Elisabeth Stabler (Ed.)

ELiS - Evidence-based reading promotion in schools

A compendium on the current promotion of reading in primary schools

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Content

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS ON THE TOPIC OF READING PROMOTION

Foreword

This compendium gives an insight into the Erasmus+ project *ELiS - Evidence-based reading promotion in schools*. The impetus for this came from the Styrian Directorate of Education (formerly the Styrian State School Board) at a symposium in Weiz, where the effectiveness of reading initiatives was discussed controversially.

As a result, a concept for an EU project was sketched out at the Styrian School Board (LSR) together with Dr. Herbert Schwetz, Dr. Hubert Schaupp, RR Juliane Müller, Mag. Maria Pichlbauer and Wolfgang Pojer. Thus the LSR started with the project *On the tracks of Archduke Johann* and sent teachers, headmasters, representatives of the School Authority (APS) and other stakeholders to Italy (South Tyrol) and Romania (Transylvania) to get to know reading initiatives. Experts from KPH Graz and PH Steiermark were already involved in this phase. The LSR was awarded the Erasmus+ Award 2018 for its function as engine and initiator of the project.

The offer of KPH Graz to take over the lead in the follow-up project *ELiS was* not only welcomed because of the uncomplicated handling, but also because valuable personnel resources were made available. The LSR (now Bildungsdirektion Steiermark) participated in the steering and at the same time acted as an equal partner in the consortium together with the PH Steiermark, the University of Regensburg, the Lucian Blaga University Sibiu and the Pedagogical Department of the German Education Directorate in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano.

The participation of the LSR (Bildungsdirektion Steiermark) was able to ensure that research at schools was made possible in the best possible way. The persons in charge have already recognized the importance of reading education before the start of the project and have integrated all relevant departments and units. Reading is one of a person's most important competences, because otherwise a successful (survival) life in the communication society is unthinkable.

In primary education, the foundations must be laid for comprehensive reading competence. Regular training in fluency, eye tension exercises and

strategies are just as much a part of the programme as activities to motivate readers to read, whereby evidence-based training is a central concern in any success factors.

With the help of the project, the LSR made it possible to test *Lesen. Das Training* throughout Styria through the purchase of books for pilot schools, combined with an induction by Dr. Petra Eisenstecken, and the testing of the materials developed by the consortium itself, such as *Filius* (training fluid in reading with different subject matter texts) and *Filia* (integrated reading promotion with reading strategies). This resulted in new initiatives for the NMS (Neue Mittelschule) in cooperation with the book club. Furthermore, the LSR provided interested schools with class licenses for the reading platform *ANTOLIN* and offered the corresponding training of teachers, during which the individual reading promotion plan *Checkpoint Lesen* was also presented by Buchzeit.

The opportunity to be in constant contact with experts from our partner countries has proved to be extremely enriching. This has led to some further cooperation at European level. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all those involved in the project, but especially to the coordinator, Prof. Elisabeth Stabler.

The task now is to ensure the dissemination of the results and to invite all schools in the supervisory area of the Styrian Directorate of Education to download and use the free materials from the website *www.projektelis.eu.* The children can look forward to it!

Wolfgang Pojer
School quality management for the primary education sector in Styria

Elisabeth Stabler

Introductory remarks

Undoubtedly, the ability to read is regarded as a fundamental competence without which participation in today's society seems hardly possible. It is precisely for this reason that numerous studies point to the key role of reading literacy in later educational and career opportunities (OECD, 2000; Naumann, Artelt, Schneider & Stanat, 2010). According to PISA (2009), Austrian pupils have a particular weakness in "reflecting and evaluating content or the structure of the text (Schwantner & Schreiner, 2013, p. 2). The PIRLS study 2016 also shows the low reading skills of Austrian pupils. 16% of this target group read at reading literacy level I (13.2%) or below (2.4%) and thus rank among the risk students. In a European comparison, Romania has the highest proportion of risk pupils (39%) and, in contrast to Austria, statistically significantly lower average values in reading literacy (Suchan, 2009). However, while children from Germany, for example, achieve similar reading results to those in Austria, pupils from the same age group in Italy read significantly better (Wallner-Paschon, Itzlinger-Bruneforth, & Schreiner, 2016). In order to achieve a long-term improvement in reading literacy, preventive measures and consistent reading promotion based on evidence are needed. In empirical educational research, the term *evidence-based* refers to the proof and legitimation of the effectiveness of a specific measure. According to Tippelt & Reich-Claassen (2010), the aim is "to provide system-relevant control knowledge for educational processes and thus to improve the transfer of scientific findings into educational policy and practice" (p. 22). According to Beushausen and Grötzbach (2011), evidence-based reading promotion in class is therefore possible if teachers are in a position to diagnose a need for support among pupils, to carry out effectiveness-tested support programmes and ultimately to evaluate the success of support. In their comments, Blumenthal & Mahlau (2015) also state that only methods and procedures whose effectiveness has been proven in scientific studies are used in the implementation of an evidence-based practice. Finally, it is a matter of finding the most suitable strategy for action in the respective setting, taking into account the expertise of the teacher and the respective needs of the children. According to the National Reading Panel (2000), the first step in the effective promotion of reading is to synthesize sublexical units (*alphabetics*). These include segmentation into sublexical units (letters, syllables, morphemes),

the retrieval of sublexical units, and the regularity of writing. Another approach cited by the National Reading Panel (2010) is reading fluidity (*fluency*), which aims to segment and synthesise as well as to understand reading. The third approach is *comprehension*, which is influenced by vocabulary, text comprehension and strategy knowledge. Since the *ELiS* project focuses on promoting reading fluidity and reading strategies, the effects of these two approaches are of particular importance. Rosebrock, Rieckmann, Nix and Gold (2010) prove in their study that sound reading tandems have an effect (d= 0.52) on the reading fluid. High effects (d= 1.37) in this subprocess of reading are also evident when children read aloud to the teacher (Therrien, 2004). In the field of reading comprehension, Slavin, Lake, Chambers, Cheung & Davis (2009), for example, demonstrate effects (d=0.32) for the modelling of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Despite these studies, Križan (2014) complains, however, that especially in the German-speaking countries there is a lack of reliable information on "which funding approaches are fruitful under which conditions" (p. 5). The project *ELiS* - Evidence-based reading promotion in schools tries to counteract this criticism by two reading promotion measures, *Lesen. Das Training* and *Filius* (training fluid with different subject texts) *or Filia* (subject-integrating reading promotion with reading strategies) were implemented in the second and third grade of the primary level and tested for their effectiveness. Both trainings do not aim at basic skills of phonological recoding, but focus on an automated reading process and reading comprehension.

Goals of the Compendium

Against the background that the transferability of international findings on reading promotion is not easily possible (Philipp, 2017), this compendium presents the *ELiS* project in detail and derives findings from the country-specific results. The content is primarily aimed at teachers who wish to improve the reading skills of their pupils. In addition, initial findings from the project can serve as a basis for decisions by the school inspectorate and other stakeholders.

With this compendium, the steering group of the *ELiS* project aims to provide teachers and students with an overview of reading initiatives and measures to promote reading, and to provide up-to-date didactic findings that view reading as a highly individual process.

This compendium therefore has the following objectives:

Although this compendium is intended to expand the current state of knowledge on evidence-based reading promotion, it is nevertheless intended to concentrate on the essential. Therefore, not the entire state of research on the topic of reading promotion is depicted, but rather an attempt is made to shed light on the reading promotion measures used within the framework of the *ELiS* project and to bundle important project results. Since the reading trainings used relate predominantly to the cognitive aspects of dealing with written language, motivational and social aspects and their influence on reading are only mentioned in the theoretical explanations. Instead, the compendium provides information and suggestions for evidence-based reading promotion in primary school through the presentation of different possibilities and offers in reading instruction, with special consideration of subject-integrating reading promotion.

To the structure of the compendium

In order to shed light on the *ELiS* project in all its facets, explanations of a fundamental nature are needed first. First and foremost, *reading literacy* per se must be defined, as the first priority in the project is on sustainable planning, design and reflection of reading and comprehension processes for general and subject-integrating meaning-encompassing reading, with special consideration given to pupils with low basic skills. Philipp (2017) comes to the conclusion in his explanations that there is a multitude of different definitions of this term and therefore postulates: "Depending on the discipline

of reference something else comes into view, so that there are very narrow, but also very broad definitions of terms" (Philipp, 2017, p. 48).
The content of the compendium is divided into three parts. In order to illustrate the impact of reading promotion measures on reading literacy, it is first necessary to give an overview of the basics of systematic school-based reading promotion in the first part of this volume. The structuring of the second part is based on the *ELiS* project with its project genesis, the deveopment of didactic materials, the analysis of reading promotion measures as well as project results obtained in the participating countries Austria (Styria region), Italy (South Tyrol region) and Romania (Sibiu region). Based on these developments and comparative findings, the third part of this volume finally deals with further chapters on the subject of reading. It deals with the status quo report of existing country-specific reading promotion measures, aspects of educational equity in the comparison countries and, finally, the opinions of teachers on the reading promotion measures implemented in the *ELiS* project.

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BASIC INFORMATION ON READING AND READING PROMOTION

Johannes Wild & Anita Schilcher

Evidence-based promotion of reading: basics, models and training programmes

After the reading course at the end of primary school, pupils should be able to read texts in an enjoyable, informative, selective, interpretive and critical way. "The primary school [...] thus lays a solid foundation for further learning, for further self-determined reading and a conscious selection of suitable media." (KMK, 2005, p. 9) The teacher's task is to create learning opportunities in a modern, competence-oriented reading class that enable children to acquire appropriate skills and abilities (Duffy, 1993; Garbe, 2011).

Analyses indicate, however, that reading in class is given only little time (Schmich, Breit, Lanzdorf & Itzlinger-Bruneforth, 2017) and tasks are less cognitively activating and supportive (Lotz, 2016; Bos, Valtin, Hußmann, Wendt & Goy, 2017). On the contrary, only capable children seem to be able to enjoy a demanding reading lesson: "The stronger the learners, the more likely a demanding lesson is to take place at all" (Lotz, 2016, p. 65). Weaker readers lack learning and exercise opportunities. The findings of the large empirical studies such as IGLU, PISA and DESI show that pupils hardly achieve greater increases in reading competence after the first grades (Philipp, 2011a). There is still a relatively high proportion of weak readers in the classrooms, and social and gender inequalities persist. These even increase in the course of compulsory schooling (McElvany, Kessels, Schwabe & Kasper, 2017; Salchegger, Sucha, Widauer, Höller, Toferer & Glaeser, 2017; Gailberger & Willenberg, 2008). Obviously, the current reading instruction does not seem to meet the needs of the pupils.

Although teachers are often aware of the problems of their own reading lessons, further training courses are often perceived as a form of patronizing, as they question established actions and suggest procedures that seem uncertain about success (Philipp & Scherf, 2012). However, the implementation of proposed innovations is therefore doomed to fail from the outset. For the implementation of new procedures to succeed, not only research, but also the professionalism of the teaching staff is required. The implementation of demanding programmes requires a good knowledge of the construct of reading competence and its diagnostics as well as of the fit and

effectiveness of various measures. The latter must prove empirically effective (National Reading Panel, 2000).

1. Reading literacy

Cognitive-psychological models such as IGLU, DESI or PISA focus on the extraction of information from texts (Bremerich-Vos, Wendt & Bos, 2017; Weis, Zehner, Sälzer, Strohmaier, Artelt & Pfost, 2016). They describe reading competence as "the ability [...] to understand, use and reflect upon written texts and to be willing to engage with them" (Weis et al., 2016, p. 252). Even the first publications after PISA were criticized by reading socialisation researchers of not taking individual, social and cultural aspects into account (Hurrelmann, 2002). Didactic models therefore usually include these and paint a more comprehensive picture of reading literacy. They also have levels of individual disposition and socialization processes (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014; Schilcher, 2018; see Figure 1).

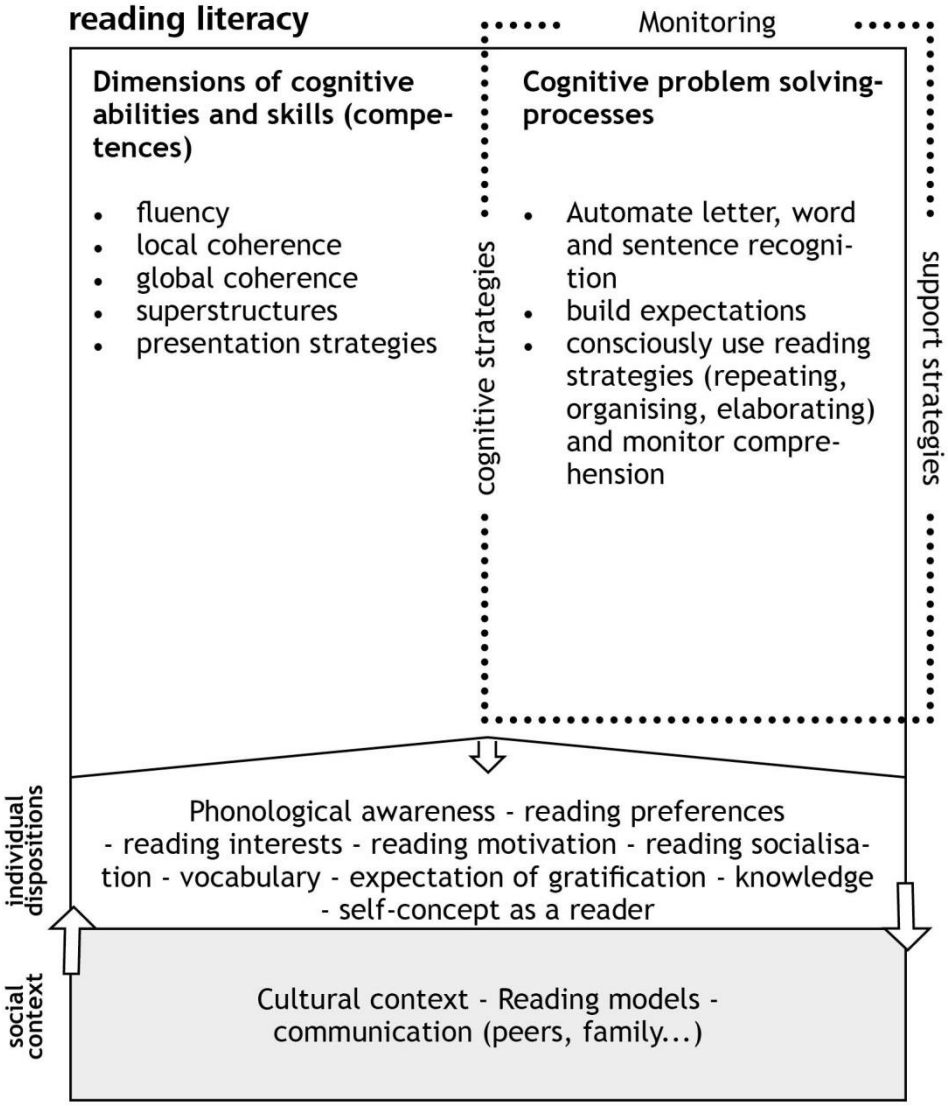

Figure 1: A didactic model of reading literacy according to Schilcher & Wild, 2018 (*Schilcher*, 2018)

1.1 Cognitive abilities, skills and processes

Weaver & Kintsch (1991) describe the cognitive level of the reading process in two parts. On the one hand, basic processes have to be mastered, on the other hand, complex hierarchical processes of understanding take place. Reading therefore means on the one hand the small-step processing

of individual information of the text (*bottom-up*), on the other hand a knowledge-based and schema-led processing of information (*top-down*). Both processes work together and lead to the construction of the overall meaning of a text: The information contained in the text is abstracted (e.g. in the form of so-called macro structures) and integrated into the text-independent knowledge of the reader. There they are enriched with the experience knowledge already stored. Research then speaks of the *mental model* of a text that is created in the mind of the reader (Schilcher & Wild, 2018). It should be obvious that this does not happen magically on its own. Reading requires effort and an active effort on the part of the reader (Christmann & Groeben, 2006).

1.1.1 Hierarchically low processes

In order to enable reading comprehension at higher hierarchical levels, basal, hierarchy-low processes such as decoding letters or words must first be mastered. Later, increasingly complex linguistic competences will play a greater role (Ennemoser, Marx, Weber & Schneider, 2012). Accordingly, the reading process "at the lowest level [...] is to be understood primarily as a visual processing operation" (Richter & Christmann, 2009, p. 28). It is mainly characterised by word recognition.

According to *dual route theory* (e.g. Ellis & Young, 1991), this can take place in two ways that influence each other (Lenhard, 2013): a slower phonological path or a faster lexical path. With the phonological way a word must be opened laboriously letter for letter. Only at the end is the meaning clear, for example with long or difficult words. In the lexical path, the letters already selected are compared with units stored in memory (e.g. morphemes) to identify a word. Frequent words are recognized at a glance. This allows you to recognize a word before it has been read completely.

In both cases, the words must be available in the reader's mental lexicon to retrieve their meaning. If a word is unknown or cannot be decoded, its meaning cannot be retrieved either (Richter & Christmann, 2009).

During decoding, the reader's gaze moves over the text in jumps (saccades). Strong readers, however, do not jump from letter to letter or word to word, but look at larger units. Therefore they need few, shorter fixations. Beginners, on the other hand, make smaller jumps and have more

frequent and longer fixations. The saccades allow the reader to simultaneously process syntactic and contextual information during word recognition. Thus already here a contentwise analysis of the entire sentence can be made (Richter & Christmann, 2009). The more these basic word recognition processes are automated, the more capacities are free in the working memory for the higher hierarchical understanding processes (Lenhard, 2013). In the Anglo-American area, the term *reading fluid* (*fluency*) has established itself for the automation of basal reading processes. One understands by it ...

- a sufficiently high degree of decoding accuracy (>90% error-free reading of words),
- a high degree of decoding automation,
- sufficient reading speed (> 100 words per minute) and
- the ability to emphasize the meaning of reading aloud (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014).

Interrelationships between sentences (*local coherence*) are created by establishing content references between sentences or units of meaning (Richter & Christmann, 2009). This requires the use of grammatical information (e.g. casus, pro-forms, tempus, thematic theme, etc.) as well as semantic strategies for linking, such as closing gaps in content through world knowledge (so-called inference) or on the basis of known everyday scripts (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014). The more hints a text offers in this respect, the easier it is to do so.

1.1.2 Hierarchically high processes

For a mental model of the entire text to emerge from the individual information of a text, it must be linked, condensed and abstracted (*global coherence*). These processes of abstraction already begin during the basal processing of the text by the reader (Christmann & Groeben, 2006). Reading strategies can support these sub-processes in the form of "ready-made" action plans (National Reading Panel, 2000; Rosebrock & Nix, 2014). So-called superstructures control the manufacturing process top-down, "in the sense of organizing pre-knowledge structures" (Christmann & Groeben, 2006, p. 168). They concern the structure of a text (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014). Like cognitive schemata and scripts, they help to build up expectations when reading, to orientate oneself in the text and to structure what has been read (Lenhard, 2013). If the structure of a lexicon article, for example, is known, the relevant information can be obtained more easily.

Presentation strategies such as irony, parodies or linguistically conveyed ideologies require a critical and interpretative approach to the text. They generate a second level of mea-ning that goes beyond the "mere" extraction of information. They therefore represent a point of contact with literary learning (Schilcher & Pissarek, 2013; Rosebrock & Nix, 2014).

1.2 Individual dispositions

Pupils need motivation so that they do not interrupt the reading process prematurely. Research distinguishes between temporary, current and habitual motivation. The former refers to the intention to read a text in a specific situation. Habitual motivation, on the other hand, describes the repeated willingness to do so (Schiefele, Schaffner, Möller & Wigfield, 2012). In order to build up a habitus as a reader, intrinsic motives have proven to be important, i.e. reading serves as an end in itself or the topic is considered important (e.g. interest in football). Only here are correlations with the number of readings and the frequency (see Schiefele et al., 2012). Extrinsic motives, on the other hand, refer less to reading itself than to the expected positive or negative consequences (e.g. good grades, no television ban).

It is problematic that the motivation to deal with texts continuously decreases during school time (Richter & Plath, 2012; Gattermeier, 2003). About 16% of pupils have problems developing sufficient habitual reading motivation (Goy, Valtin & Hußmann, 2017), boys even more frequently than girls (Stein & Endepohls-Ulpe, 2019). Altogether boys belong particularly frequently to the group of the risk pupils. Reasons for this include the feminisation of reading and teaching. As a rule, boys experience reading from childhood as a quiet and feminine activity. The selection of topics and readings usually also follows the preferences and interests of the girls (Richter & Plath, 2012; Schilcher & Knott, 2018). Since reading thus does not correspond to the role model of boys, it is devalued and less effort and time is invested in it (Guthrie & Taboada Barber, 2019). As a result, reading competence can only be developed hesitantly and the increasingly difficult texts of school lessons quickly lead to frustration (Schilcher & Wild, 2018).

In addition to motivation, prior knowledge proves to be a strong influencing factor. This concerns both conceptual, content-related knowledge of

the complex of topics presented and the topic-specific vocabulary (Almasi & Hart, 2019; Cromley & Azevedo, 2007). If a child already knows many words of the text, it does not have to "decode" them laboriously. This is especially true for complex words. In addition, children with broad prior knowledge are better able to acquire new words:

> „Readers who know more words are better at learning new words and they learn the words better. They aquire understanding of word features, such as the sounds and spellings, morphology, and syntax, as well as the word meanings." (Ganske, 2019, S. 200)

A linguistically stimulating environment thus has a recognisable influence on the framework in which pupils' reading skills can develop.

1.3 Social and cultural factors

All major empirical studies show that a corresponding offer depends above all on the educational level of the parents. While children from families with a high affinity for education generally find a stimulating environment, children from educationally disadvantaged families often receive less support. They are significantly more frequently among the weak readers (Goy et al., 2017). Only about a third of the children manage to break this link between social background and educational success during their school years (Hippmann, Jambor-Fahlen & Becker-Mrotzek, 2019). In addition, socioeconomic status and migration background are often linked. Although this does not in itself play a role in the development of reading literacy, it can become relevant if a family speaks only one language other than German. As far as German vocabulary is concerned, there will naturally then be a less extensive range (Garbe, Holle & Jesch, 2010; Gailberger & Willenberg, 2008; Hart & Risley, 2003). The parents, as the primary authority of reading socialisation, thus not only have a role model function with regard to the handling and quantity of what is read, they also open up access to literature for children, for example by reading aloud or giving suitable book presents or visiting the library to suit their interests and preferences (Hurrelmann, 2009; Rosebrock & Nix, 2014).

Moreover, the appreciation of reading in the peer group is significant. If reading is a high priority, it is regarded as a self-evident possibility of leisure activities; if there is the possibility of subsequent communications, this contributes to the development of a stable reading motivation (Philipp, 2008;

Garbe et al., 2010). In groups with lower educational affinity or low socio-economic status, audiovisual media such as television often offer faster and easier gratuities than print media (Ennemoser & Schneider, 2007). They are therefore mostly preferred. Among these "media enthusiasts" the reading weak boys are disproportionately frequently represented (Philipp, 2011b). Under such unfavorable reading socialization conditions, children can quickly get into a kind of vicious circle: Since their reading skills are low, they are often confronted with texts that are too demanding for them. They experience reading as exhausting, not very enjoyable and frustrating. As a result, these pupils try to avoid reading tasks and devalue reading as the cultural practice of another group (Garbe et al., 2010).

