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**“An Action Research of Intrinsic Reading Motivation
with Literature in the EFL Classroom”**

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Katharina Hoffmann, BA BA BEd

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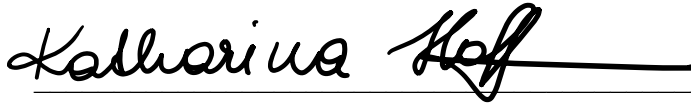
Betreut von / Supervisor:

Dr. Melissa Kennedy, PhD

Declaration of Authenticity

I confirm to have conceived and written this paper in English all by myself. Quotations from other authors and any ideas borrowed and/or passages paraphrased from the works of other authors are all clearly marked within the text and acknowledged in the bibliographical references.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Katharina Hoff", followed by a horizontal line.

Katharina Hoffmann

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List of abbreviations

AR.....	Action Research
CEFR.....	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CLT.....	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
IM.....	Intrinsic Motivation
MRP.....	Motivation-to-Read-Profile Questionnaire
PCI.....	Passage Connection Illustration strategy
SDT.....	Self-Determination-Theory

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1. Introduction

Since decades Austrian teachers worry about their learners' decline of literacy, the competences and skills needed for and gained through reading, which has been exposed by the alarming results of standardized reading tests such as PISA (Schulwesen) and BIST E8 (Bundesministerium für Bildung, BIST Englisch). Because of these distressingly poor reading outcomes the main educational goal for all subjects in the Austrian curriculum is to foster learners' reading skills and strategies to convert students into life-long independent readers (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 21). Although this incentive of stressing literacy is crucial, it does not tackle the problem by its root: the unwillingness of students to start reading at all and thus, avoiding reading experiences altogether. Before teachers can stress reading comprehension and focus on teaching reading skills, they must foster students' eagerness to engage in reading and to find the activity rewarding and satisfying, i.e. their intrinsic reading motivation (Guthrie and Wigfield, Roles 206). Increasing these levels of students' intrinsic reading motivation is attained by appealing to their right of freely chosen, self-directed behaviors, i.e. their self-determination (Deci and Ryan, Intrinsic Motivation 38). This thesis argues for the importance of intrinsic motivation and self-determination for reading, applies it to the EFL reading context focusing on reading materials and tasks, and proves their benefits from empirical data collection in action research.

This study employs action research since the students' unwillingness to read is investigated in a concrete EFL classroom situation. At the beginning of the school year 2020/21 it has been observed that the learners either did not start their individual in-class reading exercises at all or pretended to read the texts and copied the answers for the comprehension tasks from their neighbors or waited for the solutions provided by the classmates or teachers. This lack of reading motivation must be tackled and thus, the teaching and learning of reading in this particular EFL classroom needs to be improved (Reichl 66). Through action research the educator draws conclusions about her learners' behaviors (Smith, Connelly and Rebolledo 115) and makes informed decisions of changes to the curricular priorities (Grabe and Stoller 199). Following a mixed-method approach by collecting quantitative and qualitative empirical data this study integrates itself into the current line of research in the field of student intrinsic motivation (Jones 2020; Allred and Cena 2020).

Since most research on EFL reading motivation has been conducted with participants of higher education (Khan, Sani and Shaik-Abdullah 46), this action research contributes to a

relatively new target group, namely lower secondary school learners aged ten to twelve, attending 2nd grade in an Austrian middle school. The participants of this study have received one year of formal EFL instruction and their language level is described as A1-A2 according to the Austrian national curriculum and CEFR (Council of Europe, CEFR 69-71). Targeting lower level learners requires implementing smaller scale reading projects with shorter reading texts instead of extensive reading programs (Bamford und Day) to avoid overwhelming them because of length and language complexity.

As the title of this thesis mentions, *literature* has been chosen as the materials for this AR in the EFL context. This means fictional and ambiguous texts from which different meanings and interpretations can be constructed (see chapter 2 for full discussion of the term *literature* in this context). Since reading and working with these types of literary texts allows personal responses of students and stimulates communicative and creative processes (Ahrens 181), they have beneficial motivational effects on students (Lütge 179) and transform the reading experience into a pleasurable and satisfying activity.

To find appealing literary texts for this AR the students' reading interests and relevant topics are examined. The results of this informal survey (see Figure 2) form the basic criteria for selecting the three primary reading texts *The Body on the Beach*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, and *3''*. The genre preference of thrilling, exciting crime or detective stories on the one hand, lends itself to the exploration of the effect of suspense and direct involvement on intrinsic reading motivation (Minkowitsch 52), which is discussed in a later paragraph, but on the other hand, also determined the temporal starting point of the reading project. Since the coursebook *More!2* (Gerngross, Puchta and Holzmann 14-21) of the participants offers a unit on the topic crimes and detectives, the reading project was integrated thereafter without effort.

To be able to notice effects of reading materials and tasks on motivation, the students' levels of intrinsic reading motivation are measured by the MRP questionnaire twice – before and after the reading project, following current AR in this field (Allred and Cena). The comparison of the two sets of data allows drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of the selected teaching techniques and reading materials of the reading project to boost IM and self-determination. The MRP reading survey that defines students' level of intrinsic reading motivation through their self-concept as a reader and their value of reading (see chapter 3.4) was translated into German to reduce language barriers and collect quantitative data efficiently.

As the previous didactic methods in this particular EFL classroom failed to ensure student reading motivation, new teaching techniques and activities that foster self-determination and thus, intrinsic reading motivation, are applied in the reading project. Based on Self-determination-theory (see chapter 3.3) and the ARCS model of motivation, a framework for motivational lessons (see chapter 3.5) the interventions of this study are developed. Whereas the pre-reading interventions (see chapter 4.2.4) create an access to reading (Pennac 153), establish a connection to the literary texts to ensure an reading process and transform reading into an enjoyable activity (Bamford und Day 6), the post-reading interventions (see chapter 4.2.5) focus on the personal experiences of the students and their creative interpretations in the light of reader-response theory (see chapter 2.3). These reading interventions are evaluated in terms of their motivational effects analyzing the observed student behavior during the interventions (see appendix 9.5 observation grids), categorizing the written student feedback (see appendix 9.10) and the statements of the conversational focus group interview applying Mayring's qualitative content analysis (see appendix 9.8).

Apart from assessing the effects of the pre-and post reading interventions, the impact of crime and detective fiction on students' intrinsic reading motivation is examined in this thesis. Since suspense, the innate characteristic of crime and detective fiction (Beyer 3-4), invites the reader to be actively involved in the reading process, this element is highly motivational (Lütge 191). The categorized written feedback (see appendix 9.10) and analyzed statements from the conversational interview (see appendix 9.8) shed light onto the motivational influence of this particular genre.

The thesis starts with a theoretical review on how the key terms *literature*, *reading* and *motivation* are defined in the light of this AR. In addition to theses definitions, approaches to reading and teaching reading, as well as models for motivation applied in this study, i.e. self-determination theory, expectancy-value theory and ARCS model, are discussed. In chapter 4 the methodology of this particular AR on intrinsic reading motivation is outlined, the primary reading materials regarding their motivational features are analyzed, the pre- and post-reading tasks and their potentials for self-determination are examined, and the data collection and processing is discussed. The thesis ends with the presentation of the salient insights of this study, the limitations of the AR and an outlook for further research in this field. It can be concluded that the visual stimulations of the pre-reading interventions, the social collaboration and focus on creativity of the post-reading interventions, as well as, the selected primary reading texts had beneficial effects on the students' levels of intrinsic

reading motivation, even though a direct correlation of the crime genre and high levels of motivation could not be confirmed.

2. Literature and reading in the EFL classroom

This theoretical review provides a concise overview of the main didactic aspects of this thesis, *reading literature* and *literary literacy*, and how these terms are understood in the context of the EFL classroom of this research project. After classifying the criteria for *literature*, the selection process, which resulted in choosing the three primary texts for this thesis *The Body on the Beach*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, and *3*", is examined. Third, the metacognitive, reader-response approach to reading these selected literary texts is justified. Although deciding on an approach to reading literature is essential, it does not automatically lead to students establishing an access to literary texts. How teachers cater for this prerequisite for the reading process is outlined in chapter 2.4. After discussing the connection to literature, the different reading purposes and styles applied in the empirical part of this study are scrutinized. Then the didactic PWP approach to teaching reading is analyzed in light of the interventions of this AR. Lastly, the curricular implications on teaching literature and reading for the target institution of this study, an Austrian middle school, are reviewed.

2.1 Importance of reading literature and literary literacy

It has been shown that developing literary literacy through reading literature has long lasting beneficial effects on students' personal lives and future careers (Block und Israel 2). The term *literary literacy* subsumes all competences gained by engaging with literature, which are based on the following interrelated elements: the recognition of the relevance of literature for life, the emotional involvement and personal responses to literature, the understanding and creative production of meaning, the linguistic-discursive as well as the methodological competences for analysis and reflection of literature (Lütge 181). Because of the mentioned benefits of literary literacy one of the main educational goals for all school subjects in the Austrian educational setting is to foster learners' reading skills and to convert students into life-long readers (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 21). To achieve this high-stake objective of independent and successful readers, educators need to ensure access to reading and enhance the feeling of joy while understanding and creating meaning from texts (Pennac 153). According to Thaler (63), this joy for reading has great advantageous for the students:

It goes without saying that a lifetime love of books and reading has numerous benefits. So it is a worthwhile attempt to lay the foundations for continuous reading outside and beyond the classroom. Children at school should be encouraged to read as a pleasurable experience, which they go back to again and again. (Thaler 63)

In other words, educators must foster positive attitudes towards reading for students to interact with texts on a regular basis. In the long run this involvement stimulates motivation (see upward motivational spiral in chapter 3.2.1.1) and creativity (Ahrens 181) but also improves reading comprehension and productive competences (J. Guthrie, *Engaging Adolescents in Reading* 12).

As mentioned in the title, this thesis investigates student motivation and joy for reading *literature*. So before continuing the discussion about reading and its potentials, the term *literature* must be defined in the context of this thesis. Since the AR was conducted in the Austrian EFL classroom, the definitions for the concepts in question stem from literary didactics for teaching literature and reading in German-speaking areas (Nünning and Nünning 2014; Thaler 2016).

The traditional dichotomous definition of literature which distinguishes between *broad* and *narrow* is only partly applicable for this study's context. Whereas the *narrow* definition categorizes texts with poetic or imaginative quality as literature (Nünning and Nünning 15), the *broad* definition considers all written texts with communicative purposes as literature (Thaler 16). Although elements of both definitions, namely the imaginative quality of the narrow and the communicative purpose of the broad definition, are useful for determining the concept of literature in the context of this thesis, they do not include representations of spoken texts as seen in comics and visual texts as used in graphic novels, which are characteristics of the selected primary reading materials of this AR (see chapter 4.2.3).

Therefore, two other categories, *fictionality* and *ambiguity* (Thaler 16), for defining literature in the particular EFL classroom context of this thesis are more appropriate and relevant. The criterion of *fictionality* means that literary texts do not intend to convey the real world and facts and the readers are aware of this characteristic (Thaler 16). Instead of depicting the true reality, literary fiction presents invented worlds, places and characters (Nünning and Nünning 17). Since, *ambiguity* as a characteristic of literature means the openness to a variety of interpretations of literary texts (Nünning and Nünning 18), this element is especially significant for the motivational-effective reading tasks based on reader-response-theory used in this study. The ambiguity of literary texts is exploited for motivating

students to read, express their personal impressions and negotiate meaning with peers (Nünning and Nünning 22).

Apart from these two defining characteristics of literature, the category of *genre* (Thaler 17) is employed to classify the literary texts in the context of this thesis. Choosing from the three main types of literary genres, the literature used in the context of this AR are narrative texts (Thaler 18). Analyzing the three primary literary texts in terms of their topics and themes, they are categorized as crime and detective genre (Nünning and Nünning 31). As mentioned in the introduction the crime genre has been chosen deliberately to fulfill the students' reading needs, comply with organizational issues and explore the motivational influence.

To conclude, literature in the context of this thesis refers to fictional and ambiguous texts, including spoken and visual representations, that fulfill certain communicative purposes and are open for exploring different meanings and interpretations. In addition to these elements, the literature used in this AR is classified as crime genre. All further categories of classification and criteria for selecting reading materials for the study's specific EFL context are discussed in the following section.

2.2 Selecting reading materials

The most important criteria for selecting literary texts for reading in the EFL classroom are that the materials are "interesting, engaging, motivating and appealing to pupils" (Lütge 183) for a pleasurable experience. To determine motivating and interesting reading materials for a particular group of students it is essential to ask them about their reading preferences and needs (Hedge 206). Depending on these specific student interests (see chapter 4.2.2 for interests of AR participants), appropriate and appealing topics, namely crime fiction and detective stories (see chapter 4.2.3), were chosen for this AR. Because of its innate characteristic of suspense (Beyer 3-4) crime and detective narrative fiction is regarded as highly motivating and providing a pleasurable reading experience. "Suspense, adventure, imaginative gaps and surprising twists are important elements of literary encounters for younger learners and they are constitutive for what is essential in reading for pleasure or extensive reading." (Lütge 191)

Apart from these characteristics that ensure an interesting reading process, educators in the EFL classroom need to pay attention to the appropriate length of literary texts according to the students' language level (Lütge 183). Since the pupils in this AR study have

only received one full school year of obligatory, structured English language teaching and learning, their level of proficiency is around A1 to A2 according to the expectations of the national curriculum (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 40) based on the CEFR (Council of Europe, CEFR 69-71). For low-level, young learners of English, it is recommended to select easy reading materials (Bamford und Day 2) including picture books or illustrated stories that attend to different senses and modes (Thaler 27) and provide and interplay between words and pictures (Lütge 191).

Although the communicative EFL classroom promotes the use of authentic reading materials in contrast to highly didacticized texts to rise motivation (Hedge 67), the risk of overwhelming low-level, beginning EFL students must be kept in mind (Thaler 27). Balancing the criterium of authenticity and the risk of excessive demand of the students and following all the above mentioned criteria, one authentic text-less graphic novel called 3“ and two graded readers, which are “authentic to the needs of learners” (Hedge 68), were selected for the empirical study of this thesis. The authentic graphic novel scaffolds the reader’s understanding with pictures (Lütge 192) and develops students’ visual literacy (Lütge 191) without considering the language level. One of the graded readers, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, is a simplified and thus, less demanding text than the original story, and the other illustrated detective story *The Body on the Beach* was written for the language level A1-A2 minding the scope of words and grammatical structures (Thaler 27). See chapter 4.2.3 for detailed analyses of the motivational characteristics of the primary reading texts of the study.

2.3 Approaches to reading literature

Having identified and selected suitable materials, educators decide the approach to reading literature applied in their particular EFL classroom. Traditionally the predominant approach to reading literature in the EFL classroom was the bottom-up-view, which defined reading as decoding written symbols to make sense of a text and placed importance on understanding its linguistic features (Hedge 189). This view stressed the formal aspects of a text and implied that its meaning is figured out by deciphering its structures. Of course it is essential for reading to understand the words and sentences in a text but to correct this over-reliance on structures a reader-centered view opposed to the traditional text-centered one was introduced. This top-down or cognitive view centers the readers. Their hypotheses about the text are confirmed or rejected with the help of their background world and topic knowledge. In order to use the advantages of both views, they were combined to the interactive or

metacognitive view (Thaler 47). The interactive view is the merging of bottom-up activities, such as decoding and understanding words and sentences in the text, and top-down ones, like forming expectations and using previous knowledge for constructing meaning (Ur 141).

With the shift to the reader-orientation a new literary theory surged, the Reader-Response-Theory (Nünning and Nünning 40), which postulates that meanings are constructed through the constant interplay between the readers and the texts (Iser 280). This means that the readers process the texts and these interpretations of the readers create meanings (Nünning and Nünning 40). According to Lütge (178) the reader generates meaning of text and does not intend to decipher the author's intention:

The influence of the Reader Response Theory focussed [sic!] on the reading process as a creative act involving the reader and his or her exchange with the literary text which was more received as a process of negotiation and not so much as a kind of decoding of the ›hidden meaning‹ of a text. (Lütge 178)

Reading is viewed as negotiation of meaning between the recipient and the text and involves emotional processes in the meaning-making, subjective responses and reflections of the individual (Lütge 183), which are dynamic, complex and dependent on numerous different variables (Middeke 191). The readers' perspectives and experiences of the text are valued instead of intending to detect the author's intention or analyze the organization of the text (Hirvela 46).

Reader-Response-Theory, however, was not only quickly introduced in teaching literature and reading in the EFL classroom due to its reader- or learner-centeredness, but also for its potential for communicative tasks (Thaler 57). Although Iser considers reading as communication per se (Middeke 193), in the EFL classroom communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to the integration of productive and receptive language skills (Hedge 45). Apart from combining productive and receptive skills CLT also entails the development and use of linguistic, pragmatic, discourse, strategic competences and fluency (Hedge 56) that support learners to use English for communication with people, acquisition of knowledge, reflection and solving of problems and expressing experience (Clark, Carino and Brownell 37). Therefore this study's AR combined reading literary texts with the use and development of various productive skills and competences (Lütge 179) while applying a reader-response approach to the texts. This synthesis of reader-response-theory and communicative language teaching is also evident in the PWP approach (see chapter 2.6) and thus, in the interventions of the AR (see chapter 4).

2.4 Access to literature and reading

From the previous chapters it has become clear that regardless which approach towards literature is taken (see chapter 2.3) reading a text does not usually stand for itself but always implies interacting with the text by constructing meaning, understanding the content, context or linguistic features or communicating about it. Especially, in the EFL classroom this complexity of the reading and meaning-creating process creates tension (Pennac 57) because of language obstacles and inhibitions (Lütge 187). This strain results in “killing the desire to read” (Pennac 57), observed as unwillingness to read and the development of avoidance strategies as shown in the description of the teaching situation that was the starting point for this study (see introduction). So before the actual reading process can take place, EFL teachers need to establish access to literature through intriguing reading materials (see chapter 4.2.3) and motivating their reluctant student readers to engage in literature by appealing and creative lesson designs (Minkowitsch 26). In this way, it is facilitated that students overcome the fear of not understanding and the meaning-making process of reading is transformed into a pleasurable experience (Pennac 141).

Unfortunately, Pennac’s suggestion to change reluctant readers’ perception of literature by freeing school reading of any obligations (141) and purposes other than enjoyment and pleasure (63) has not yet resonated to a large extent in teaching guidelines and English coursebooks. Not only the approved Austrian coursebooks counteract his approach by setting concrete reading tasks e.g. answering questions or writing summaries (Gerngross, Puchta and Holzmann 18) but also the Austrian EFL curriculum pinpoints reading objectives for each level in form of can-do statements taken from the CEFR (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 40). Despite the curricular constraints and limited time resources, language teachers have the curricular freedom to incorporate projects to develop particular skills and competences (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 38). In order to convert their students into independent lifelong learners and readers (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 40) they must design courses to motivate them for reading for enjoyment and pleasure such as the interventions in this study’s AR (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).

A humorous yet inspirational source for language teachers to change their own and their reluctant students’ perspective on reading are “The Rights of the Reader” by Pennac (163-197). Whereas some of the ten ‘rights’ are easily incorporated into the EFL classroom, e.g. “The right to read it again.” (179) or “The right to read out loud.” (192-196), others seem to counteract the achievement of the curricular goals, e.g. “The right not to read.” (169) or “The right to read anything.” (Pennac 180-183). Reflecting on these rights with the learners,

finding meaningful ways to incorporate them in the reading classes, and taking them into consideration also for out-of-class-reading, they motivate reluctant student readers and facilitate access to literature (see appendix 9.3 for “The Rights of the Readers” by Daniel Pennac and illustrated by Quentin Blake). Further activities that improve the students’ relationships with literary texts and boost reading motivation by fostering self-determination before the actual reading process are discussed in chapter 4.2.4. Having established a connection to literature and willingness to read it is also important to recognize further purposes for reading and choosing the appropriate reading style (Thaler 48).

2.5 Reading purposes and styles

Horatio’s platitude that literature either instructs or delights (Leitch 121) generates two broad purposes for reading, either for information or pleasure (Anderson 100). It is clear that this action research with literature in the EFL classroom concentrates on the latter. Although Pennac’s proposition (63) that school reading should focus mainly on reading for enjoyment is intriguing and useful for reluctant readers (see chapter 2.4), it is still possible to subsume further reading purposes that bring pleasure to learners. Therefore, the question asking what the students want to gain from reading a text is vital because only then they reflect on different reading styles for achieving their purpose (Thaler 48).

For the motivational pre- and post-reading activities in this study (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5) the two reading styles, the intensive and extensive, were combined. If students like to gain a detailed understanding of the text and accurately analyze it, they must attend to intensive reading (Thaler 50). Reading texts which exceed the length of coursebook texts fast and fluently for a general understanding and fun is defined as extensive reading (Hedge 202). In the interventions of this study pictures, passages or the whole narrative were read for details and thus, the students applied an intensive reading style (see chapter 4.2.4). The length of the literary texts (Hedge 202) and the goal of getting students into reading and gaining an enjoyable reading experience, however, is the aim of extensive reading (Bamford und Day 6). Since this thesis focuses on enjoyment of reading and there are no fixed criteria for the nature of extensive reading (Day, Bassett and Bowler 7), the predominant reading style of this study is from now onwards referred to as extensive reading.

