Targeted Support to Struggling Readers

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The Model of Targeted Support
(Eskelä-Haapanen, 2012)

- Background:
- Steady increase in special needs education in Finland (23.3% children in basic education)
- 30% of them integrated in basic education classrooms → children’s rights to study with their classmates and their social environment (Salamanca Statement 1994)
- Inclusive education (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson 2006)
- Each individual learner is properly able to use her/his right appropriate training and support, regardless of and thus without the need for any `special needs` labelling. (European Agency for development in special needs education 2006)
- Children at risk and motivation (Lerkkannen et al., 2010)
Research questions

- What are the classroom teachers’ possibilities to support every child individually and target in their language development process?
- How do phonological exercises located in individuals` zone of proximal development help in this process? (Vygotsky 1978; 1982.)
- What is the expertise of the classroom teacher's?
Procedure – What happened?

- Hermeneutic and qualitative action research – teacher as a researcher
- 29 pupils involved, from the 2nd grade up to the 6th grade (8-11 years), five different diagnoses
- Classroom teacher guided pupils by giving individual support and affording participatory learning
- Cooperation with parents (immediate)
- Multi-professional cooperation (special needs educator, classroom assistant, school psychologist, other school staff)
Data

- A large amount of materials produced by the pupils themselves
- Teacher’s field notes
- Interviews
- Narratives (pupils and parents)
- Tests and exams
- Teacher`s professional growth (memory-work method)
Results and experiences

- The pupils were able to study in their own classroom with peer and teacher’s support without transfer to special needs class
- Reading and writing motivation and skills increased
- Teacher’s professional change
- Targeted support model
- Coteaching
- Differentiation
Enhancing reading fluency through volunteers - Reading Grandmas and Grandpas

A program in which senior volunteers are providing shared reading experiences at schools for children who struggle with independent reading.

Part of the Reading fluency -project in Niilo Mäki Institute (University of Jyväskylä) in association with the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare.

The program promotes active ageing and interaction between generations.
II : Does reading one-on-one with tutors enhance reading?

- Instruction including modeling and/or feedback has also lead to improvements in reading fluency (Chard et al., 2002)
- There are few studies concerning volunteer tutoring programs where adequate evaluation methods were used. The reviews show children participating in a volunteer tutoring outperforming control groups (Morris 2006, Wasik 1998)
- Most of the studies have been conducted with the English-speaking children, not in the context of orthographically regular language
- Exception Huemer (2008), where German-speaking children did improve in fluency during volunteer reading period
How and when?

- Grandmas and grandpas visit schools once a week (for seven weeks)
- One grandma / grandpa reads with students which teacher has selected (two dysfluent readers)
- Sessions last for 20-45 minutes (20 minutes) per student
- Reading sessions take place on one-on-one basis
What happens during reading sessions?

- The tutor and a child read with varying shared reading methods
- A reading diary is filled out
- After reading, a short discussion on the content of the book and reading in general

- echo reading
  “malliluku”
- choral reading
  “yhdessä luku”
- shared reading
  “vuoroluku”
Experiences

- The children’s experiences of the program were positive.
- Grandmas and grandpas have read with a total of 165 children.
- These experiences are from spring 2013:
  - 77% (n=33) of the children told that reading was more fluent after the program than before.
  - 91% (n=40) told they were reading more after the program than before.
  - Especially book reading increased: 73% (n=32) told they were reading more books after than before.
Benefits to reading

Also the children (n=44) were asked “Did you feel the volunteer could help you”
Reading Fluency -project / Niilo Mäki Institute

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Thank you!

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