So-called "reading kinks" can, however, occur even under optimal conditions. This often happens at the age of about nine or 13 years (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014; Philipp, 2008). The texts read so far then often appear to be too little demanding and the topics favoured so far too uninteresting (Schilcher & Knott, 2018).

> "Reading, which has been childish and full of relish, is becoming stale because adolescents mature cognitively, the seriality of children's literature, which is still beloved up to now, can be seen through, new (reading) needs arise as a result of physical and mental maturation, and reading motivation also declines strongly. " (Philipp, 2008, p. 37)

2. Reading promotion - what works?

A study of platforms such as lesen-in-deutschland.de, on which countries provide information about their reading promotion measures, reveals a sobering picture. A large number of measures (Ø twelve) make up the majority, but the main focus is on preschools, and reading animation projects such as book presentations, author readings, reading nights and reading competitions, etc. There is a predominance of isolated promotion of reading motivation and reading culture (Artelt, McElvany, Christmann, Richter, Groeben, Köster, Schneider, Stanat, Ostermeier, Schiefele, Valtin & Ring, 2007). There are hardly any concrete and demonstrably effective support programmes, such as training courses aimed at promoting reading fluency or reading comprehension.

This focus on reading motivation and reading culture is problematic. From the point of view of reading research, it has long been clear that measures that animate reading alone are not suitable for producing active readers with a stable motivation to read (Artelt et al., 2007; Souvignier & Philipp, 2016), because it is ignored that motivation arises primarily from experiencing self-efficacy. Without the simultaneous promotion of cognitive abilities and skills, these projects run nowhere. "The path from the description and definition of target criteria of school education to a practice realizing this claim is [therefore still ...] long." (Artelt et al., 2007, p. 66)

Based on a large number of research results, four focal points of reading promotion have now been identified: the promotion of phonological awareness in preschools, the promotion of decoding ability and vocabulary, the promotion of reading fluidity by means of sound reading procedures, and the promotion of reading comprehension through reading strategy training (National Reading Panel, 2000; Artelt et al., 2007). Teachers, however, often rely on reading animation (e.g. reading night) and multi reading procedures (e.g. Bamberger's reading Olympiad, silent reading times), the effectiveness of which has so far not been proven or only occasionally. While these measures at least do no harm to children with a stronger reading ability, there is a lack of opportunities for training among learners who need support (Schilcher & Wild, 2018).

The use of evidence-based funding programmes in conjunction with appropriate diagnostics is therefore indispensable (see Figure 2).

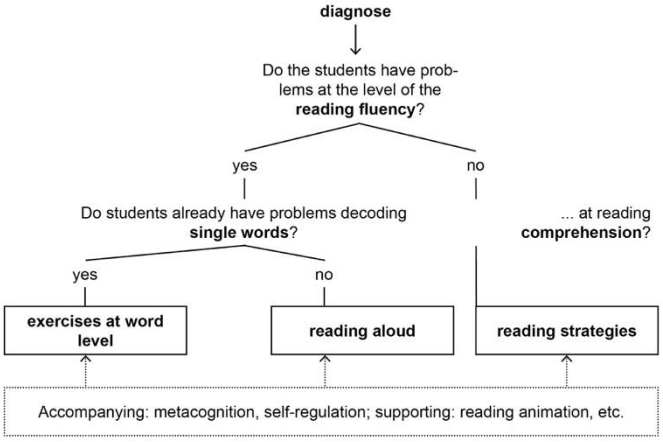

Figure 2: Decision tree for reading promotion

2.1 Training decoding skills and building vocabulary

In addition to learning phoneme grapheme correspondence in written language acquisition, vocabulary acquisition plays a central role in reading. If the proportion of unknown or difficult words in a text is too high, understanding is difficult. It is therefore advantageous to have a broad vocabulary. Such a structure can be established by direct instruction, e.g. by relieving the burden orally, or indirectly, e.g. by supporting the development of new words during reading (National Reading Panel, 2000). Methodologically, there are variants ranging from the creation of semantic networks to the classical vocabulary book (National Reading Panel, 2000). It is not enough to convey words as declarative knowledge. They must be linked to meaning and be significant for one's own language reception or language production. A five-step approach, as usual in foreign language teaching, has therefore also proved to be useful for German (Ulrich, 2011; Polz, 2011; National Reading Panel, 2000):

1. Isolate new/unknown words while reading or listening
2. Capturing the word form and distinguishing similar words (acoustically/optically)
3. Semantization: Understanding the meaning of words
4. Varying and networking: Linking word form and meaning with other words or contexts and storing them in memory
5. Reactivate and use: Repeated use of the word (receptive and productive), possibly multilingual (Pieles, 2019).

Ganske (2019) and Rosebrock & Nix (2014) also point to the importance of exercises in contextual analysis and the silphic and morphological structure of words, such as listening to situational references (e.g. search for contextual paraphrases, synonyms, antonyms), word building blocks and word formation mechanisms (e.g. prefixes, suffixes, word stem, paraphrase). A discussion with a partner about the meaning of a word or brainstorming in the form of a *word study time* is also useful. Kuhn, Rasinski & Young (2019) propose to examine difficult or interesting words from the text. Thus, not only can a content-related networking take place, but also ambiguities, e.g. *Strom* (german) in the physical or geographical sense, can be clarified. Munser-Kiefer & Kirschhock (2014) describe in the second module of *Reading in a Reading Team* how the automation of word recognition can be designed. It is thus at the interface to the read-fluid-training sound reading

procedures. *Phonit* (Stock & Schneider, 2011), on the other hand, focuses on decoding.

2.2 Reading aloud

For a long time, reading promotion was mainly concerned with reading comprehension. Only in the 80s of the 20th century a rethink did take place and the promotion of reading fluidity as a prerequisite for reading comprehension was given greater consideration. Until then, having the students read turn by turn was regarded as a tried and tested method at school. However, it has now been proven that this is ineffective. It has rather the opposite effect: pupils find it boring, not very challenging and, due to the lack of preparation possibilities, even sometimes frightening. Current approaches to promoting reading fluid rely on the repeated reading of a text with a loud or semi-voiced tone. The aim is to achieve a certain level of reading fluid. At the same time, this is intended to increase practice time and create opportunities for feedback (National Reading Panel, 2000). Furthermore, funding programmes often make use of the positive effect of a reading model that serves as a model for speed, emphasis, etc. It supports the children in reading aloud themselves (Kuhn et al., 2019). It is advantageous if the fluid training is combined with the possibility of connection communication: From the beginning, the focus should always be on understanding (Lotz, 2016). Basically, a distinction can be made between the reading aloud methods as shown in Table 1:

	unique	**repeated reading of** the text
reading model	reading aloud (*paired/assisted reading*), reading by listening	Filius / FiLBY-2
no reading model	turn by turn	*repeated reading,* reading theater

Table 1: Systematics of the sound reading procedures (n. Kuhn et al., 2019; Rosebrock & Nix, 2014), marked in grey are expected effective procedures

In the meantime, the so-called sound reading tandems, a form of *paired reading*, have established themselves in German-speaking countries as a method of promoting reading fluidity. Here, a child with reduced reading ability (*reading athlete*) reads an age-appropriate test aloud or aloud to-

gether with a reading competent classmate (*reading trainer*). The reading trainer carries his/her own finger in the line and serves as a model for pronunciation, emphasis and speed. In addition, this person has the task of monitoring the reading process of the weaker reading child: he or she corrects mistakes (after sufficient waiting time) and praises if no mistakes are made. As soon as the reading athlete feels confident, he or she can give their trainer a signal and read without accompaniment. The stronger reading child then reads along quietly, but corrects and continues to praise. Studies by the Frankfurter Lesegruppe show that both reading athletes and reading trainers benefit from this type of reading. For the training to be effective, it should be practiced systematically over a longer period of time. A training period of at least eight weeks makes sense, whereby 15 to 20 minutes are trained about three times a week (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014; Kuhn et al., 2019). Gailberger (2011) developed a methodological variant of the sound reading tandems for secondary schools. When *reading while listening,* the reading trainer is replaced by a professional speaker from CD. Wild & Schilcher (2017) adapted and expanded the concept with Filius for the primary level, in FILBY-2 (Schilcher, Wild & Steinert, 2019) the training was again revised and supplemented.

In *repeated reading*, pupils should read a medium-heavy text without a reading model until it can be read fluently. The aim of this procedure is for the children to learn to pay attention to more text signals, such as punctuation, and to build up a visual vocabulary each time they pass through. Since the repeated confrontation with the same text quickly becomes boring and is not motivating in the long run, Nix (2006) proposes to create a staging situation (so-called *reading theatre*). *Repeated reading* is then no longer an end in itself, but serves the preparation of a theatre performance, a podcast or school radio or the creation of a radio play. The repetitive element of *repeated reading* was also taken up in *Filius* and *FiLBY-2.*

2.3 Strategy development

Reading strategies are prefabricated, planned actions that help pupils to develop challenging texts:

> Strategies are plans for solving problems encountered in constructing meaning. Unlike skills, these plans cannot be automatized because the uniqueness of each text requires readers to modify strategies to fit the demands of the text.

> […] Consequently, a good strategy user consciously adapts individual strategies within an overall plan for constructing meaning. (Duffy, 1993, S. 232)

The concept of strategy encompasses not only cognitive, but also metacognitive or supporting processes that are purposefully and consciously used to achieve a goal (Almasi & Hart, 2019; Philipp, 2012a). These can be used before reading, during reading and afterwards (Artelt & Dörfler, 2011, p. 30). Research has shown that good readers have an extensive repertoire of strategies that they can apply and adapt to specific situations (Duffy 1993; Artelt et al., 2007).

In school-based teaching, the focus is usually on the cognitive strategies of text processing (see Figure 3). They can be categorized according to their reading goal into ordering, repeating and elaborating strategies. When it comes to reducing and structuring information, ordering strategies such as creating a mind map or underlining are useful. In this way, the information can also be used well as a basis for a presentation or for writing. Repeated strategies stimulate the renewed examination of the text in order to keep the content longer. For example, a sentence or paragraph can be read again. Elaboration strategies serve to deepen text comprehension, for example by activating textual knowledge (Philipp, 2012a; Artelt & Dörfler, 2011).

Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, serve self-regulation, i.e. the planning, monitoring and regulation of the reading process. Support strategies, on the other hand, support reading in general, for example by creating a pleasant environment.

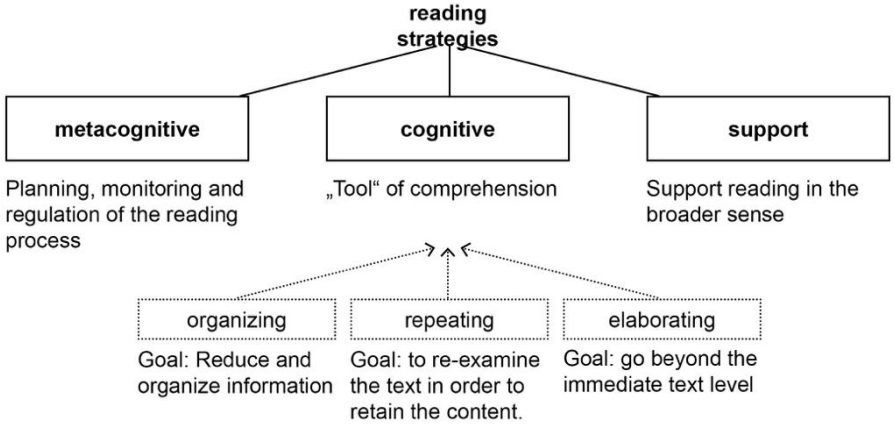

Figure 3: Systematics of reading strategies (according to Philipp, 2012a, p. 45)

Central to successful teaching of reading strategies is not whether the "right" strategies are introduced, but that pupils develop a concept of what it means to think strategically (Duffy, 1993). Strategies should not simply be learned by heart, but the planned reading process of experts should be emphasized. This requires teachers to (1) create situations that require strategic thinking and are aimed at a reading goal, (2) provide explicit information about what good readers are doing in this situation, and (3) respond flexibly to emerging students' strategic thinking ideas (Duffy 1993). It must become clear how, when and why the strategies are used (Almasi & Hart, 2019). With regard to the introduction of strategies, teachers can orient themselves on the placement scheme of Graham & Harris (2005) and Lienemann & Ried (2006):

1. **Activate Previous Knowledge & Build Background Knowledge:** So that new strategies can be stored in memory, pupils need points of contact with what they have learned so far. The situation-specific prior knowledge should therefore be activated, for example: What ideas do you have to work with the text? What strategies do you already know? In addition to networking, one goal of this phase is to uncover typical misconceptions, such as that strong readers always understand everything.
2. **Understand the importance of reading strategy:** On this basis, the children should become aware of the advantages of planned action. They recognise that reading professionals use strategies and that these help them to better understand texts. For example, experts always read with a pen in order to underline key terms or to note down questions. If the students are not aware of the benefits of a strategy, they reject the additional effort that the application of the strategy initially entails.
3. **Modeling:** In the next step, the teacher explains the application of the strategy in the so-called *loud thinking of* a concrete text. She not only describes her approach, but also comments on it: For example, she explains why she (does not) do something and praises herself for successful steps. For example: "So before I read a text, I first examine the heading. Then I can understand the lyrics better later. I'll figure out what this is about and what I already know about it. Hmm, this is about polar bears. I know that polar bears live in the snow. But what their habitat looks like and how they feed, I don't know yet. That would interest me! Great, I'll write the questions down in a minute! When I then read the text, I search specifically for answers to my questions. Everything else is not so important at first! Great,

that's how I do it!" Students will thus be able to answer the question of why, how and when the strategy is used. Self-reinforcements ("class", "super") underline the personal significance of the strategy and reward successful behaviour (see also Almasi & Hart, 2019, p. 235 for a successful example).

4. **Memorize:** In order for pupils to be able to automate the new strategies, they must first be transferred to declarative knowledge. However, the children should not just learn the procedure by heart, they must have understood why and how they implement these strategies. Strategy subjects, checklists or learning posters help you to remember the procedure and to reflect on it.
5. **Supported and independent practice:** In the subsequent phase, a longer transition period follows during which the strategies are practiced with the support of the teacher (*scaffolding*). The focus is on the joint application of the strategies, for example in plenary sessions, with pre-structured texts, etc. Gradually, however, the teacher withdraws, so that pupils end up having to apply the strategies independently (*fading*).

One of the first trainings in German-speaking countries dedicated to the introduction of reading strategies is the *text detectives* (Gold, Mokhlesgerami, Rühl, Schreblowski & Souvignier, 2004). Using the metaphor of a detective, the children are taught the planned procedure and a total of seven "detective methods" are taught: Note headline, present visually, deal with text difficulties, check understanding, underline important points, summarise important points and check retention. The programme was also published for weaker children under the name *Lesedetektive* (Rühl & Souvignier, 2006). There, only four of the seven detective methods are thematized. *Lesetraining mit Käpt'n Carlo* (Spörer, Koch, Schünemann & Völlinger, 2016) emphasizes reciprocal learning in strategy communication. There, four strategies are introduced and practiced with a partner: clarifying comprehension difficulties, asking questions about the text, summarising text passages and making predictions. In the *Burg Adlerstein Reading Training* (Pronold-Günthner, Winkler-Theiß, Schilcher, Pissarek, Sontag, Steinbach, Stöger, Wild & Lichtinger, 2014) the children train three basic reading strategies (thinking about questions, skimming reading and finding headlines) on an extensive corpus of texts in the form of a continuation story. They are also embedded in a cycle of self-regulated learning. The children also receive immediate feedback on their strategy application through questions on the training texts, which are graded according to

difficulty. *Filia* (Wild & Schilcher, 2018) focuses on three visualisation strategies: Activating prior knowledge, recognising visualisation types and supplementing visualisation. The strategies are practiced on 35 factual texts over a longer period of time. A more detailed overview of known reading strategy trainings is given in Table 2.

Vocabulary/ decoding	reading aloud	strategy trainings
▸ Leichter lesen und schreiben lernen mit der Hexe Susi (Forster & Martschinke, 2012) * ▸ Lesen im Leseteam [Baustein 2] (Munser-Kiefer & Kirschhock, 2014) * ▸ Lesen. Das Training [Baustein 1-2] (Bertschi-Kaufmann, Hagendorf, Kruse, Rank, Riss & Sommer, 2010) ▸ PHONIT (Stock & Schneider, 2011) *	▸ FILBY-2 (Schilcher, Wild & Steinert, 2019) # ▸ Filius (Wild et al., 2017) # Fluency Development Lesson (Kuhn et al., 2019)* Lautlesetandems (Rieckmann, Behrendt & Lauer-Schmaltz, 2012) * ▸ Lesen durch Hören [Baustein 1] (Gailberger, 2011) *	▸ Burg Adlerstein (Pronold-Günthner et al., 2014) * # ▸ CORI (Philipp, 2012c) * ▸ Filia (Wild & Schilcher, 2018) (Hrsg.) # ▸ Käptn Carlo (Spörer, Koch, Schünemann & Völlinger, 2016) * ▸ LekoLemo (Streblow, Schiefele & Riedel, 2012) * ▸ Lesen durch Hören [Baustein 2] (Gailberger, 2011) * ▸ Lesen im Leseteam [Baustein 3] (Munser-Kiefer & Kirschhock, 2014) * ▸ Lesen. Das Training [Baustein 3] (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010) ▸ PALS (Philipp, 2012d) * ▸ Selbstreguliertes Lesen mit Sachtexten (Stöger, Sontag & Greindl, 2012) * # ▸ Textdetektive (Gold et al., 2004) * und Lesedetektive (Rühl & Souvignier, 2006) *

Table 2: Table of established reading trainings (extended to Philipp, 2012b, p. 209)
*Note: *: Efficacy already empirically proven; #: with extensive text corpus*

2.4 Motivation

Despite a multitude of reading animation procedures in schools, the development of reading motivation is a difficult undertaking. As has already become clear, measures have a motivating effect above all when they enable success in reading in a variety of authentic reading situations. In order to make these clear to pupils, there must be sufficient texts of the same length and weight with which they can train over a longer period of time. If the texture or task type changes during training, the children attribute success not to their own ability, but to the lighter/ heavier text or task. You

will not be able to set realistic and challenging goals. Regular feedback on the achievement of these goals, on the other hand, makes it possible to experience competence and strengthens the personal significance of reading.

Another advantage of the support procedures mentioned in the previous sections is that pupils have the choice during the training, for example with regard to the topic. Particularly with regard to the acquisition of vocabulary, it makes sense to form thematic units in which the vocabulary is repeated and reading also appears important for professional learning (Guthrie & Taboada Barber, 2019).

Reading nights, author readings, library visits are therefore only profitable if they are integrated into a comprehensive funding concept. Popular programs such as *Antolin* are rather detrimental to reading motivation, as they limit the experience of autonomy and lead to a negative connotation of reading (Meier, 2017). In the worst case scenario, the pupils experience measures like this as the demonstrated culture of another group, distance themselves and devalue reading.

2.5 What does reading teaching look like?

A well-founded diagnostic system is a prerequisite so that pupils can be supported in a precisely fitting manner. In addition, sufficient time must be invested in teaching. Standardised reading tests such as the *Salzburger Lesescreening*, the *Hamburger Lesetest* or the *Frankfurter Leseverständnistest* show where the children have strengths or weaknesses and allow comparison with an external group. On this basis, the appropriate funding programme can then be selected (for an overview of established test instruments see Pissarek & Pronold-Günthner, 2018). Individual lessons etc. do not bring success, the long-term training is crucial.

In order for long-term training to be successful and for children to be able to assess themselves, suitable texts must be available. Many teaching texts only fulfil these criteria to a limited extent: they often contain a high density of information, sometimes require unknown concepts and are often extremely complex in terms of language. Tasks are often not very concrete or are limited to the extraction of individual information. More complex conclusions or interpretations are rarely in demand.

Texts that are used in class should therefore not only be thematically appropriate, but also take pupils seriously as readers. Already the title should arouse interest and curiosity. In the case of factual texts, this works well when the focus is on a problem question. It should have a "puzzle character" and not be answered with mere everyday knowledge. Compare the following headings: "*Why can a mole see in the dark*?" (real question) vs. "*The mole"* (form of statement). The headings do not only differ with regard to the question form. While the first title has a clear focus (orientation/sense of the mole) and emphasizes the novelty value of the text, the second title remains rather unspecific, general, and thus boring. Activating prior knowledge and forming hypotheses is made more difficult. Accordingly, the text can hardly be pre-structured. It also does not stimulate connection communication. If, on the other hand, the focus is on an authentic problem, pupils develop expectations and want to solve them. One should therefore confine oneself to the central and essential findings that the text is intended to provide. Because if the information density is too high, the children keep only little.

In order for pupils to learn well with or from texts, they should have a comprehensible structure and an appropriate level of difficulty. So-called readability indices allow an initial assessment. They can be calculated by computer, for example with *RATTE* (Wild & Pissarek, w/o year). Based on linguistic statistical methods, readability indices express the difficulty of a text as a numerical value. Text surface features such as word and sentence difficulty are used for this purpose (Groeben, 1978). Content characteristics are only included indirectly. The *LIX* (*Readability Index* by Carl-Hugo Björnsson) and *gSmog* (german *Simple Measure of Gobbledygook* by Harry McLaughlin) have become very well known. For example, the *gSmog indicates* the grade for which a text is suitable: For example, a *gSmog of* 5 indicates that a text is readable by an average fifth grader.

In order to receive feedback on reading comprehension, tasks specially designed for the texts are suitable. They should include different levels and include both open and closed types (e.g. multiple choice). Detailed instructions on task construction can be found in the *Item Writing Guidelines* of the IGLU/PIRLS surveys (Mullis & Martin, 2013) and in the relevant psychology textbooks.

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OUTLINE OF *ELIS* - EVIDENCE-BASED READING PROMOTION IN SCHOOLS

Elisabeth Stabler, Hubert Schaupp, Herbert Schwetz & Elfriede Amtmann

Project genesis of *ELiS*

ELiS (Evidence-based reading promotion in schools) is a European cooperation project involving six educational institutions from Austria, Italy, Romania and Germany. In addition to the Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule der Diözese Graz-Seckau, which is the project's head organisation, the following other institutions are involved: Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark, Bildungsdirektion Steiermark, Pädagogische Abteilung der Deutschen Bildungsdirektion in der Autonomen Provinz Bozen, Lucian Blaga University and University of Regensburg. In terms of content, this project follows on from the mobility project "*In the footsteps of Archduke Johann - Innovative practices of general and subject-specific reading in a European comparison*", which had been carried out by the LSR (now Bildungsdirektion Steiermark) in 2015 and which relied on the institutional benefit of individual mobility measures (OEAD, 2018). To this end, teachers, school inspectors, psychologists and education experts travelled to South Tyrol and Sibiu for five days each in order to learn about new methods in the field of learning to read on the one hand and to critically reflect on their own practices (Service Department EU/Internationalisation, n.d.) on the other.

1. Project goals

With regard to the first objective of the project, improving basic reading skills through innovative methods, it can be seen that there are currently a large number of initiatives that focus on successful reading instruction, but whose effectiveness has not been sufficiently tested. While generally meaningful, but not empirically tested reading promotion measures already exist in practice, a training course for subject-integrated reading for the second and third grades of primary school was developed within the framework of the *ELiS* project. This seems important precisely because adequate reading competence is important for the school's entire canon of subjects (Schmölzer-Eibinger, 2013). The project thus follows on from the "Education and Training 2020" (ET 2020) of the European Commission, which in its strate-

gic framework for European cooperation in the field of education and training calls for an analysis of existing successful practices regarding the reading performance of pupils (European Commission, 2016).