Apart from intensive and extensive reading, two other common styles were applied during the interventions of this AR, silent reading and reading aloud (Thaler 50). These

reading styles cater for different learning types and language levels which were also accounted for in the selection of the reading materials (see chapter 4.2.3) and the post-reading tasks (see chapter 4.2.5) of this study. For efficient, individual reading that focuses on understanding the students applied silent reading in class for the preparation of the first post-reading tasks (see chapter 4.2.2). Reading aloud at a slow and uniform pace was also appropriate during the group work for preparing the post-reading transformation tasks (see chapter 4.2.5.4), since the participants of this AR were low level, young learners of English (Thaler 50). Through reading aloud the words come alive, the audience is exposed to the text and other readers are attracted (Pennac 192-196). Irrespective of the reading purpose or reading style the PWP approach, a specific task sequence for teaching reading (Lütge 187), has been developed, which is discussed in the following section.

2.6 PWP approach to teaching reading

The most common practice in the EFL classroom for designing reading classes is the PWP- approach (Thaler 52), which has also been used in this AR (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5). The PWP approach structures the reading procedure around the three stages of pre-, while-, and post-reading (Williams 37-40). This design for teaching reading has been adapted because of the rise of communicative language teaching focusing on the active learner (Lütge 187), who constructs meaning during the reading process and produces language (Surkamp 493). Teachers applying this approach for the design of their reading courses rise the quality of their lessons and facilitate successful learning because the interaction between the readers and the texts is guided, the complexity of the reading process is reduced and the readers overcome linguistic obstacles more quickly (Lütge 187). For each of the stages the educators focus on particular aspects of the text and select appropriate exercises for interaction and achievement of purpose.

In the pre-reading stage the students' prior topic and world knowledge is activated (Hedge 210) as pointed out in the top-down approach to literature (see chapter 2.3). In addition, the students are made aware of the language, unknown vocabulary and grammar structures are introduced to facilitate the language input (Thaler 48), as indicated in the bottom-up view (see chapter 2.3). Another important pre-reading exercise is working on the genre and text type (Thaler 48). In this way the students brainstorm on the topic, reflect on the title and book cover, anticipate the content (Hedge 210) and predict plot lines and types of

characters (Lütge 187). All of these popular and useful pre-reading activities were used in the interventions of this AR (see chapter 4.2.4).

Since the while-reading and after-reading stage often overlap (Thaler 51) they have been synthesized into the post-reading phase in this study (see chapter 4.2.5). Depending on the purpose of reading different post-reading exercises are set by the educators but all of them require interaction, involvement or intense reflection (Lütge 187). There are two broad categories of post-reading exercises: on the one hand, detailed comprehension and analysis, and on the other hand, creative production or transformation of the text (Thaler 52). Whereas the former exercises usually require intensive reading (see chapter 2.5) and focus on form of text and understanding (see chapter 2.3), the latter foster creativity and the expression of personal responses using reader-response-theory (Surkamp 494). Literary texts “provide the potential for creative follow-up activities” (Lütge 180) and these tasks not only develop the students’ language competence and skills by creating written and spoken output at their corresponding language level but foremostly, enhance motivation (Lütge 187). In these creative tasks the readers show their individual interpretations and “meaningfully use the insights gained in the reading process” (Surkamp 494).

To maintain student’s attention and motivation it is important to carefully instruct the students on what is expected from them (Thaler 64), vary the post-reading exercises (Thaler 65), cater for different learning styles and provide choices (see chapter 3.3). Therefore, educators choose adequate post-reading tasks from a variety of production- / action-oriented or performance-based activities (Lütge 188). Production-oriented activities allow students to create something new by artistically and aesthetically expanding or altering the original text (Surkamp 494), for example in this AR, the personal response in PCI (see chapter 4.2.5.2) or the transformations of the text into videos and posters (see chapter 4.2.5.4). These creative oral or written productions promote “expressing personal experiences, [...] discovering one’s own personality, [...], enlarging one’s vocabulary, fostering self-determination and freedom of expression, raising motivation and improving class atmosphere.” (Thaler 56) All of these creative post-reading tasks are prone to collaborative work and the use of digital devices (Lütge 193) , which have motivational effects on the students (see chapter 5.2).

To conclude, the tripartite division of the reading process and the integration of oral and written production skills for communicative tasks based on the literary text, structure the reading process and make it manageable for students (Lütge 183). Through the help of the PWP approach the students gain a deep understanding of the reading materials and develop literary literacy.

2.7 Austrian curriculum on reading literature in the EFL classroom

Since developing literacy and establishing a ‘reading culture’ are ultimate goals in Austrian education (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 21), the acquisition of reading skills and strategies is stressed in the EFL curriculum (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 35). Students need to develop appropriate strategies to read and comprehend English texts independently (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 35). After completing the first year of formal English instruction in an Austrian middle school, the target institution of this study’s AR, the national curriculum requires the students to have reached level A1 according to the CEFR and achieve A2 towards the end of 2nd grade (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 40). This implies that at A1 the students “[c]an understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required” (CEFR Overall Reading Comprehension, A1) and at level A2 the learners “[c]an understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language.” (CEFR Overall Reading Comprehension, A2).

Although the general curriculum accentuates the development of students’ literacy and the curriculum for EFL states explicit levels and competences for reading, the teaching techniques to achieve these goals are not prescribed. Regarding the materials a close examination of the national document shows that *literature* is mentioned once in the EFL curriculum as a topic of the familiar domains (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 38). This implies that EFL teachers are at liberty to select methods and literary texts they find appropriate for developing their students’ literacy and reading skills. Due to this curricular freedom of choice for this AR motivational teaching techniques and interesting reading materials were explored and examined to foster students’ levels of reading motivation as a prerequisite for developing literacy and reading skills (see chapter 4). Before discussing these practical motivational approaches to teaching reading literature, the theoretical groundworks of the concept of *motivation* in education psychology and language teaching must be analyzed in context of this thesis.

3. Motivation in education psychology and language teaching

The use of literature in the EFL classroom stimulates student motivation (see chapter 2.1) because “literary texts [...] quite generally have the potential to evoke a personal response, i.e. positive, negative or ambivalent reactions that can lead to interaction in the EFL classroom and prepare for communicative and creative tasks.” (Lütge 179) Because of these beneficial effects of literature on student motivation, it is now essential to review the theoretical concept of *motivation* in light of this study’s EFL context.

First, the meaning of the term *motivation* is discussed in the domains of this AR, the fields of education psychology and language teaching. Then the most important theory on the differentiation of types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic, is reviewed. As the title of this study indicates, the focus lies on intrinsic reading motivation, whereas extrinsic forms of motivation are only outlined on the margins. Next, the theory of self-determination, which is closely linked to intrinsic reading motivation, is discussed in detail because the pedagogic choices of this action research have been based on it. After that one way of operationalizing the psychological concept and the tool measuring the levels of intrinsic reading motivation of this empirical study are presented. Lastly, the ARCS model of motivation, which was the underlying framework for developing the pedagogic reading interventions of this AR, is reviewed.

3.1 Definitions of *motivation*

Over the course of more than 100 hundred years researchers have come up with numerous definitions for and theories on *motivation*, each accentuating either the biological, emotional, social, or cognitive aspect (Cherry) of the psychological concept in question. In this way, every model and theory of motivation is a simplification of a complex, multidimensional process and a selection of different variables interacting with each other (Guthrie and Wigfield 405). *Motivation* denotes “the process to make a start, guide, and maintain goal-oriented behaviors” (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 1) in humans and it is described as an internal state or condition (Huitt), that explains why individuals take certain actions to fulfill their needs or expectations (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 1).

Defined as a higher-order mental function, *motivation* can be transferred to different areas of behavior (Dörnyei 51), e.g. the field of education, learning and teaching. In the

educational context the term *motivation* is widely used in everyday conversations and professional texts, also subsuming a variety of meanings of the concept. One comprehensive definition of motivation in education is the following: “Motivation is defined as the inclination, energy, emotion and drive relevant to learning, working effectively and achieving.” (Martin, Ginns and Papworth 150) Motivation in learning is described as the starting point of engaging in an activity, the willingness to continue a certain task (Malloy, Marinak and Gambrell 273) and the persuasive feeling that provides optimism in students after having accomplished a certain task (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 1).

In the light of this action research, the particular activity that students should engage in, be willing to continue and accomplish is, of course, reading. Motivation for this specific subskill can be defined as the following: “Reading motivation is the individual’s personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes, and outcomes of reading.” (Guthrie and Wigfield 405) The personal goals or purposes are obtained by reading (Guthrie and Wigfield 405) and every individual takes agency over how to manage, organize and direct their motivation to read (Wigfield and Tonks 250-251).

Although the versatility of the concept of motivation has facilitated the acquisition of interesting insights into the various psychological and educational domains, the lack of a general, universally applicable definition has lead to the question of its usefulness for research. The concept of motivation, nevertheless, continues to be a valuable one in educational psychology due to its compelling aspects. Motivation has an intuitive appeal to the majority of people because it is a discernible phenomenon. The feeling of being motivated or not is experienced daily and the difference between motivated and unmotivated people can be observed in their behavior (Dörnyei 1-2).

From these different current definitions it becomes evident that the traditional claim of motivation to be the antecedent of a certain behavior and description of motivation as a steady characteristic including general commitment to a certain behavior (Dörnyei 11) cannot be substantiated. Especially, in the field of education, this traditional claim has been abandoned because research of teaching and learning has shown that students do not display the initial motivation across all subject matters and keep the level of motivation constant over the course of action (Dörnyei 5). This outdated view of motivation as stable and constant characteristic of a learner would make all educational interventions (see chapter 4.1) to change their level of motivation redundant.

Being motivated is nowadays explained as task-dependent, e.g. being motivated to read, and confined to a specific situation, for example, in the classroom. In this sense,

motivation is described as transitory or temporary, as a process undergoing change (Dörnyei 5). The influential circumstances, such as the educational setting, the materials or the actions of the teacher, can either positively or negatively impact the learner's motivation (Tovani 9). These behavior patterns and situations that lead to altering levels of motivation have been studied in detail and numerous guidelines for motivating students in teaching and learning have been established on the basis of these findings (see sections 3.3 and 3.5). Some of these suggestions have been applied in the context of this action research and their effectiveness for changing the student's levels of reading motivation in this particular educational setting has been investigated (see chapter 4.2).

A further traditional claim in research on the psychological concept in question has concentrated on the individual perspective on motivation, i.e. motivation as a personal need or interest. The social and cultural surroundings in which the student lives and learns have been neglected to a large extent. New approaches, such as the Self-determination theory (see chapter 3.3), however, focus on the societal perspective on individual's behavior which is "determined by powerful contextual forces at large such as sociocultural norms, intergroup relations, acculturation or assimilation processes." (Dörnyei 21). Self-determination theory (see chapter 3.3) has included the societal influences on the individual's motivation in form of 'the need for relatedness' (Dörnyei 26) and in accordance with this theory, Wigfield (2000) has identified social motivation as one central component of reading motivation (Reading Motivation 141).

The social aspect of motivation is particularly important for educational settings and for this action research project on literature because students not only work individually but also in pairs and groups on their reading projects. The communicative element of literature, namely, the interaction and dialogue with peers about views on literature, stories and the sharing of emotions involved in the reading process (Wigfield, Reading Motivation 142) underlines this need to focus on the social aspect of reading motivation. Reichl (2009) challenges the idea of the solitary reader, who immerses in the subjective meaning-making process and the drawing of unchallenged conclusions. She presents research that shows that students prefer to socialize over their reading, share their emotions in the meaning-making process and negotiate the meaning and interpretation of the content online and in educational settings (Reichl 97).

Before continuing the discussion on motivating educational practices and methods it is important to review the most prominent theories and models of the concept in question at this point. This includes the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory, the self-determination

theory, the ARCS model, and the Expectancy (-value) theory. All of these theories and models have been developed or introduced in the context of education, have been transferred into the field of teaching reading and play a distinct role in this action research, which is explained within each subsection.

3.2 The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory

The theoretical perspective on motivation of this action research is largely based on the prominent intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory by Deci and Ryan (1985). Their theory was first published in the book *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior* in 1985 and includes the differentiation between the different kinds of motivation, namely, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation.

Whereas, intrinsic motivation arises within the human because it is internally rewarded (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 5), extrinsic motivation is fueled by rewards outside from the human (7). Amotivation results either from lack of felt competence or lack of value or interest (Ryan and Deci 4). Based on these distinctions between the forms of motivation, Deci and Ryan have done considerable work of experimental psychology on autonomy in human motivation and wellness, which has been expanded and lead to the self-determination theory (see chapter 3.3), already mentioned in the previous chapter because of its societal aspects.

Deci and Ryan's new approach towards human motivation has been striking because the psychologists broke with the until then dominant belief that humans perform best when the preferred behavior is reinforced by external rewards. Their focus of research has shifted towards so-called high-quality motivation, i.e. when humans totally immerse in an action, have a good experience and show their best performance, and the factors that help people to experience this form of motivation (O'Hara). Although Deci and Ryan do not negate the desirable effects of external factors, namely, reward and punishment, on people's motivation, they advocate for autonomous, intrinsic motivation (O'Hara), which is also clearly marked in their term of high-quality motivation.

Their insights have also been foundational in the field of education and learning environments because less controlling and more student-centered teaching settings have been empirically tested to be effective for boosting student motivation and thus, developing their competences and improving their performances. Deci and Ryan's focus on the support of students' autonomy in the light of motivation has contributed to establishing classroom

methods and techniques that on the one hand are highly structured by the teachers but on the other hand understand and appreciate the perspective of the students (O'Hara). A considerable amount of these teaching methods based on Deci and Ryan's theory on motivation and their effects on student motivation have been applied and tested in this action research (see chapter 4.2).

3.2.1.1 *Intrinsic reading motivation*

Since the core of this action research project is the students' level of intrinsic motivation (IM) for reading it is crucial to start with the definition of this term. Intrinsic motivation is the inner drive obvious in every child, namely, to eagerly learn, undertake challenges and engage in problem-solving. In this way, IM is associated with play, exploration, volition and curiosity (Ryan and Deci 3). Interest and the direct involvement with the environment are considered to be the basis of IM, which results in an amplification of the attention towards the environment and stimulation of investigatory and manipulative behavior (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 28).

Intrinsically motivated behaviors provide joy and “are engaged in for their own sake – for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from their performance.” (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 328) Experiencing this enjoyment of a certain activity can induce the condition and experience of *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi). Csikszentmihalyi defines *flow* as a “peculiar, dynamic, wholistic sensation of total involvement with the activity itself” (Kumaravadivelu 48). In a state of flow individuals experience the loss of the ego and perceive themselves as a unit with their surroundings and the activity. Since the experience of the flow is autotelic, meaning it is self-rewarding, this condition is intrinsically motivating for individuals (Nakamura, Tse and Shankland). According to Deci and Ryan (29) flow is the highest form of intrinsic motivation:

[I]nterest and excitement are central emotions that accompany intrinsic motivation, and the concept of flow represents a descriptive dimension that may signify some of the purer instances of intrinsic motivation. When highly intrinsically motivated, organisms will be extremely interested in what they are doing and experience a sense of flow. (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 29)

In accordance with Deci and Ryan's differentiation between types of motivation (1985), Wigfield (2000) has also identified different components of reading motivation, including intrinsic reading motivation and social motivation (*Reading Motivation* 141).

Naturally, intrinsic reading motivation is connected with the same key concepts as IM in general, namely, the interest in reading itself as well as in the content of the reading materials (Bamford und Day 36), the enjoyment and satisfaction of reading. Focusing on these latter characteristics, intrinsic reading motivation is defined as “the experience of reading literature for private enjoyment and diversion” (Reichl 94). This is associated with the image of the reader in a cozy position in an armchair, who is completely immersed in the book and forgetting time and place and everything around them (95) and thus, experiencing the state of flow.

For students to experience this interest and enjoyment (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 34) in school reading and enter a state of flow in relation to the reading process, educators imitate the ideal picture of the reader as described by Reichl (95). Teachers either shift reading for school to the outside of the classroom, where students choose their preferred reading positions, places and atmosphere. But teachers also imitate the idealistic picture in the school library or other available rooms, dissolving the usual classroom seating arrangements and establishing a relaxed reading atmosphere (see chapter 4.2.4.1).

Apart from creating a relaxed reading atmosphere, educators also need to reduce pressure and tension and free students from external rewards and other contingencies (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 29). For students to be interested and intrinsically motivated to read, they need to perceive the locus of causality within themselves. This means that the students feel like the action or behavior stems from within themselves and they choose autonomously and independently to read (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 618).

However, to operate without external control and engage in learning and reading freely, the students need self-determination (Deci and Ryan 30). Self-determination is the individual’s experience of choice, the capacity to determine one’s action and the need to have that capacity (38). In this sense, self-determination and the satisfaction of the need of competence, as well as the need of relatedness and autonomy (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327) (see section 3.3), are the antecedents for learners “to be more intrinsically motivated and willing to engage in learning activities for the sake of knowledge itself” (Ibrahim, Baharun and Harun 215). In other words, students’ intrinsic motivation for reading can only be enabled and enhanced if teachers recognize the importance of self-determination in learning and design the educational contexts according to the students’ needs as shown in the interventions of this action research (see sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).

When the need of competence has been temporarily satisfied because the student has effectively engaged with a certain environment and successfully mastered a particular skill,

these positive feelings of accomplishment lead the individual to explore further, playfully deepen their new skills and stretch their abilities (Deci and Ryan 27). The individual continually searches for optimal challenges that require the expansion of their capabilities in order to satisfy the need for competence (33) and the desire of self-improvement (Turner 416). In this way, high levels of competence shown in outstanding student performances have been connected with high levels of intrinsic motivation of the performers (Taylor, Jungert and Mageau).

The connections between enjoyment of reading, i.e. intrinsic reading motivation, and high levels of competence are also supported by the Motivational Spiral Model, a model of reading motivation developed by Rippel (L. J. Fisher 1). The upward spiral of this motivation model (see figure 1) stresses that enjoying reading is the basis for reaching higher levels of reading motivation. If the students derive feelings of pleasure from the reading process, they spend more time on reading (J. Guthrie 6), get more practice, automatize the process, reading becomes even more pleasurable and their language knowledge grows, which results in high achievement (J. Guthrie 6). Ultimately, they develop a good attitude towards school and more motivation to read (L. J. Fisher 1).



Figure 1: *Motivational Spiral Model (MSM) – upward spiral*

Guthrie and Wigfield (2005) have also highlighted this relation between reading motivation, comprehension and achievement. “Motivation is causally related to comprehension in the sense that classroom conditions that increase reading motivation also increase reading comprehension and recall of text that is read” (Guthrie and Wigfield, Roles 206). In their model of reading they combine interactive and metacognitive (see chapter 2.3) with motivational processes for reading and present strategies for the literature classroom. The cognitive processes such as the activation of prior knowledge, the formation of mental

representations of the text, the construction of causal inferences and the integration of prior knowledge, which have been used as pre-reading activities in this action research (see chapter 4.2.4), are intertwined with motivational processes that foster intrinsic motivation through recognizing personal interest and providing task mastery goals (Guthrie and Wigfield, Roles 189).

To conclude this chapter on intrinsic reading motivation it has been made clear that classroom settings that focus on reading for pleasure and enjoyment promote the students' levels of IM. High levels of IM enable them to develop their reading skills, which then in the long run leads to high levels of competence and exceeding performances in reading comprehension.

3.2.1.2 *Extrinsic Reading Motivation*

In contrast to intrinsically motivated actions, which are internally rewarded, extrinsically motivated behaviors are driven by external rewards. They are described as instrumental (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 328) and as means to a certain end (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 619). The external reasons for action vary widely in content and character in education (Ryan and Deci 3): from positively connotated incentive systems such as gold stars, best-student awards, or positive feedback (Deci, Koestner and Ryan 1) to restricting aspects such as control, punishments, threats and anxieties (Ryan and Deci 3). Whereas intrinsically motivated readers are driven by enjoyment and pleasure (see section 3.2.1.1), extrinsically motivated readers are concerned with checking scores, and testing and comparing their fellow students' reading comprehension skills (J. Guthrie 7). Extrinsically motivated readers lack devotion, do not spend much time on reading and do not gain a deeper understanding of the text (J. Guthrie 2). However, as incentives for extrinsic reading motivation are often used in classroom settings and school pupils are familiar with them, they are important to relevant to point out.

Generally, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are commonly depicted as antagonistic (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 328) or dichotomized. However, self-determination theory (see chapter 3.3), the theory which evolved out of the intrinsic – extrinsic motivation model (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 4), indicates four subtypes of extrinsic motivation along a continuum of self-determination or control (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 619). The four types of extrinsic motivation are external, introjected, identified, integrated forms of regulation and were built around the concept of *internalization*. Internalization is the

“proactive process through which people transform regulation by external contingencies into regulation by internal processes” (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 328). This means that internalized actions and behaviors can display a higher level of self-determination, since the individual strives to incorporate external contingencies and regulations into their core self (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 620). These new categories are especially important for the field of teaching and learning because even though intrinsic motivation is considered to be the optimal drive for long-lasting and efficient learning, some forms of extrinsic forms are appreciated in educational settings.

External regulation is the most non-autonomous, controlled and least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci 3). The locus of initiation of the action or behavior is external to the person, usually instigated through obtaining rewards or avoiding threats or punishments (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 329). Externally regulated reading processes thus are instigated by controlling teachers in form of reading as punishment, e.g., for behaving inappropriately during the lesson, or as part of standardized testing in form of reading comprehension tasks in tests (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 619). It has been shown that forced reading by the teachers results in avoidance mechanisms (Cambria and Guthrie 18) (see introduction) or the evaluation of the reading materials as “boring, lame, uninteresting, or pointless” (Armour 115) In this way, they contribute to the reluctance to read for fun and undermine the development of intrinsic reading motivation in students.

Nevertheless, in institutionalized educational systems external regulation in form of controlling or informational rewards (Deci, Koestner and Ryan 3), are deeply ingrained. The students are expected to study, acquire skills, actively participate and meet certain criteria and deadlines in order to receive positive grades (Deci, Koestner and Ryan 5). In this environment students continuously receive informational rewards in form of teacher feedback, or are frequently confronted with controlling behaviors, such as deadlines and competitions between students, that impair the students’ perceived autonomy and thus, decrease intrinsic motivation (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 335). Even educators, who are aware of the detrimental effects of extrinsic awards on students’ intrinsic motivation to learn (Deci, Koestner and Ryan 15), still use them occasionally because they are easily applicable, effective for achieving short term learning goals or for re-focusing the attention of the students as applied in one intervention of this action research (see chapter 5.2).

Introjected regulation is internalized but not self-determined. The behavior is internally coerced (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 329). This means that the individual does not choose to engage in reading but wants to avoid feelings of guiltiness (Levesque,

Copeland and Pattie 620), for example, if the student has a personal relationship with the teacher and does not want to disappoint them because of not having read a certain text. It is also introjected extrinsic motivation if students only strive for personal aggrandizement by engaging in or completing a reading task (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 620). They do not enjoy or experience value in the reading process but feel important when providing answers to reading comprehension tasks or powerful (Ryan and Deci 3) if they have succeeded in completing the reading when peers struggled. Instead of reinforcing this type of extrinsic motivation for reading by setting comprehension tasks with closed-ended questions and fostering competition between peers the interventions used in this action research to boost intrinsic reading motivation have focused on setting open-ended or creative tasks and collaboration (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).

Despite the inevitability of extrinsic pressures in the school context, the more self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation, namely identified and integrated regulation, enable learners to value and embrace non-fun, controlled activities (Haerens). Students who read due to identified regulation experience a high degree of volition and willingness (Ryan and Deci 3) because reading is perceived as a useful instrument to achieve the goal of improving (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 330). Students, who have fully integrated the reading process into their core self (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 330), cognition and motivations (Levesque, Copeland and Pattie 620), perceive the action as consistent with their values, needs and as expression of their identity (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 330).

Especially integrated regulation allows the students who do not enjoy or find pleasure in reading as such, - the main aspects of intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 3.2.1.1) to experience the characteristics of self-determination too. Students feel autonomy as initiators of their reading process, competence when being effective and confident readers, and relatedness because of satisfying relationships and closeness to peers and teachers during the reading process (Haerens). Thus, an important goal for education is that students realize the value of learning and the acquisition of skills “even with respect to topics and activities they do not find interesting.” (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 338) Giving value to learning in general and reading in particular, resulting from internalization and integration, can only happen “if (a) children understand the personal utility of the activity, (b) they are provided choices about the activity with a minimum of pressure, and (c) their feelings and perspective are acknowledged.” (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 338)

3.3 Self-determination theory

In the previous chapters about intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation self-determination, which has developed out of the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 3), has already been mentioned frequently. It is essential now to fully understand and discuss self-determination theory because the pedagogic choices and decisions of this action research to promote intrinsic reading motivation have been made in light and respect of this theory.

Whereas most motivation theories stopped at the differentiation between intentional and non-intentional actions to investigate and determine the factors for failing or promoting certain behaviors, self-determination theory added the distinction of self-determined or controlled types for intentional behavior. This differentiation is important because the intentional reading behavior of the students in this study should shift from the controlled types to self-determined ones, supported by the teacher and the interventions (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5). Intentional self-determined actions display volitional engagement, the sense of the individual's self and the regulatory process is the choice of the individual. In practice this means that the students choose to read a certain book because they want to engage with or use the materials for their purposes. In contrast, controlled actions are subject to interpersonal or intrapsychic forces and the regulatory process is either compliance or defiance (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 326-327). This means that the students read either to comply with the teacher's or parents wish for reading or defy the wish for reading and avoid it all together as pointed out in the introduction.

For the definition of self-determined and controlled actions the concept of the perceived locus of causality (see chapter 3.2) is useful because it clarifies its relation of self-determination to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Whereas for self-determined behavior the locus of causality is perceived within the person, i.e. internal, for controlled behavior it is external to the self (327). This shows a close relationship between intrinsic motivation and self-determination, and extrinsic motivation and controlled behaviors. "Intrinsically motivated behaviors represent the prototype of self-determination – they emanate from the self and are fully endorsed." (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 328) This quote shows that intrinsic reading motivation is self-determined in the sense that the volition of the students to engage in reading stems from within themselves and the students fully approve their decision to read.

Self-determination theory addresses the energization and the direction of the human behavior through three inherent, innate, basic psychological needs: the need of competence, relatedness and autonomy (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327). The need of competence is described as the desire to attain outcomes, perform actions successfully (327) and the feeling of effectiveness and self-confidence in pursuing and accomplishing set tasks (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 3). In practice the need of competence is satisfied through finishing a book, accomplishing a reading task, e.g. skimming or carefully reading a text for certain information, or having understood the main message of the text. The second one, the need of relatedness, is characterized by the feeling of being connected to others (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327), i.e. the teacher, peers or other readers. The final need of autonomy is associated with liberty and volition (Gopalan, Bakar and Zukifli 3), meaning that the action and behavior is self-initiated and self-regulated (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327). The students do not solely experience the reading task as forced by the teacher or the school curriculum but can take action and make decisions in the reading process.

The concept of needs in explaining motivation is not innovative, as Maslow (1954) synthesized the large body of research on human motivation in his hierarchy of needs. However, the concept of needs has been proven immensely useful since it addresses motivational universals in humans and can be combined and integrated with different phenomena. Social contexts that provide the opportunity to fulfill the people's basic psychological needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy will enhance motivation, achievement and personal development (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327-328). In order to boost students' intrinsic reading motivation, self-determination and the satisfaction of these three innate universal needs underlie and determine the interventions applied in this action research on reading in the EFL classroom (see chapter 4) to create the optimal reading context.

If the social context does not satisfy the three basic psychological needs, motivation is diminished, the learning process is impaired and the students will experience alienation from education and knowledge (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 333). Studies have shown that this diminishment of motivation further deteriorates with age and school years and especially, teenager students lose interest and excitement for the ongoing in school (Haerens). To counteract this automatic process of loss of motivation in teenage years, experts on SDT have provided teachers with practical strategies to facilitate and promote self-determined forms of motivation (Ryan and Deci 1) and given practical advice for the optimal conditions and educational settings for learning (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 332).

In order to fulfill the need of competence, i.e. for students to feel competent as readers and to succeed in the reading tasks, the teacher provides well-structured environments and optimal challenges in form of suitable reading materials and reading strategies. “The intrinsic needs for competence and self-determination motivate an ongoing process of seeking and attempting to conquer optimal challenges.” (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 32) In addition to the optimal reading challenges, the educator also sets tasks that interest the students and require their use of the creativity and resourcefulness (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 32). Rather than setting performance goals, which focus on students outperforming their peers in a controlling way, teachers define mastery goals that increase student motivation because they enhance students’ existing competences and their self-belief of succeeding (Ryan and Deci 11).

Positive and constructive feedback by the teacher further satisfies the need of competence (Ryan and Deci 2). Instead of using degrading and controlling words, which negatively impacts the students’ intrinsic motivation (Reeve and Jang 216-217), they are enlightened by the teachers’ informational feedback on how to understand or read better (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 248). A common misconception teachers need to be aware of is that grading is not an effective motivational strategy per se. Only by providing criteria for grading, e.g. in form of an assessment sheet, and informational feedback on how to meet certain standards, grades function as incentives for rising intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci 11). Teachers are responsive to their students’ comments and questions about the reading materials and tasks and in this way they acknowledge the student’s improvement and mastery but also encourage effort and diligence (Reeve and Jang 216-217).

The need of relatedness highlights the importance of interpersonal contexts for successful learning (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 248). The relationships facilitating the learning processes in school predominantly involves teachers and peers (Ryan and Deci 2). The teachers establish positive relationships with their students by attempting to understand and be responsive to the student’s perspectives, e.g. their interpretations of certain text passages or visual representations. This also means that need-supportive teachers listen to their students’ questions and comments about texts and task instructions, bring attention to the students’ interests in reading (Reeve, Bolt and Cai 546-547), acknowledge the students’ feelings of like and dislike of certain text genres (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 336), their value systems (see chapter 3.4.1.1), and their socio-cultural frames of reference (Ryan and Deci 9). It has been shown that personal conversations about the students’ perspectives on reading, e.g. the value of reading, the role of reading in the family and peer group, their

preferred genres, as well as individual positive feedback on reading strategies, in combination with the acceptance of the teacher as a reading role model have beneficial effects on intrinsic reading motivation (Jacobs and Farrell 54).

Whereas the relationship to the teacher and their need-supportive behavior has been discussed intensively in literature, the relatedness to the peer group has only been mentioned on the margin (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 333). Since peer groups have a profound impact on teenagers, educators should use these influential social relationships for boosting learning. In the particular case of this study respectful collaboration in form of pair and group work has been used to satisfy the need of relatedness and thus, rise intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 4.2.5).

The need of autonomy in students is satisfied by setting reading tasks that create a sense of initiative and ownership of actions (Ryan and Deci 2). Instead of undermining the need of autonomy by monopolizing reading materials, telling answers about texts, and giving too many directives on how to approach the tasks (Reeve and Jang 216-217), educators provide meaningful choices of reading materials and tasks (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 342). Autonomy-supportive educators also give the students time for independent reading and let the students allocate time spans for certain text passages and tasks (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 336). Interestingly, research on subjective teacher beliefs in relation with their behavior has shown that students who are perceived as autonomous and motivated receive more autonomy support from teachers, whereas distracted students are perceived as less motivated and are treated in more controlling ways (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 341). In this action research, the students' need of autonomy was satisfied by providing various choices of reading materials according to their individual cognitive starting points (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 342) and reading tasks acknowledging the individual differences in learning (Ryan and Deci 9). In addition to these choices, the students could also select their preferred forms of reading and their partners for collaboration (see chapter 4.2.5).

Supporting the need of autonomy does not imply a laissez-faire, chaotic, boundary-free teaching setting. The idea of structure in self-determination is highly appreciated and considered beneficial for student learning. Structures have enormous positive effects because they set clear expectations and goals, signal consistency in rules and guidelines, provide informational support and scaffold learning (Ryan and Deci 7). According to Deci and Ryan (252) clear boundaries positively affects children's intrinsic motivation in several ways:

Setting limits typically involves asking children to do something that conflicts with one of their needs or feelings. By acknowledging the potential conflict, perhaps providing

an alternative outlet for satisfaction of the need or expression of the feeling, but at least affirming the legitimacy of the need or feeling, one can generally avoid the kind of power struggle (whether interpersonal or intrapersonal for the child) that undermines the child's self-determination and intrinsic motivation. The child can accept the limit and still maintain self-esteem. (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 252)

When teachers explain the limits to the students in an informational way, intrinsic motivation can still be maintained or enhanced even though the regulations and boundaries conflict with the students' need of autonomy. Through this open and respectful communication the power struggle between the educator and the student is avoided and the relationship to the teacher in form of the need of relatedness is protected.

Huitt (2011) has synthesized the different guidelines for need-supportive teaching behavior to increase intrinsic motivation and has created a list of the most important features. This enumeration of SDT-focused teaching is a checklist for practitioners and summarizes the desired educational setting:

Teachers explain or show why learning a particular content or skill is important, allow students some opportunities to select learning goals and tasks, create and/or maintain curiosity, provide a variety of activities and sensory stimulations, provide games and simulations, set goals for learning, relate learning to student needs, and help students develop plans of action (Huitt).

All of these SDT characteristics in education have been respected in the interventions of this action study on reading (see chapter 4) because if the three basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy are ensured, the intrinsic reading motivation in students rises and an increase in students' engagement, learning and wellness is perceived. Ideally, the focus on SDT will enable the students to become self-directed, life-long learners and readers, which is set as an ultimate goal in the national curriculum (see chapter 2.1). A further positive consequence of high levels of self-determined motivation are positive effects on school outcomes, i.e. better grades, and lower school dropout rates (Ryan and Deci 5).

Even though self-determination theory has provided numerous guidelines for educators based on scientific data to establish an optimal educational setting and promote beneficial forms of motivation in learning, the implementation and application of the need-supportive classrooms is still difficult. The existing school system with its constraints in time, resources and the national curriculum complicates and often deters teachers from altering their teaching techniques and methods. In addition to the boundaries of the school framework "teachers, like their students, have basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT specifically maintains that for teachers to actively support students' needs, they themselves must experience need supports." (Ryan and Deci 13)

Administrative control, inflexible curricula and the lack of support for teachers deteriorates their levels of motivation. Pressure on the teachers by the school organization, the superiors, the educational system, and the public decreases their self-determination, i.e. their autonomy, competence and relatedness, and they rather exert pressure and control over their students (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 340). In order for teachers to cultivate and assert their levels of motivation, they need to be empowered and the schools need to establish general motivational climates (Haerens).

Despite the previously mentioned obstacles and the fact that the need-supportive approach has been a novelty in the target institution, the action research of this thesis proves that SDT focused reading projects are possible and fruitful to increase student motivation (see chapter 5). The research project on intrinsic reading motivation satisfied the teacher's need of competence because it focused on the educator's special domain of literature and the transmission of interest in reading to students. The project was approved by the school forum and the headteacher (see chapter 4) because its general objectives were in line with the school's vision and values, namely, the increase of intrinsic reading motivation to transform students into life-long readers and independent learners. Although the project was embedded to achieve the goals of the national curriculum, the teaching materials and methods were selected by the teacher. In this way the educator's need of autonomy was fulfilled. Since the findings regarding motivational reading materials and teaching techniques beneficial for student motivation were shared with fellow English teachers in the institution, the need of relatedness was also satisfied.

3.4 Measuring intrinsic reading motivation with the MRP

In order to understand the effects of educational interventions on the students' levels of self-determination and to measure their levels of intrinsic reading motivation, this psychological concept has been operationalized to make it objectifiable. It must be stressed that reading motivation is "a difficult psychological construct to define and measure and [consequently] there is no single way to view or assess children's motivation for reading." (Hirvela 78) Measuring reading motivation has also been criticized because the use of self-reported surveys and questionnaires as well as qualitative data obtained in interviews only show situational and individual data. It is problematic to compare the results of the various measuring tools not only because of the diverging results but also because of the different conceptualizations of motivation (Grabe 190). As a consequence, the results of the tools that

measure reading motivation must be analyzed with care and the theoretical concepts underlying the measuring instruments might also be questioned (Jones).

Since the action research of this study pinpointed and investigated a problem to suggest improvements for a concrete teaching situation, the use of the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) consisting of a self-reported questionnaire and guidelines for a conversational interview was considered appropriate and valid. The MRP measures intrinsic reading motivation by reviewing and combining the individual's self-concept as a reader and value of reading. This view on intrinsic reading motivation is based on the expectancy-value theory of motivation by Eccles, which is explained in detail in the following chapter.

3.4.1.1 *The expectancy-value theory by Eccles as basis for the MRP*

The MRP is based on the expectancy-value theory on motivation by Eccles (1983), which posits that motivation is determined by an individual's perception about how successful one is in performing a task (expectancy) and by the individual's value of accomplishing this certain task (Eccles 79-81). These perceptions of being successful, i.e. the expectancy beliefs, are defined as the individual's evaluation of competence (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 119), which is in line with SDT and competence as a basic need that has to be satisfied in order for an individual to feel motivated (see chapter 3.3). In the MRP these perceptions of the individual's reading competence are synthesized to the self-concept of the reader. The second element of Eccles' definition of motivation is the task-value, which in the MRP is transferred to the value of reading. This view of the task-value comprises four different aspects: attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, and cost (Tran, Chen and Warschauer 292). Since the items of the MRP questionnaire measuring the students' value of reading are categorized into these four categories (see section 3.4.1.2), they are shortly described hereafter.

If students attribute attainment value to reading, they personally find it important to succeed in the reading tasks and their sense of identity is influenced by the importance of developing reading skills (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 120). Intrinsic value of reading is the interest, enjoyment and fun experience during the reading process and the tasks (Tran, Chen and Warschauer 292). Clearly, intrinsic value of reading is similar to Deci and Ryan's concept of intrinsic motivation and closely linked to Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow (see section 3.2.1.1). If students find reading and the tasks connected to the text useful

for their lives in relation to their future careers and goals, it is utility value (Tran, Chen and Warschauer 292). In Deci and Ryan's terminology, the reasons for the engagement in reading are extrinsic but they are directly related to the individual's internalized goals (see chapter 3.2.1.2) (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 120). The last component of the value of reading is the costs, which are the conceptualized negative aspects of engaging in reading. These unfavorable facets are performance anxiety, fear of failure, the amount of effort and investment put into reading and understanding it and completing the reading tasks (Möller 285), and the lost opportunities or alternatives because of the choice to read and do the related tasks (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 120).

To conclude, the expectancy-value theory by Eccles underlying the MRP to measure intrinsic reading motivation in this study clarifies that the students' reading motivation depends on their individual beliefs about their ability to read. This reading competence further determines their positive or negative value of reading (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 120). In order for students to manage reading a text and completing the tasks related to the reading and thus, positively impact their reading values, teachers have to create an access to literature, establish a positive reading atmosphere, select relevant reading materials and tasks and function as role models (Eccles and Wigfield, *Motivational Beliefs* 121) by explaining reading strategies and values of reading (see chapter 4.2.4.3).

3.4.1.2 *The Motivation to Read Profile (MRP)*

Originally, the MRP was developed in 1996 for L1 students of English in elementary school because researchers and educators felt "the need to increase [their] understanding of how children acquire the motivation to develop into active, engaged readers" (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 518). Even though, the MRP was adapted in 2007 to investigate the reading motivation of L1 students in secondary school and the survey was revised to be appropriate for adolescents (Pitcher, Albright and DeLaney 380), the original version of the MRP questionnaire was used in this AR. The decision to adapt the tool initially measuring the motivation of L1 readers in elementary school for beginning low-level English readers in the EFL classroom was based on the comparable situation of limited reading experiences and acquired reading strategies in the English language. Another reason for selecting the MRP for this study was its user-friendliness and efficiency because it was easy to administer and quickly provided a concise overview of the students' levels of intrinsic motivation.

Based on the expectancy-value theory on motivation (see chapter 3.4.1.1), the MRP measures the intrinsic reading motivation by investigating the self-concept of the reader and the value of reading for the individuals. The instrument combines a quantitative and qualitative approach for assessing reading motivation, which was then an innovative stance, because it entails a self-reported, group-administered reading survey (quantitative data) and individually administered conversational interviews (qualitative data) (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 519).

The reading survey is comprised of 20 items with four-point-scale responses: 10 items covering the self-concept of the reader and 10 items the value of reading (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 522). The questions asking for the self-concept of the readers are further divided into two subsections: the self-perceived competence in reading and acquired reading strategies, and the self-perceived performance compared to peers (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 520-522).

Self-perceived competence in reading / reading strategies:

Item 5: When I come to a word I don't know, I can ... figure it out.

Item 7: When I am reading by myself, I understand what I read.

Item 9: I am a.... reader.

Item 13: When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I think of an answer.

Item 15: Reading is ... easy/hard for me.

Item 19: When I read out loud, I am a reader.

Self-perceived performance compared to peers:

Item 1: My friends think I am reader.

Item 3: I read as my friends.

Item 11: I worry about what other kids think about my reading

Item 17: When I am in a group talking about stories I talk about my ideas (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 520-522).

The items in the questionnaire about the value of reading ask for:

1: attainment value: Item 8: People who read a lot are....

Item 12: Knowing how to read well is ... important.

2: intrinsic value: Item 2: Reading a book is something I like to do.

Item 4: I think reading is way to spend time.

Item: 20: When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel

3: utility value: Item 16: When I'm older I will spend of my time reading.

4: perceived value of reading of their peers: Item 4: My best friends think reading is

5: value of reading-related activities: Item 6: I tell my friends about good books I read.

Item 10: I think libraries are ... place to spend time.

Item 18: I would like for my teacher to read books out loud to the class...) (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 520-522).