2. Reading interventions

Two reading intervention programmes were tested in the *ELiS* project. On the one hand, this is the already existing systematic reading course *Lesen. Das Training*, on the other hand, the subject-integrating reading training *Filius* (training fluid in reading with different subject texts) and *Filia* (subject-integrating reading promotion with reading strategies) were implemented in practice. The focus of both reading promotion measures is on training reading skills, reading fluency (reading focus in the second class) and meaning-enhancing reading through the application of reading strategies (reading focus in the third class). Although the respective reading interventions were not always implemented simultaneously in the individual groups, a uniform training duration of 600 minutes per school year was nevertheless achieved.

3. Random sample

A total of 84 teachers and 1669 German-speaking pupils from second and third grade primary schools in Austria (Styria region), Italy (South Tyrol region) and Romania (Sibiu region) took part in the project. Pupils were encouraged and tested with regard to general and subject-specific reading. The focus was on children with low basic reading skills. A focus on this group can be explained by the findings of the Youth Report 2015, which show that in the EU one in five 15 year olds has low reading skills. In addition, it was found that disadvantaged families and children with a migration background are particularly affected by a lack of reading competence (European Commission, 2011).

The project runs from September 2016 to August 2019, with reading interventions taking place in two consecutive school years (2016/17 and 2017/18). Before the respective reading intervention was carried out, the teachers were trained in their own further training with regard to the exact implementation of the reading training. Manuals specially written for teachers for the integrated reading training courses *Filius* and *Filia* also made it

easier to put them into practice. All documents and useful information created in the project have been placed on the project's own homepage www.projektelis.eu.

The measurements of reading competence using standardized test instruments were carried out in a longitudinal procedure over a period of two years in order to finally provide answers to the research questions formulated in the project. These were as follows:

- How effective are the different reading trainings in the participating countries?
- Do different groups of children benefit differently from certain measures in terms of improving their reading skills?

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Petra Eisenstecken

Lesen. Das Training - a structured intervention model to improve reading skills

1. Concept development

Lesen. Das Training was developed by the Reading Centre of the Pedagogical University of the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland as part of a Swiss research project. Andrea Bertschi-Kaufmann, Gerd Kruse, Ursula Rickli, Maria Riss and Thomas Sommer were involved in the elaboration.

2. Concept presentation

This reading programme was primarily designed for pupils with reading difficulties. However, it quickly became apparent that pupils with a strong reading ability were also enthusiastic. Readers work with this training programme over two school years. If one orients oneself on the reading acquisition process, it becomes understandable why reading skills and reading fluency are first trained in the first training year before the so-called reading strategies (working techniques) are used in the following training year.

Figure 4: Lesen. Das Training (*Photo: author*)

This basic concept is reflected in all three volumes. Once you have captured the structure, you can transfer it to all volumes. Each band is equally structured. Only the content, the font size, the text length and the text difficulties change. The volumes are aimed at the 2nd-9th grade (Ernst Klett, 2019).

2.1. Reading skills

The first step is to start with the green booklet. It trains *reading skills* after the reading acquisition process, from the letter level to the word, sentence and text level.

> "Reading skills are the basic techniques for visually capturing text elements, usually from the capture of individual characters to the perception of words and word groups, phrases and sentences. The development thus leads from elementary decoding to a differentiated semantic-syntactic connection on the sentence and text level. These processes are decisively supported by the ability to concentrate and memory." (Bertschi-Kaufmann, Kruse, Rickli, Riss, Sommer, 2010b, p. 14)

It is therefore necessary for the pupils to do page by page in this booklet, whereby the pace of work may vary due to the different reading skills of the individual pupils. Slow readers usually need more time. Additional tasks have been integrated for faster readers. In the exercise book, pupils work as independently as possible and read quietly as possible.

Before the students begin with the individual skill exercises, they should prepare their eye muscles for reading. You will spend two to three minutes doing *fitness training for the eyes*. During these eye warming exercises, only the eyes may move, while the head and body are kept completely still. Readers should refrain from pointing fingers as soon as possible (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

2.2. Reading accuracy

This part of the training program consists of two blue booklets (a reading booklet and a protocol booklet). The focus is on *reading habits*.

> "Reading fluency (Fluency) refers to an effortless ability to read and read aloud at the level of words and sentences. In common reading, the working memory of the reader is less or hardly occupied with the activity of reading itself, as this is largely automated. Readers can concentrate more on understanding the content." (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b, p. 19)

The more fluently a child reads a text, the faster he or she can work his or her way through it, paying attention to the understanding of meaning. The precise, clear and fluent reading is trained. Pupils should not read quickly

and superficially, but get as close as possible to the target time. The focus is on *reading speed, reading fluidity, reading accuracy, reading clarity* and *reading expression* (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b*). Reading fluid* is seen as a bridge between reading skills and reading strategies (Pikulsky & Chard, 2005).

While the pupils read quietly and for themselves in the green booklet, the loud (pre-)reading is the focus for the first time in the blue part. In principle, you should refrain from reading aloud in a row in the classroom. In this training program, volume reading takes place in *reading tandems*. Where possible, "low quality" reading tandems should be set up. For this purpose, the teacher prepares a list of the pupils in advance and assigns the individual pupils to either the high-performing or the weaker group. Subsequently, the first, second, third rows etc. of both groups form a so-called *reading tandem*.

Each reading unit starts with a specific *preliminary exercise*. The first words to be listed are those that appear in the subsequent reading text. The reading tandems simultaneously read out the list of words in a half-voice, until they feel confident. The advantage of this *choral reading is that the* auditory aspect is also taken into account during joint reading, as the reading child listens to the read word from the reading partner at the same time (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

If the reading tandem feels sufficiently prepared, the mutual reading aloud can be started. The child who reads aloud takes his or her personal reading book in his or her hand and passes on his or her protocol to the partner. At the beginning the text may be read once quietly. This preparation phase is important and should be taken seriously by the children. After the silent reading session, the reading child reads the text aloud for the first time, while the minute-reader quietly reads along and marks the reading errors in color in the protocol booklet. The reading time is stopped at the same time. Each school is responsible for the purchase of simple stopwatches suitable for children. These are not included in the training program package. After the first reading, the same child reads the text aloud a second time. Once again the co-reader pays attention to possible reading errors. However, the color is changed during this pass. The reading time is also stopped at the second reading pass. A reference time is specified under

each reading text in the reading booklet. The aim is for the lecturers to come as close as possible to this time. Many children understand fluid reading to mean "fast" reading, often making careless mistakes. Following these two reading sessions, the reading child makes a self-assessment, while the minute-taker gives feedback. They then exchange their reading experiences with each other. A reading unit is thus considered to be completed. The respective reading tandem does not change until the next training hour. The child who is to read the next time may choose his or her own reading text. In contrast to the green booklet, it makes little sense for the children to work through the texts one after the other. Since each reading unit consists of six runs, there is a good chance that the reading child will know the text by heart over time. Therefore the order of the texts can be freely determined in this booklet. The protocol page in the front part of the reading booklet gives the reading child a clear overview of which texts he or she has already read aloud and which he or she still has to read aloud (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

2.3 Reading strategies

> "Reading strategies are consciously chosen and self-controlled procedures or comprehension operations in reading, which are systematically and specifically used to build understanding and use texts. Depending on the tasks and objectives to be accomplished, different reading strategies must be used." (Bertschi-Kaufmann, Rickli, Riss, Sommer, 2010b, p. 28)

The authors of *Lesen. Das Training* differentiates two types of strategies: cognitive understanding strategies and metacognitive control strategies. While cognitive comprehension strategies serve as tools for text exploration and should be used especially in the phases of viewing, developing and summarizing a text, metacognitive control strategies are needed for planning, monitoring and controlling one's own approach to reading and comprehension development. Their use is particularly central in the phases of pre-relief, dealing with comprehension difficulties and text reflection (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

The booklet with the *reading strategies* (orange booklet) is only used in the second training year. This is about teaching working techniques so that

pupils gradually learn to understand the content of a text for themselves. Volume 1 (2nd/3rd grade) covers the first four basic strategies:

- Preparing for the text
- Recognize and clarify text passages with difficult words
- Finding statements and arranging content
- Summarize and evaluate what has been read (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010a).

In volume 2 (5th/6th grade) and volume 3 (7th-9th grade) further strategies are added: viewing the text, assessing the text, mastering comprehension difficulties, working on the text, summarising the text, assessing the text, etc. The point is that the pupils should be able to understand the content of a text for themselves if possible. For this they can use different techniques, which they get to know and practice in school. They have to deal with what they have read and make their own considerations. Each reading strategy consists of three rounds, which are taught as follows: In the first round, the teacher explains the individual work steps and the pupils carry them out simultaneously. In the second round, the teacher explains the individual steps from start to finish, while the pupils listen carefully and watch attentively. After the teacher's explanations, they start to carry out the assignments independently. The third round is a repetition and is therefore conducted by the students alone (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

The reading texts in the orange booklet are aimed at both boys and girls and contain both literary and discontinuous texts. Volume 1, for example, shows a flight ticket. Students are asked to extract the most important information from this condensed text and to ask themselves the following questions: When does the plane leave? What time does check-in start? Which gate do you have to go to? How long does the flight take? Is there a stopover with a longer stay? These are questions that young people and adults encounter in their everyday lives.

3. Use of the training program

The entire training programme extends over two school years and comprises a total of around 45 teaching units. Ideally, this structured reading

training should be used three times a week (15 to 20 minutes each as a reading unit) in class. The first step is to start with the green booklet. After about four to five weeks, the *exercise* is started. The reading strategies (the orange booklet) will only be used in the second year of training (Bertschi-Kaufmann et al., 2010b).

The teachers ensure a quiet atmosphere so that each student can concentrate on their work. It would be desirable if not only the teachers of German but also all subject teachers felt responsible for the successful reading skills of their pupils. All teachers benefit from the good reading skills of the pupils, but especially the pupils themselves.

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Elisabeth Stabler

Filius - Train fluency in reading with different factual hearing texts

1. Introductory remarks

The results of the EU Youth Report 2015 state that 20% of pupils under 15 years of age have a low level of reading literacy and make it very clear that, among other things, an increase in basic skills must be a central objective of European education systems (Council of the European Union, 2013). Children with poor basic literacy skills are at particular risk in their school and later professional careers, which further reduces their chances of participation in society and self-determination as required by the OECD (2010). Therefore, reading promotion programmes are already needed at primary level that do justice to the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils and contribute to an increase in reading competence.

Although the promotion of reading literacy is primarily seen as a task of German language teaching, it will be necessary in future to sensitise all other subjects in this respect as well. Vollmer and Thürmann (2013), for example, point out that language skills and subject-specific learning are interdependent. Therefore, reading promotion must be considered as the task of all subjects in order to launch subject-specific reading in addition to general comprehension reading.

2. Description of the reading promotion programme

Fenkart (2012) complains, particularly with regard to subject-specific reading, that although factual texts are used in the various subjects taught, a tailor-made promotion of reading is hardly practised. Therefore, factual texts should be integrated into the various subjects taught at primary level and the children should be taught the necessary reading strategies. Frequently, factual texts are developed independently of content-related problems. "This is, from the point of view of learning psychology, detrimental to motivation, offers little opportunity for mental networking and conveys the impression of artificiality in learning situations." (Spinner, 2004, p. 129)

Among other things, the *ELiS* project has committed itself to the development of a reading training course integrated into the subject area in order to counter criticism from Fenkart (2012) that, although factual texts are used in various subjects in class, there is a lack of a precisely tailored reading promotion. Above all, Spinner (2004) warns that factual texts are developed independently of their contextual problems and that mental networking is therefore hardly possible.

Filius is a reading fluid training course that was developed for children in the second grade of primary school and offers texts for interdisciplinary reading with audio texts (see Figure 5). Pupils assume the role of reading athletes who are supported by a professional reading trainer with regard to their reading fluidity (Rosebrock & Nix, 2017).

Figure 5: Cover page Filius (Wild & Schilcher, 2017)

In this form of accompanying sound reading, as practised in *Filius*, a trained speaker acts as a reading trainer in the factual texts (Wild & Schilcher, 2017). Since the use of a sports metaphor was already used in the *ELLIPSE*[1] student intervention study and proved useful (Philipp, 2016), such a term was also used in *Filius*. The person who reads the factual texts[2] to the children aloud on the sound carrier serves as a reading model, as it demonstrates which reading speed is appropriate for the text and how which parts of the sentence should be meaningfully emphasized (Rosebrock & Nix, 2017). Pupils with reading difficulties in particular benefit from a reading model because they are relieved of the burden of their reading process and can therefore participate more easily in follow-up communication after reading (Wild & Schilcher, 2017).

[1] The ELLIPSE project (Acquisition of reading strategies - longitudinal study on the implementation of peer-assisted learning in section I) was carried out at the University of Education Northwestern Switzerland from 2012 to 2014 with pupils from the 6th and 7th grades and was led by Maik Philipp.
[2] The factual texts can be downloaded from the *www.projektelis.eu* website.

2.1 Course of the training

Filius combines two different methods of reading didactics: *repeated reading on the one hand* and *paired/ assisted reading on the other*. During repeated reading, the children read the respective text section (see Figure 6) loudly to each other in a peer reading tandem, while during accompanying sound reading the speaker of the sound carrier represents the reading model. Each training unit consists of three steps:

1. quietly reading along with the speaker from the audio carrier
2. semi-voice/ whispering reading along with the speaker from the sound carrier, and
3. Reading aloud in a reading tandem.

The first step is silent reading, in which the students follow the respective audio text word by word with a pen in their hands. In this first step, differentiation can be made by selecting different tempos – slow, normal and fast – to choose from. For this reason, the training can be used not only in class, but also in individual development. The audio book has proved to be particularly useful for children with reading difficulties from a reading didactic point of view in German lessons for a number of reasons (Gailberger, 2010): Firstly, children who read poorly, even though they have little or no reading competence, can still take part in the lesson with the help of the audio book. Second, according to the author, reading with audiobooks enables these children to slowly and gradually increase their reading speed, thereby continuously increasing the automation of their reading process. Thirdly, according to Gailberger (2010), the language model of the audio book offers pupils with reading difficulties the opportunity to improve their reading and quiet reading step by step.

After quietly reading along with the audio text, the semi-voiced / whispered reading along with the speaker of the audio carrier follows. Just as in step 1, the children follow the text with a pen in their hands, with the speaking person again acting as the language model in the audio texts. According to Wild and Schilcher (2017), holding the pen should "initiate later work with reading strategies" (Wild & Schilcher, 2017, p. 6) and replace the finger that travels in the line. Those pupils who have a low reading competence can repeat this step several times or optionally do it as a homework assignment.

In a third and at the same time final step, the children read the text to each other loudly in a peer reading tandem. This is a cooperative form of reading learning in which pupils with different levels of competence in reading read a text together in a team of two. The task of the child with the strongest reading ability is to draw the attention of the child with the weakest reading ability to reading errors.


K9

Nimm deinen Stift und lies mit!

Wie unterhalten sich Menschen, die nichts hören?

Manche Menschen können nichts hören. Sie haben eine Hörschädigung. Bei manchen Menschen ist das seit ihrer Geburt so. Andere sind erst mit der Zeit taub geworden. Für beide sind Dinge, die für uns ganz einfach sind, oft schwieriger. Das kannst du selbst ausprobieren. Wenn du dir die Ohren zuhältst, wird es schwierig, sich mit anderen zu verständigen. Deine Mitschüler könnten z.B. neben dir stehen und etwas fragen. Du würdest sie nicht hören. Verstehen könntest du sie ebenfalls nicht. Menschen ohne Gehör haben dieses Problem auch. Sie müssen deshalb einen anderen Weg finden. Manche schauen dazu anderen auf den Mund. Dort bewegen sich bei jedem gesprochenen Laut die Lippen etwas anders. Zum Beispiel ist bei einem „a" der Mund ganz weit auf, bei einem „o" ist er runder. Mit viel Übung kann man diese Bewegungen gut erkennen. Man nennt das „Lippenlesen". So können Gehörlose verstehen, was du sagst. Auch wenn sie dich nicht hören können.

Viele taube Menschen können auch nicht sprechen. Sie sind stumm. Das Lippenlesen konnten sie deshalb nicht lernen. Sie sprechen daher oft eine eigene besondere Sprache. Man spricht sie nicht mit dem Mund. Sie wird vor allem mit den Händen gesprochen. Man nennt sie Gebärden- oder Fingersprache. Sie gibt es auf der ganzen Welt. Wörter oder Buchstaben haben in diesen Sprachen eine eigene Handbewegung. Für die Gebärde „Rutsche" gleitet die rechte Hand zum Beispiel nach unten. Das sieht dann so aus, als würde die rechte Hand unter die linke Hand rutschen. Mehrere Bewegungen bilden dann ganze Sätze. Dazu müssen Menschen die Gebärden aber zuerst lernen. Dafür gibt es eigene Schulen. Hier unterrichten die Lehrer nicht Deutsch oder Mathe. Sie lehren die Gebärden. Weltweit können daher viele Menschen die Sprache sprechen. Nicht nur Stumme. Zum Beispiel haben sie manche Ärzte gelernt. Sie können sich so mit ihren Patienten unterhalten. Für andere Menschen gibt es aber auch Übersetzer.

a

b

c

16

Figure 6: Filius factual texts with color coding

As Figure 6 shows, each text is divided into two equally long sections (Section A and Section B), which are first read once in a reading tandem. A child now reads section A alone and a child reads section B. In the *Filius reading training course,* a child therefore reads a total of three factual texts "in order to automate the recognition of words and sentences" (Philipp & Schilcher, 2012, p. 90).

The classification of the individual reading tandems takes place before the beginning of the training by the respective teacher, who has been trained in the implementation of *Filius in accordance with the* current state of scientific knowledge in how to form qualitatively efficient reading tandems. The starting point for the classification is the results of a baseline measurement

using the Salzburger Read-Screenings by Mayringer and Wimmer (2014), which were recorded six months earlier. Based on these results, each teacher creates a ranking, starting with the child with the highest reading quotient, and then divides the class into two equal parts. The child in the first row from the team of reading strong pupils finally forms a reading tandem with the child in the first row from the team of reading weaker pupils etc.

The reading training itself was carried out daily for 20 minutes over a period of six weeks, whereby the course of the training was always the same (quiet reading, half-loud/whispering reading and reading aloud in a peer reading tandem).

2.2 Listening and reading texts

Promoting reading must be seen as the task of all subjects, since language is the central premise of learning in every subject (Schmölzer-Eibinger, Dorner, Langer & Helten-Pacher, 2013). *Filius* therefore focuses on factual texts on various topics at primary level. In line with the contents of the curriculum of the elementary school in the area of subject teaching (Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, 2012), ten problem-oriented texts were written in each of five selected areas (body, forest, environment and nature, technology and mathematics). The *Filius reading training* therefore contains 50 factual texts. All texts are of the same length and weight, so that the selection of the individual texts can take place at will. This was made possible with the help of the *Regensburg analysis tool for texts, RATTE* for short (Wild & Pissarek, w/o year), which measures the linguistic difficulties as well as the difficulty level of a text. The respective difficulty level is determined by the output of the *gSmog* (*Simple Measure of Gobbledygook - german*), a value set up by McLaughin (1969) and adapted by Bamberger and Vanecek for the German-speaking world in 1984. This indicates approximately the school level in which the text can be used (Bamberger & Vanecek, 1984). In *Filius, a gSmog value of* 3.0 and a volume of 300 words were targeted for each text. In addition, care was taken to ensure that not only the text per se, but also the respective sections (A and B) have a *gSmog value* of 3.0. Furthermore, the sections were designed in different colours to show the children in a peer reading tandem

that the *role of the reader* is now being changed. In addition, most of the texts of the training were written problem-oriented by formulating the heading as a question (Examples: *Why do birds sing? How can blind people read? Why were computers built?)*. The authors hope that this will promote follow-up communication at the end of the reading process.

During the creation of the texts, attention was also paid to the use of reading strategies, which is why each text is encased in two so-called metacognitive brackets. Before actually reading the text, the children should think about the headline and activate their previous knowledge. This strategy and at the same time the first metacognitive bracket can be described as an elaboration strategy and, according to Krause und Stark (2006), is intended to relieve the reader of the task of classifying and understanding a text. The second metacognitive bracket begins after the actual reading process and can be called a monitoring strategy. Here, the pupils should verbalise their growth in learning and learn to control their reading process (Philipp, 2012). At *Filius*, the children are explicitly asked in this phase by the trained speaker in the listening texts to talk about their own learning increase in terms of content. In order to clearly separate the transitions between the metacognitive bracket and the text to be read and to make them recognizable for the children, a change of the speaking person takes place on the sound carrier as well as a short pause "so that the children can prepare themselves to read along" (Wild & Schilcher, 2017, p. 7). Figure 7 graphically summarizes the explanations on the structure of *Filius* factual texts.

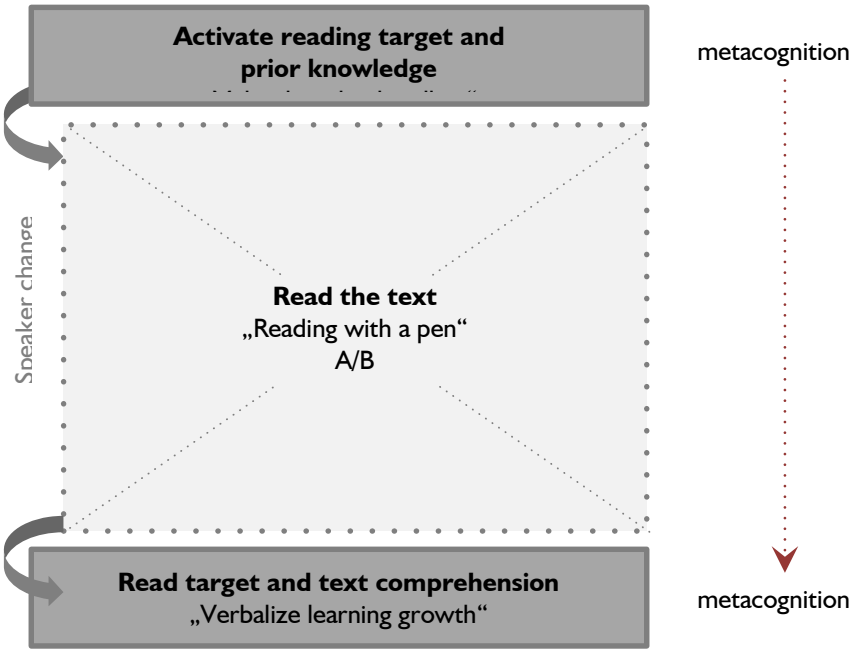

Figure 7: Content structure of the Filius factual texts (based on Wild and Schilcher, 2017)

Thus it becomes clear that this reading training contains some factors for a successful reading promotion. According to von Zadelhoff (2016), these are, among other things, a three to four times repetition of a reading text, a time limited course of the intervention, a performance heterogeneous composition of reading pairs, the regular performance of reading training as well as a uniform course of reading training (von Zadelhoff, 2016). In addition, *Filius* can be used both in the classroom and in individual promotion and also relies on the positive influence of peer reading tandems on reading literacy. Thus this reading training does justice to the demand of von Zadelhoff (2016) when she demands it:

> "Due to the increasing heterogeneity of the student population and the increase in learners with poor reading performance, a reading promotion that can be carried out with the entire class structure and in which learners with higher reading performance support learners with poor reading performance should be considered" (p. 347).