The conversational interview of the MRP provides detailed insights into the unique nature of the participant's reading motivation and focuses on the preferred genres, authors, the means of locating appropriate and interesting reading materials (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 519) and the activities related to reading (531). The conversational interview guidelines allow deviation and adaptations to suit the researcher's purpose, gain deeper insights into the participants' reading experiences and consequently, recognize the individual modes to relate and explain reading motivation (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 525).

For the conversational focus group interview of this action research, the revised questions of the 2007 (Pitcher, Albright and DeLaney 380) and 2013 (Malloy, Marinak and Gambrell 274) versions were used because the updated guidelines include questions concerning electronic resources and the reading of digital texts (Malloy, Marinak and Gambrell 275), schoolwork and projects the students enjoyed and texts the students choose to read out of school (Pitcher, Albright and DeLaney 380). These questions were extended and modified to ask about the interventions and reading materials of the reading project (see appendix 9.7 for the guidelines for the AR's conversational focus group interview).

"[T]he results of the MRP can be used to plan instructional activities that will support students' reading development." (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 529) On the one hand, individual interventions for students with low scores in the reading survey are introduced to support their development of reading motivation, increase their reading engagement, boost their feeling of competence or the value of reading by providing meaningful purposes. On the other hand, as conducted in this action research, class projects with substantial cooperative group activities or home reading projects are implemented on the basis of the results of the MRP (530). "The MRP can provide a means of assessing, monitoring, and documenting student responses to innovations in the classroom that are designed to promote reading motivation." (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 531) Thus, in this AR project the MRP questionnaire was used before and after implementing the reading program, the answers of the self-reports were verified by careful observations of the educators (531) and in the conversational focus group interview after the innovative lessons the educators were

informed about the personal opinions of the students regarding the motivational elements of the reading materials and tasks. In these ways, the questionnaire and the interview guidelines of the MRP investigated and measured the effects of the interventions on the students' intrinsic reading motivation in this action research.

3.5 ARCS model for lesson planning

The ARCS model was developed as a framework for designing instructions that promote motivation to learn (Keller 2). The model can be adapted for lesson planning (6) and was used to develop the interventions of this action research project on intrinsic reading motivation. The ARCS model suggests that attractive, satisfying and stimulating learning materials boost student motivation and it provides a systematic way to determine and deal with student motivation in relation to learning materials. The model synthesizes most areas of research on human motivation into four main variables, which are **Attention**, **Relevance**, **Confidence**, and **Satisfaction** (Keller 3).

Attention is a pre-condition for motivation and learning; therefore, the first step for motivation is to attract and sustain direct attention to the material in question. In the teaching contexts this initial attention gaining can be attained via a dramatic or provocative sentence, image, a distinct noise or a quiet pause (Keller 3). In this action research the attention towards reading was attracted, on the one hand, by visiting the library and establishing a relaxed reading situation, and on the other hand, by graphic stimulation taken from the reading materials. Especially, for low level learners visuals have been proven to be attractive and stimulating input (Oktarina, Hari and Ambarwati 76). The most difficult issue of the condition of attention is to maintain it, to satisfy the “sensation-seeking needs of the students” and foster “their knowledge-seeking curiosity” (Keller 3). For this action research, reading materials regarding the topic crime were chosen in order to sustain attention through the genre's innate characteristics of suspense and thrill (Beyer 3-4).

The second condition for motivation is relevance which can be presented in three ways on a continuum from a rather traditional to a future-oriented way. The classical humanistic perspective views learning as relevant, which students will come to enjoy and appreciate. This view on learning is in accordance with the upward model on reading motivation by Rippel (see chapter 3.2.1.1) because it focuses on the process of reading as enjoyable from which the students will derive even further pleasure and appreciation, the more they read and gain competence. Other instructors present learning as relevant for

present jobs or future careers. This perspective is in line with the goals of the Austrian national curriculum because instructing students to read will eventually convert them into life-long readers and independent learners (see chapter 2.1). The third possibility to make learning relevant to students is to stress how the content is taught and learned (Keller 3). For the interventions of this action research a reader-centered approach (see chapter 2.3) was taken which made it possible for students to relate to the content and focus on their experiences during reading (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5). This third view on relevance also attends to different structures of learning (Keller 3). Students who like to affiliate or relate to others (see chapter 3.3. for need of relatedness) enjoy reading in groups and working together on the output (see chapter 4.2.5.4), whereas students who want to achieve goals appreciate taking responsibility in their own learning and working individually on their own responses (see chapter 4.2.5).

The third component of the ARCS model which influences motivation in learning to a large extent is confidence (Keller 5), also called *self-efficacy* (Bandura). Self-efficacy is the perception and belief of one's own capabilities to learn and accomplish (Schunk and DiBenedetto 101832-2). In other words, self-efficacy is the self-judgment and belief that a particular action is possible and that the individual can accomplish and complete it (Huitt). Confidence or self-efficacy results from self-reflection and evaluation (Schunk and DiBenedetto 101832-2), determines the individual's expectancy of success (see chapter 3.4.1.1) and influences the student's motivation, endurance and achievement (Keller 5). Students with a high level of self-efficacy feel competent to read a certain text and complete the tasks. They have appropriate reading skills and know strategies that help them learn, for example, they listen carefully to instructions, ask for clarification or help, and are persistent in understanding the meaning of the text. When receiving positive feedback from their instructors on the completion of their reading task, their perception on the learning and reading process as well as their confidence is consolidated and they are motivated to continue these successful reading behaviors (Schunk and DiBenedetto 101832-2).

Students with a high level of confidence in their skills focus on their ability and the effort they put into achieving a goal. They do not attribute their success to luck or to the easiness of the text or the task. Therefore, they consider setbacks and mistakes as learning possibilities and actively engage in improving their skills that boosts their confidence. On the other hand, students who experience a low level of confidence do not trust in their reading skills, either because of the anxiety of failing or previous negative experiences. Since low levels of self-efficacy result in avoidance strategies or negative attitudes towards reading,

educators must underline the development of confidence in a supportive surrounding (Keller 5) by choosing interesting texts, designing manageable reading tasks and providing informational and motivational feedback (see chapter 4.2.5.4).

The last aspect of the ARCS model is satisfaction, i.e. the positive feeling after having successfully accomplished a task. This feeling of satisfaction is either promoted via external rewards (see chapter 3.2.1.2) or stimulates intrinsic reward and motivation. “A challenge is to provide appropriate contingencies without overcontrolling, and to encourage the development of intrinsic satisfaction.” (Keller 6) If students have managed to complete reading the texts, understand and relate to them, actively engage with the content and fulfill the set tasks, they feel proud and satisfied. This positive feeling boosts their confidence and activates an upward tendency in reading motivation (see chapter 3.2.1.1).

The interventions of this study met all of these conditions of the ARCS model, namely, attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction of the students, to a large extent in order to boost and sustain intrinsic reading motivation. This has been shown in the increased levels of motivation as measured by the MRP (see chapter 5.1) and the student behavior during the interventions as well as the written and spoken student feedback confirmed the effects of the motivational teaching techniques (see chapter 5.2).

4. Methodology

The methodology of action research has been selected for this thesis because it is considered the most suitable and effective for solving problems in the own classroom (Reichl 66). First, the general advantages of this methodology and the adaption of the eight step model of AR on reading by Grabe and Stoller (199) for this study is discussed. The project plan of this AR is presented including the presentation of the institution and participants, the chronological timeline, the analyses of the motivational features and potentials of the reading materials and interventions. Lastly, the data collection and analytical processes are justified.

4.1 Action Research

Since this thesis was motivated by a perceived unwillingness of individual in-class reading (see introduction), the empirical data based on the MRP (see section 3.4) using an AR method provided an opportunity to pinpoint the problem and suggest improvements of the teaching and learning situation. With the help of AR empirical data concerning the classroom situation is systematically collected and analyzed (Grabe and Stoller 200). On the basis of these insights conclusions can be drawn about the learners' behaviors, the teacher's beliefs and practices, which then can imply ways of improving and solving the teaching and learning problem (Reichl 66). The teachers "mak[e] more informed pedagogical decisions" (Smith, Connelly and Rebolledo 115) on the basis of the collected data and act accordingly to resolve the issue (Grabe and Stoller 226).

There is doubt whether the teacher can professionally assume the role of the researcher in AR. Some critics prefer the external, detached researcher for their higher levels of objectivity. Nevertheless, AR "passes the control of practice over to the individual teacher in a specific setting" (McNiff 14). Unquestionably, action researchers, on the one hand, are close to the subject matter, but on the other hand, they also need to assume an external perspective on the issue and have to distance themselves to succeed in plausible, credible, valid scientific work. The action researcher combines doing the research and being the subject of the research questions (Burnaford, Fischer and Hobson 7-8) and thus, provides intricate insights into the learning and teaching situation in the EFL classroom.

Despite the lack of distance of the research practitioner and its implications for the empirical validity, the strengths of AR are the reflections and suggestions for the teaching practices retrieved through systematic investigation and analysis (Grabe and Stoller 200). In

addition to the systematicity it also includes the different perspectives of the teacher and the students on the teaching situation (Reichl 67). Since AR is a cyclic and iterative process (Grabe and Stoller 202), the teaching practices are evaluated regularly and the classroom adaptations are monitored. In this way, the effects of the teaching setting on the pupils' learning are critically enquired and systematically analyzed to comply with the constantly changing classroom situations (Zuber-Skerritt 1-2).

Although various models for AR to investigate teaching and learning problems exist, there is no restrictive template to follow and research practitioners can adopt and simplify their action plans flexibly to suit their students' needs. For the AR of this study Grabe and Stoller's (2020) eight-step model for improving teaching reading provided the structure for establishing the action research plan. Their model integrates the important aspects of AR, namely, the combination of theoretical knowledge on reading with the systematic reflection on practical teaching techniques (Grabe and Stoller 200) and in addition to these essentials of AR also caters for elements of SDT (see section 3.3). This AR model on reading highlights the adaption of instructions "that help students develop reading skills" (Grabe and Stoller 200), or in other words the students' needs of competence (see section 3.3), as well as the development of "teacher-student relationships that support effective learning" (Grabe and Stoller 200), i.e. the students' needs of relatedness (see section 3.3).

The eight steps of AR on improving teaching reading are the following (Grabe and Stoller 199):

1. Determine student's reading needs
2. Adjust curricular priorities to meet these needs
3. Articulate relevant instructional goals and objectives
4. Design / redesign courses
5. Plan purposeful reading lessons
6. Adopt, adapt, and develop instructional materials
7. Provide feedback
8. Adjust daily lessons to meet students' needs and attitudes

All of these steps were carried out but their order had been adapted to suit the study's critical examination of the level of intrinsic reading motivation of low level English learners. The order of the steps was also altered to integrate the AR project easily into the usual classroom practices. In this way, the goal of the AR project, i.e. raising intrinsic reading motivation, was intertwined with the teaching and learning objectives of the individual lessons. In other

words, the research questions and design and the instructional goals and objectives were co-dependent and influenced each other.

4.2 Outline of action-research project with literature in EFL classroom

In this section the methodology of this study's AR is outlined and the proceedings are explained referring to Grabe and Stoller's (2020) model of AR on improving teaching reading (see section 3.1). The action research project of this thesis on reading motivation can be divided into three phases: first, preparing and designing; second, conducting; and third, analyzing and interpreting the data. In the first phase of the project the goals of the AR and its corresponding lessons were established, namely, the raise of the intrinsic reading motivation of students through motivational reading materials and teaching/learning techniques. This included the determination of the students' interest in reading (see section 3.1: step 1 of Grabe and Stoller's model) through asking them which topics they were interested to read and which text types they usually attended to. On the basis of these insights reading materials that attracted the majority of the students were found and compelling tasks that supported self-determination in form of the need of competence, relatedness and autonomy (see section 3.3) were planned. In other words, the course was redesigned (see section 3.1: step 4 of Grabe and Stoller's model) and the objectives of the individual lessons were set (see section 3.1: step 3 of Grabe and Stoller's model).

In the second stage of the AR project the coursebook progression was interrupted and thus, the curriculum was altered to meet the students' reading needs (see section 3.1: step 2 of Grabe and Stoller's model). Before the interventions the students' levels of intrinsic reading motivation were measured by the MRP questionnaire translated into German. Then the planned purposeful pre-reading lessons (see section 3.1: step 5 of Grabe and Stoller's model) were held, which of course, were adjusted to the students' daily needs (see section 3.1: step 8 of Grabe and Stoller's model). After these pre-reading interventions to raise interest in literature and motivation for reading (see chapter 4.2.4), the students engaged in extensive individual reading, completed reader-response centered post-reading tasks (see chapter 4.2.5) and all 25 students provided written feedback (see appendix 9.6) on the pre-reading interventions, the reading materials and the post-reading exercises (see section 3.1: step 7 of Grabe and Stoller's model).

After six months the students completed a second round of extensively reading crime fiction to increase exposure to literature and time spent on reading. Compared to the first extensive reading process the students engaged in different post-reading tasks, which were adapted to cater for different aspects of self-determination and the learning styles of the students (see chapter 4.2.5). While applying the different motivational pre-reading and the in-class post-reading interventions student behaviors were observed and noted down in observation sheets (see appendix 9.5) as indicators for their levels of motivation. These observations were included in the evaluations of the teaching and learning techniques regarding their effect on motivation (see chapter 5.2). After completing the reading project, the levels of intrinsic motivation were again measured by the MRP questionnaire (see chapter 3.4) and six students, three female and three male students, took part in the conversational focus group interview following the guidelines of the MRP (see appendix 9.7).

In the last stage of the AR the data sets on the levels of intrinsic reading motivation, i.e. the self-concept of the reader and the value of reading obtained through the MRP (see section 3.4), were processed and analyzed. In addition to the analysis of the MRP data, the observed student behavior during the pre-reading lessons and the written feedback after the post-reading tasks were categorized, interpreted and transformed into visual representations (see section 5). Based on the observation and student feedback, the interventions' effects on intrinsic reading motivation were evaluated. Lastly, the conversational focus group interview was transcribed and processed with the help of categories following qualitative content analysis (Mayring) (see chapter 4.2.6) and these insights were integrated in the evaluations of the interventions and the reading materials. In chapter 5 the raised levels of intrinsic reading motivation measured by the MRP and the observed behaviors indicating raised levels of motivation are discussed. Furthermore, the positive evaluations of the interventions and the reading materials as expressed in the written feedback and the conversational focus group interview with the students are reviewed.

After having summarized the steps of this study's AR, each of the outlined phases is discussed in detail in the following sections. First, the institution and the participants of the study are characterized, then the design of the reading project is explained, third, the primary reading materials are analyzed. In addition to these points, the pre- and post-reading interventions to foster intrinsic reading motivation by applying SDT and the ARCS model are reviewed and lastly, the data collection and processing is outlined.

4.2.1 Institution and participants

Before continuing the in-depth discussion of the action plan for the AR on intrinsic reading motivation, the institution and the participants of this study are presented. Since each AR investigates a teaching and learning problem of a specific course in a particular classroom of a certain institution, it is important to determine the setting, learning arrangements, available rooms and materials as well as characterize the pupils. In this way a deeper understanding of the pedagogic choices made in the interventions of the AR is gained.

The AR project was conducted in a private, compulsory lower secondary school, also called “Middle School” in the Austrian school system, in the 23rd district in Vienna. Various factors indicate that the economic status of the students could be described as upper-middle class. A representative portion of the students’ parents have completed a tertiary education and are employed in high-income occupations. Consequently, the parents are able to afford and willing to pay the monthly tuition fee and recognize the importance of their children’s education. They support their child’s development and schoolwork also at home, which has been mentioned in the written student feedback of this AR (see chapter 4.2.6). The location of the school at the outskirts of Vienna and the corresponding housing costs there, suggest a rather high economic status. Studies in 2021 in the US have shown that highly educated and economically advantageous adults living in (sub)urban areas are more likely to be book readers and visit libraries (Gelles-Watnick and Perrin). Therefore, the parents’ of the participants not only financially supported the acquisition of the additional English reading materials but also welcomed the project to motivate students to engage in reading because they recognize the value of reading skills for their offspring’s future. The research project took place in the classrooms, a small conference room next to the classrooms, the student lounge areas, which are located on the ground level and are areas for relaxation, and the school library on the first floor which is used by the primary, as well as the upper secondary school of this institution.

The participants of the action-research project are 25 students, 12 females and 13 males, attending 2nd grade. They have received one year of formal English instruction in the lower secondary school and according to the national curriculum should have acquired level A1 in the five skills: listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 40). In March 2020, the worldwide pandemic of Covid-19 and the closure of schools had a tremendous impact on the students’ education and their formal English language instruction. Distance learning with

weekly plans was implemented for more than two months, followed by a traditional classroom teaching system in smaller groups on alternate days. The health crisis, the emotional struggles including uncertainty and anxiety, the absence of social interaction with peers, and the subsequent changes in the teaching and learning system had a deteriorating impact on the quality and amount of English language instruction. The students' progress and the development of language competences were largely dependent on the time, support and level of English skills of the parents. Even though additional classes were organized for compensating the alleged lack of education, the desired level of A1 according to the CEFR has not been reached in reading, written and oral production by the end of their Year 5.

The English classes in this particular type of school are always conducted by two teachers. Consequently, the action researcher is supported by another English teacher, who is denominated as the team teaching partner in this thesis. On the one hand, this teacher provided individual help to the students, but on the other hand, she also actively contributed to the research process because she monitored the students' behaviors and documented them in the observation grid. The team teaching partner is also the Art and Handicraft teacher of the students and consequently, she is highly involved in creative tasks that foster SDT in form of the student's need for competence (see chapter 3.3) and recognizes the potential of hands-on work with visual representations to improve the student's motivation on reading (see chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).

To comply with the preliminary consideration of the AR plan "from the perspective of ethical data collection and reporting" (Grabe and Stoller 2003) the proposal for this thesis's action research project was presented in the "School Forum" of the institution, consisting of the headteacher, the class teachers and the parent representatives at the beginning of the school year 2020/21. Since the School Forum voted unanimously in favor of the proposal of the research project, they agreed on the different forms of data collection involved in this AR. In addition to the permission of conducting the AR in this institution, the vote from the "School Forum" also allowed the publication of the results in an academic context and within the institution. Apart from that, the additional costs of purchasing English reading materials was supported by the parents.

In a parents-teacher-conference in the third week of September 2020 the legal guardians of the participants were informed about the reading project, its purpose and the range of the publication. The parents could ask questions about the project and they were informed that the project was accounted for oral and written participation of the students' English grade. The parents of the participants signed that all pictures, documents and creative

outputs of the projects could be used for the empirical research and published not only in the thesis but also on the public school homepage, which is common practice at the institution. For the conversational focus group interview the students were asked for their voluntary participation and it was explained that their answers would not have any impact on their grade. Their participation would highly be appreciated because their answers help to improve the learning and teaching of reading in English. After the students' consents the guardians of the participants were notified and complied with the request.

4.2.2 Design of reading project

The perceived unwillingness to read and the decision to improve this teaching and learning situation (see introduction) by enhancing the intrinsic reading motivation of the students resulted in conducting an informal survey to investigate the students' reading interests in topics and text types. Since the interests of the students are the core for fostering

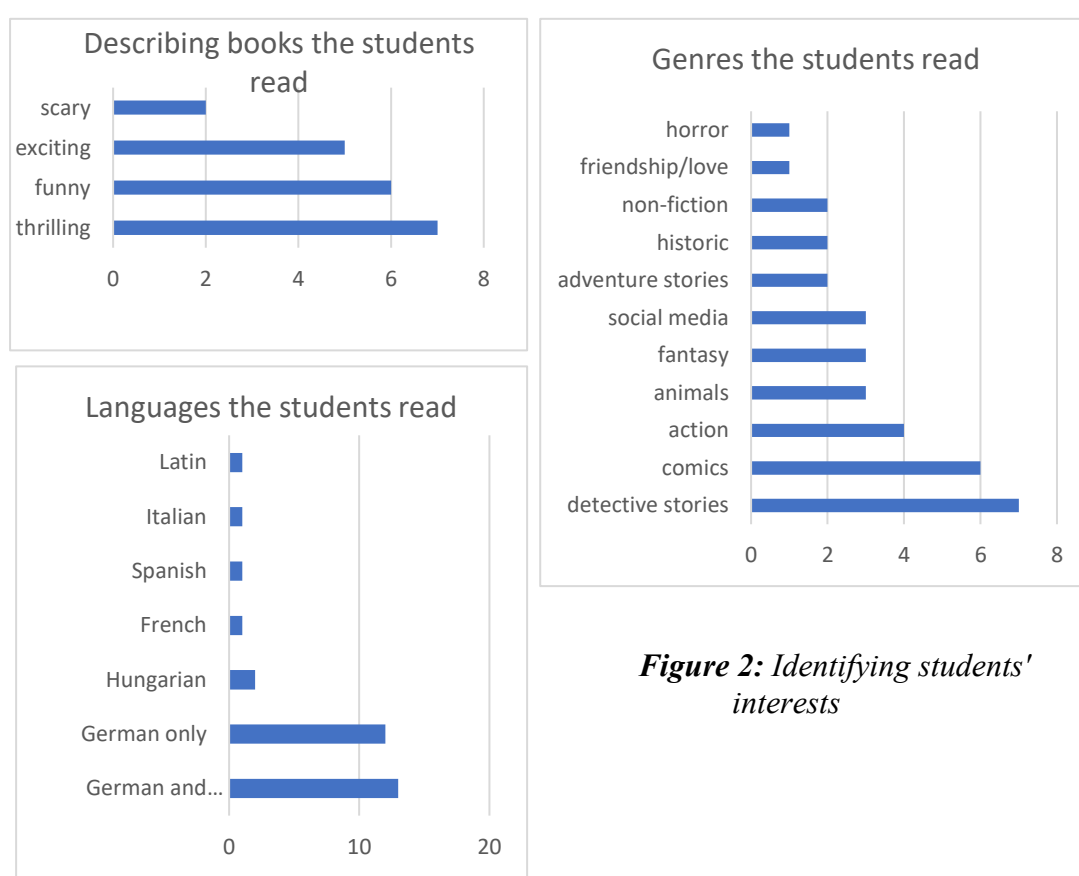


Figure 2: Identifying students' interests

intrinsic motivation (see section 2.2.1), it is crucial to find out about students' preferences of texts. In this way the need of competence of the students is satisfied because they feel sure about the context, the genres and formats of the reading materials (see section 3.3). The informal survey also attends to the need of relatedness because the pedagogic decisions of the

teacher are oriented at the students' preferences and feelings about certain text genres (see section 2.2.2). The results of this informal survey about reading interests were the basis for selecting the topic 'crime' and 'detective puzzles', the reading materials, namely, short story, comic and graphic novel, and the temporal starting point for the reading project.

The informal survey was undertaken in October 2020 during one of the lessons moderated by the class teacher, which focuses on learning strategies, organizational skills, personal development and growth as a community. The students were asked in German to note down three aspects of their reading habits: first, adjectives for describing books they read; second, genres they usually read; and lastly, the languages in which the texts they read are written. The answers of the informal survey are shown in figure 2.

The majority of the 6th grade students reported reading texts whose content is exciting, thrilling or funny. This is in line with the three most common genres or text types they recorded: action, comics, and detective stories. Interestingly, 13 students claimed that they read in German and English whereas twelve learners declared that they only read texts in German. The discrepancy of the given answers might be due to the fact that it has not been clarified whether the students should reflect on in- class and out-of-school reading or only texts they read in their leisure time.

Based on the insights about the preferred text types of the students the topics 'crime' and 'detective stories' and the primary extensive reading materials, the illustrated short story *The Body on the Beach*, the comic *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, and the graphic novel 3", were selected (see section 3.2.3). The reading project with the text types revolving around the topic 'crime' were easily integrated into the usual classroom procedures after completing Unit 2 "Did we catch them?" in the coursebook *More!2* (Gerngross, Puchta and Holzmann 14-20) at the beginning of November 2020. These three lessons based on the content of the coursebook unit served as a lead-in and starting point for the reading project since the coursebook unit "Did we catch them?" covered the investigation of a theft, the students encountered and acquired useful words in light of the reading project and performed a role play about the crime of an ingenious hypnotist and his assistant solved by ambitious police officers. After finishing the coursebook unit, the actual reading project focusing on raising intrinsic reading motivation began. In the table below the chronological timeline of the reading project including two extensive reading phases to maximize exposure to literature and time spent on reading, as well as the stages of reading according to the PWP approach (see chapter 2.6) and the corresponding interventions is shown. For a detailed discussion of

the pre- and post-reading interventions based on SDT and the ARCS model to boost intrinsic reading motivation see sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5.

date	procedure	intervention	materials
Nov, 4-6	lead-in	Reading and performing the role play “Pronto”	<i>More!2</i> – Unit2 - “Did we catch them?”
Nov, 10	lead-in	Introduction of reading project	
	pre-reading	Visit to the library	
	pre-reading	Judging a book by its cover	
	pre-reading	Reflecting on reading habits	
		MRP questionnaire	
Nov, 11	pre-reading	Discussing book genres	
	pre-reading	Vocabulary instruction	
	pre-reading	Flash images	Pictures of <i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
Nov, 12	pre-reading	Creative language work	Covers of <i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
	instructions	Extensive reading and preparation of post-reading tasks: PCI, Give-Me-5, Story-in-the-box	<i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
Nov, 13	individual in-class reading	Extensive reading and preparation of post-reading tasks: PCI, Give-Me-5, Story-in-the-box	<i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
Nov, 14 - Dec, 4	individual reading at home	Extensive reading and preparation of post-reading tasks: PCI, Give-Me-5, Story-in-the-box	<i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
Dec, 9-10	post-reading presentation	PCI, Give-Me-5, Story-in-the-box	
		Written feedback form	
May, 18-25	in-class reading in groups	Extensive reading and preparation of post-reading tasks: Creative transformation work	<i>The Body on the Beach</i> , <i>Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men</i> , 3”
May, 26	post-reading presentation	Creative transformation work	
		MRP questionnaire	
May, 28		Conversational focus group interview	

Figure 3: Timeline of reading project

In total, three in-class pre-reading lessons were designed to create an access to literature and reading in general (see chapter 2.4) and establish a positive attitude towards the extensive primary reading texts (see section 4.2.4). Then the students received their selected reading materials for the first round of extensive reading. Due to lockdown they had more than three weeks to individually read their crime story. During these three weeks the students also prepared their personal response to the reading material in form of PCI, Give-Me-5, or Story-in-the-box (see section 4.2.5).

To satisfy the students’ need of autonomy and thus, raise their intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 3.3), they were provided with meaningful choices between three

primary texts (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 342) depending on their reading skills and preferences, as well as three significant alternatives of post-reading tasks taking into consideration their different learning styles and modes of expression (Ryan and Deci 9). Due to lockdown amidst the first round of extensive reading, the students' basic need for autonomy was also fostered because they read independently and allocated their reading time freely (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 336). To conclude the first round of motivational interventions and extensive reading, the students orally reported on their reading experience, presented or read out their task outcome, discussed the materials with their peers and teachers in informal in-class conversation and filled in the written feedback form (see appendix 9.6).

The second round of extensive reading and motivational post-reading interventions took place in May 2021 in-class with all 25 students present. In the first lesson the learners were instructed in the different reading styles (see chapter 2.5) and the creative transformation post-reading tasks (see section 2.6). Then four lessons of independent group work followed and in the subsequent lesson the outcomes of the transformation tasks were presented and the students gave guided feedback to their peers. After the presentation of the group works, all students filled in the MRP questionnaire (see section 3.4) and two days later pre-selected students took part in the conversational focus group interview in German using the guidelines of the MRP (see appendix 9.7).

Different to the first part of the AR project, the second round of reading and post-reading interventions took place in school in form of group work. The learners chose one of the other two crime or detective stories which they had not read in the first round and formed groups of four or five students. Apart from satisfying the students' basic need of autonomy because of choosing their reading material and partners, the peer collaboration in the post-reading interventions attended to their need of relatedness (see chapter 3.3). Paying attention to the perspectives of the peers and negotiating interpretations of the texts foster successful learning and raise intrinsic reading motivation (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 333).

4.2.3 Reading materials

As shown in Figure 2 (see section 3.2.2) the three primary reading materials for this AR's reading project, *The Body on the Beach*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, and *3''*, comply with the students' needs and interests in reading detective, thrilling, exciting and scary stories. The three texts are defined as literary crime fiction (see chapter 2.2), which regardless of mode in graphic or novel form lends itself to exploration of motivation due to

its unique features of structure, affect, and relationship with the reader. The textual structure of “who has done it” or “who is it” is appealing and raises intrinsic reading motivation because of the reader’s involvement (see chapter 3.2.1.1) in solving the crime and investigating the case side by side with the detective or main character (E. Martin). During the lecture of the crime story, the reader activates mental images revolving the crime topic (Aebersold and Field 40) and works with the story. The text invites the reader to establish expectations, make assumptions, raise questions and formulate hypotheses in relation to the plot events (Ohler 129). Due to this personal involvement and negotiation of meaning the text is relevant to the readers (see chapter 3.5) and the connection to and interpretation of the text caters for their need of relatedness (see chapter 3.3).

In addition to the textual structure and the relationship with the reader, thrill and suspense, the innate characteristics of crime fiction, cause emotions of worry, excitement (Dictionaries), shock, surprise (Mikos 45), horror, anger and the longing to continue to read (Fuchs 36). The use of suspense in the storylines enhances intrinsic reading motivation because it attracts the reader’s curiosity, one of the main aspects of SDT-focused teaching (see chapter 3.3), and maintains the student’s attention (see chapter 3.5). Depending on how fast or slow and what kind of information is revealed in relation to the crime or the culprit, the reader is put into a tense, excited state (Ohler 129). These feelings of uncertainty and ambiguity continuously fuel the reader’s curiosity and thus, their intrinsic reading motivation is raised (Minkowitsch 52). In other words, the partial knowledge presented in the crime or detective text animates the continuation of reading and consequently, the expansion of knowledge (Aebersold and Field 40). The readers are captivated by the crime and detective narratives because the texts raise questions and provide delayed answers (Lodge 14).

All three primary reading texts narrate parts or the whole plotline in pictures, either in form of an illustrated short story (*The Body on the Beach*), a comic (*Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*) or a black and white graphic novel (3’). This is especially motivating for reluctant readers and low level learners because visual stimulations appeal to the senses and contact with literature is made in an uninhibited, playful and fun way (Thaler 27). Illustrated written texts in the EFL classroom adapt similar strategies as picture books for the natural acquisition of language for toddlers (Nagy, Literaturklassiker 4) because meaning is presented in a multi-modal manner (Nagy, ABC Graded Reader 20). The pictures guide the reader’s understanding, reduce language barriers (Nagy, Literaturklassiker 4), and cater for different cognitive and learning styles (Hedge 18). Through the pictures the students have access to the meaning of the texts and their need of competence is satisfied (see chapter 3.3).

In the following the different motivational features of the three primary reading materials in light of fostering self-determination are discussed in detail.

4.2.3.1 *The Body on the Beach*

The Body on the Beach written by Joyce Hannam was first published in 1994 by the Oxford University Press. It is part of the “Hotshot Puzzles 3”, a series of graded readers designed for teenage English learners, aimed at Level 3 with 400 headwords appropriate for early to mid-elementary readers, which is level A1 to A2 according to the CEFR. OUP advertised the *Hotshots Puzzles series* with riddles that occur on every two pages and which the reader is invited to solve as a means of interactive engagement with the text to boost intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 3.2.1.1). Since the general subject matter of *The Body on the Beach* is a committed murder, the puzzles suit the content and the progression of the text perfectly. The reader supports the protagonist Alex, i.e. the self-designated detective, in unravelling the case. The third person omniscient narrator’s point of view helps motivate the reader in their role as detective, as it provides access to the protagonist’s feelings and thoughts as well as other characters’ opinions. Presenting events in chronological order and having the characters re-tell and discuss background information builds suspense (Ohler 129) while enriching the complexity of the story. The use of pictures further enhances comprehension, by reflecting the written text, and motivation to solve the case, by presenting riddles or clues.

4.2.3.2 *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*

D.K. Swan adapted the story “Sherlock Holmes’s Adventure of the Dancing Men” by Sir Arthur Canon Doyle for the Longman Structural Reader *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men*, originally published in 1973, and changed it into a comic. Since the students are interested in and familiar with the structure of comics their self-determination in form of the need of competence (see section 3.3) is boosted. This pedagogic, graded reader is intended for learners of English as a second or foreign language and corresponds with the series of the “Easystarts” including 200 headwords and thus, referring to the level A1 of the CEFR (Pearson English Graded Readers). After portraying the main characters and their backstory, the readers investigate the crime side-by-side with the famous fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, who instructs his companion Dr. Watson and the readers how to decipher the coded messages with the stick figures that are written by the culprit. At the end of the story the readers are requested to interact with the text and decode the message of the murderer. This direct address and engagement of the readers creates motivation by appealing to the need of

relatedness to the text (see chapter 3.3). Since the plot is mainly told in pictures, which create a dynamic and vivid setting and portray the emotions of the characters, the little amount of text in comparison to textbook reading materials is motivating. Since the vocabulary and grammar structures are limited and easy, the language level is slightly below the proficiency of the learners and this motivates reluctant or handicapped reader to master the reading process without distress and gain positive reading experience (Nagy, Projekte 8).

4.2.3.3 3''

Marc-Antoine Mathieu's work *3''* (*3 Seconds*) originally published in 2011 is a thriller or crime graphic novel (Murray) and also called a "zooming-game", including a digital version retrievable on a website. The absorbing, complex and multi-layered story is told in detailed, highly artistic black-and-white pictures without any words in captions or speech bubbles. The author of the graphic novel plays with time and place because the actions and circumstances happening in the same three seconds are portrayed from diverse perspectives through reflection and zooming effects. In this way the reader is guided through the story and needs to solve the silent mystery and answer the questions regarding the characters, reasons and connections. The structure of the graphic novel centers the readers and their active, highly individual reading processes (Keller 3). *3''* requests to actively interpret the pictures, uncover the puzzles and fill in the blanks only with the help of some guiding questions in the preface, revealing the names of two characters and wishing the reader good luck for the investigation. Since this authentic material presents a different, rather unconventional form of reading and an unorthodox book type for English learners, the students' attention is attracted (Keller 3) and reluctant readers are motivated to explore this appealing book format and notable manner of reading visuals (Oktarina, Hari and Ambarwati 76).

4.2.4 Pre-reading interventions

As mentioned in the outline of the reading project (see chapter 4.2.2) the following pre-reading interventions were designed to establish access to literature (see chapter 2.4) for reluctant readers and create interest in the primary reading texts through creative lessons (Pennac 153 and Minkowitsch 26). The pre-reading interventions are based on the expectancy-value theory of creating an access to literature and establishing a positive attitude towards reading (Eccles and Wigfield, Motivational Beliefs 121) and thus, catering the basic need for competence. In addition to applying SDT, the pre-reading interventions are also

grounded on the ARCS model of motivation to attract attention to reading in general and the crime reading materials in particular (Keller 3). Since the AR project is part of the communicative EFL classroom and applies the PWP approach to teaching literature (see chapter 2.6), these pre-reading interventions require active participation of the students and integrate spoken and written productive skills as well as vocabulary skills (see chapter 2.3). Reading and analyzing visuals, as well as exploring different elements of the texts, such as book covers, titles and plots, facilitate and ensure that students are motivated for the upcoming extensive reading process and the engagement with the literary texts (Thaler 27; Lütge 192; Hedge 210). After the pre-reading interventions the students engaged in the first extensive reading process (see chapter 2.5) of the three literary crime fiction texts (see chapter 4.2.3).

4.2.4.1 *Visit to the school library*

The first pre-reading intervention realized in this AR project was a visit to the school library to create access to literature through showing the students where they can find (English) books and how the borrowing system works. This library visit provides the students with access to reading materials and encourages them to find texts according to their interests (Wilkinson, Andries and Howarth 163). In addition to access to literature, this pre-reading intervention attracts attention, the prerequisite for motivation and learning, as claimed by Keller (3) in chapter 3.5. The traditional classroom setting is dissolved by moving to the library and establishing a relaxed reading situation. Visiting the school library is considered a valuable reading-related activity that increases intrinsic reading motivation as suggested by Gambrell (530) and the MRP tool to measure IM (see chapter 3.4). The positive reading environment in the school library fosters interest and enjoyment in school reading as argued by Reichl (95) in chapter 3.2 because the atmosphere in the library facilitates recalling positive memories about books and reading (Tovani 9). Acquainting the students with the practice and rules of the school library fosters their need of competence because their knowledge about the library system is expanded, which reduces the emotional hurdle and disinclination to new situations, and the students' need of autonomy is satisfied because they can independently access English literary texts and take ownership of their reading (see chapter 3.3).

4.2.4.2 *Judging a book by its cover*

In this intervention the English idiom “Don’t judge a book by its cover”, i.e. not judging a person or object by its outward appearance, was reversed. The students were asked to wander around the library and operate under Pennac’s right of the reader “to dip in” (190-191) to create access to literature (see chapter 2.4). The students had the right to choose any book in the library for any reasons, open it at any page, read any passages or words, explore and spend a few minutes with the book. Then the learners selected one book, invested a few minutes to carefully read the information on the cover and the blurb, interpreted the imagery or visuals and reflected about the reason why they had been attracted to the book and chose it for this activity. Afterwards the students got together in groups and judged the other students’ books by their covers, interpreted the title, guessed about the genre, the plot, the mood of the book and built up expectations or formulated hypotheses about the content (Reissman), all pre-reading exercises mentioned in chapter 2.6. The peer collaboration and negotiation of meanings and interpretations (Reichl 97; Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 333) raise intrinsic reading motivation through satisfying the need of relatedness (see chapter 3.3). Ideally, this intervention provides sensory stimulation, ventures exploration and sparks curiosity – the main features associated with intrinsic motivation (see chapter 3.3). The learning aims of this intervention entails that students can express their feelings and opinions (CEFR descriptor for sustained monologue: describing experience, A2) and can formulate simple sentences to speculate about the meaning of the title and the content of the book.

4.2.4.3 *Reflecting on reading habits*

To foster confidence or self-efficacy and thus, intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 3.5), it is vital to engage in self-reflection about reading attitudes, reading strategies and reading habits. Self-reflection impacts the students’ self-awareness and consciousness in order to be able to cope with thoughts, emotions and actions, as well as personal strengths and weaknesses (Schunk and DiBenedetto 101832-2). According to the national curriculum, reflection about the own experiences is of paramount importance for the education of the learners (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 35). In the reflection process the students also rediscover fond memories connected to reading which leaves them with a positive connotation of the reading process, helping reluctant readers to develop an affirmative attitude towards literature and reading (see chapter 2.4).

Students at lower secondary school need guiding questions from the teachers to fruitfully reflect on their experiences (Guthrie 25). These reflection questions were adapted from the MRP interview guidelines (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 523-524).

- What kind of books did you enjoy as a kid?
- What kind of books / texts do you read?
- Where do you read?
- When do you read?
- In which languages do you read?
- How does reading make you feel?
- What does a good reader do? Who is a good reader?

During the reflection process the learners jotted down their answers to the questions provided by the teachers on a post-it and stuck it on the corresponding poster. Then they rotated to the next station / question. The second intervention related to reflection on reading habits was the administration of the MRP questionnaire (see chapter 3.4).

4.2.4.4 *Discussing book genre*

Discussing the crime and detective genre activates the students' prior and schematic knowledge (Hedge 210) because they recall typical situations, characters and plot settings of the particular genre and form mental representations, which help them to predict content, gain deeper understanding of the texts (Hedge 190) and construct meaning as indicated by Thaler (English Literature 48) in chapter 2.6. Since some of the learners are already familiar with genre in question, they can act as experts, experience high levels of competence (see chapter 3.3) and relevance (see chapter 3.5). In addition to these experiences (see chapter 3.5), the students consolidate their existing knowledge and integrate new pieces of information about the detective stories more easily (Guthrie 11). For learners who have not yet been exposed to the crime and detective genre it is important to explicitly communicate genre knowledge to facilitate making sense of the text, its setting and characters and building up expectations (Hedge 189) to interact and construct meaning (see chapter 2.3). For this intervention the action researcher had prepared a PowerPoint presentation with pictures displaying book covers and the students guessed the corresponding genres. This type of activity is raising intrinsic student motivation because the guessing game is connected with play, arousing curiosity and joy, the main characteristics of IM as pointed out by Ryan and Deci (3) in chapter 3.2. First the book covers appeared straightforward with illustrations or the title

indicating the genre, then the covers were ambiguous requiring negotiating meaning and giving reasons for interpretations, which are highly motivating as indicated by Nünning and Nünning (22) in chapter 2.1. At the end of the activity the covers of the three pre-selected reading materials were reviewed and possible characters and plots were discussed creating access to the literary texts of the extensive reading process (see chapter 2.4).

4.2.4.5 *Vocabulary instruction*

In order to successfully converse about the covers, speculate about the content and characters involved in the detective / crime genre, the students were simultaneously introduced to new vocabulary items. Vocabulary instruction as a pre-reading activity is beneficial for ensuring the students' understanding of the linguistic elements in the text as pointed out in chapter 2.3 in reference to the bottom-up approach to reading literature. The national curriculum also requests that vocabulary is not instructed in form of isolated terms but in networks and meaningful, communicative interactions: "Der Vermittlung von Wortschatz und Grammatik in vielfältig kontextualisierter und vernetzter Form ist größtes Gewicht beizumessen, zB ist Vokabular, wo immer möglich, in Kollokationen, Redewendungen und Phrasen mit impliziter Grammatik einzubetten." (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 36)

The new vocabulary items were noted down in form of a mind map also called a graphical organizer, which visually represents the connection between the words and ideas in the crime / detective story (Fisher, Frey and Hattie 79-81). In these word networks (Hedge 127) the students recorded their already acquired words as well as newly encountered items, which they associated with the crime genre. In this way the students kept track of the vocabulary and had a reference sheet which boosted their confidence (see chapter 3.5) when decoding the words during the reading process (Hedge 189). At the end of the activity the mind map included branches for stereotypically 'morally good' characters (detective, police officer, Sergeant, inspector, guard), criminals (murderer, thief, robber), other people involved (witness, suspects), crimes (murder, theft, robbery, assassination), weapons (knife, pistol, gun), and words describing crime scenes (case, blood, footprints, magnifying glass). Although the teacher initiated the network by writing down some words appropriate for the language level A1+, the students contributed the majority of the words by activating their English vocabulary of the topic or finding out English translations in online dictionaries of the words they had articulated in German before.