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Maria Petek

Filia - Integrated Reading Promotion with Reading Strategies

Filia focuses on four weeks of training in three effective reading strategies that enable third-level primary school students to capture, process and understand information contained in a text more easily. After examining the heading, the text is closely examined before a visualization is created and completed, enabling global text comprehension. The initial strategy modelling by the teacher using the method of noisy thinking is gradually transformed into guided practice and finally transferred to the self-regulated and reflected work of the pupils (Wild & Schilcher, 2017).

Figure 8: Cover page Filia (Wild & Schilcher, 2017)

The very complex process of absorbing knowledge during reading is based on different skills and requires different competences. In addition to the optical perception and visual processing of writing, the connection, classification, storage and reflection of graphic symbols at the level of grapheme-phoneme correspondence as well as at the level of words, sentences and texts are of great importance. Based on the ability to read, one needs reading fluency and reading strategies in order to have a high reading competence, which is reflected in the construction of meaning and the formation of coherence (Bertschi-Kaufmann, Kruse, Rickli, Riss & Sommer, 2015). The individual conception regarding the content of a text is based on the one hand on assumptions about the topic, namely from one's own experience, and on the other hand on a preliminary understanding of the meaning of the text through first processing steps. The basic work with strategies usually takes place in the meaningful steps *before reading, during reading* and *after reading*. The basis for this are metacognitive control strategies, such as choosing and reflecting goals, self-assessment or monitoring the learning process, and cognitive understanding strategies, such as summarizing, visualizing, commenting, ordering and structuring. Metacognitive control strategies tend to involve planning, monitoring and regulating one's

own actions. Cognitive comprehension strategies are primarily a tool for text exploration, while support strategies support reading in the broader sense through workplace design or time management. Cognitive comprehension strategies have ordering, elaborating and repetitive aspects. Ordering aspects focus on reducing and ordering information; elaborating aspects point beyond the immediate textual level and attempt to network knowledge; repetitive aspects lead to a further engagement with the respective text and to a deeper understanding (Philipp & Schilcher, 2012). For the work with the texts in *Filia,* the ordering and elaborating aspects are of particular importance.

Rosebrock and Nix (2017) place a "didactic model of reading competence" (p. 11) at the centre of their considerations, whereby both a synchronous view (considering cognitive and social aspects) and a diachronic view (considering the process of reading socialization) are thematized. Reading as "... active-constructive and highly complex mental process" (Rosebrock & Nix, 2017, p. 12) requires - based on the abilities on the hierarchical low levels of letter, word and sentence knowledge - first a local coherence formation in the sense of creating semantic and syntactic references. In addition, this multi-level model will develop a global coherence at the process level for the capture of superstructures such as text patterns and the filtering out of representation strategies. Motivation, knowledge, participation and reflection lead via the subject level with individual dispositions such as preferences and self-concept (Schilcher, Finkenzeller, Knott, Pronold-Günthner, & Wild, 2018) to the social level, which enables "follow-up communication" in the individual environment (Rosebrock & Nix, 2017, p. 15).

In the concrete examination of *Filia*'s texts, the three-step *examination of the headline, careful examination of the text and creation of a visualisation form* the basis for understanding the text, because preparing for reading has a positive influence on how information is handled. The activation of prior knowledge proves to be useful in the sense of expectations regarding the text content. The writing of notes becomes the natural basis for the design of summaries, posters or presentations in all school subjects, not only in German. For this purpose *Filia* offers – similar to *Filius* – a series of factual texts of the same length and divided into paragraphs, which were formulated with a uniform degree of difficulty for the third school level after being checked by *RATTE - Regensburger Analysetool für Texte* - (Wild & Pissarek, w/o year).

The reading training *Filia* with the 26 factual texts of the workbook is scheduled for a total of four weeks. After the first introductory week, during which a strategy is presented on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 25 to 30 minutes of daily practice are planned. A strategy handbook for students, as shown in Figure 9, supports the learning process with questions and hints. With the help of the first fan card *Stop, think first!* the previous knowledge is activated and an expectation is built up. *Search for* the second subject card *Visualization!* stimulates the recognition of the text structure and places the concept of keywords at the centre, as a graphical representation as flow text or as upper/lower point text facilitates the capture of essential information. It is also possible to display text patterns as addition or sequence as well as matrix or net. With the third fan card "*Add visualization!*" the exact reading takes place paragraph by paragraph, so that information is reduced and organized, whereby more and more detailed information optimizes the result.

Figure 9: Strategies of Filia (Wild & Schilcher, 2017)

The second week is characterized by the daily repetition and application of the three strategies with all students. Additional explanations, further proposals for the concrete implementation as well as precise implementation instructions in the handbook enable teachers to take a targeted approach. In the workbook for the pupils the texts can be found on the left-hand side; the matching right-hand side leaves room for the graphic design. Prestructuring the first six texts helps the students to create the first visualizations. In the workbook in the upper right corner of the right-hand side there are boxes for ticking the strategy used throughout. Figure 10 shows an example of what a double page looks like in a workbook.

The frequent practice with the strategy subjects, the comparison of the visualizations as well as the evaluation and presentation of the results lead to as independent work as possible from the third week of the reading training. If necessary, the students can practice in groups, with weaker readers this can also be done with texts from *Filius*. For an extended training additional texts can be downloaded at *www.projektelis.eu .*

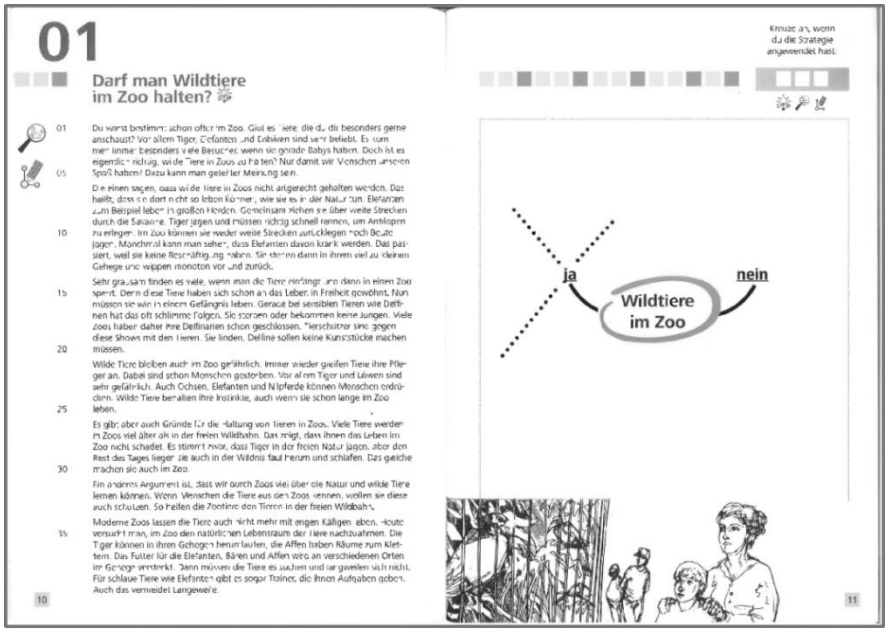

Figure 10: Example text from Filia (Wild & Schilcher, 2017, p. 10-11)

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Susanne Seifert & Elisabeth Stabler

Project results of *EliS*[3]

1. Project design

The focus of *ELiS's* interest is the sustainable safeguarding and promotion of the reading competence of children in primary school, with special consideration given to pupils with low basic skills. Two different interventions (*Lesen. Das Training*, *Filius/Filia*) were implemented in the classes, and developments in reading skills were compared with each other and with developments in children's skills in a non-specific intervention group (non-specific IG) receiving regular education. The participating teachers of IG *Lesen. Das Training* (Read The Training) and IG *Filius/Filia* were introduced to and trained in the training programmes within the framework of further training. The same events were held for teachers in the three countries so that all participants with the same prerequisites could start the training.
In order to be able to provide information on the children's level of achievement, the reading competence measurements were carried out in all three countries in a longitudinal design at the beginning and end of the second and third school year respectively (MZP[4] 1: September 2016, MZP 3: June/July 2017, MZP 4: September 2017 and MZP 5: June/July 2018) and in a test window of two weeks each. Another survey (MZP 2: April 2017) was carried out in the second school year with IG *Filius/Filia only,* as the intervention only started after that. This time of measurement is therefore not relevant for the further considerations, which are concerned with comparisons of the different intervention groups.

While in Italy (South Tyrol region) and Romania (Sibiu region) the country-specific project managers were responsible for the tests, in Austria (Styria region) external test leaders had to be appointed due to the large number of random samples. These persons, all of them teaching students at KPH Graz, were trained precisely in advance with regard to the procedure and

[3] The *ELiS* project required extensive preparatory work for data preparation and analysis. The following persons were also significantly involved (in alphabetical order): Amtmann Elfriede; Holzinger Andrea; Schaupp Hubert; Schwetz Herbert & Wild Johannes

[4] MZP= time of measurement

handling of the tests. The aim of conducting the tests of non-school participants was, on the one hand, to keep the effort for the schools and the participating teachers low and, on the other hand, to increase the objectivity of the tests.

2. Survey instruments

The Salzburg reading screening 2-9 (SLS: Mayringer & Wimmer, 2014) was used to measure the students' basal reading skills. The statistical quality criteria of the procedure are to be described as satisfactory. The reliability of the test procedure for the second school level is .90 (retest reliability). The validity (check whether the test measures what it pretends to measure, i.e. the basal reading ability) in the second school level is .80. The test procedure can be carried out in class, is a speed test and takes a processing time of three minutes. Within this given time, children have the task of reading sentences (e.g. "Airplanes can fly.") as quickly and quietly as possible and assessing their accuracy. In the course of the test, the sentences become longer and more complex.
With the help of the number of correctly read sentences, a statement is made about the children's level of performance by determining the reading quotient (LQ). "This expresses how far the reading ability measured in a child deviates from the average of the standardization sample." (Mayringer & Wimmer, 2014, p. 8) The authors emphasise that this test is only able to identify reading problems among pupils, but that concrete courses of action are not possible.

In addition to the SLS, the project used the progress diagnostics of sense-acquiring reading (VSL: Walter, 2013) to record the development of sense-acquiring reading in longitudinal sections from the second grade primary school onwards. The children have to read a text for four minutes, "in which at the place of every seventh word there is a bracket with three selection words, namely two distractors and the matching word" (e.g. "You can see penguins here in [zoos, parks, animal species].") (Walter, 2013, p. 6). The appropriate word must be recognised by the pupils and then encircled.

The children were tested at a total of four times within the intervention period of two years in class setting using paper-pencil versions (see Table 3). Since all test procedures include parallel forms, care was taken during

the surveys to ensure that different versions and variants were used alternately. For organisational reasons (existence of the SLS sheets due to the general licence for Austria, while the VSL sheets had to be ordered first), however, only the SLS was used in the first review. For all further measurements, both the SLS and the VSL were used. Personal data of the children, in this case gender, German as first or second language and a current need for support, were filled in by the teachers using class lists and submitted to the project coordinator. School- and class-specific data were again provided by the LSR (now Bildungsdirektion Steiermark). Children who have an informed special educational need took part in the examinations in consultation with the respective teacher.

	survey dates			
test time	MZP1	MZP3	MZP4	MZP5
	09/2016	06/07/2017	09/2017	06/07/2018
Survey instruments used	SLS	SLS VSL	SLS VSL	SLS VSL

Table 3: Overview of measurement dates and survey instruments used

3. Sample

This chapter describes the sample in the *ELiS* project. Samples were selected in the individual countries by the respective partner institutions. First of all, information letters about the respective interventions (*Lesen. Das Training* and *Filius/Filia*) were sent to the school directorates and to the responsible school quality managers. Those schools or teachers who wanted to participate in the project were named to the project coordinator in a further step. This finally established contact with the interested parties and subsequently took over the entire communication and organisation of the participants. The unspecific intervention groups formed parallel classes of the intervention groups.

The largest sub-sample in the project was the Austrian children (region: Styria) with a number of 1101 children, followed by 306 pupils from Romania (region: Sibiu) and 262 children from Italy (region: South Tyrol). In total, this results in a sample number of 1669 children. According to available gender data, 869 children (52.1%) were male and 785 (47.9%) female. 591 children (35.4%) indicated German as their second language, whereby it should be emphasised that the Romanian sample almost exclusively had German as their second language. Table 4 gives an overview of all country-

specific data, whereby the country designations are used instead of the regions for simplification purposes in the more detailed presentations.

	sex feminine	German as a second language	intervention group			Total
			IG 1 (*Reading. Training*)	IG 2 (*Filius/ Filia*)	unsp. IG (KG)	
AUSTR	502 (45.6%)	248 (22.5%)	408 (37.1%)	374 (34.0%)	319 (29.0 %)	1101
IT	130 (49.6%)	62 (23.7%)	262 (100%)	-	-	262
RUM	153 (50%)	281 (91.8%)	177 (57.8%)	99 (32.4%)	30 (9.8%)	306
Total	785 (47%)	591 (35.4%)	847 (50.7%)	473 (28.3%)	349 (20.9 %)	**1669**

Table 4: Description of the sample composition (number of children and percentage share) at the level of pupils overall and in the three countries; AUSTR = Austria (Styria region), IT = Italy (South Tyrol region), RUM = Romania (Sibiu region)

With regard to the class level, it can be seen that a total of 84 different classes participated in the project during the study period. These classes are divided into 32 different schools in the three countries (Austria, Italy and Romania). The school location was either a village (41.2%), a small town (7.8%), a medium-sized town (27.5%) or a large city (23.5%). The categorisation into village, small, medium-sized and large cities is based on the following values:

- Village: < 5,000 inhabitants
- Small town: 5,000-20,000 inhabitants
- Mid-sized town: 20,000-100,000 inhabitants
- Big city: more than 100,000 inhabitants

Figures 11 to 13 show the distribution of schools in the participating countries.

Figure 11: School locations in Austria (Styria region)

Figure 12: School locations in Italy (South Tyrol region)

Figure 13: School locations in Romania (Sibiu region)

4. Starting position

The sample in this study can be described as very heterogeneous, which is why we deliberately refrained from comparing countries. In order to highlight these differences in the sample composition between the countries and the three intervention groups, this chapter presents the gender distribution, the proportion of children with German as their first or second language, and the average class sizes and initial abilities.

4.1 Differences between the three countries

4.1.1 Sample composition

A Chi-square was used to calculate whether the distribution of boys and girls in the three countries was comparable. It was found that this distribution is comparable in the three countries ($\chi^2(2, 1654) = 1.95$, *n.s.*) and does not differ significantly between the three countries (see Figure 14).

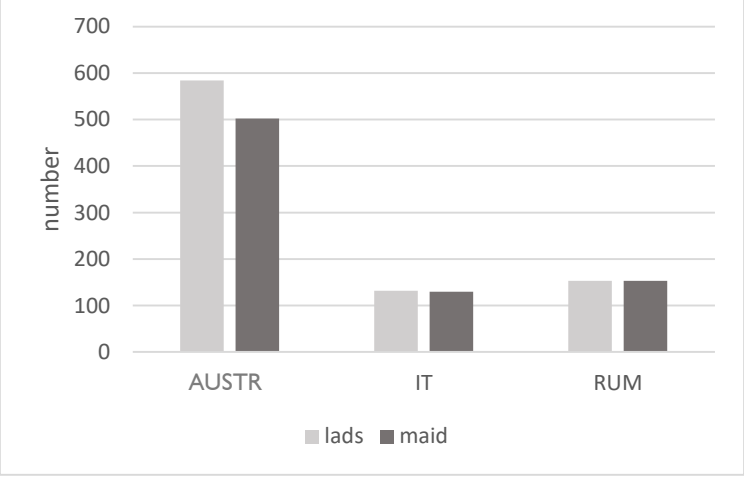

Figure 14: Gender distribution in the three countries

In addition to the gender distribution, the distribution of children with German as their first and second language was calculated for the three countries. The calculation showed that the distribution is different in the three countries ($\chi^2(2, 1640) = 508.07$, $p < .001$). While Austria and Italy do not differ significantly in terms of the proportion of children with German as their second language, the Romanian sample shows a particularly

high proportion of children with German as their second language (see Figure 15). The reason for this is that the German language has a long historical tradition in Sibiu.[5] In addition, there are more and more schools that offer German as a language of instruction and enjoy great popularity (Ziegler, no year).

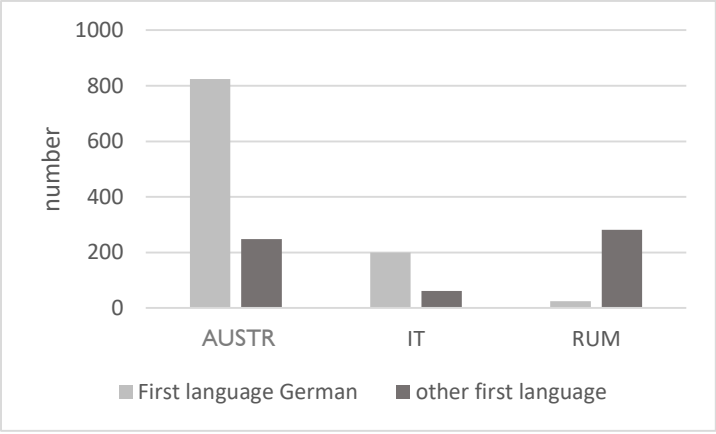

Figure 15: Distribution of children with German as their first or second language in the three countries

In a further step, it was examined whether the class sizes in the three countries differ significantly from each other. For the calculation, a univariate variance analysis was performed at class level (class size x country). This showed a significant main effect on class size ($F(2, 81)=40.08$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.50$). The differences in class size were significant between Austria (M=19.64, SD=4.31) and Romania (M=31.20, SD=2.97) and between Italy (M=17.73, SD=3.37) and Romania ($p<.001$). There were significantly more children in the Romanian classes than in the Austrian and Italian classes.

[5] From the middle of the 12th century, for example, the first Transylvanian Saxons immigrated to Sibiu, which at that time belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary (see Ziegler, n.e.c.).

4.1.2 Output values in the SLS

Only the SLS was used for the presentation of outgoing services because only this survey instrument was used at the first time (MZP 1). If one compares the values of the SLS at the beginning of the second class between the three countries by means of a univariate analysis of variance, a significant difference between the mean values of the SLS becomes apparent ($F(2, 1490)=44.17$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.06$). The difference between the SLS raw values is significant ($p<.001$) between Italy and Romania, between Italy and Austria and between Romania and Austria. Austrian children had reached the highest values of the three comparison countries for MZP 1 (see Table 5).

country	number N	raw values mean (SD)	reading quotient mean (SD)
AUSTR	941	22.44 (9.58)	101.85 (14.77)
IT	256	20.02 (7.40)	98.04 (11.53)
RUM	293	16.99 (7.45)	93.5 (11.21)
Total	1490	20.96 (9.10)	99.55 (14.00)

Table 5: Descriptive-statistical data on output services in the SLS (raw value and reading quotient) for MZP 1 by country; AUSTR = Austria (Styria region), IT = Italy (South Tyrol region), RUM = Romania (Sibiu region)

4.2 Differences between the three experimental groups

4.2.1 Sample composition

In addition to differences in sample composition between the countries Austria, Italy and Romania were differences between the three experimental groups – *Lesen. Das Training (LdT)*, *Filius/Filia (FiL)* and non-specific IG *(unspez_IG)* - calculated. With regard to the gender distribution, it was found that the distribution in the three groups is comparable ($\eta^2(2, 1654) = 0.003$, *n.s.*). (see Figure 16).

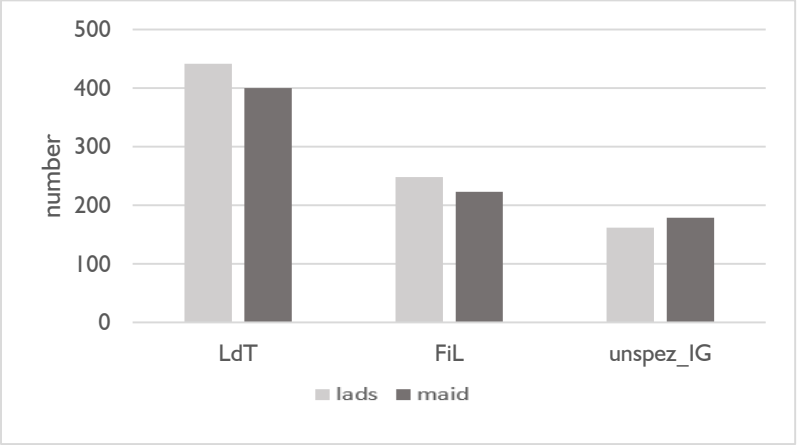

Figure 16: Gender distribution in the three experimental groups *(*LdT= *Read. Training,* FiL= *Filius/Filia,* unspez_IG=unspecific *intervention group)*

In contrast to the gender distribution, differences were found in the calculation of the distribution of the first and second languages of the children in the experimental groups ($\chi^2(2, 1640) = 9.9$, $p < .01$). The proportion of children with German as their second language in IG *Lesen. Das Training* is also high. The training compared to the other two IG *Filius/Filia* and *non-specific IG* larger. In the *Filius/Filia* intervention group, on the other hand, the proportion of children with German as their second language is smaller compared to the other two IGs (see Figure 17).

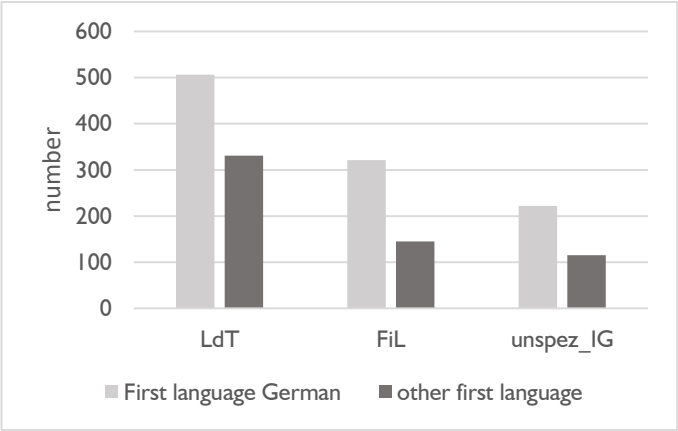

Figure 17: Distribution of children with German as their first language and German as their second language in the three experimental groups (LdT = *Lesen. Das Training,* FiL= *Filius/Filia,* unspez_IG=unspecific *intervention group)*

Finally, it was examined whether the class size in the three groups differed significantly from each other. A univariate analysis of variance at the class level (class size x experimental group) did not produce a major effect on class size ($F(2, 84)=27.27$, n.s.). There is therefore no significant difference in class size between the experimental groups.

4.2.2 Output values in the SLS

If one compares the values of the SLS at the beginning of the second class between the three experimental groups by means of a univariate analysis of variance, a significant difference between the mean values of the SLS becomes apparent ($F(2, 1487)=12.71$, $p<.001$, $\square^2=.02$). The difference between the raw values of SLS is significant ($p<.001$) between IG *Lesen. Das Training* and the non-specific IG and between the IG *Lesen. Das Training* and the IG *Filius/Filia*. Children in IG *Lesen. Das Training* had thus reached the lowest values for MZP1 (see Table 6).

experimental group	number N	raw values mean (SD)	reading quotient mean (SD)
Lesen. Das Training (LdT)	787	19.84 (8.50)	97.85 (13.03)
Filius/Filia (FiL)	388	22.22 (9.57)	101.49 (14.88)
unspecific IG	315	22.18 (9.62)	101.41 (14.71)
Total	1490	20.96 (9.10)	99.55 (14.00)

Table 6: Descriptive-statistical data of the output power in the SLS (raw value and reading quotient) for MZP 1, separated by test groups.

4.3 Conclusions for further calculations

The starting position is not comparable between the three countries. In addition to the differences between the countries described in this chapter with regard to the distribution of children with German as their first and second language, class size and output in the SLS, the implementation conditions are not comparable. Therefore, a comparison of the developments between the countries was not made below.

The differences between the experimental groups with regard to the distribution of children with German as their first and second language, class size and output in the SLS also make it possible to compare developments only if these differences are taken into account. However, since this comparison is very interesting for everyone involved in the project, an attempt will be made in the following chapter 5 to present the developments.

5. Selected results

The ELiS project focused on how effective the various trainings (*Lesen. Das Training* and *Filius/Filia*) were. To this end, Chapter 5.1 not only shows the development of skills over time (i.e. from the beginning of the intervention period at the beginning of the second class to the end of the intervention period at the end of the third class), but also compares the increases with

each other and with a group that has not received any specific intervention (non-specific IG). This makes it possible to determine whether the differences in increases can actually be attributed to intervention. When comparing the increases, however, it is essential to ensure that the differences that exist between the groups are controlled. This means that one looks to see whether the growth is actually different, even if the different starting situation (starting performance in the SLS, class size and the proportion of children with German as their second language) is taken into account.
Chapter 5.2 provides an initial insight into whether there are certain trainings that have been particularly effective for certain children. Chapter 5.3 then discusses how these results should be interpreted taking into account the diversity of classes, showing how different the developments of the individual classes are in order to show that it is above all the factor of the teacher that influences differences in developments.

The SPSS program was used for the analyses of the quantitative data, whereby covariance analyses (ANCOVAS) were mainly calculated with the difference values of the raw values in order to take into account the different starting positions in the experimental groups in the form of covariates. The reading fluid was considered for the second class (MZP 1 to MZP 3) and the third class (MZP 3 to MZP 5). However, due to a lack of values at the beginning of the second school year, meaningful reading was only recorded over the third school year, i.e. from MZP 3 to MZP 5. Post-hoc tests, which show whether there are differences between the individual intervention groups (IG), were calculated according to Bonferroni. In the presentation, no tables are given for the mean values and attempts are made to facilitate the reading flow by highlighting important aspects. In addition, figures illustrate the changes in the mean values. The figures also show the average values from the norm sample (for SLS LQ=100, for VSL T-value=50). By means of this visualization an assessment with a larger sample from the manuals of the SLS or the VSL is possible.

5.1 Development of intervention groups in a separate analysis of countries

In this chapter the differentiated results for the individual IG (*Lesen. Das Training*, *Filius/Filia*, *non-specific IG*) will be presented. Due to the fact that the implementation conditions, the linguistic peculiarities and the initial situations of the children in the three countries were sometimes very different, the project team decided to present the results separately for the three countries.

5.1.1 Austria

In Austria, the three IG showed at first glance approximately comparable development processes with regard to the skills tested with the SLS and the VSL (see Figures 18 and 19). Since the development processes are influenced by the different initial conditions in the experimental groups, the increases in the experimental groups are compared to *MZP 1* under control of the covariates *class size*, *proportion of children with German as their second language* and *raw values in the SLS.*

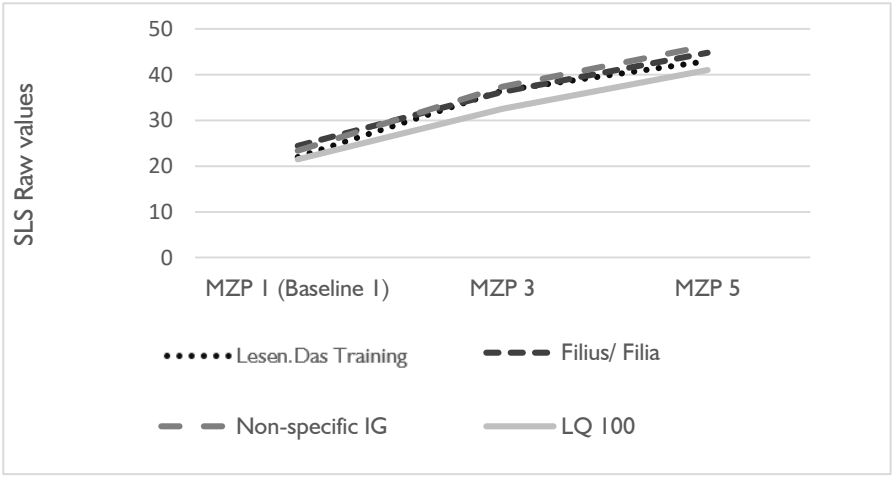

Figure 18: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in Austria in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 (LQ=100) at the respective time.

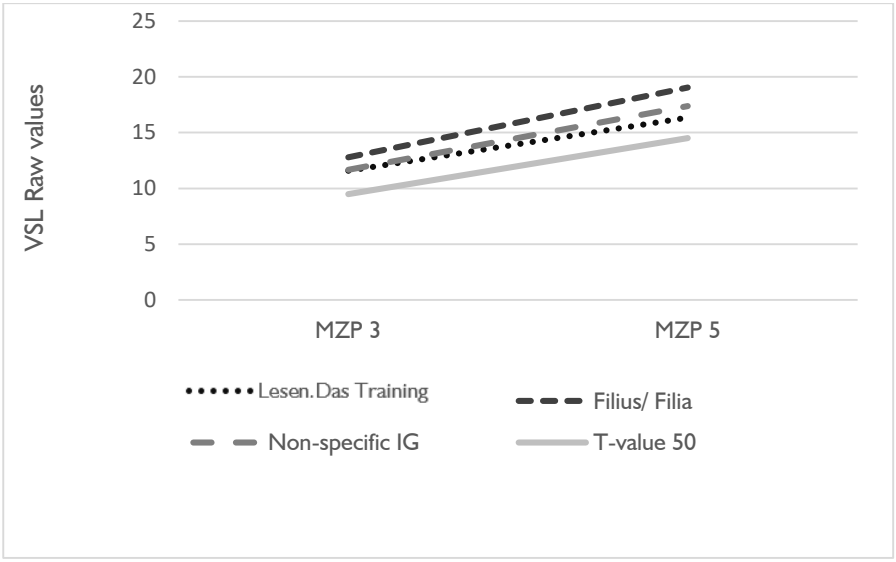

Figure 19: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) until the end of the project (MZP 5) in Austria in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 at the respective time

A covariance analysis for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group) shows no significant effect for the intervention group ($F(2, 874)=1.85$, n.s.). **This means that the increases in SLS in all three experimental groups in Austria during the second class are equally strong under control of the differences in sample composition and output power.**

A covariance analysis for the comparison of SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates shows a small but significant effect in the intervention groups ($F(2, 818)=15.41$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=0.04$). The IG showed *Lesen. Das Training* the relatively smallest increase (*Lesen. Das Training* vs. *Filius/Filia*: -2.06, 95%-CI [-3.29, -0.84]; *Lesen. Das Training* vs. *non-specific IG*: -2.60, 95%-CI [-3.83, -1.38]). The growth rates of IG *Filius/Filia* and the *non-specific IG* were statistically the same.

With regard to the VSL, an ANCOVA for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value t5-t3 x intervention group) under control of the covariates mentioned shows a small but nevertheless significant effect of the intervention group ($F(2, 816)=4.00$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=0.01$). The IG showed *Lesen. Das Training* a slightly lower increase

than the non-specific IG (-1.17, 95%-CI [-2.28, --0.06]). **This means that during the third class, under control of differences in sample composition and output power, both the increases - recorded by SLS as well as by VSL - in the group *Lesen. Das Training* are recorded. It was less than in the *non-specific IG*.**

5.1.2 Italy

In Italy, only the intervention *Lesen. Das Training* was implemented, therefore there are no comparisons to the other two experimental groups.

The development of the reading skills of these children can, however, be compared with the average norm value from the SLS manuals (LQ=100) for reading speed and from the VSL (T-value=50) for reading comprehension at the corresponding times. Figures 20 and 21 illustrate this. One recognizes that in reading comprehension during the third grade the intervention *Lesen. Das Training* leads to the skills matching the VSL standard value during the third class (Figure 21).

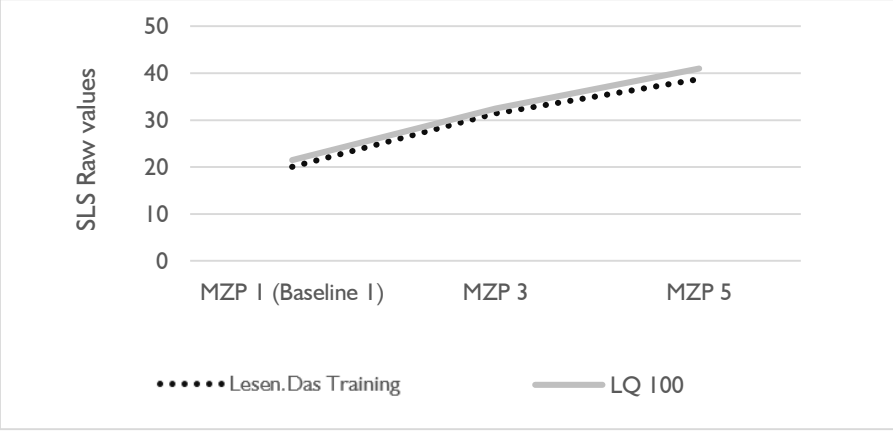

Figure 20: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in Italy of the test group Lesen. Das Training compared to the values corresponding to a T-value of 50 (LQ=100) at the time.

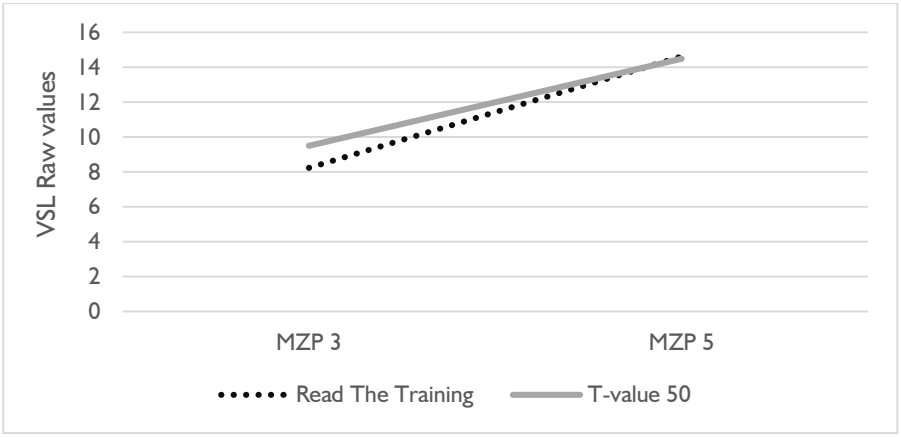

Figure 21: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) to the end of the project (MZP 5) in Italy of the test group Lesen. Das Training compared to the values corresponding to a T-value of 50 at the time.

5.1.3 Romania

Since the group sizes in Romania are too unequal (see Chapter 3) and the control group in Romania was only *one* class with a particularly large number of pupils and thus a more difficult starting position, only the IG *Lesen. Das Training* and IG *Filius/Filia* compared with each other will be read in the following analysis.

At first glance, it appears that the *Filius/Filia* intervention is an advantage for the increase in reading fluid (SLS). While in the second grade the children in both IG show comparatively parallel developments, the growth rate in IG *Lesen. Das Training* is flattening. The training in the third class is a bit weaker, while the IG *Filius/Filia* shows a larger increase (see Figure 22). In the development of meaningful reading (measured with the VSL) in Romania, an alignment of the values of the two groups seems to be taking place (see Figure 23).

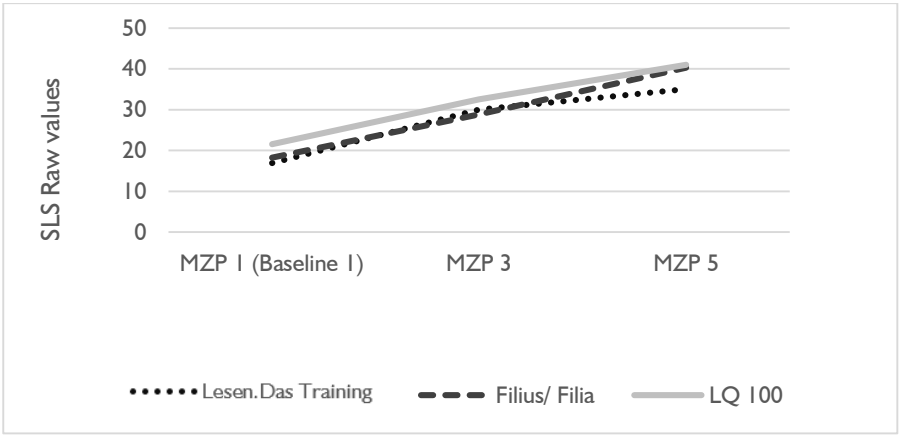

Figure 22: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in Romania compared between those of IG Lesen. Das Training and Filius/Filia and to the values that correspond to a T value of 50 (LQ=100) at the time.

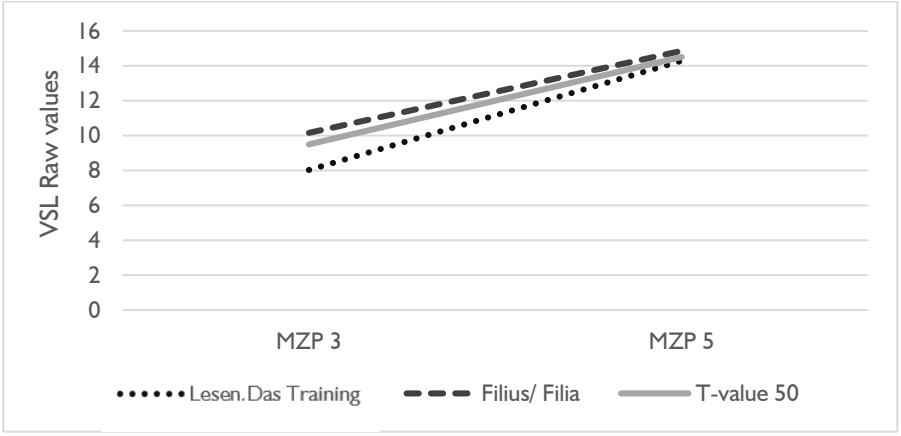

Figure 23: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) to the end of the project (MZP 5) in Romania in comparison between IG Lesen. Das Training and the IG Filius/Filia and to the values which correspond to a T-value of 50 at the respective time.

Since the development processes are influenced by the different initial conditions in the experimental groups, the increases in the experimental groups are compared to *MZP 1 in the SLS* under control of the covariates *class size* and *raw values.* The proportion of children with German as their second language was not included as covariates, as the majority of children in Romania spoke German as their second language.

A covariance analysis for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group)

cannot be interpreted due to inhomogeneity of the error variants between the groups according to the Levene test ($p<.05$). However, the post-hoc comparisons, which are still interpretable, showed that the increase in SLS of IG *Filius/Filia was* significantly ($p<.05$) different from the increase in IG *Lesen. Das Training* (-2.22, 95%-CI [-4.19, -0.35]), whereby the IG *Lesen. Das Training* distinguishes a bigger growth. Nor can the covariance analysis for the comparison of SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) be interpreted due to inhomogeneity of the error variants between the groups according to the Levene test ($p<.05$). However, the post-hoc comparisons showed that the increase in SLS of IG *Filius/Filia was* again significant ($p<.001$) from the increase in IG *Lesen. Das Training* distinguishes (6.64, 95%-CI [4.64, 8.65]). **This means that the increase in reading fluid in Romania during the second class, under control of differences in sample composition and output, was slightly greater in IG *Lesen. Das Training*, however, in the third class the IG *Filius/Filia* showed the larger increase.**

With regard to the VSL, the covariance analysis cannot be interpreted either for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value t5-t3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates due to inhomogeneity of the error variants between the groups according to the Levene test ($p<.05$). However, the post-hoc comparisons showed that there were no significant differences between the two intervention groups. **This means that during the third grade, under control of differences in sample composition and output, the increases in meaningful reading were equally strong in the two intervention groups.**

This result shows that the children in Romania benefited from both interventions in sensory reading, but that there was a slightly higher increase in reading fluid as a result of the *Filius/Filia* intervention.

5.1.4 Summary of the effectiveness of intervention measures in the various countries

In Austria, all three intervention groups in reading fluid seem to benefit equally from reading instruction during the second grade, regardless of whether the pupils received one of the interventions or "traditional" in-

struction. By the end of the third grade, however, children who received the *Filius/Filia* intervention appear to have a *nonspecific IG* equal increase in reading skills, whereas IG *Lesen. Das Training* showed lower gains.

In Italy, only the intervention was *Lesen. Das Training* is used nationwide. Therefore no comparison to other groups is possible. Nevertheless, one can see from the average standard value of the VSL that during the third grade the children caught up clearly in the sense-embracing reading and aligned themselves with the average value.

In Romania, only the developments of the two IG were *Lesen. Das Training* and *Filius/Filia are* compared to each other. It could be shown that in the reading fluid children of IG *Filius/Filia* in the third class showed a stronger increase than children of IG *Lesen. Das Training*, which however in the second class showed a little more learning growth.

5.2 Development of children of different levels in the intervention groups

In this chapter, the focus is on looking at whether one of the forms of intervention particularly promotes or supports a specific level group of pupils. In doing so, the developments of four different level groups are considered separately. These levels result from the initial abilities in the reading fluid. According to the performance of the children in the SLS at the first time of testing (MZP 1), they were divided into level groups 1 (lowest quartile covering the children in the sample with the lowest initial abilities) to 4 (highest quartile covering the children in the sample with the highest initial abilities), based on the quartiles of the overall sample. Table 7 gives an overview of the initial values in the level groups and shows how these level groups are distributed across the intervention groups.

As already in chapter 5.1, the increases are calculated in order to take into account the initial conditions influencing the development processes in the experimental groups. The increases in the experimental groups are thus compared under control of the covariates *class size* and *proportion of children with German as their second language.*

The results are not presented separately for the three countries due to the different distribution of the intervention groups.

	Level group 1	Level group 2	Level group 3	Level group 4
IG *Lesen. Das Training*	*N=253* *M=10*.51 (3.93)	*N=214* *M=18*.57 (1.73)	*N=172* *M=24*.37 (1.76)	*N=148* *M=32*.37 (4.18)
IG *Filius/Filia*	*N=85* *M=8*.66 (4.59)	*N=91* *M=18*.87 (1.57)	*N=95* *M=24*.26 (1.78)	*N=117* *M=33*.02 (4.62)
unspecific IG	*N=79* *M=10*.16 (4.12)	*N=74* *M=19*.11 (1.65)	*N=74* *M=24*.22 (1.65)	*N=88* *M=33*.85 (5.76)
Total	*N=417* *M=10*.07 (4.17)	*N=379* *M=18*.74 (1.69)	*N=341* *M=24*.30 (1.74)	*N=353* *M=32*.95 (4.79)

Table 7: Overview of the size of the sub-samples and the mean values M (with standard deviation) of the children of the four level groups in the three intervention groups.

5.2.1 Level group 1 (below average readers)

A covariance analysis for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group) cannot be interpreted due to inhomogeneity of the error variants between the groups according to the Levene test ($p<.05$). However, the post-hoc comparisons, which can still be interpreted, showed that the increase in the SLS of IG *Filius/Filia* differed significantly ($p<.001$) from the increase in the two other experimental groups (*Filius/Filia vs. Lesen. Das Training). Lesen. Das Training*: 4.54, 95%-CI [2.65, 6.43]; *Filius/Filia* vs. *unspecific IG*: 5.04, 95%-CI [2.67, 7.40]). The ANCOVA for the comparison of the SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) shows no significant main effect for the intervention group ($F(2, 333)=0.41$, n.s.). **This means that, under control of the differences in sample composition, the children with the lowest initial reading ability during the second class show the highest increases in reading fluid from the *Filius/Filia* intervention, but the increases in the third class are the same in all intervention groups.**

Regarding the VSL, the covariance analysis for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates shows no significant difference between the intervention groups ($F(2, 333)=3.03$, n.s.). **This means that during the third class, under control of the differ-**

ences in sample composition, the increases in meaning reading were equally strong in all experimental groups.

Figures 24 and 25 show the development processes in both recorded characteristics of this level group. The figures show that at the end of the third class, the children in level group 1, no matter what support they receive, end up at a similar level of performance.

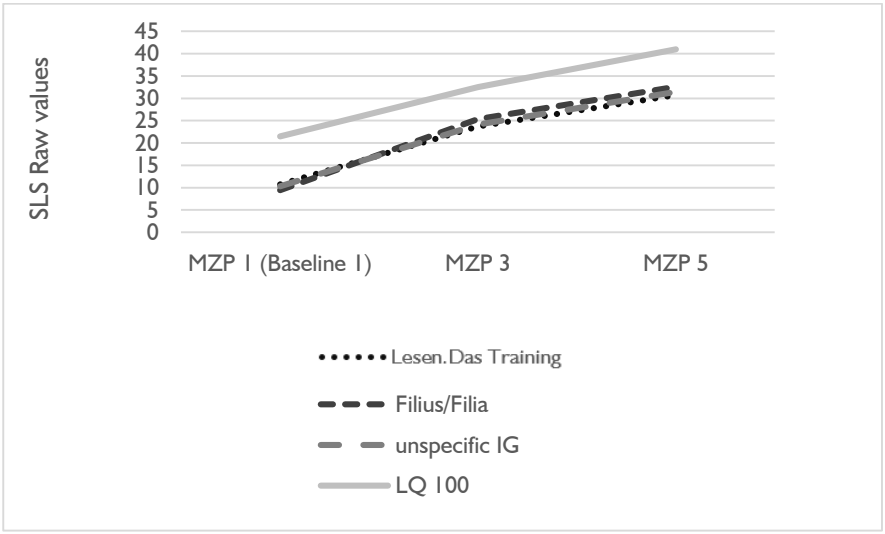

Figure 24: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in level group 1 (lowest quartile) in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 (LQ=100) at the respective time.