4.2.4.6 *Flash images*

The previous indicated vocabulary instruction is also valuable for the pre-reading intervention called “Flash images”, which establishes a positive reading attitude (see chapter 2.1) even before the literary texts have been opened and develops students’ visual literacy (Lütge 192). For this activity, illustrations of the three chosen extensive reading materials were selected and shown to the learners for a few seconds. Then the learners wrote down what they could see, associated with the picture or any other thoughts that were inspired by the illustration. This process was repeated providing more time with every display of the image. Since this activity had not been formerly introduced to the students, the educators supported the students with the following guiding questions:

- What can you see?
- Who are they?
- What are they doing?
- What is the story about?
- What do you think about the colors?
- How does the picture make you feel?

Whereas self-confident, proficient learners usually cope effortlessly with open-ended activities, insecure, less proficient lower secondary level students request scaffolds to engage in interpretation exercises. Therefore, the questions do not limit the learners in their creative responses but cater for differences in proficiency levels and help the student reflect and “query their understanding” (Fisher, Frey and Hattie 93). High achieving learners display their deep analysis and understanding of the picture, which results in feelings of competence (see chapter 3.3) and satisfaction (see chapter 3.5). Low-level students raise their self-efficacy because the guiding questions make the activity manageable and reachable (Guthrie 19), thus, effecting their level of intrinsic motivation.

With these questions the students were asked for their opinion and evaluation, which corresponds to the reader-response theory (see chapter 2.3) and the concept of relatedness (see chapter 3.3). Ideally, the readers were emotionally stirred by the pictures and their interpretations (Pennac 184-186), linked the illustrations to their experiences and their already existing knowledge and hence, made meaning of it (Guthrie 19). In regards to motivation for reading, by presenting only snapshots of the stories they whet the students’ appetites to start reading the texts and explore the plots further.

4.2.4.7 Creative language work

These creative language interventions help developing the students' visual literacy (Lütge 192) and incite student motivation to finally start reading the extensive literary crime fiction. In these creative language exercises the students first received the cover page of the story, which had been manipulated by the action researcher to hide the original title. In group work they used language creatively and independently to find suitable and attractive titles, which should sell the book and convince people to read it. After finding titles, the students chose pictures photocopied from the three extensive reading materials. Whereas for *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men* the pictures had been manipulated and printed without words in captions, speech and thought bubbles, original pictures of the other two books had been reproduced. The students filled in the blanks and re-wrote or invented the story according to their expectations about characters, settings and the plot. The cognitive suspense created through these assumptions and hypotheses about the content of the books fosters students' curiosity (Ohler 129) and thus, rises their level of intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 4.2.3). Although reading and interpreting the pictures, and imagining the scenes and the characters is a demanding process, it is a motivating creative one (Pennac 27) because the students act in a self-directed and autonomous way, which is the core of self-determination (see chapter 3.3).

These three lessons of pre-reading interventions established access to literature and a connection to the primary texts. Even reluctant readers seemed eager to receive their literary crime fiction texts and start the extensive reading process. Due to lockdown only one in-class reading session was possible and the students had to finish their first round of reading and post-reading tasks individually and independently at home.

4.2.5 Post-reading interventions

All of the post-reading interventions are centered on the interactive view on literature combining bottom-up processes focusing on language and top-down ones concentrating on topic and world knowledge (Thaler 27). In addition, they embrace the importance of the construction of meaning and interpretation by the reader as postulated in reader-response-theory (see chapter 2.3). Apart from these common approaches to reading literature, all of the after-reading interventions apply the communicative language teaching principles of integrating different productive skills with reading (Hedge 45) (see chapter 2.3). Regarding motivational aspects, the post-reading interventions focus on raising intrinsic reading

motivation by attending to the SDT needs (see chapter 3.3). The tasks foster students' need of autonomy because the students are provided with a choice of tasks and work independently on them (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 342). The interventions satisfy the need of competence because the educators set optimal reading challenges including reachable task mastery goals with appropriate reading materials (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 32) (see chapter 3.3).

Regarding the satisfaction of the need of relatedness, the post-reading interventions must be distinguished referring to the first and the second round of extensive reading. Whereas the first type of post-reading tasks predominantly fulfills the need of relatedness in form of acknowledging the individual students' interests, feelings and opinions about the text (Reeve, Bolt and Cai 546-547), the second round of post-reading interventions centers the relatedness to peers in form of collaboration (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 248) and negotiation of meanings and interpretations (Lütge 183) (see chapter 3.3). Apart from these different forms of relatedness, the second round of post-reading interventions also enhances student motivation by focusing on creativity (Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation* 32; Lütge 181; Minkowitsch 26; Surkamp 494) and the use of technological devices (Lütge 193). These different motivational factors in the first and second round of post-reading interventions not only cater for particular needs of self-determination but also for distinct learning and reading styles of the students (see chapter 2.5).

The post-reading interventions after the first extensive reading process are called Story-in-the-box, PCI, and Give-Me-5. The after-reading tasks referring to the second extensive reading of the literary crime fiction are subsumed under the name of creative transformation tasks. All of these interventions fostering intrinsic reading motivation are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.5.1 *Story-in-a-box*

One of the post-reading interventions after the first extensive reading process is called "Story in a box". In this task the outside of a shoe box or similar container is decorated to match the mood and plot of the text, the title and author of the book are written on the front edge of the box, and it is filled with realia that are related to the characters or narrate the story (Collins 18). Using real-life objects helps the student understand the text, "enhance[s] students' reading experience and make[s] learning tangible." (Collins 20) The manual creations convert reading into an interactive process using multiple senses for learning

(Thaler 56). Through this creative, hands-on activity the students' thinking and processing of information is stimulated in a new way and especially, low-achieving students' levels of intrinsic motivation are increased with this type of task (J. Guthrie, A. Wigfield and N. Humenick 243).

Although the story box is presented in various teaching guidelines as a pre-reading activity to create interest in the book and combine it with vocabulary instruction (Collins 18) for this AR project it was designed as a post-reading task for students to reflect on the content of the books and to show their understanding of the reading materials. The learners had to find five items that are related to the story and present the box to their fellow classmates, explaining the objects and the reasons for putting these five realia into the box (Collins 20). This also raises the classmates' curiosity to choose this literary text for their second extensive reading process.

4.2.5.2 *PCI – Passage, Connection, Illustration*

The post-reading activity called “PCI – Passage, Connection, Illustration” (Beach 1) focuses on the reader's perspectives and experiences with the text and the construction of meaning (see chapter 2.3) and boosts intrinsic reading motivation by acknowledging the students' perspectives (Jacobs and Farrell 54). Predominantly in the US education sector, the PCI strategy prepares students for discussions in literary classes as an alternative to reading logs to report on the readers' experiences and check the students' understanding (Byram Middle School).

First, the students choose a passage they perceive as powerful, moving, inspiring or which caught their attention and give reasons for their choice. Second, the students establish a connection to the text through active engagement with the text, deep understanding of it and monitoring their thinking and reflection (Farnsworth). Either the students find a connection between the text and the self, the text to another text, or the text to the real world. In order to initiate this reflection process, the teacher posed the following guiding questions in German to reduce language obstacles due to their limited spoken production competence at level A1.

Focusing on text-to-self connections:

- What does this story remind you of?
- Can you relate to the characters in the story?
- Does anything in this story remind you of anything in your own life?

Focusing on text-to-text connections:

- What does this remind you of in another book you have read?
- How is this text similar to other things you have read?
- How is this text different from other things you have read?

Focusing on text-to-world connections:

- What does this remind you of in the real world?
 - How are events in this story similar to things that happen in the real world?
 - How are events in this story different from things that happen in the real world?
- (Simon)

The students write down their insights in a short passages of maximum ten sentences, not minding spelling and grammatical structures because the focus lies on the personal reflection of the reading process and the literary text. The CEFR Companion Volume identifies these skills as vital for “Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)” at level A2 (Council of Europe, CEFR Companion Volume 107). The third element of PCI requires students to draw or create an illustration of a scene, a character or an association that represents the book to appeal to their creativity (Farnsworth).

4.2.5.3 *Give-me-5*

Another choice of post-reading tasks after the first round of extensive reading entails the students’ selection of five items of the story. These five items from the book either illustrate the message of the story, reveal insights into the characters, are associated with the theme or topic of the text or show the students’ understanding of the story (Farnsworth). It is the learner’s choice whether the five items are quotes, illustrations, self-drawn pictures or objects or a mixture but the learner must justify the choices and point out the connections to the text to show their negotiation of meanings and interpretations of the text (Reichl 97). Since “Give me 5” combines the activity of “Story in a box” with its interactive, hands-on, multisensory elements and the explicit reader-response approach of “PCI” it is a meaningful, communicative and thus, motivating task as it provides the students with the satisfaction of needs by choice, self-direction and a sense of ownership (Ryan and Deci 2).

4.2.5.4 *Creative transformation tasks*

The interventions after the second extensive reading process are categorized as creative transformation tasks that set mastery oriented goals to foster students’ efficacy and boost intrinsic reading motivation as argued by Schunk and DiBenedetto (101832-2) in

chapter 3.5. In contrast to the previously discussed post-reading activities, these interventions are tackled not individually but in self-chosen, collaborative groupwork, satisfying the need of relatedness, which is a prerequisite for self-determination and a factor for increasing intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 3.3: Ryan and Deci 2).

Communicative post-reading activities that embrace transfer or transformation integrate different skills and allow creativity and flexibility (Hadfield and Hadfield 95). The students show their own interpretations and levels of understanding (see chapter 2.6). Low-achieving students are scaffolded by a framework and express their potential in other, non-linguistic ways, whereas high-achieving students articulate their own ideas by adding their language and imagination (Hadfield and Hadfield 100). The social interaction, the discussion and negotiation of meaning of the text fosters understanding and achieving the learning objectives (J. Guthrie, *Engaging Adolescents in Reading* 5).

The creative transformation work of this AR project entails transforming scenes from the book into a play, a video production, or converting the book into a film poster and trailer. Even though the role play, video production, poster and trailer -creations are based on the contents of the books, the students are encouraged to manipulate the original texts, personalize the topic, imagine feelings and enjoy the ownership of their composition (J. Guthrie, *Engaging Adolescents in Reading* 22-23). This satisfies their need of autonomy and consequently, boost intrinsic reading motivation. The learners are free to choose their words, develop personalities and situations to their mind, and acquire spoken fluency (Hedge 279). Whereas some students enjoy to assume and act out roles or speak out loud (Hedge 280), other group members enjoy the right to be silent and not to explain to other what has been read and understood (see chapter 2.4: Pennac 197).

For the video productions the students are encouraged to use all advantages of digital devices including movie making and cutting apps, smartphone cameras, visual and sound effect, which have beneficial effects on student motivation (see chapter 2.6: Lütge 193). To achieve task mastery goals the use of new media and technologies is approved and highly recommended by the national curriculum: “Allgemeine Fachziele sind eine zielorientierte, d.h. auf den Fremdsprachenunterricht abgestimmte, Einbeziehung der neuen Informationstechnologien (zB Textverarbeitung, Internet, E-Mail, digitale Medien).” (Bundesministerium für Bildung, *Lehrpläne der Mittelschule* 36)

As already mentioned the students work in groups of four or five persons and are allowed to choose their members as well as the task themselves. The choice of task, the shared control of the project and the self-selection of knowledge display, i.e. how the students

choose to show their understanding of the text, are practices to cultivate motivation according to Guthrie (43-45). Each group has to ensure to have a group manager who is responsible for coordinating the work and mediating between the members, a time tracker who will account for the time management of the group, an idea tracker who maintains the focus and notes down the progress, and a book tracker who reminds the students to bring their books and materials to the sessions. Providing certain roles for groupwork facilitates the dynamics of the group, simplifies teamwork, and helps to share responsibility for the outcome (Hedge 62). Additionally, it guides students to avoid procrastination and diversion from the objective. Group work as a mean of open, independent learning is also manifested in the national curriculum: “Hierbei sind vielfältige Arbeitsformen wie zB offenes Lernen, eigenverantwortliches Lernen, Kurzpräsentationen einzusetzen.” (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 37)

At the end of the second extensive reading process and the preparation of the creative transformation task the students show or perform their output. Their work is evaluated by the peers and each group receives feedback rating their effort, creativity, teamwork, and commenting what could be improved. Giving constructive peer feedback is a further practice to boost motivation (J. Guthrie, *Engaging Adolescents in Reading* 44).

4.2.6 Data collection and processing

For the data collection of this action research project a mixed-method approach was followed, which is in line with the methodology of the current AR in the field of teaching literature in the EFL classroom as indicated in the introduction (Jones 2020; Allred and Cena 2020). The quantitative data in this AR was obtained by administering the MRP questionnaire (see chapter 3.4) at two distinct points of time – before starting the reading project and after the post-reading interventions of the second round of extensive reading– to observe a rise in intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 5.1). The qualitative data collected in this AR was used to evaluate the motivational interventions as well as the crime fiction materials for extensive reading. The qualitative data collection entailed observing student behavior during the pre-reading interventions and the second round of post-reading interventions, the written feedback after completing the first round of post-reading interventions and the conversational focus group interview at the end of this AR (see chapter 4.2.2 and figure 3 for the chronological timeline).

The MRP questionnaire was administered in paper-and-pencil format (see appendix 9.4), the students were instructed about the aim of the questionnaire - to find out about their reading motivation- that honest responses were extremely helpful and that their answers were not graded. All 25 students completed the translated German questionnaire twice. The filled-in questionnaires were scored according to the directions and the scoring sheet provided by Gambrell, Codling and Palmer (527-529), assigning the highest number of points to the most positive and the lowest number of points to the least positive item. The scores were filled into an Excel sheet and the total score of reading motivation, as well as the separate scores of the subscales, the self-concept of the reader and the value of reading (see chapter 5.1), were computed automatically. In addition to these scores, the total scores of intrinsic reading motivation was also calculated for each individual and the whole class. The different sets of data reported at distinct points of time were then compared and analyzed for changes in the level of intrinsic reading motivation after the reading interventions (see chapter 5.1).

During the in-class pre-reading interventions (see chapter 4.2.4) as well as the second round of post-reading tasks (see chapter 4.2.5.4) the student behavior and comments were documented in form of observation grids (see appendix 9.6) filled in the by the team teaching partner (see chapter 4.2.1). The observation grids focused on the question “What does the teacher help to engage and motivate students?” and the role of the classroom, the activities, the teacher’s qualities, the students’ behavior and motivation (Scrivener). These documents and field notes about behaviors were sorted according to the interventions. In this way these sets of data contributed to the evaluation of the interventions to gain insights about further motivational effects on learners, which have not been noticed and reported by the students themselves.

After completing the first round of extensive reading and post-reading interventions the students filled in a written feedback form (see appendix 9.6) rating the in-class pre-reading interventions and the extensive reading material with five stars and expressing their feelings about the reading project in general. This is a manageable and suitable way for low-level learners and their limited abilities to express opinions and reasoning according to the CEFR Companion Volume at level A1 “[The learners c]an use simple words/signs to state how a work made them feel.” (107) and at level A2 “[The learners c]an express their reactions to a work, reporting their feelings and ideas in simple language.” (107). In this way the written feedback form acknowledges the students’ perspectives (Jacobs and Farrell 54) and they are integrated into the evaluation of the reading materials and the interventions for boosting intrinsic reading motivation. The students were assured that the responses in the

feedback helped the educators to create further interesting reading projects and that their answers would not be graded.

The written feedback given in form of stars was recorded in an Excel sheet and the average points were computed automatically. The open-ended answers concerning the individual opinions and reasons were coded into categories (see appendix 9.10 for visual representations of some of the categories). The categories for the reasons of choosing the post-reading interventions embraced *easiness of task*, *limited writing*, *preferred vocabulary work*, and *creativity*; the answers about the opinions about the literary texts were coded into *feelings about content*, *evaluation of book's general quality*, and *evaluation of book's language level*; the filled in blanks about the dislikes were categorized into *content*, *characters*, *genre*, *layout and pictures*, *language and style*, and *I liked everything*. The categories for helping to understand the story were *parents*, *pictures*, *German translations from dictionary*, *pictures + dictionary*, and *no help needed* and the answers for what the students learned were *content*, *language level and reading performance*, *genre*, and *vocabulary*.

The conversational focus group interview took place after completing the reading project during an afternoon lesson with six pre-selected students (three male and three female) according to their different attitudes towards reading and levels of language proficiency representing a broad spectrum of the study's participants. To reduce any language barriers and gain deep insights into the personal opinions of the students the interview was conducted in German following the guidelines (see appendix 9.7) adapted from Pitcher, Albright and DeLaney (380) and Malloy, Marinak and Gambrell (274) as indicated in chapter 3.4.1.2. The interview was recorded, transcribed and analyzed by applying Mayring's qualitative content analysis (2010). The statements by the students were interpreted and put into the following categories (see appendix 9.10):

- personal value of reading,
- reading skills and competence (self-concept of the reader),
- interest in reading materials,
- language level and vocabulary,
- level of difficulty of individual post-reading tasks, and
- motivational aspects of creative transformation post-reading tasks.

The coded statements by the interviewees were integrated into the evaluation of the interventions and the reading materials of this AR regarding their motivational effects.

These different sets of quantitative and qualitative empirical data were carefully processed and analyzed to show the rise of intrinsic reading motivation in students by providing appealing literary reading materials and using creative pre- and post-reading teaching techniques. The scores of the levels of intrinsic reading motivation, the evaluation of the teaching interventions, as well as the impact of the literary crime fiction on student motivation are discussed in the following chapter.

5. Results and Discussion

After thorough analysis of the quantitative data collected in this AR by the MRP questionnaire it is clear that the participants' levels of intrinsic reading motivation rose. These heightened levels of student motivation were induced by the appealing pre-and post-reading interventions applied in this AR, as the qualitative data outlines. The selected literary texts also positively affected student motivation, although the beneficial impact of the crime and detective genre could not be confirmed.

5.1 Levels of intrinsic reading motivation

The students' levels of intrinsic reading motivation measured by the MRP questionnaire show a rise of two points from 57 points to 59 out of 80 for the average total score. This means that the total score of intrinsic reading motivation has improved for 21 out of 25 students by minimum one point, for one student the level has remained the same, and three students reported a decrease of intrinsic reading motivation (see figure 4).

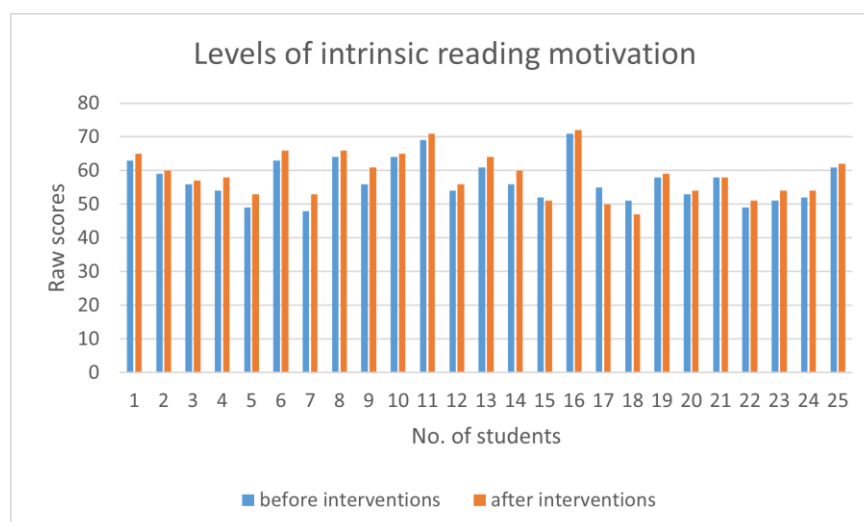


Figure 4: Rise of intrinsic reading motivation

Reviewing the subscores, the self-concept as a reader and the value of reading comprising the total score, gives a clearer picture of the increased levels of intrinsic reading motivation. Before the interventions the mean of the raw score for the self-concept of the reader was 28.7 of 40, given a range of scores between 21 as the lowest, and 36 as the

highest. Both extremes were reported by girls. Nine students reported scores of 30 or above, whereas the most common achieved score was 28 reported by seven students. After the interventions the average raw score reported for the self-concept as a reader was 29.6. In comparison to the first cycle the score increased by 0.9 points. The range of the scores was between 23 and 36. Ten learners reported scores of 30 or above, and the most common reported score was 29. Figure 5 shows that 92% of the students reported either the same or higher scores for the self-concept after the second round of extensive reading.