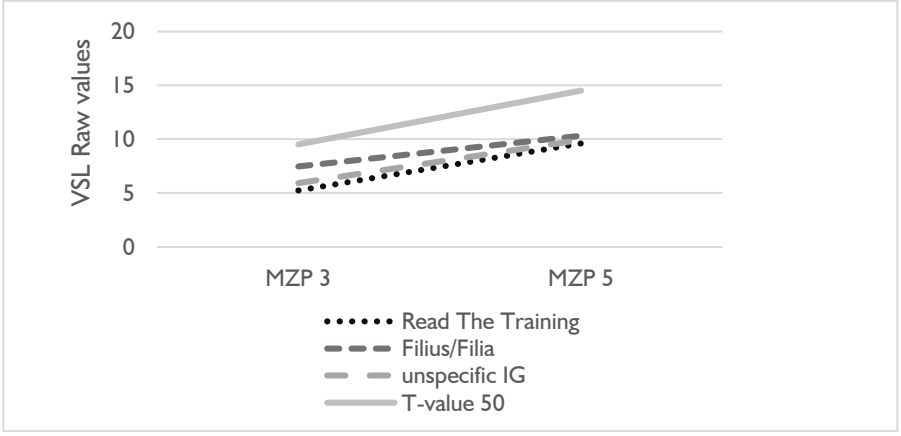

Figure 25: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) *to the end of the project* (*MZP 5*) *in level group 1 in comparison between the intervention groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 at the respective time.*

5.2.2 Level group 2 (readers of the lower average range)

The ANCOVA for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group) shows no significant difference between the experimental groups ($F(2, 357)=0.22$, n.s.). The ANCOVA for the comparison of the SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value t5-t3 x intervention group) cannot be interpreted due to inhomogeneity of the error variants between the groups according to the Levene test ($p<.05$). However, the post-hoc comparisons, which can still be interpreted, showed that the increase in the SLS of IG *Lesen. The training* differed significantly ($p<.001$) from the increase of the other two experimental groups (*Lesen. Das Training* vs. *Filius/Filia*: -3.09, 95%-CI [-4.86, -1.31]; *Lesen. Das Training* vs. *non-specific IG*: -3.59, 95%-CI [-5.47, -1.71]). **This means that, under control of differences in sample composition, children with baseline reading skills showed comparable increases in the lower average range during the second class in all three experimental groups, but in the third class IG *Lesen. Das Training* showed comparable increases. The training showed a smaller increase than the other two groups and the intervention *Filius/Filia*, but also regular lessons led to a larger increase.**

With regard to the VSL, ANCOVA shows no significant difference between the intervention groups ($F(2, 335)=1.50$, n.s.) for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates. **This means that during the third class, under control of the differences in sample composition, the increases in meaningful reading were similar for this level group in all experimental groups and it made no difference in this level group which intervention the children received.**

Figures 26 and 27 show the development of this level group in both skills. Since the values of IG *Filius/Filia at the* beginning of the third class and at the end of the third class were congruent with the average values achieved in the norm sample according to the VSL manual (T-value=50), the norm graph was omitted from Figure 26.

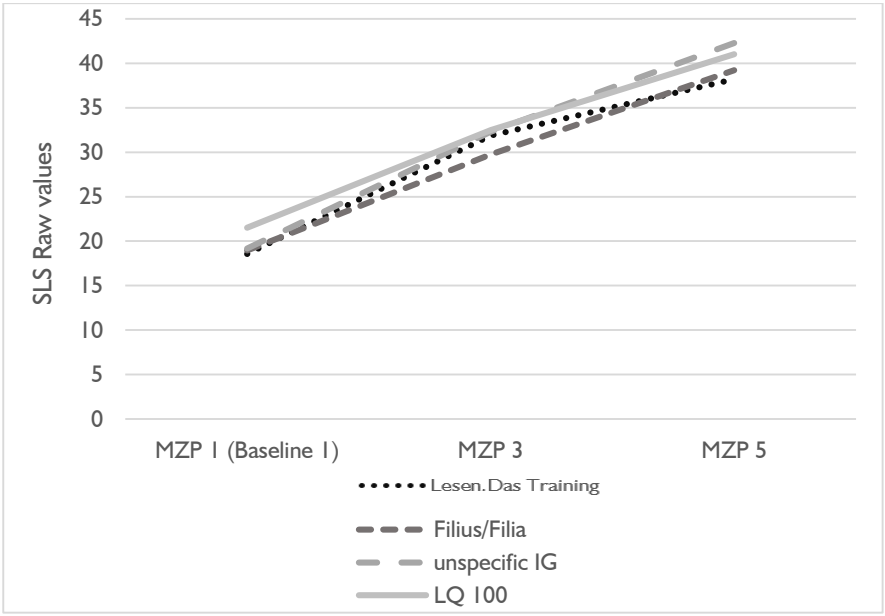

Figure 26: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in level group 2 in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 (LQ=100) at the respective time.

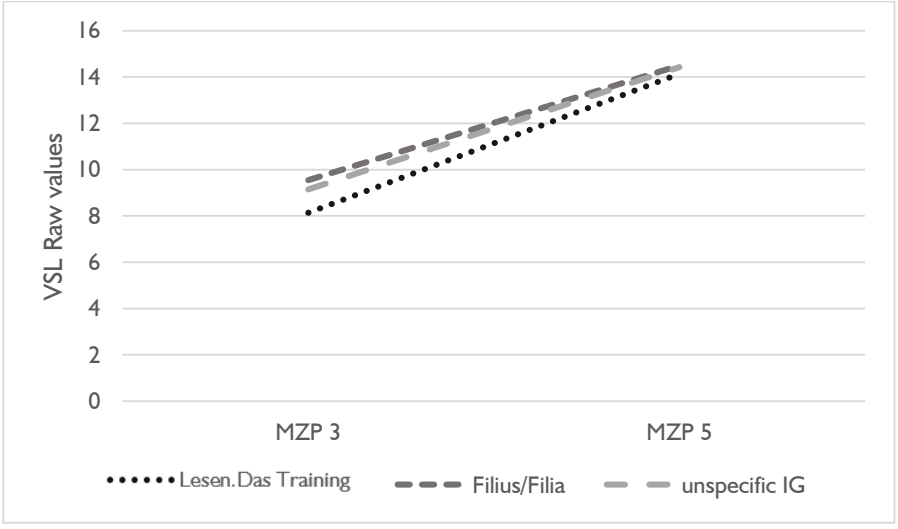

Figure 27: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) to the end of the project (MZP 5) in level group 2 in comparison between the intervention groups.

5.2.3 Level group 3 (readers of the upper average range)

The covariance analysis for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group) shows no significant difference between the experimental groups ($F(2, 318)=0.63$, n.s.). However, the covariance analysis for the comparison of SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) shows a significant difference between the experimental groups ($F(2, 300)=20.55$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.12$). The post-hoc comparisons showed that the increase in the SLS of IG *Filius/Filia* differed significantly ($p<.001$) from the increase in the two other experimental groups (*Filius/Filia vs. Lesen. Das Training*: 5.15, 95%-CI [3.21, 7.09]; *Filius/Filia* vs. *unspecific IG*: 3.82, 95%-CI [1.40, 6.24]). **This means that, under control of differences in sample composition, children with baseline reading skills showed similar increases in the upper average range during the second class in all three experimental groups, but in the third class IG *Filius/Filia* showed a larger increase than the other two groups.**

Regarding the VSL, ANCOVA shows a small but significant difference between the intervention groups ($F(2, 300)=4.13$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=.03$) for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates. The post-hoc comparisons showed that the increase in the VSL of IG *Filius/Filia* differed significantly ($p<.05$) from the increase in the two other experimental groups (*Filius/Filia vs. Lesen. Das Training*: 1.83, 95%-CI [0.07, 3.60]; *Filius/Filia* vs. *unspecific IG*: 2.30, 95%-CI [0.10, 4.50]). **This means that during the third class, under control of differences in sample composition, IG *Filius/Filia* had the greatest increase in sensory reading in this level group.**

Figures 28 and 29 show the development of this level group in both recorded characteristics.

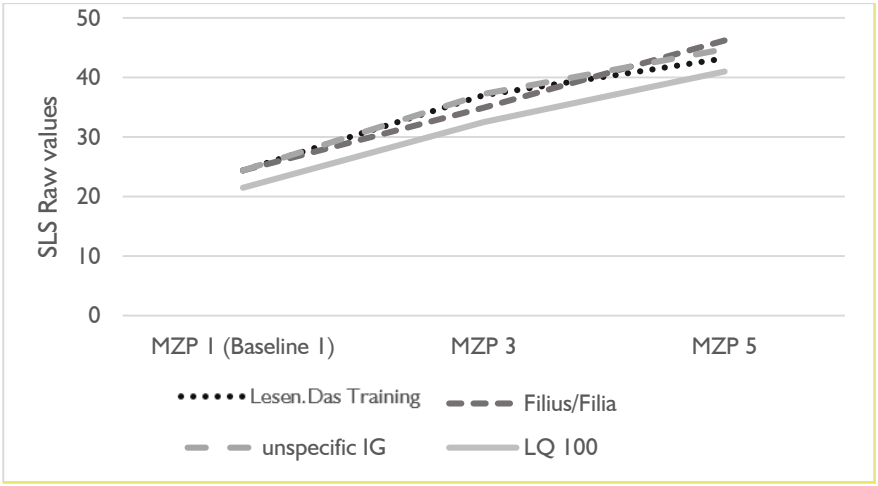

Figure 28: Raw values of SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in level group 3 in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T-value of 50 (LQ=100) at the respective time

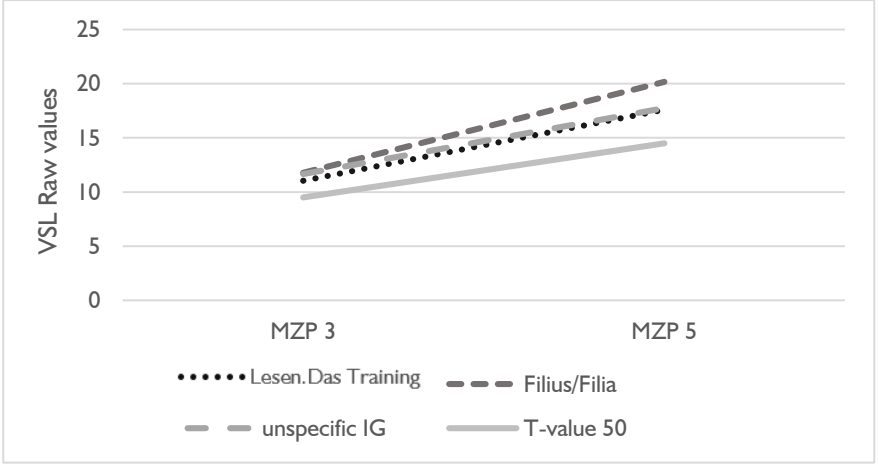

Figure 29: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) to the end of the project (MZP 5) in level group 3 compared between the intervention groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 at the time.

5.2.4 Level group 4 (above-average readers)

The ANCOVA for the comparison of the increases in the second school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 3-MZP 1 x intervention group) shows no significant difference between the experimental groups (F(2,

337)=0.06, n.s.). The ANCOVA for the comparison of the SLS increases in the third school year (difference SLS raw value MZP 5-MZP 3 x intervention group) shows a significant difference between the experimental groups ($F(2, 326)=12.02$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.07$). The post-hoc comparisons showed that the growth in the SLS of IG *Lesen. Das Training* differed significantly ($p<.01$ and $p<.001$, respectively) from the growth of the other two experimental groups (*Lesen. Das Training* vs. *Filius/Filia*: -2.71, 95%-CI [-4.56, -0.87]; *reading. Training* vs. *non-specific IG*: -3.83, 95%-CI [-5.87, -1.80]). **This means that, under control of the differences in the sample composition, the children with above-average initial abilities during the second class showed comparable increases in all three experimental groups, but in the third class the IG *Lesen. Das Training* showed a smaller increase than both other groups and the intervention *Filius/Filia*, but also conventional teaching led to a larger increase.**

With regard to the VSL, ANCOVA shows no significant difference between the intervention groups ($F(2, 324)=0.84$, n.s.) for the comparison of the increases in the third school year (difference VSL raw value MZP 5 -MZP 3 x intervention group) under control of the same covariates. **This means that during the third class, under control of differences in sample composition, all three experimental groups showed similar increases in sensory reading at this level group.**

Figures 30 and 31 show the development of this level group in both recorded characteristics.

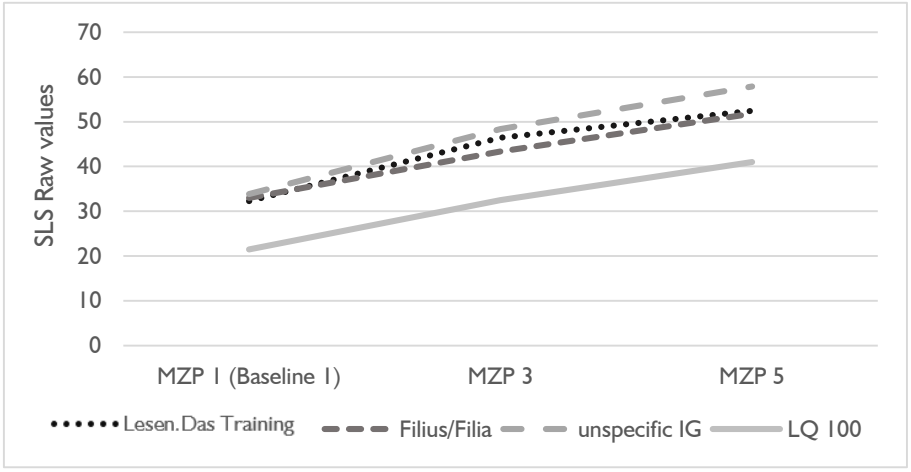

Figure 30: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in level group 4 in comparison between the three test groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 (LQ=100) at the respective time.

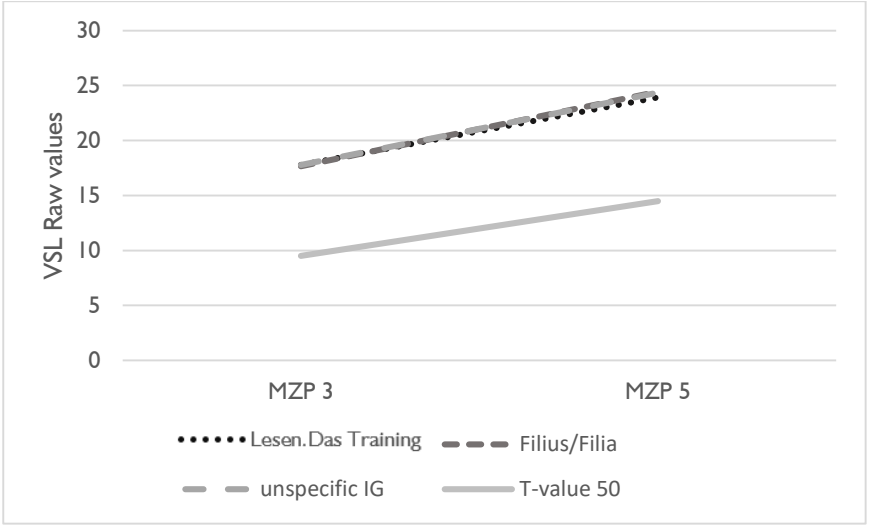

Figure 31: Raw values of the VSL from the beginning of the third class (MZP 3) to the end of the project (MZP 5) in level group 4 compared between the intervention groups and to the values corresponding to a T value of 50 at the time.

5.2.5 Summary of the effectiveness of intervention measures for different level groups

The results presented show that both the two specific intervention measures and conventional teaching create opportunities for children of different levels to support them in their reading fluency and in understanding reading. Below-average readers (level group 1) benefit the most from the *Filius/Filia* intervention in reading fluid, at least in the second class, and equally from all measures in sensory reading. For children in the lower average range, but also in the above average range, the intervention seems *Lesen. Das Training* during the third class compared to both other experimental groups to support the development less well. But *Lesen. Das Training* bears for the weaker two quartiles in the course of the 3rd stage more towards reading comprehension, while *Filius/Filia* for the very weak even has a slightly opposite effect here. Readers in the upper average range benefit most in the third class from the *Filius/Filia* intervention through supported strategy training, both in terms of the development of reading fluidity and of meaning-enhancing reading.

Overall, this analysis shows that, under control of the class size and the proportion of children with German as their second language, the *Filius/Filia* measure provides a range of services that has a positive influence on development for various level groups. However, it should also be mentioned at this point that the effects are very small and can sometimes be due to other factors (e.g. teacher-specific factors).

5.3 Diversity of developments in relation to the individual classes

This chapter focuses on the development of individual classes. The developments of the different classes are considered purely descriptively separately for the three experimental groups. Figures 32 to 34 show (across all countries) the average development of reading fluidity in the individual classes for each intervention group to give an idea of how diverse the starting situations and developmental processes are during the second and third classes. Not every course is of interest in detail, but it can be shown in particular that no pattern emerges in any intervention group which differs from the courses in the other intervention groups.

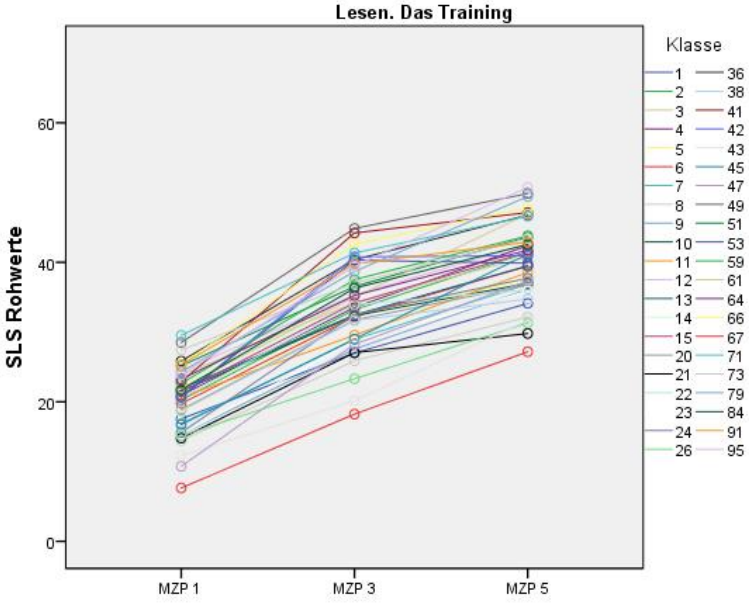

Figure 32: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in the IG Lesen. Das Training in comparison between the classes.

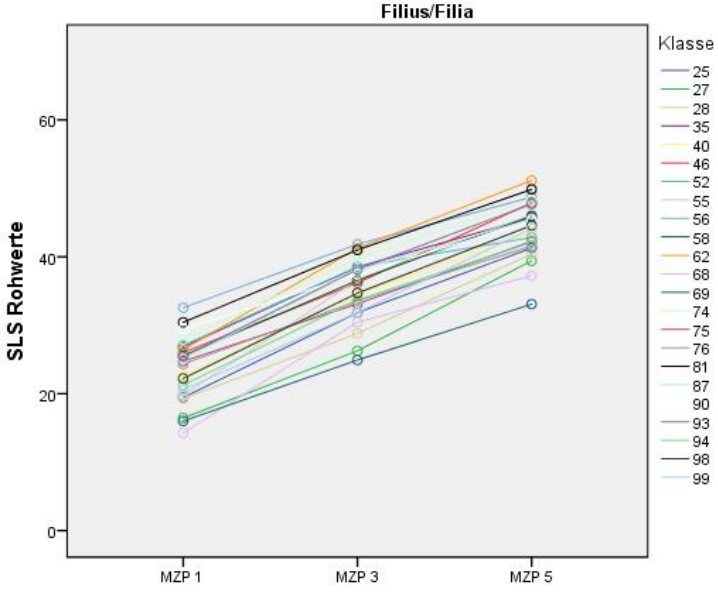

Figure 33: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in IG Filius/Filia in comparison between the classes.

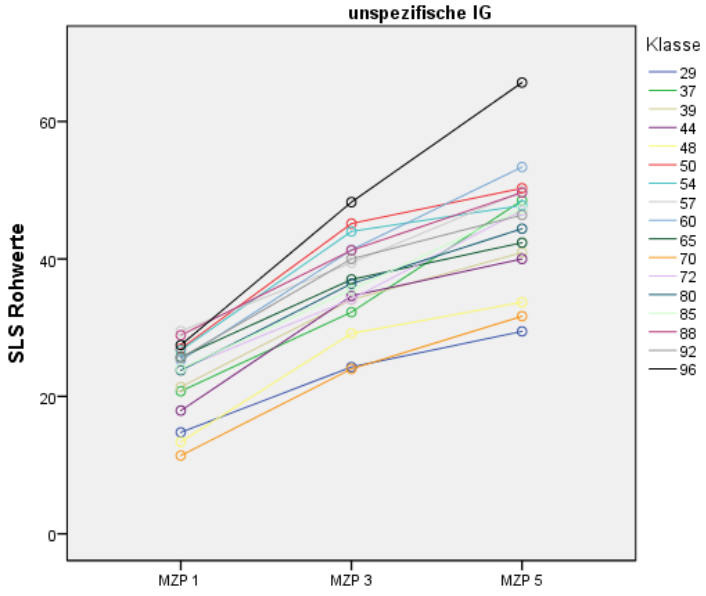

Figure 34: Raw values of the SLS from project start (MZP 1) to project end (MZP 5) in the unspecific IG in comparison between the classes.

5.4 Discussion of the first results taking into account the diversity of the classes

In order for teachers to know which measures are more or less promising to support children in reading acquisition, it is necessary for studies to be carried out to test these measures in school practice. The *ELiS* project examined the effectiveness of two reading promotion measures. The results presented in chapters 5.1 and 5.2 are only initial analyses of the results. It shows that both measures implemented in school practice do not lead to outstanding effects, even though in some of the analyses the *Filius/Filia* measure led to greater growth than *Lesen. Das Training* and partly also as conventional lessons. However, the effects are in principle very small and indicate directions that could be followed in greater depth. The results - generally looking together - are thus rather such that the children who are using *Lesen. Das Training* or *Filius/Filia* were supported, did not make significantly greater leaps in development than children whose reading development was supported in conventional teaching. The increases in skills are also congruent with the standard values of the diagnostic proce-

dures. In conclusion, it can be stated that children can benefit from traditional education to an almost comparable extent as from interventions implemented in the *ELiS* project.

This result is not particularly surprising. Similar "weak" effects are repeatedly found in studies (for an overview see Ise, Engel & Schulte-Körne, 2012; Souvignier & Antoniou, 2007) in which funding measures are embedded as realistically as possible in school practice. This embedding in school practice is also reflected in the *ELiS* project in the fact that the teachers themselves, trained through further training and supported by appropriate materials, were responsible for implementing the measures, and the measures were also implemented over a long period of time. A meta-analysis by Souvignier and Antoniou (2007), which examined the effectiveness of reading promotion programmes in promoting reading comprehension, already showed that measures implemented over a shorter period of time under controlled conditions ("controlled" interventions) achieve greater effects than "ecologically valid" interventions implemented over a longer period of time and embedded in regular school life under more natural teaching conditions (Souvignier & Antoniou, 2007). Similarly, the meta-analysis of Ise, Engel and Schulte-Körne (2012), which examined the effectiveness of German-language funding approaches in the field of LRS, found that the effects are significantly lower when an intervention is carried out by a teacher (and thus the proximity to everyday school life is maintained) compared with the intervention carried out by a project member. In this respect, the almost comparable effectiveness of both intervention measures to conventional teaching is not particularly surprising.

Rather, the first results show that it is not the support measures themselves but other factors that have a decisive influence on the development of the pupils. In particular, class-related variables (e.g. class composition and class size, which were also checked in the calculations due to the different sample composition of the experimental groups) or teacher-related variables (e.g. knowledge about reading promotion, teaching experience, didactic concept, motivation to carry out such a long intervention programme) are important influencing factors for pupil developments. In connection with the implementation of reading promotion measures, the teacher is referred to as the "decisive actor for the implementation of changes in teaching" (Philipp & Souvignier, 2016, p. 7). Hattie (2003) describes the teacher or various variables related to the teacher (e.g. the

feedback he or she gives; the quality of the instruction) as an important influencing factor for school learning success.

These variables influencing the outcome of intervention studies on the part of the class or teacher can, of course, only be partially controlled in a research project in which funding measures are implemented in the classes. On the basis of the available data in the *ELiS* project, it can be concluded that for each class there is an individual development and that there is no specific development in the intervention groups that could be distinguished from the development in the other intervention groups.

The aim of one of the next analyses will now be to take into account the hierarchical structure of the data (pupils in classes in schools) and to include the class-related and school-related variables in the evaluation in a multilevel analysis.

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SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS ON THE SUBJECT OF READING PROMOTION

Michaela Reitbauer & Vanessa Quehenberger

Reading promotion measures in primary schools and needs analysis of teachers - State-of-the-art

1. Introduction

This article provides an overview of reading initiatives and reading promotion measures (as of 2017) in all countries participating in the *ELiS* project: Austria, Italy, Romania and Germany. Important institutions that are important for promoting reading are mentioned here, which can only be described in part due to their brevity. The explanations are followed by explanations of the needs analysis that was carried out in the course of the project with the participating teachers and whose results served as the basis for further content-related elaborations in the project[6].

2. School and extracurricular reading initiatives and reading promotion measures

2.1 The situation in Austria

With regard to school-based reading initiatives in Austria, the *Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research* (BMBWF), formerly known as the BMB, is named first. In addition to the *Basic Decree on Reading Education* (*2016*) and the mandatory implementation of the *Salzburger Lese-Screening* (*Mayringer & Wimmer, 2014*), it has also called for a review of *educational standards* in German/reading/writing since 2015. However, the development of the *Austrian framework reading plan* (*Österreichischer Rahmenleseplan* 2017), which for the first time addresses all Austrian representatives in the field of reading education and focuses on both the school and extracurricular sectors, is also regarded as ministerially established. In addition to the *Federal Ministry of Education, Science and the Arts,* the *Federal Institute for Education Research, Innovation and Development* (BIFIE) of the Austrian school system makes a significant contribution to reading promotion measures in Austria. For example, this institution offers support for teachers through the development of materials, such as the *t*hematic booklet published in autumn 2016 (*Themenheft für den*

[6] On the project homepage *www.projektelis.eu* detailed descriptions can be read.

Kompetenzbereich Lesen – Umgang mit Texten und Medien; BIFIE, 2016). *Buchklub Österreich* and *BuchZeit Wels* in turn aim to improve the communication and networking of school libraries in the area of general compulsory schools and make a significant contribution to the production of reading didactic and media pedagogical materials for individual support. In addition, they develop future strategies to promote reading in cooperation with national and international reading education institutions. The *Coordination Office for Reading* (*KsL*) *is* also stationed at the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. This is conceived as a nationwide network to support the improvement of reading competence of pupils in primary schools and was established in November 2002 in the Ministry of Education (Aspalter & Jörgl, 2017 cited by Dippelreiter, 2016).

An overall picture of Austria in the field of *universities of teacher education* can be seen from the reports of the federal state representatives of the Coordination Office for Reading for the Domain Reading. The curricular anchorages, related to reading education in *pedagogical education NEW*, comprise on average 15-18 ECTS. Sub-elements with regard to reading education are to be assigned to individual focal points of the universities of teacher education. Styria represents a special focus on reading with the focus on *In Lesewelten begegnen – Lesen in schulischen und außererschulischen Kontexten* (*In reading worlds encounter – reading in school and extracurricular contexts*). Reading has a very strong presence in all federal states in the continuing education sector as well as in continuing education within the framework of university courses. In addition, EU projects in the field of reading and reading education are central themes in the curricula of teacher training colleges (Senn & Kurtagic-Heindl, 2016).

In addition to nationwide initiatives, institutions at state level also make an important contribution to promoting reading in Austria. The federal state of Styria with its *Lesezentrum Steiermark* is mentioned here as an example. This is an institute for library organisation, library development and reading pedagogy and is regarded as a service and coordination centre which, on behalf of the Province of Styria, looks after, advises and accompanies around 600 public Styrian libraries, school libraries and libraries in special forms with the Resort Education and Society, the Styrian Directorate of Education and the Diocese of Graz-Seckau (Lesezentrum Steiermark, 2019). The *Steirischer Landesentwicklungsprogramm* (Zoller, Haucinger,

Pojer & Radler, 2016) and the working priorities 2016/17 of the Styrian Directorate of Education have again set themselves the goal of implementing the individualised acquisition of written language at school entrance in accordance with new scientific findings in as many schools as possible and strengthening competence-oriented reading instruction as a basis for successful learning. The *LeseNetzWerk.Steiermark* was founded by the Bildungsdirektion Steiermark, the Buchklub Steiermark, the Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark and the Lesezentrum Steiermark to coordinate all Styrian institutions involved in reading and literature education. The common goal is to increase the reading skills of children and young people in Styria (Bildungsdirektion Steiermark, 2019). The contract for evidence-based reading promotion in schools was awarded for the first time in Styria through the obligatory annual implementation of *Salzburger-Lese-Screening* in Styrian schools. Feedback from quality managers on the results of the *Salzburger-Lese-Screening* contains the following measures at class level for all pupils:

- an intensification of reading times through daily/weekly rituals,
- differentiated reading programmes within the framework of self-organised learning phases,
- targeted promotion of different reading strategies for the indexing of texts,
- computer-assisted reading promotion programmes, and
- Intensification of subject-integrated reading and the reading of texts in everyday life (Holzinger, 2017).

In addition, reading events such as reading nights or reading rallies are held in the communities. Measures at the individual level for pupils with below-average reading performance can be found in the use of diagnostic procedures for the targeted clarification of the causes of low reading performance and in the derivation of targeted support measures. In turn, children with above-average reading performance are offered an increased range of reading texts for independent acquisition of knowledge by reading and excerpting factual texts as well as by active use of online portals by teachers. Furthermore, these pupils are used as reading trainers and take part in reading competitions, for example (Mayringer & Wimmer, 2016).

2.2 The situation in Romania

In Romania, there are several associations that follow the development of reading literacy and reading motivation and from which several projects have originated, also thanks to the Eurydice study (Iunesch, 2017). The National Association of Romanian Teachers *ANPRO - Asociația Națională a Profesorilor de Română*, which deals with reading education and literacy as one of the most important subjects, can be mentioned in this context. Accordingly, numerous online publications on reading literacy and reading motivation for teachers, but also for pupils, can be downloaded from their homepage (http://www.anpro.ro/categorie/revista-cl/). The association supports projects such as the *Literaturzirkel* or *Lesen für das Dritte Jahrtausend*, in which, among other things, the focus is on promoting interest in reading (ANPRO, 2019). The association *ALSDGC - Lectura şi Scrierea pentru Dezvoltarea Gândirii Critice* organises reading projects as well as a project for the promotion of reading in vocational training (ALSDGC, 2019). In Romania, in particular, the pre-school curriculum (3 to 6/7 year olds) sets objectives explicitly aimed at developing a basis for the acquisition of written language, and it also sets out associated reading promotion measures (MINISTERUL EDUCA□IEI, CERCET□RII ŞI TINERETULUI, 2008).

2.3 The situation in Italy

In the field of reading initiatives, South Tyrol (Italy) is characterised by close cooperation between schools, public libraries and school and specialist libraries (Eisenstecken, 2016). The training of school librarians as technical experts that has been in place for many years should be emphasised. Since 2006, the *LeseForum Südtirol* has also been carrying out nationwide reading campaigns to encourage the South Tyrolean population to read (Eisenstecken, 2016). The *Südtiroler Lesefrühling* 2007 (Pädagogische Abteilung in der Deutschen Bildungsdirektion der Autonomen Provinz Bozen, 2019a) (South Tyrolean Reading Spring 2007) was a major reading project that had a widespread impact in kindergartens, schools and in extracurricular places such as public libraries. At about the same time, other projects were being developed in South Tyrol, such as *Bookstart - Babys lieben Bücher* (family agency in collaboration with the German and Italian cultural departments, 2019).

Since the publication of the results of the PISA study of German-speaking pupils, in which South Tyrol took part for the first time in 2003, the *AG Leseförderung* (*Working Group for the Promotion of Reading*) has created its own course series entitled *Leseförderung leseschwacher Schülerinnen und Schüler* (*Reading Promotion for pupils with reading difficulties*). Due to the great demand from the teaching staff, there were a total of five editions in the following years. During these two-year training sessions, teachers from primary and secondary schools learned about the Swiss training programme *Lesen. Das Training* to know the training (Ernst Klett Verlag, 2018) which tries to promote reading skills, reading literacy and reading strategies among pupils. *Lesen. Das Training* was tested for the first time in South Tyrol in the 2012/13 school year on 2,000 pupils in 1st to 8th grade. Thanks to the numerous positive feedback from the teachers, the state of South Tyrol has since taken over half of the costs for the purchase of the training booklets. Also worth mentioning is the *Büchermärz 2013* campaign, which considered the reading aloud and occupation with books at original reading places and in the context of unconventional reading aloud events to be important (Eisenstecken, 2016).

2.4 The situation in Germany

In Germany, the number of established projects and measures relating to the seven fields of action of the Standing *Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the* Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), which are often geared to promoting reading motivation and reading culture, is enormous in many federal states and also in individual schools. In almost all federal states there are school libraries, handouts and materials. In addition, cooperation between libraries, newspapers and schools is promoted and computer programs such as *Antolin*, *Leselilli* or *Lesepirat*, which can be used specifically to promote reading, are subsidised by the Länder. The Standing *Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (*KMK) also defined the further development of basic and advanced training for teachers, particularly with regard to dealing with heterogeneity, improving diagnostic skills and providing targeted support for individual pupils (Artelt et al., 2007).

3. Needs analysis

In order to be able to respond to the needs and wishes of the participating teachers in the ELiS project in the best possible way, a needs analysis was carried out at the beginning of the *ELiS* project in 2016 in those countries in which a reading initiative took place. To this end, teachers in the participating countries were interviewed about current reading promotion in schools. Some of the key results are presented below.

Styrian teachers consider sufficient and regular reading times, cross-class reading, opportunities for retreat, a pleasant reading environment, a budget for reading material, standardised procedures for performance assessment and a well-stocked library to be important in optimal reading instruction. Another personal importance of the teachers is to motivate the children to read and to offer them a wide range of reading opportunities. In order to perceive reading as an activity of daily life, teachers visit libraries, offer to read various children's magazines or go to readings by authors (Reitbauer & Wachter, 2017). A further central statement of the Styrian pedagogues is to raise the performance level of the pupils in order to be able to support them in a targeted manner. These results are in line with those from South Tyrol. Here, too, teachers would like to see targeted support or concrete measures to optimally support pupils with reading difficulties (Eisenstecken, 2017). In his comments on the situation in Germany, Artelt (2007) emphasizes a focus on this group. German pupils read at a high level compared to other European countries, yet 15% do not reach the minimum standard and many children in need of support do not receive appropriate remedial education from specially trained teaching staff. For children with a migration background, there are hardly any concrete support programmes at the level of understanding. Oral work on texts dominates and is used by teachers to solve problems rather than to continue working on texts. This is due to the fact that few teachers, despite being offered further training in reading, spend hardly any time on strategy training and have deficits in diagnosing reading competence, teaching reading strategies, task construction and task assessment. Since reading is often taken for granted in other subjects, collegial exchanges between colleagues from other disciplines and at different grades are rare in order to find common goals and starting points (Artelt et al., 2007).

There is currently only one reading literacy association in Romania and no national strategy to develop reading literacy. Reading didactics is not strongly represented in Romanian training centres for teachers, with the exception of training in German as the language of instruction. Accordingly, teachers express a need for up-to-date textbooks to promote reading literacy, as Romanian schools still use German textbooks from the 1990s of the 20th century. Teachers at schools with German as the language of instruction underline the need for a selection of textbooks and the constraints imposed by legislation. The Romanian Ministry of Education has therefore approved only three textbooks for Romanian language teaching, so that Iunesch (2017) urgently demands that reading competence be placed in the focus of decision-makers.

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Andrea Holzinger & Susanne Seifert

Promoting reading – a contribution to increasing educational equity

1. Theoretical framework

Education is one of the most important social issues of the 21st century (Mayer, 2000) and relates both to school education and vocational training and to formal and non-formal lifelong learning. Their social significance can be measured by the simultaneity of educational expansion and social inequality of educational opportunities. The expansion of education that began in the 1950s has led on the one hand to increasing participation in education and an increase in educational opportunities in all social groups, but at the same time has not led to a comprehensive reduction in the social inequality of educational opportunities in many countries (Becker & Lauterbach, 2010).

Educational justice refers to the "ideal of an education system that is independent of individual factors such as gender, ethnic or social origin, economic performance, religious or political opinion". Under conditions appropriate to education, everyone in the education system has largely equal opportunities" (Klenk, 2018). As international and national educational studies show, however, this equality of opportunity is very different in the individual countries. The social status of the family of origin continues to play an important role in many countries, including those of the European Union. This is evident in Austria, for example, at the latest since the publication of the PISA study in 2000, in which 20% of 15-year-olds could only read at an elementary level and a close connection between social origin and educational opportunities could be demonstrated (Haider, 2001). This means that educational opportunities are already largely defined at the end of compulsory schooling, which makes the quality of institutional education in the pre-school and school sector all the more important. With regard to Austria, it can be seen that the results of the PISA test 2015 in the field of reading are approximately comparable with the results from 2000 and that the connection between social origin and educational opportunities and the

(re-)production of social inequality and life situations remain (Suchań & Breit, 2016).

Boudon's theory (1974) is regarded as the central explanatory approach for social inequalities in the school context. It distinguishes between primary and secondary effects of social origin. Primary effects are due to origin, which can be explained by better school performance of pupils from families with a higher social status and better access to educational activities and school-relevant resources, such as support with homework and enabling tutoring. According to Boudon, the secondary effects include differences in educational behaviour, the cause of which can be found in different educational aspirations as well as in the appreciation of education or the evaluation of education-related costs, and which result from different patterns in educational decisions specific to origin (Boudon cited after McElvany et al., 2019). In addition to the secondary effects defined by Boudon, the effects of family background on grades and school career recommendations must also be taken into account (Boudon quoted from Maaz & Nagy, 2009).

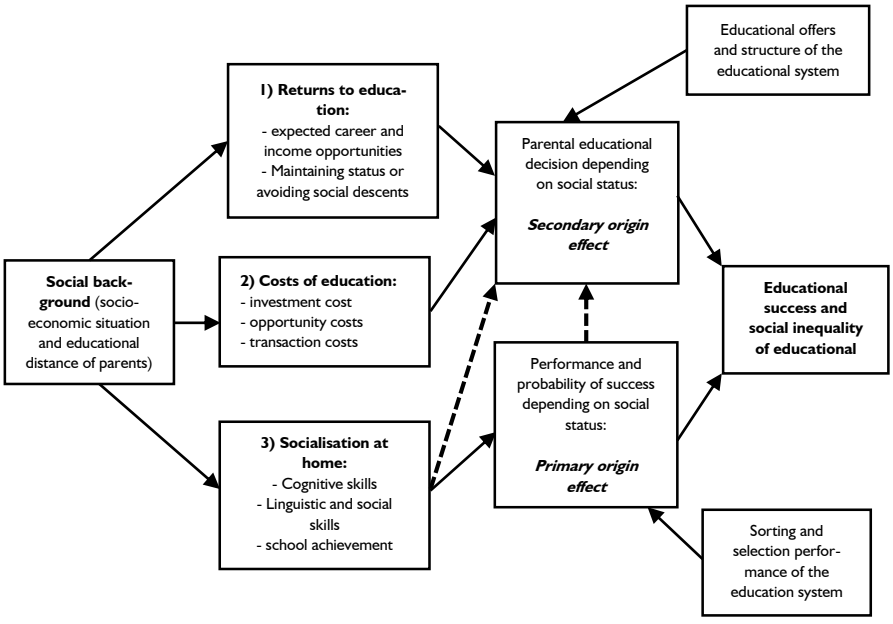

Figure 35: Primary and secondary effects of social origin (taken from Becker & Lauterbach, 2010, p. 16)

The early educational decisions made by parents or legal guardians as a result of the structure of the education system are binding in the long term, can hardly be revised and have an impact on the course of education, career and life (Becker & Lauterbach, 2010). Since there is still little evidence at too early a time of the pupils' ability to perform and their expressed interest in their own educational pathways, these early decisions are also characterised by uncertainties (Becker & Schubert, 2006). The disparities in competence acquisition due to origin become all the greater the less support is provided in the lower performance range and the more the school types differ as development environments (Baumert & Artelt, 2003).

For the first time, Baumert and Schümer (2002) were able to draw attention to the close connection between reading competence and social origin with the data of the PISA study 2000. The social inequality of reading skills is particularly high in those countries where different school careers are differentiated early on, e.g. in the German-speaking countries of Germany and Austria. Especially at the end of primary school, there is an important educational decision for the transition to secondary school, which is mainly influenced by the will of the parents. Finally, Bordieu's theory of unequally distributed capital, according to which action is determined by the resources of economic, cultural and social capital, which are unequally distributed in society and thus lead to unequal educational opportunities and social reproduction of social inequalities, should also be mentioned here (Bordieu, 1983). The concept of habitus as a system of permanent dispositions acquired through individual and collective experience (Bordieu, 1983), characterised by perceptual patterns, thought patterns and action patterns, plays a special role here.

According to Becker (2000), the secondary origin effects are more significant than the primary origin effects. Parental educational decisions are "forced" by the structure of the education system, they must be made particularly early in Germany and Austria and thus limit the period for institutional compensation for educational inequalities. Origin-related assumptions play a particularly important role in transitional decisions. The results of a simulation study based on the data of the PISA study 2000 by Müller-Benedict (2007) also indicate that the elimination of secondary effects

would result in a significantly higher increase in the grammar school quota than the elimination of primary effects.

In contrast, Ditton (2019) paints a more differentiated picture. In a primary school study (Ditton, 2010) he was able to prove that teachers, despite comparable achievements, make different recommendations for further school attendance depending on the pupils' origin. The interviewed teachers justified this with the different assessment of cognitive aptitude, language skills and parental support. In a further study (Ditton, 2013), he pointed out that grades at the time of transition are more important than the test results achieved for attending secondary school and for teachers' transfer recommendations. In the case of transfer recommendations based on grades, expectation effects of teachers also play a role, which have a negative impact on children with a low social status. In addition, recommendations for children from families with a higher social status are often based on positive social behaviour.

Ditton (2019) sums up that the choice of school type clearly coincides with the social background of the children, with pupils from higher social strata overrandomly frequently attending grammar schools and children from lower social strata overrandomly not attending grammar school. While teachers orient their school recommendations more to the performance of the children, parents attach almost equal importance to social background and school performance when deciding on a school career.

2. Reading literacy of pupils in Austria, Romania and Italy

For more than 20 years, basic competencies that are classified as relevant for social participation have been recorded in large scale assessments according to valid psychometric standards (Baumert, Maaz, Lühe, Schulz, 2019). In Europe, the following large scale assessments are particularly well known to the general public:

- Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) on the competences in mathematics and natural sciences of pupils in the fourth grade - carried out every 4 years from 1995 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)

- Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for basic education Fifteen-year-olds - carried out every three years from 2000 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) on reading literacy Ten-year-olds - conducted every five years from 2001 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)

The aim of large scale assessments is monitoring and benchmarking (Seidel & Prenzel, 2008). Results of student competences are compared with certain standards and with other educational systems. The data basis is the starting point for considerations on changing and improving educational processes and concrete measures for educational practice. The student competencies are usually measured model-based using a comprehensive set of instruments and provide information about the level of knowledge of students in the respective country and enable an international comparison. In addition to student competencies, context data on social and ethnic traits are collected from students, parents and teachers, depending on the respective large scale assessment.

With regard to reading literacy and the three countries participating in the *ELiS* project, Austria, Romania and Italy, the central results of the PISA study from these three countries will now be presented. In Italy and Romania, the focus is on the German-speaking schools in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano and Transylvania. The PISA study was chosen because it is the only major international education study that has been or will be carried out in all three countries and from which the context data collected with it can be used to generate findings in connection with educational equity. The PIRLS study, which would have been more obvious for the election due to the target group of ten-year-olds, is ruled out because the Autonomous Province of Bolzano did not participate.

The presentation of the results of the PISA study concentrates on the one hand on the average results of the individual countries in comparison to the OECD average. On the other hand, the results of the countries are presented with regard to the seven competence levels in the field of reading and, subsequently, the first two competence levels in particular are exam-

ined, where basic reading skills are not or just being achieved. Pupils who do not exceed competence level I (1a, 1b) can be described as at risk due to the prognostic validity of the PISA reading test with regard to the further course of their educational career (Bussiere, Hebert, & Knighton, 2010).

Stage 1b Minimum points 262	Students at level 1b are able to find individual, clearly indicated information in a prominent text passage. The text itself is short, syntactically simple and is in a context familiar to young people.
Level 1a Minimum points 337	Level 1a students are able to find clearly stated information from one or more independent pieces of text, identify the main topic in a text about a known topic, or link information in the text to simple everyday knowledge. The required information is contained at a prominent point in the text and there is no competing information.
Stage 2 minimum score number 407	Second level pupils can solve elementary tasks by locating simple information, drawing simple conclusions and recognising the main message of a well marked part of the text. They can use personal experience and points of view to make comparisons or to identify connections between the text and extratextual knowledge.
Stage 3 minimum score number 480	Students in the third level can solve reading tasks of moderate complexity. You will be able to select several pieces of information from a text, establish connections between parts of the text and show text comprehension in connection with familiar everyday knowledge. They can identify the main message of a text, pick out information that is not easily visible in the text or that competes with each other or does not meet expectations.
Stage 4 Minimum points 553	Students in the fourth level are able to solve difficult reading tasks that require skills such as searching for embedded information, interpreting meaning in linguistic subtleties, and critically evaluating a text. They show a precise understanding of long or complex texts whose content or form may be unknown.
Level 5 minimum score number 626	Students at the fifth level are able to solve very complex reading tasks and localise and arrange several deeply embedded information. You can critically evaluate texts and formulate hypotheses by drawing on subject-specific knowledge. The young people demonstrate a detailed understanding of the text and can derive information that is relevant for the solution of the task. They can reconcile concepts that are contrary to expectations.

Level 6 minimum score number 698	Sixth level students are able to draw multiple conclusions and make detailed and precise comparisons. They show a complete and detailed understanding of one or more texts and can combine information from several texts. The pupils deal with unusual ideas and are able to deal with competing information. You can hypothesize or critically evaluate a complex text on a topic you are not familiar with.

Table 8: Definition of competence levels in reading (taken from Suchań & Breit, 2016, p. 32)

2.1 Results from Austria

Austria has participated in the PISA study since 2000. The focus of the examinations always alternates between the content domains of reading, mathematics and natural sciences. In the 2000, 2009 and 2018 studies, the focus was on reading skills. In addition, data on the socio-economic background of the students are collected in a student questionnaire. (e.g. parents' occupation and education), existing and usable learning resources at school and in the parental home as well as the attitudes of pupils towards the main area of competence, etc.. A school questionnaire focuses, among other things, on basic school data (type of school, school size, number of classes, number of teachers, etc.), information on school resources and learning environment, and quality development measures.
The average reading score for the 35 OECD countries in the PISA 2015 study is 493 points, with an average standard deviation of 96 points. Austria achieved an average of 485 points with a standard deviation of 101 points.

If we compare the mean values from 2000 to 2012, they are constant between 490 and 492 points in Austria, with the exception of 2009. In the years 2000, 2009 and 2012 the Austrian average reading value is significantly below the OECD average, 2003 and 2006 there is no significant difference. Austria is therefore one of the countries that does not show a significant average trend in the development of results in the field of reading literacy in the course of PISA participation.