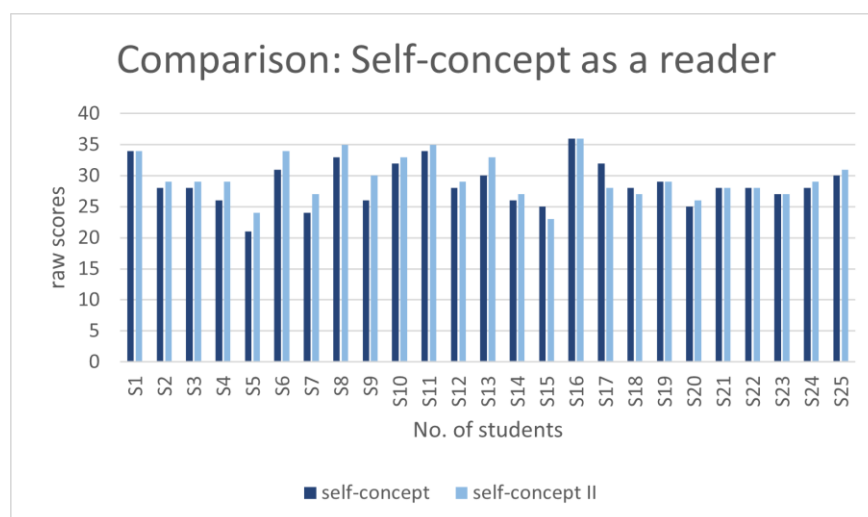


Figure 5: *Self-concept as a reader*

Two students reported lower scores after the interventions. One of them explained in the conversational focus group interview that during the creative transformation post-reading tasks he realized that his reading rate was significantly slower and he needed more support understanding the text. Thus, his level of self-efficacy or confidence decreased. Another student who reported a decrease in his self-concept as a reader stated that he noticed lack of vocabulary knowledge due to the increasing proficiency level of the reading materials. In comparison to his classmates he needed to look up or ask for clarification for a noticeable amount of unknown words. Both students reported low scores for item 3 comparing their self-perceived performance to their peers by ticking: “I read not as well as my friends.” and lower scores for item 9 for their self-perceived competence in reading ranging from “I am a poor reader.” to “I am an OK reader.” (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 520). The student who reported the lowest self-concept before the interventions increased her score and her level of self-efficacy, i.e. perceived competences.

Concerning the value of reading, the average raw score before the interventions was 28, ranging from 21 to 35 out of 40. Whereas the lowest self-reported scores for the value of

reading were stated by two boys, the girl who also reported the highest score of the self-concept as a reader noted down the highest level of value of reading alongside with a another girl, whose self-concept as a reader reached a raw score of 34. More than half of the students reported levels of value of reading below 30; the most common rated scores were 28 and 31 by four students each.

After the interventions the mean raw score for the value of reading rose one point to 29. The range of the scores was between 20 and 36 out of 40. Figure 6 demonstrates that again 92% of the students either reported equal or higher scores at the second administration of the MRP and thirteen students reported scores of 30 or above for the value of reading. For two students who had initially reported already low scores of value of reading, the importance declined further in terms of the perceived value of reading of their peers and the value of reading-related activities (see chapter 3.4.1.2). Both students ticked “I think libraries are a boring place to spend time.” (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 521), which infers that the pre-reading intervention of a visit to the school library (see chapter 4.2.44.1) did not have a positive effect on their intrinsic reading motivation

	value I	value II
1	29	31
2	31	31
3	28	28
4	28	29
5	28	29
6	32	32
7	24	26
8	31	31
9	30	31
10	32	32
11	35	36
12	26	27
13	31	31

	value I	value II
S14	30	33
S15	27	28
S16	35	36
S17	23	22
S18	23	20
S19	29	30
S20	28	28
S21	30	30
S22	21	23
S23	24	27
S24	24	25
S25	31	31

Figure 6: Value of reading

At the other end of the range, two students reported an increase of three points in the value of reading. In the conversational interview one of these students explained that during this academic year he realized he shared an interest in the same non-fictional scientific books with his seatmate and they have established a regular book and information exchange. Because of their shared interest his score for the value of reading related-activities, “I tell my friends about good books I read. – I do this some of the time” (item 6) (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 520-521) rose. The other student whose score increased in three points has a diagnosed and certified reading and writing difficulty and receives regular training in his first language to overcome the deficiencies. It is an extremely positive development that his impediments in the first language influence his attitude towards reading in the foreign language only to a certain extent. He increased his score for his self-perceived competence as a reader and his attainment value (see chapter 3.4.1.1).

Overall the scores for the self-concept as readers as well as the value of reading that constitute the level of intrinsic reading motivation measured by the MRP questionnaire have slightly improved during the course of the AR project. This infers that the reading interventions as well as the selected extensive reading materials had positive impacts on student motivation and were therefore successful. In the next subchapter the beneficial effects of the pre-reading (see chapter 4.2.4) as well as the post-reading interventions (see chapter 4.2.5) on the participants’ intrinsic reading motivation are discussed.

5.2 Evaluation of pre- and post-reading interventions

The evaluations of the pre- and post-reading interventions stem from the observed and documented student behavior during the in-class lessons (see chapter 4.2.6 and appendix 9.6), the coded answers from the filled in written feedback forms (see chapter 4.2.6 and appendix 9.5) and the categorized student statements from the conversational focus group interview (see chapter 4.2.6 and appendix 9.7 and 9.8). Although all pre-reading interventions created access to the literary text, the pre-reading interventions including visual stimulations had the most noticeable positive effects on student motivation and participation. Regarding the post-reading interventions, all of them fostered intrinsic reading motivation by satisfying the basic needs of self-determination. Each pre-and post-reading activity discussed in chapters 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 is evaluated in detail in the following paragraphs.

Although two students evaluated the reading-related activity of spending time in a library as boring in the MRP questionnaire, the majority of the students mentioned the visit to the library in a positive way. Due to the Covid-19 lockdowns and hygiene regulations most activities that involved leaving the classroom and less regulated seating arrangements were cut out of lessons. Therefore, the visit to the library attracted attention (Keller 3), was a change of scenery, and a way to spend time in a comfortable environment with sofas and upholstered chairs, imitating a living room or café and thus, representing a positive reading environment (Reichl 95). Showing the students the English literature aisle in the library and explaining the borrowing system stimulated the need of autonomy of one student, who in the conversational focus group interview reported to have taken ownership about her English reading (see chapter 4.2.4.1) because she had borrowed books from the school library regularly since this in-class visit. In her case this pre-reading interventions has facilitated access to English literature and increased intrinsic reading motivation.

In the pre-reading activity “Judging a book by its cover” all the students made use of their “right to dip in” (Pennac 190-191) and found a book to express opinion and formulate hypotheses (Reissman). Six students complained about the lack of time to find “the right book” and would have enjoyed spending more time on “dipping in”. When arguing the reasons for having selected the book or explaining the attraction to it, the students either, commented on the title, the colors of the cover, the familiar name of the author, or parroted the statement of the student before them. Although the integration of spoken production (Lütge 193) in this pre-reading activity was challenging for low-achieving students and the provision with language chunks and ideas to be able to justify their selection of books would have been helpful, they were not discourage from the activity itself and engaged actively with the books in the library.

The reflection on personal reading habits was an easily manageable, engaging activity and the innovative interaction format of creating posters with colorful sticky notes appealed to the students. Close consideration of the answers on the sticky notes made evident that the majority of the students answered sincerely and engaged in honest self-reflection about their reading habits to foster self-efficacy (Schunk and DiBenedetto 101832-2). Although this pre-reading activity integrated spontaneous written output production, the students quickly jotted down their one word or simple phrase answers, not hindered by vocabulary obstacles and disregarding spelling and sentence structure. In this way, the students uninhibitedly reflected on their personal experiences.

The second part of the reflection task, the filling in of the MRP questionnaire, was completed by the students without hesitation. Once it had been made clear that their answers would not affect their grades, the students chose the most suitable reply without inhibitions. Five students needed encouragement to pick the most appropriate answer for them and not look at their neighbors' sheet. When administering the questionnaire a second time after a few months time, four students recognized the questionnaire and commented on what they thought had been their answers the last time. Explaining to them that they should not try to remember which options they had selected last time but choose the most suitable answer at that moment, all the participants completed the questionnaire quickly and without any language obstacles due to the translation of the MRP into German.

Discussing genres by analyzing and interpreting book covers to make informed guesses started out as a dynamic, fast-paced, engaging activity alluding to the students' curiosity and feeling of competence and thereby, fostering intrinsic reading motivation (see chapter 4.2.44: Ryan and Deci 3). The more ambiguous the covers were and the more thinking and reasoning (Nünning and Nünning 22) the guess required, the more pensive and hesitant the students reacted. Although the negotiating of meaning and expressing of arguments with limited spoken production competence at level A1 is demanding, the students coped with it ingeniously by using a mixture of English and German words. Steering the genre discussion to a metalevel by asking about characters, settings and possible plots of the crime genre in general, student participation dropped because the learners preferred to ruminate about characters and story lines using pictures as impulses. Resulting from this observation, it is clear that visual stimulation for genre discussion has the greatest impact on student motivation.

The genres of the three pre-selected extensive reading materials were easily identified by the students, thus, they effectively activated their prior and schematic (Hedge 210), and were invited to construct meaning (Thaler 48) by further speculating about the content. *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men* was labelled "a classic" and "a detective story" because ten students have already heard about the famous fictional detective and inferred the genre from the title and the pictures on the cover. *The Body on the Beach* was identified as a "murder mystery" by guessing about the characters in the foreground and the crime happening in the dark on the beach as seen on the cover. The interpretation of the picture on the cover of 3" lead the students to come up with the term "thriller" for the book. The students built up expectations about the content (Hedge 189) by discussing the title in detail

and therefore, this pre-reading intervention was motivational because it whet the appetite to start the extensive reading process.

During the discussion of the crime genre, important words for the speculations about the characters and content were instructed and thus, embedded in meaningful and communicative interactions as requested by the national curriculum (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Lehrpläne der Mittelschule 36). Although the abstract discussion of the crime genre was perceived as slow and uninspiring, the learners were actively involved and motivated to contribute their vocabulary knowledge in the mind map. Unsurprisingly, some students, who play multi-player online video games in English, satisfied their need of competence and raised their level of intrinsic motivation by displaying an abundant range of vocabulary items for A1+ language level. The pre-reading activity also fostered intrinsic student motivation by fulfilling the need of autonomy because low-achieving students selected the working speed and the amount of words they copied into their mind maps, whereas high achieving students expanded their own mind-maps by searching further vocabulary items in online dictionaries. In the conversational interview the students reported that even though they enjoyed the vocabulary work in-class, it did not have a long-lasting effect on their decoding during the extensive reading process (Hedge 189) because it was more time-efficient to look up unknown words in online dictionaries or ask siblings and parents than look at the mind map.

Developing visual literacy (Lütge 192) through “Flash Images” fosters students’ positive reading attitudes and raises intrinsic reading motivation even before the actual reading process of the texts. The learners were emotionally stirred by the pictures and their interpretations (Pennac 184-186) and immediately wanted to communicate their experience and feelings to others (Guthrie 19) and thus, satisfy their need of relatedness (see chapter 3.3). Only after reassuring low achieving students that the requested note-taking was not graded and only served their later discussion, they were willing to engage in writing down their experiences and thoughts. This proves the point of this AR that teachers must always focus on student motivation as antecedent for learning before stressing any other skills and competences, such as linguistic form or spelling.

For directing the students’ attention to the creative language work of finding attractive titles for the book covers of the three selected extensive reading materials, the outlook of an external reward was given (see chapter 3.2.1.2). Only by presenting this activity as a game with a vote and prize at the end, the students re-focused on the lesson. When showing the book covers to the students, two pairs commented that they remembered the original title but

opted for creating a new one, satisfying their need of competence and rising their intrinsic motivation.

After the vote and the presentation ceremony of the winning title, the students again were chatty and loud. Interestingly, when the educators transitioned to the next activity by pinning up pictures, the majority of learners stopped talking, glanced at the photocopies and once again the power of visuals on students was experienced. The students eagerly chose pictures to transform and were totally immersed in the activity that the peer teaching partner continued this work in the afternoon during the art lessons. The students' intrinsic motivation was raised because the pictures stimulated the students' cognitive suspense (Ohler 129), they used language creatively (Pennac 27) to manipulate the pictures, fill in the blanks and construct meaning through their assumptions and hypotheses (Thaler 48).

To sum up the evaluation of these pre-reading interventions, it is evident that all of them created access to literature and facilitated the extensive reading process of the crime literary texts. Especially, the effect of visual stimulations on student motivation is striking. In addition to the pictures, the innovative teaching methods including poster creation with sticky notes and creative language work of transforming illustrations and cartoons were positively commented by students. Although written production of output seemed to threaten student motivation, the educators managed to reassure students of the focus on content over form, fostering students' needs of competence.

All of the post-reading interventions increased students' intrinsic reading motivation by satisfying their need of autonomy because they took ownership of the reading process, the way to make meaning of the literary text and the form to show their interpretation to the educators and peers. Each student chose the activity that best suited their learning style, language level and skills. This resulted in successfully mastering the extensive reading process and the post-reading task, which fostered their need of competence and thus, boosted their level of intrinsic reading motivation.

Before presenting the individual evaluations of the post-reading activities and their motivational effects, figure 7 shows the distribution of task choice according to the three literary crime stories. This graph shows that all of the post-reading activities were motivating, appealing, or intriguing to the students in some way, otherwise the learners would not have selected and engaged in the task.

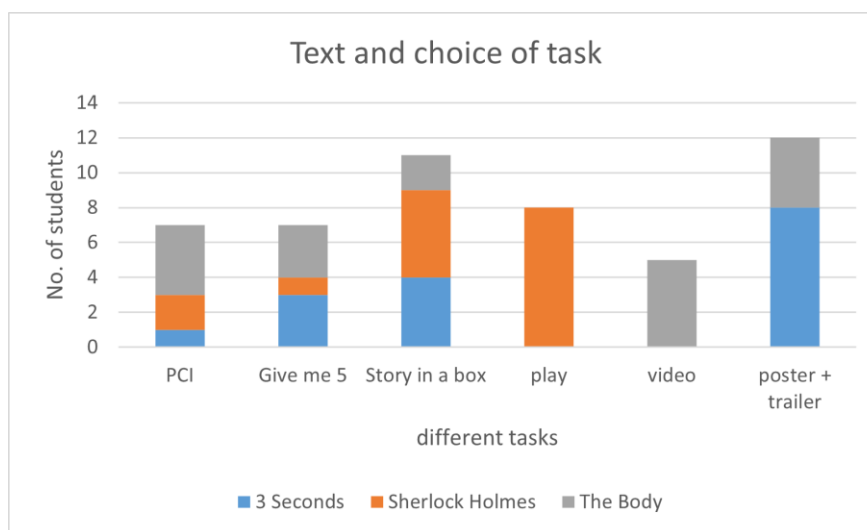


Figure 7: Task choice of post-reading interventions

The post-reading intervention “Story-in-the-box” had beneficial motivational effects on eleven students, who referred to the task as manageable and the easiest activity to complete on their own. These comments show that their intrinsic reading motivation was fostered by satisfying their need of competence and autonomy. This task of hands-on creation especially appealed to students, who are regarded as low-achieving and display basic language competences because the spoken or written output production is limited. When opening the boxes and seeing the items the students were reminded of the content of the story and could retell and justify their choice of realia quickly, which shows their successful engagement with and understanding of the literary texts (J. Guthrie, A. Wigfield and N. Humenick 243). See appendix 9.9 for pictures of the students’ boxes.

Seven students each decided on the post-reading interventions of “PCI” and “Give-Me-5” and many of them explained their attraction to engage in these activities because of the possibility to draw or illustrate. Similar to the selection of the realia for the “Story-in-the-box”, the students show their personal response to and interpretation of the literary text in form of their creativity, which fosters intrinsic motivation (Lütge 187). High achieving students reported to have chosen the “PCI” task because that activity best suited their learning

styles and language levels. This reasoning shows that they raised their intrinsic motivation through satisfying their need of competence by showing their deep understanding of a passage of the literary text and explaining their connection to the crime story.

The creative transformation post-reading interventions catered for the need of relatedness by collaborative group work. This enjoyable social format fostered intrinsic reading motivation for the majority of the students. Although two students acknowledged that they prefer showing competence over satisfying the need for relatedness, because they do not want to depend on students' learning styles and organizational skills, they reported to have gained teamwork skills.

In addition to the motivational effect of the social format, the use of the digital devices in the creative process of the video and trailer production spurred the students on to engage in these post-reading tasks. Exploiting the technological devices fosters student motivation by satisfying the needs of autonomy and competence because they personalized the content of the literary texts, interpreted them in their own creative way and took ownership of their compositions (J. Guthrie, *Engaging Adolescents in Reading* 22-23). *The Body on the Beach*, for example, inspired one group of learners to produce a video filming and combining three individual scenes: one silent scene showing the setting, one focusing on a dialogue between the characters taken from the literary text and one concentrating on the action at the end of the plot.

Although these types of action-, production-oriented and performance-based post-reading integrate written and spoken skills (Hadfield and Hadfield 95), the students refrained from re-writing the original texts. Instead they showed their artistic creativity and flexibility either by re-producing the original language taken from the comic and performed as a play or in non-linguistic ways in form of the poster or the silent videos (Hadfield and Hadfield 100). Hence, their limited level of productive skills did not interfere with negotiating their meanings and showing their understandings of the literary texts.

Changing the reading styles of the extensive reading process from individual silent reading at home in the first round to reading-aloud in groups in the second only fostered intrinsic reading motivation for low-achieving students as the learners indicated in the conversational interview. Students who perceive their reading skills as limited enjoyed reading in groups and aloud because they could check their understanding of the words and discuss the storyline during the reading process. In this way they profited from high-achieving students and their reading skills and fostered their need of competence. On the other hand, student who perceive themselves as fluent, independent EFL readers enjoy

reading silently at home to speed up the reading process and fully concentrate on the plot and thereby, foster their need of competence.

To conclude, all of the post-reading tasks had beneficial effects on student motivation because they satisfied their need of competence, relatedness and autonomy and emphasized creativity, content, and personal responses over form and linguistic features. The post-reading interventions after the second round of extensive reading motivated the students because of social collaboration, i.e. the satisfaction of the need of relatedness, and the use of digital devices for their creative transformations. In the conversational interview all of the interviewees agreed that although they have only engaged in these post-reading tasks once, they would prefer to do them in other subjects instead of oral poster presentations or written book reports because they are “cooler and more interesting”.

5.3 Impact of reading materials and genre on student motivation

The star-rating of the three extensive reading materials in the written feedback form (see appendix 9.6) showed an overall positive student evaluation of the literary crime fiction, identifying the texts as appealing and motivating for the target group. Whereas the students rated *The Body on the Beach* with 3.8 stars out of 5, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men* as well as 3” scored an average 4.3 stars because the literary texts satisfied the students’ needs of being *thrilling, exciting, comics and detective stories*, as reported in the informal survey at the beginning of the AR study (see figure 2). In the written feedback forms the students reported their pleasurable reading experiences and raise of intrinsic reading motivation by stating their positive feelings about the materials (“I was excited and happy”) and the appropriate correspondence between the language levels of the text and their reading skills (“very easy to read because I knew most of the words”), and thus, satisfying their need of competence. The comments about the books’ general qualities (“It was a good book”, “a cool book”) showed their relevance for the students fostering the need of relatedness to the reading materials.

In addition to these motivational factors of the selected reading materials, the multi-modal presentation of content in form of pictures (Nagy, ABC Graded Reader 20) raised student motivation. Eleven students pointed out that the pictures in the texts guided their understanding and reduced language inhibitions (Nagy, Literaturklassiker 4). Whereas the

detailedness of the visuals of 3'' was explicitly mentioned as appealing, the sole use of pictures demanded a high level of visual literacy (Lütge 191) which students also described as overwhelming, confusing and strange and thus, impairing their satisfaction of the need of competence. The drawings of the comic *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men* were evaluated old-fashioned and the illustrations of *The Body on the Beach* were not mentioned at all, hence failing to attract the students' attention and impacting their level of intrinsic reading motivation.

The crime fiction genre and detective stories positively affected seven students (see figure 2) by satisfying their reading interest, the pre-requisite of a pleasurable reading experience and high levels of IM (Deci and Ryan, Intrinsic Motivation 28). These students attributed their general positive feelings about the reading project to the preference of this particular genre. Further eleven students commented positively on the content of the literary texts, identifying the innate characteristic of suspense (Beyer 3-4) as motivating and appealing factor for extensive reading materials in the EFL classroom. They were captivated by the storylines structured around the question of identifying the culprit and the interactive involvement of themselves in solving the crime, which are regarded as highly motivational elements in reading (Ohler 129; Lodge 14). In contrast to these positive evaluations and impacts on motivation because of the particular crime and detective genre, five students explicitly commented negatively on the topic and content of the literary texts: "I didn't like reading the book because I like fantasy stories better.", "I didn't like reading the book because I don't like detective and crime stories.", "I didn't like the riddles of the detective story." "I didn't like that it was a crime story." "I learnt from the reading project that I don't like crime stories because they have aggressive and violent parts." Since the educators acknowledged the students' dislikes of the certain texts and appreciated the expression of their personal response (Surkamp 494), they still supported students' needs for self-determination and fostered their intrinsic motivation (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 336).