Figure 36: Countries without significant average trend (OECD, 2016, Table I.4.6., p. 175)

In terms of competence levels, 23% of Austrian pupils have major weaknesses in reading comprehension and do not reach competence level 2, thus belonging to the risk group. 7% of the pupils reach competence levels 6 and 7 and thus belong to the top reading group. The OECD average is 20% for the risk group and 8% for the top group (Suchań & Breit, 2016).

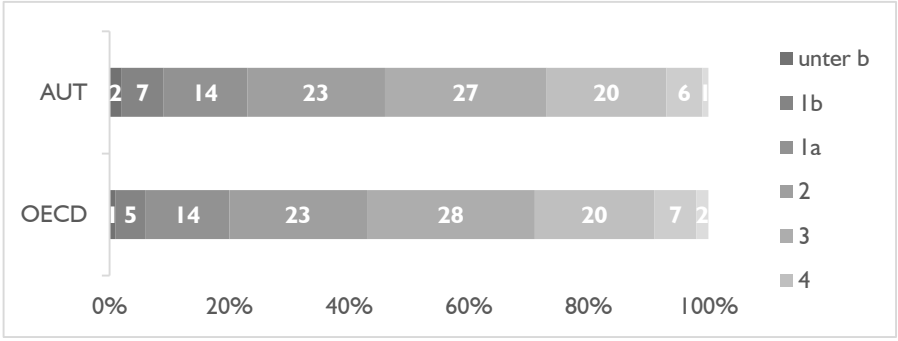

Figure 37: Reading performance in Austria 2015 based on competence levels - own presentation based on PISA 2015 data (OECD, 2016)

2.2 Results from Italy and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano

Italy has participated in the PISA study since 2000, and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano has participated with its own sample since 2003. The results in Bolzano differ significantly from those in Italy. While Italy, with an average score of 485 points in the PISA test in 2015, achieved the same

average score as Austria and was thus significantly below the OECD average, pupils from the province of Bolzano achieved an average score of 503 points. Within the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, pupils from German schools scored best with an average of 506 points. The results of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano thus show no significant difference from the OECD average. The schools in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano generally follow the tendency that female pupils do better than male pupils. The students score 507 points, outperforming the boys by 9 points. This difference is statistically significant, albeit only to a small extent (Dalla Villa, Fiorini, & Russo, 2017).

Italy itself shows no significant trend in the development of average results in reading literacy over PISA participation because there is no significant positive or negative trend (OECD, 2016).

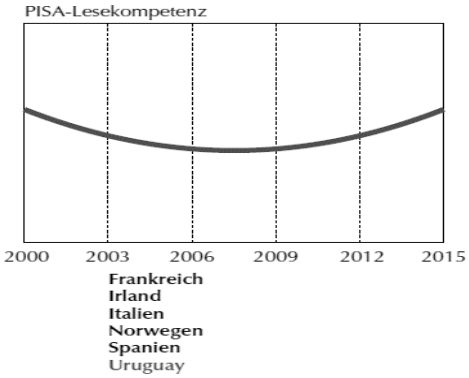

Figure 38: Countries without significant average trend (OECD, 2016, Table I.4.6., p. 175)

21% of pupils in Italy do not reach competence level 2 and therefore do not have the necessary reading skills to participate effectively and productively in life. 6% of pupils are assigned to competence levels 6 and 7 on the basis of their reading performance and therefore belong to the top reading group (Suchań & Breit, 2016).

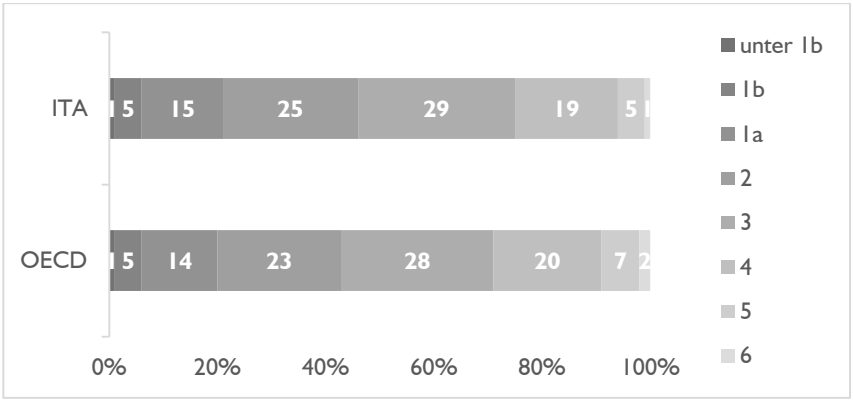

Figure 39: Reading performance in Italy 2015 based on competence levels - own presentation based on PISA 2015 data (OECD, 2016)

Looking at the results of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, only 14% of the pupils did not reach competence level 2. If this result is further differentiated, it can be seen that 8.5% of the pupils of the Ladin schools, 12.2% of the German schools and 18.2% of the Italian schools are below the basic level (Dalla Villa, Fiorini, & Russo, 2017).

2.3 Results from Romania

Romania has participated in the PISA tests since 2000. In 2015, the reading competence test achieved an average value of 434 points, which means that Romania's result is significantly below the OECD average (OECD, 2016). In contrast to Austria and Italy/Bolzano, the test was not computer-assisted but carried out in paper form.

Among the 42 countries for which comparable data on student performance are available from at least five PISA surveys including 2015, Romania is among the 12 countries that have seen a tendency for improvement in reading literacy performance since 2000. In Romania, too, the difference in performance between boys and girls in favour of girls is significant, but the difference decreased significantly (OECD, 2016). Specific data evaluations on the reading performance of pupils at German-speaking schools are not available.

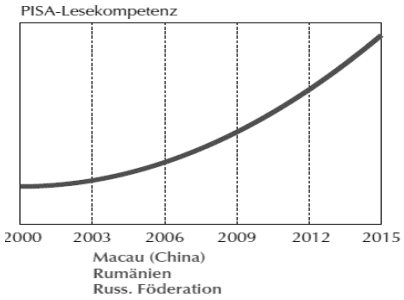

Figure 40: Countries with positive average trend (OECD, 2016, Table I.4.6, p. 175)

In Romania, the percentage of pupils belonging to the risk group is very high at 39%. Competence level 5 is reached by 2%, competence level 6 by 0%. Thus, the percentage of pupils who do not achieve elementary reading skills differs strikingly from the OECD average: the percentage of pupils who show top performance is very low compared to the OECD average (Suchań & Breit, 2016).

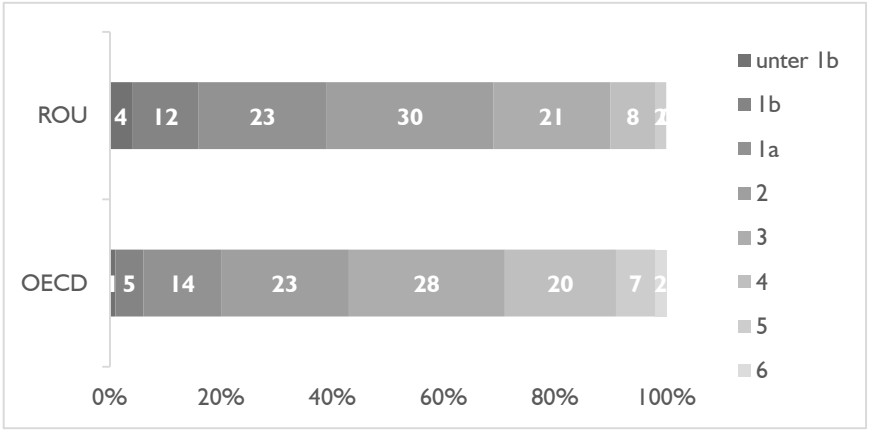

Figure 41: Reading performance in Romania 2015 based on competence levels - own presentation based on PISA 2015 data (OECD, 2016)

3. Equal opportunities against the background of international educational studies

"By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes" (Global Goals for Sustainable Development, 2015, Goal 4.1).

This goal is one of the 17 sustainable development goals proclaimed by the United Nations in 2015. The report "An unfair start. Inequality in Children's Education in Rich Countries" published in 2018 on behalf of UNICEF shows that there is still a long way to go before this goal is achieved. This report focuses on educational inequalities in 41 countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and/or the European Union (EU). Based on the currently available data for the respective countries, inequalities of children and adolescents from pre-school to 15 years of age were examined with regard to factors such as parents' occupation, migration background, gender and school characteristics (UNICEF, 2018).

In the elementary area, the percentage of children who attend an educational institution at least one hour a week before starting school was determined. The equal access of girls and boys to preschool education served as a measure of equal opportunity. The data sources were global databases of UNESCO and OECD as well as the Eurostat survey on formal education and the EU statistics on income and living conditions 2016.

In primary and secondary education, inequalities in reading literacy between the ages of ten and 15 were documented. As an indicator of inequality in these age groups, the reading performance gap between the ten per cent of the best and the ten per cent of the worst pupils was used. In primary school, the data source was the PIRLS study 2016, in secondary school the PISA study 2015.

The results show that the relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and access to education or reading performance varies widely across countries. The results suggest that there is no systematic link between country income and access to pre-school education or reading performance. Latvia, with a comparatively low country income, provides almost universal access to pre-school learning and is better able to compensate for inequality in reading than Germany, which has a significantly higher country income. While countries such as Latvia and Finland understand how to achieve educational equity across all three indicators, there are countries that succeed in doing so in pre-school but no longer in secondary education. Austria also belongs to the latter.

Austria ranks 10th out of 41 countries with the lowest inequalities in terms of access rate to pre-school education, 5th out of 39 in terms of reading literacy among 10-year-old pupils and 29th out of 38 in terms of reading literacy among 15-year-old pupils. According to this ranking, educational equity in Austria decreases with the age of the children.

Romania ranks 39th out of 41 in the list of countries with the lowest inequalities in access to pre-school education, 14th out of 38 in reading literacy among 15-year-olds, and no data are available on inequalities in opportunities for 10-year-olds. Romania is thus one of the countries that significantly reduces inequality from the time of pre-school education until the age of 15.

Italy is in the top third of the list of countries with the lowest inequalities with 15th place in access to preschool education in the middle third, 6th out of 39 in reading literacy for 10-year-olds and 13th out of 38 in reading literacy for 15-year-olds in the top third of the list of countries with the lowest inequalities. No data are available specifically for South Tyrol.

country	Preschool (rank)	Primary School (rank)	Secondary School (rank)
Italy	15	6	13
Romania	39		14
Austria	10	5	29

top third of the ranking | middle third of the ranking | bottom third of the ranking

Figure 42: Inequality in three levels of education (UNICEF, 2018, p. 8)

According to a PISA special evaluation by the OECD in cooperation with the Vodavone Foundation Germany, why children and young people can be successful at school despite social inequality has to do with the success factor resilience. In the context of this study, resilience is understood as a positive achievement of adaptation and as the ability of pupils, despite social disadvantages in all PISA test fields, to reach at least competence level three and thus to acquire the prerequisite for active social participation and lifelong learning (Vodavone Stiftung Deutschland, 2018).

This shows that at PISA 2015 the proportion of resilient pupils in OECD countries is around 25%. Depending on the country, Austria with around 23%, Italy with around 21% and Romania with around 6% resilient pupils are just below or well below the OECD average of 25%. A comparison of the data from PISA 2006 and PISA 2015 shows that in Italy and Romania the proportion of resilient pupils has increased, while in Austria it has decreased.

Among the influencing factors of resilience are personal factors such as gender and the language spoken at home as well as school factors such as joint teaching with pupils from non-socially disadvantaged families, a positive school climate, stable teaching staff, a motivating leadership style of the school management and all-day school forms (Vodavone Stiftung Deutschland, 2018).

4. Conclusion

Against the background of the study "An unfair start" (UNICEF, 2018), in which Austria ranks in the top third of countries with the lowest inequalities in access to pre-school education and in the bottom third of countries with the lowest inequalities in the reading performance of 15-year-old pupils, it seems to be confirmed that a selective school system has a negative impact on educational equity. Baumert and Schümer (2002) have already pointed out, after analysing the data from the PISA 2000 study, that the social inequality of reading skills is particularly high in those countries where different school careers are differentiated early on. In both Romania and Italy, all children go on to secondary school after primary school – without having to choose between different types of school. The decision for the grammar school is made after the 8th grade. According to the results of the study "An unfair start" (UNICEF, 2018), inequality in both countries decreases up to the 8th grade.

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Petra Eisenstecken & Liane Iunesch

Voices of the teachers

The following article gives insights into the opinions of the participating teachers from South Tyrol and Romania.

1. Use of *Lesen. Das Training* in Italy

In South Tyrol there are numerous reading activities and offers to encourage pupils to read. School and public libraries do great things and organise readings with authors, reading competitions, reading Olympiads, reading rallies, reading nights and much more.

For years, people in South Tyrol were convinced that reading animation would improve the reading skills of their pupils. However, the results of the 2009 PISA tests, in which South Tyrol took part for the first time, revealed a different picture. Although the results were not quite frightening, it became clear that just reading a lot was not enough. After the first reading acquisition process, the reading technique must continue to be fine-tuned. Children need to refine their reading skills, not forgetting reading fluency and reading comprehension. Therefore the search for a suitable material started in South Tyrol. The search was successful in neighbouring Switzerland. The *Lesen. Das Training* Program was developed at the College of Education of the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland. This is a structured reading training by Bertschi-Kaufmann, Kruse, Rickli, Riss and Sommer. Since the 2013/14 school year, this intervention programme has been recommended to schools in South Tyrol. The schools can apply for a special financing for the purchase of the training booklets for the children of the 2nd grade primary school in the pedagogical department of the German Directorate of Education, if the own funds of the school are not sufficient. Therefore, volume 1 (2nd/3rd grade) is mainly used in South Tyrol. The reason for this is also to do justice to the transition from first reading acquisition to further reading instruction. First-time readers in particular need to train their reading skills sufficiently, accelerate their reading fluency and learn important reading strategies in order to be able to understand the content of a text for themselves later on. Against this background, that South Tyrol facilitated funding the material *Lesen. Das Training*, it is understandable that all classes involved in the project with *Lesen. Das Training* worked and in the group "Italy" no further

intervention (neither *Filius/Filia* nor unspecific intervention by conventional teaching) was carried out.

The *ELiS* project in South Tyrol involved 15 primary school teachers from different parts of the country (Goldrain, Meran, Lana, Mölten, Bolzano, Kaltern, Steinegg, Brixen, Lüsen). The classes of these teachers were included in the surveys. Beyond this sample involved in the *ELiS project,* however, there are other teachers in South Tyrol who have been using the *Lesen. Das Training* already for several years. For this reason, an online survey was conducted in South Tyrol in January 2018, to which a total of 122 teachers were invited. 78.7% have participated. The results of this online survey will be briefly listed in this chapter.

81% of respondents state that the reading skills of students through *Lesen. Das Training* can be improved. Teachers notice that progress is particularly noticeable among pupils with poor reading skills. Especially the reading flow and the overview of words would be improved by this training program. The children work motivated and are very proud when they are allowed to control their partner. The children must be made aware of the indicated reading report times in the reading liquid section (blue booklet), otherwise they will read too quickly and thus too inaccurately. Especially the boys are motivated to read because they find the texts interesting. The texts are suitable for both sexes and therefore appeal to both boys and girls.

While the pupils work in the green notebook (reading skills) or in the two blue notebooks (reading skills), the teacher has the opportunity to go to the individual pupils or reading tandems, observe them and listen to them. The children always work independently and are allowed to find their own place in the classroom, in the school corridor or in the alternative rooms.

The children particularly like the skill training (green booklet) because it contains easy tasks that even pupils with reading difficulties can do without help, e.g. by solving riddles. *Lesen. Das Training* really teaches the children a lot. They listen more attentively when reading and can also apply eye reading when necessary. Progress can be seen especially among students with poor reading skills. The pupils like the continuous development very much. Thay enjoy their work and enjoy reading. Progress in the acquisition of reading skills can also be observed. Working with the structured training

programme facilitates the design of reading lessons and is found to be very practical in use.

Some work instructions in the green booklet (reading skills) are initially difficult for pupils to understand from time to time. However, it can be observed how the pupils approach the exercises in the course of time quite naturally and independently. The reading progress can be well observed by the continuous checks. The results obtained are useful for further work.
The texts can be used specifically to achieve an internal differentiation of the reading offer in the class. Pupils are allowed to practice fluent and accurate sound reading in partnerships and to record it for each other. The students are particularly fond of doing this. They also take a very critical approach and sometimes assess each other more strictly than the teachers do. The fitness training for the eyes, which is always used when working in the green exercise book, is a lot of fun for the pupils. Foreign-language children can build up and expand their vocabulary in a targeted manner. The content interests the children and touches them personally.
In the 3rd grade the pupils learn how to work out the meaning of read texts, how to summarise contents and how to judge them. These reading strategies can be applied in German lessons as well as in other subjects.
Getting an introduction to the textbook *Lesen. Das Training* is very valuable for the use of the exercise books in the class. The precise instructions on how to handle the individual issues are particularly important. In particular, the progress made during the first year of training, which some pupils make in reading, is very encouraging. Therefore, the results at the beginning of the 3rd class surprised. There it was determined who had continued to read a lot in the summer and who had rather neglected reading. The parents were very surprised that this became so clear during the examination in autumn. This made them aware of the meaningfulness of reading at home. The pupils were very motivated and enthusiastic to take part in the training and practised regularly. Reading partners was also taken seriously by the pupils. They observed and evaluated very critically.

2. Use of *Filius/Filia* for children with German as their second language in Romania

In Romania, all teachers involved in the *ELiS* project took part in further training in the use of *Lesen. Das Training*, so that six of the nine teachers chose *Lesen. Das Training* for their class. Three teachers were prepared to receive the material for reading promotion at a later date. The three teachers (hereinafter referred to as LP1, LP2 and LP3 for reasons of anonymity) who opted for the *Filius/Filia* intervention taught the second class with German as the language of instruction at different schools in different districts of Sibiu/Hermannstadt. The classes in which *Filius/Filia* was used ranged from 28 to 33 children (class sizes varied in two of the three intervention classes during the duration of the project), a total of 99 pupils, two of whom spoke German as their mother tongue. For all other children in the three intervention classes, German is the second language with which they came into contact at the age of three in kindergarten or just before they started school.

The reasons for choosing *Filius/Filia* varied at the beginning. For one teacher, it was a desire for variety: "New information was provided daily, the same text was not always read" (LP3); for the other, it was a desire to teach their children the skills that are a prerequisite for learning success in the grammar school, such as: "Taking important information from texts in each subject" (LP1); and the third teacher justified their participation with the conviction that the children would certainly enjoy the new methods or materials (LP2). The common factor in deciding to participate in the project and to use the *Filius/Filia* reading training is the focus on the children and the benefits of the project for the children's future careers.

Since the contact with the German language was limited to the lessons and the materials *Filius/Filia* had been developed for native speakers, it was to be assumed that the teachers in Sibiu could initially fear that the texts would be too difficult for their pupils. On the one hand, the second grade reading book used so far contains only short texts and poems and a single factual text, so that reading factual texts of this length must appear rather unusual and difficult. This fear was expressed explicitly by only one of the three teachers: "I often found the texts demanding in the sense of the many unknown words" (LP1). But the fear did not materialize: "But the children had understood the essentials from the context and at the last question

'And, what did you learn?' they often convinced me with their detailed answers" (LP1). The other two teachers had no concerns or fears, but said that in the first days of training with *Filius*, the children needed far more time than had been planned in the training: "In the beginning, the exercise lasted longer than an hour, but afterwards they were ready in 25 minutes" (LP2).

According to the teachers, *Filius* reading training in all three classes started with the slowest speed of the factual texts, which proved to be "too slow" (LP2) for the children after a few days, so that they themselves asked to be allowed to use the fastest speed. In all classes the children noticed differences to their own pronunciation, e.g. the use of the "uvular-r" by the speakers.

All teachers felt that the training was fun for the children:

> "The combination of exercise book, CD and reading along inspired the children immediately. They actively participated, repeated, were attentive and could hardly wait for the exercises. The children have often used the acquired knowledge in all areas - language, natural history, biology, environmental studies, politics – in everyday life. They memorized words and applied terms. Day after day their attention was trained and their reading competence has, in my opinion, increased greatly during this period" (LP1).

Another concern expressed in only one case was the difficulty of meeting binding curricular requirements, given the time needed to promote reading literacy in class (LP1). The other two teachers thought that reading training was implicitly also suitable for fulfilling the curricular requirements in various subjects, so that there was no risk of overloading and no time pressure from the intensive training (LP2, LP3).

All three teachers found the strategy training in the third class (*Filia*) "difficult at the beginning":

> "The second exercise book *Filia* seemed too big for our students from the beginning. I found the project leaders' plans more than daring. The children no longer stood alone in front of a sheet of paper to read, but had to analyse demanding, linguistically difficult texts. I knew that these skills had not yet been developed among our students. The children had often answered questions about texts, but I found it difficult to write out ideas from the text myself. I remember I didn't know exactly how to explain it myself. The first five texts were written together. (...) The *Filia booklet* was not as popular among the pupils as the *Filius booklet* in terms of the way it worked, but the proposed topics remained in the children's memories for a long time" (LP1).

The other two teachers interviewed also reported similar experiences.

Although the teachers were explicitly encouraged to express criticism, the feedback on the entire reading training *Filius/Filia* was exclusively positive:

> "At the end of training, all I can say is, 'Who dares wins!' It is okay to confront my students with difficult tasks, with a flood of information that is unexpectedly high. So they use all their energy to read correctly, they are aware of what competence is improved and participate motivated. (...) The information input was very high, but the remaining knowledge is equal" (LP1).

The training improved the reading skills of the children in the perception of the teachers, was attractive for the children because it suggested interesting topics for both girls and boys and "was fun for the children" (LP1, LP2, LP3). In all cases, according to the teachers, the children regretted that the training was over and asked to be allowed to continue reading the booklets at home: "I have the feeling it was a success and the children enjoyed it. They would have liked to have continued with the training" (LP2).

Many children looked for further information and books on the proposed topics, which they were then allowed to present in class.

All three teachers were grateful to have taken part in the project and emphasised above all the increase in learning of the children, but also their own: "I learned a lot about learning to read, my class and myself" (LP1). Together with the next generation of pupils, all three teachers are planning to use the *Filius/Filia reading* training course to promote reading.

Closing remarks or freely after Franz Kafka "*Ways are made by walking them*!"

At the end of this compendium, as project coordinator, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the project.

Every initiated project is predestined to work on something new, to open up something unknown until now. In addition to theoretical specialist knowledge, practical expertise is also required in order to gain insights. I owe the fact that these findings have now been bundled in a book to all the *ELiS* project partners who, over a period of three years, have worked together for many hours to develop ideas, discuss problems, dare new approaches to reading promotion and never lose faith in the relevance of this project. Through productive cooperation across countries, a dedicated team was formed, which was able to gain important insights in the field of reading promotion through the setting of high goals and the implementation and effectiveness testing of reading promotion measures.

I am especially indebted to the participating teachers and the respective school management for their active participation and the associated further training, which have made a significant contribution to the success of this project. Together with the *ELiS* project team, they set out on the road to evidence-based reading promotion and successfully took part in it. Accordingly, Kafka already postulated: "Paths are created by walking them."

With this in mind, I would like to thank all those involved in the *ELiS* project for the joint project and look forward to further paths in the future that will lead to successful and sustainable evidence-based reading promotion in schools.

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