Despite these above presented insights, the correlation between exposure to the crime genre and raised student intrinsic reading motivation could not be measured in a reliable and valid way in this AR. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize a positive impact of that particular type of literary texts on student motivation because the effect depends on students' interests into topics and contents and the selection of the reading materials. Any other pre-selected genre belonging to the spectrum of identified interests of the students might have achieved similar heightened levels of intrinsic reading motivation. Since student needs even change over the course of an academic year, only one of the six interviewees would like to

repeat a reading project on the crime genre. The others would prefer to choose the topics of the reading materials themselves, satisfying their need of autonomy.

To sum up, the selected reading materials *The Body on the Beach*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men* and 3'' appealed to the interests of the students in terms of content and text types featuring suspense and visual stimulations, which resulted in an enjoyable reading experience and affected their intrinsic motivation. A direct positive correlation between the crime genre and students' raised levels of intrinsic reading motivation could not be established.

6. Limitations and outlook

Without doubt, the sample size of 25 participants is relatively small and the positive effects of the teaching techniques and reading materials can only be seen in the particular context of this EFL classroom. Because of this limitation, generalizations about the improvement of teaching reading literature must be made with caution. In addition to the small sample size the interventions have only been applied and tested once. Some of these teaching and learning techniques need to be trained and implemented several times before they reveal their full effects on students' motivation.

Another limitation of this AR's methodology is that the action researcher was also the class teacher of the participants, which biases the findings. Since the class teacher usually has a particular personal connection to learners to facilitate their academic and personal growth, the team teaching partner should have played a more active role in the interventions and instructions. In this way, the action research would have played a less integral part in the classroom setting and could have concentrated on the gathering of data and the research process in general.

A further limitation of this methodology is the significant time gap between the two extensive reading processes. During the time span of six months, the students' needs, interests, levels of motivation might have changed due to internal or external factors not discussed in this thesis. Especially the time of the pandemic involving distance learning periods, new online teaching formats and time spent at home without peers might have had substantial influence on students' personality development, the formation of new habits or other psychological consequences that directly relate to reading motivation. Due to these factors the changes of the levels of intrinsic reading motivation as reflected in the results must also be viewed with caution.

Doubtlessly, this AR was aimed at low-achieving reluctant readers to boost their intrinsic reading motivation through experiencing pleasurable reading experiences and fostering their self-determination in form of the basic needs. Due to this fact, the interventions and reading materials had minimal effects on students with already high levels of motivation. For further research projects on intrinsic reading motivation the target group of these gifted, high-achieving students must also be borne in mind either by providing more challenging, interesting materials, individualized counselling or higher demanding spoken and written output production.

Despite these limitations the AR presented in this thesis has contributed valuable insights on motivational techniques and intriguing reading materials for teaching literature in the EFL classroom. It has focused on a niche by investigating learners at lower secondary level with a language level of A1 to A2. In the near future the action researcher might concentrate on the importance of digital reading and explore story apps for school reading for advanced learners.

7. Conclusion

When starting to plan this thesis the main idea was on how to integrate teaching and reading literature in lower secondary grades at level A1-A2. The majority of the guidelines on teaching literature in the EFL classroom recommend starting as soon as possible to acquaint the students with reading longer texts to transform them into successful lifelong learners (Thaler 27). But a vast majority of students is often unwilling to engage in the reading process or avoid it altogether. For students to connect with literature and transform reading into a pleasurable, satisfying activity, the teacher has to appeal to the students' interests, foster their self-determination and thus, ensure high levels of intrinsic reading motivation.

This AR has shown that levels of intrinsic reading motivation are raised by using inspiring, interactive reading materials and carefully planned interventions adapted to the needs of the students. With the translated MRP questionnaire the levels of intrinsic reading motivation reflected by the self-concept as a reader and the value of reading were easily and time-efficiently measured and the two sets of data -before and after the interventions of the AR- were analyzed. The comparison of the results has shown a slight general tendency of positive changes in students' intrinsic reading motivation.

The interventions planned according to the students' needs of self-determination and the elements of the ARCS model fostering motivation, were useful and effective means to raise intrinsic reading motivation. This has been confirmed through the categorized observations conducted by the team teaching partner and the evaluations of the students in from of the written feedback and the statements in the conversational focus group interview. Particularly striking has been the influence of the visual stimulations on lower secondary language learners. They motivated the students to actively participate during the interventions but also helped them to the understand the reading materials. Another motivational element was the social format of group work and the use of technological devices for preparing the post-reading productions. The effects of different reading modes on student motivation is dependent on the preferred learning and reading styles of the students. Whereas lower-achieving students favor in-class reading and listening to the reading materials in order to guide their understanding, higher-achieving learners rather choose silent reading at home because the limited speed rate when reading aloud hinders their focus and attention span. Since the success of motivational teaching techniques and reading materials always depends on the individual student, it is essential that EFL teachers regularly determine their students'

interests and cater for a variety of different needs. “[E]ach teaching situation is unique in terms of content, level, student skills and learning styles, teacher skills and teaching styles, and many other factors. [Thus t]o maximize student learning, a teacher must find out what works best in a particular situation.” (McKinney 274)

Regarding the impact of the crime genre on the level of intrinsic reading motivation this research can not present clear findings or provide recommendations. The crime and detective stories have been advantageous in this AR because the majority of the participants preferred suspenseful, interactive stories. It can only be concluded that a particular genre can either have a positive or a negative impact on the students’ motivation depending on their individual interests and preferences. When selecting the reading materials it seems more important that they include stimulating visuals, interactive elements and appropriate language levels.

This thesis contributes to an evolving field of AR in literature focusing on lower EFL learners. Through the publication of this research, a variety of tested pre-, and post-reading activities are shared and their effects on students’ motivation can be compared. Moreover, the exchange of manageable, attractive, authentic, as well as inspiring adapted and graded reading materials might be beneficial for the spread of using literature in the EFL classroom at low levels. In addition, this thesis might serve as an inspiration for novice teachers to introduce new projects into rather rigid existing teaching systems, convince team teaching partners of the value of them and show their interests and enthusiasm for a particular pedagogic or didactic issue.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Abstract

The perceived unwillingness and avoidance to read has lead to applying a new teaching approach focusing on low-level learners' self-determination (Ryan and Deci 1984) and intrinsic reading motivation in the Austrian EFL classroom. The purpose of this Action Research is to evaluate the impact of this new approach on beginning EFL learners' motivation. The new teaching techniques were designed to satisfy the students' needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy, the underlying principles of self-determination (Deci, Vallerand and Pelletier 327) and the reading materials were selected because they appealed to students' interest in crime fiction and were appropriate for level A1-A2. The students' levels of intrinsic reading motivation were measured by the Motivation-to-Read-Profile questionnaire (Gambrell, Codling and Palmer 518) before and after the reading project. The motivational effects of the crime stories and the impact of the pre-and post-reading tasks on student motivation were evaluated by observed student behavior, and written and oral student feedback applying Mayring's (2020) qualitative content analysis. The heightened levels of intrinsic reading motivation after the interventions show that reading materials featuring suspense and requiring active engagement as well as reading-related activities including visual input, social collaboration and technological devices stimulate self-determination.

Keywords: intrinsic reading motivation, literature in the EFL classroom, self-determination, motivational pre- and post-reading activities, crime fiction

9.2 Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Da österreichische Schüler:innen im Englischunterricht das Lesen fremdsprachiger Texte vermeiden, wurde eine neue Lehr- und Lernmethode angewendet, die die Selbstbestimmung der Lernenden in den Fokus rückt, um somit die intrinsische Lesemotivation zu steigern. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist diese neue Methode hinsichtlich ihrer Auswirkung auf die Motivation der Schüler:innen zu evaluieren. Diese neuen Unterrichtsmethoden wurden basierend auf der Selbstbestimmungstheorie von Ryan und Deci (1984) und der Erfüllung der Grundbedürfnisse Kompetenz, Autonomie und sozialer Eingebundenheit entwickelt. Der Wert der intrinsischen Lesemotivation wurde vor und nach dem Leseprojekt mit Hilfe des Motivation-to-Read-Profile Fragebogens gemessen. Die Lesetexte, die in dieser Studie verwendet wurden, sind dem Kriminal- und Detektivgenre zuzuordnen und wurden aufgrund der Interessen der Schüler:innen und deren Sprachstufe A1-A2 ausgewählt. Die Auswirkungen dieser Lesetexte sowie der Unterrichtstechniken und -aktivitäten auf die Motivation wurden durch Beobachtung, sowie das mündliche und schriftliche Schüler:innenfeedback, das mithilfe der Qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse nach Mayring (2020) analysiert und interpretiert wurde, festgestellt. Die Auswertung dieser Studie zeigt, dass höhere Werte an intrinsischer Lesemotivation durch die Auswahl von spannenden und interaktiven Texten, sowie Unterrichtsmethoden, die visuellen Input, Gruppenarbeit und neue Technologien einsetzen, erreicht werden.

Schlagwörter: intrinsische Lesemotivation, Literatur im Fremdsprachenunterricht, Selbstbestimmungstheorie, motivierende Leseaktivitäten, Kriminalgenre

9.3 Illustration of “The rights of the reader”

The Rights of the Reader

by Daniel Pennac

illustrated by Quentin Blake



1 The right not to read.



2 The right to skip.



3 The right not to finish a book.



4 The right to read it again.



5 The right to read anything.



6 The right to mistake a book for real life.



7 The right to read anywhere.



8 The right to dip in.



9 The right to read out loud.



10 The right to be quiet.

10 rights - 1 warning
Don't make fun of people
who don't read -
or they never will.



Illustration © 2000 Quentin Blake

WALKER BOOKS
www.walkerbooks.co.uk

Source: <https://melliber.wordpress.com/2010/08/02/the-rights-of-the-reader-poster-in-case-you-havent-already-seen-it/>

9.4 MRP questionnaire: translation

Leseumfrage

Name: _____

1. Meine Freunde glauben, dass ich _____.
 - ☐ ein sehr guter Leser bin
 - ☐ ein guter Leser bin
 - ☐ okay im Lesen bin
 - ☐ ein schlechter Leser bin
2. Ein Buch lesen ist etwas, das ich gerne mache.
 - ☐ nie
 - ☐ fast nie
 - ☐ meistens
 - ☐ oft
3. Wenn es ein Wort im Text gibt, das ich nicht kenne, kann ich _____.
 - ☐ immer herausfinden, was es bedeutet
 - ☐ meistens herausfinden, was es bedeutet
 - ☐ fast nie herausfinden, was es bedeutet
 - ☐ nie herausfinden, was es bedeutet
4. Meine Freunde finden, dass Lesen _____.
 - ☐ sehr viel Spaß macht.
 - ☐ Spaß macht
 - ☐ okay ist
 - ☐ überhaupt keine Spaß macht.
5. I lese _____.
 - ☐ nicht so gut wie meine Freunde.
 - ☐ genauso gut wie meine Freunde.
 - ☐ ein bisschen besser als meine Freunde.
 - ☐ sehr viel besser als meine Freunde.
6. Ich erzähle meinen Freunden von guten Büchern, die ich lese.
 - ☐ Das mache ich nie
 - ☐ Das mache ich fast nie
 - ☐ Das mache ich manchmal
 - ☐ Das mache ich sehr oft
7. Wenn ich alleine lese, verstehe ich _____.
 - ☐ alles
 - ☐ fast alles



- ☐ fast nichts
- ☐ nichts

8. Leute, die viel lesen sind _____ ..

- ☐ sehr interessant
- ☐ eher interessant
- ☐ eher langweilig
- ☐ sehr langweilig

9. Ich bin _____ .

- ☐ ein schlechter Leser
- ☐ ein mittelmäßiger Leser
- ☐ ein guter Leser
- ☐ ein sehr guter Leser

10. Ich finde, dass Bibliotheken _____ .

- ☐ ein sehr schöner Ort sind, um dort Zeit zu verbringen.
- ☐ ein schöner Ort sind, um dort Zeit zu verbringen.
- ☐ ein langweiliger Ort sind, um dort Zeit zu verbringen.
- ☐ ein sehr langweiliger Ort sind, um dort Zeit zu verbringen.

11. Ich mache mir Sorgen, was andere Jugendliche über mein Lesen denken.

- ☐ sehr oft
- ☐ manchmal
- ☐ fast nie
- ☐ nie

12. Ein guter Leser zu werden, finde ich _____ .

- ☐ nicht sehr wichtig
- ☐ eher wichtig
- ☐ wichtig
- ☐ sehr wichtig

13. Wenn ein Lehrer mir eine Frage über einen Text stellt, den ich gelesen habe, _____.

- ☐ weiß ich nie eine Antwort
- ☐ weiß ich fast nie eine Antwort
- ☐ weiß ich manchmal eine Antwort
- ☐ weiß ich immer eine Antwort

14. Zeit mit Lesen zu verbringen, finde ich _____ .

- ☐ sehr langweilig
- ☐ langweilig
- ☐ schön
- ☐ sehr schön

15. Lesen ist _____ .

- ☐ sehr leicht für mich



- ☐ eher leicht für mich
- ☐ eher schwierig für mich
- ☐ sehr schwierig für mich

16. Wenn mein Lehrer einen Text laut vorliest, finde ich das _____ .

- ☐ sehr schön
- ☐ schön
- ☐ langweilig
- ☐ sehr langweilig

17. Wenn ich mich mit meinen Mitschülern über Bücher, die ich gelesen habe, austausche, _____ ..

- ☐ hasse ich es, über meine Ideen zu reden
- ☐ mag ich es nicht, über meine Ideen zu reden
- ☐ mag ich es, über meine Ideen zu reden
- ☐ liebe ich es, über meine Ideen zu sprechen

18. In meiner Freizeit, verbringe ich _____ .

- ☐ keine Zeit mit Lesen.
- ☐ sehr wenig Zeit mit Lesen.
- ☐ etwas Zeit mit Lesen.
- ☐ sehr viel Zeit mit Lesen.

19. Wenn ich laut vorlese, bin ich _____ .

- ☐ ein schlechter Leser
- ☐ ganz okay im Lesen
- ☐ ein guter Leser
- ☐ ein sehr guter Leser

20. Wenn ich ein Buch geschenkt bekomme, bin ich _____ .

- ☐ sehr glücklich
- ☐ glücklich
- ☐ unglücklich
- ☐ sehr unglücklich



9.5 Observation grids

Class: 2.MS

No. of learners: 25

Age of learners: 11-12 years

Length of lesson: 50min

Level: A1-A2

Observer : Claudia Mathy – team teaching partner

Teacher observed:

Katharina Hoffmann

Cycle 1 – lesson 1: What helps to motivate students?

What is there about the classroom, the activities, the teacher and the learners that helps to raise interest, motivate students and create conditions for effective learning? What things do you observe that seem to play a part in preventing learning?

The classroom

Make notes on seating, sight lines, space, air, warmth, light, whiteboard, equipment, etc.

The activities

Make notes on the kind of activities used, the nature of student involvement, balance of students doing things and teacher doing things, etc.

The teacher

What personal qualities does the teacher have (i.e. not teaching techniques)? What kind of rapport does this teacher have? What is the personal psychological atmosphere generated by this teacher? What is it like to be a student in this classroom?

The learners

How motivated are the learners? Why? To what extent are they taking an active part in their own learning? To what extent are they expecting the teacher to do the work for them?

9.6 Written feedback form

Feedback – Reading project

Name: _____

Before reading: Rate the activities. (1 star: I didn't like it. - 5 stars: I loved it.)

Visit to the library



Judging a book by its cover in the library



Talking about my reading habits (Lesegewohnheiten)



Discussing crime and detective stories



Learning vocabulary about crime and detective stories



Flash images: Writing down what you see and think



Creative language works: Writing titles and text into pictures



I chose:

- ☐ Sherlock Holmes and the Dancing Men
- ☐ The Body on the Beach
- ☐ 3"

I rate the book



I chose:

- ☐ Story in the box
- ☐ PCI: Passage, Content, Illustration
- ☐ Give me 5

because _____.

Complete the sentences. The words in the box might help you.

exciting	cool	interesting story	difficult to understand
easy to read	nice characters	pictures	translation of words
dictionary	great	okay	crime stories
want to know how it ends	want to know who has done it		

1. I found the book _____ because
_____.
2. I didn't like _____.
3. _____ helped me understand the story.
4. I learnt from the reading project _____.



9.7 Conversational focus group interview guidelines

Guidelines for conversational focus group interview

Date: 28th May 2021

Time: 14:00 – 15:00

Location: classroom 2.MS

3 male students, 3 female students

Thank you for participating in this conversation.

We will talk about reading in general and about our reading project in school.

This interview will be recorded but only used for creating better reading lessons.

Your answer will not effect your English grade in any way.

Please eat and drink as you like. Whenever you feel like standing up or going to the toilet – tell me and we will interrupt the interview.

Do you have any questions?

Value of reading:

1. Did you read anything yesterday?
2. What was it about?
3. Why did you read it?
4. What kind of books do you usually like to read?
5. What do you usually read at home? : ebooks, computer, internet, communication (social media) – difference to school reading!
6. Is it important to learn to read well?

Reading materials of AR project:

7. Have any of your teachers done something with reading that you really enjoyed?
8. What could teachers change to make reading for school / in class more enjoyable? Choose different, more interesting book?
9. What did you think about the crime stories from our reading project?
10. Would you have chosen these books yourself? Why / Why not?

Interventions of AR project:

11. What else could teachers do to make reading more enjoyable? Choose different, more interesting activities?
12. What was cool about the activities in school / at home (PCI, Story in the box, Give me 5, creative transformation tasks?)
13. Which activities did you not like? Why?

Self-concept of the reader:

1. What's the easiest thing about reading in class?
2. What's hard about reading in class?
3. What do you have to do to become a better reader?
4. How could teachers help you become a better reader?

Is there anything else you would like to say about reading?

9.8 Categories for qualitative content analysis (according to Mayring 2010)

Qualitative content analysis of conversational focus group interview

Categories for coding:

- Personal value of reading
- Reading skills and competence (self-concept of the reader)
- Interest in reading materials
- Language level and vocabulary
- Level of difficulty of individual post-reading tasks
- Motivational aspects of creative transformation post-reading tasks

Examples of interpretation of student statements:

Personal value of reading

Ich finds schon wichtig ... aber es ist extrem anstrengend...
Als Mechaniker brauch ich keine englischen Texte lesen...
... schon immer gern gelesen... 50 Bücher im Sommer
... was Neues lernen...

Reading skills and competence (self-concept of the reader)

...war ziemlich anstrengend, ich war immer der letzte...
...schon immer schlecht im Lesen...viel langsamer...
... .Buch war leicht, da gabs ja nur die Bilder..
... laut Lesen ist angenehmer...

Interest in reading materials

... mögen Bücher über Geschichte z.B. Schlachten im antiken Rom.
...nimmt mir die Bücher mit, die ihr gefallen haben....meistens Liebes...
... lieber lustige Bücher...
...vorher hab ich Krimis nicht wirklich gelesen...
... spannend, ich wollte weiterlesen und wissen, wer es war.

Language level and vocabulary

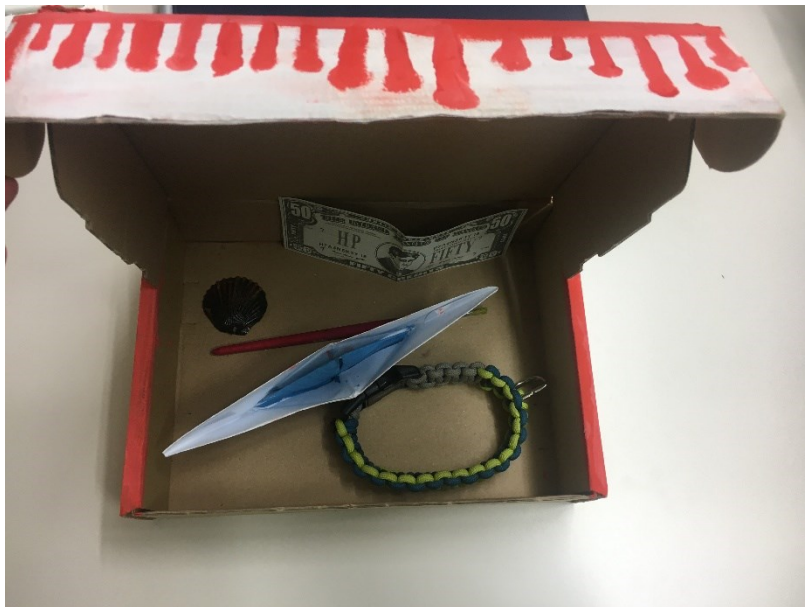
... von den Computerspielen weiß ich einige Wörter...
... ich find Mind maps so verwirrend... da schau ich nie drauf...
... Online Wörterbuch und Google translate... meine besten Freunde
... zu faul alle Wörter nachzuschauen...

Level of difficulty of individual post-reading tasks

... mit dem Schuhkarton war lustig und einfach...
... das Schreiben war schwierig aber ich mag Zeichnen
... voll schwierig... hab es alleine probiert, aber meine Mama.... geholfen
... das leichteste ausgewählt...

Motivational aspects of creative transformation post-reading tasks
... den Film von 3" haben wir einfach nachgespielt...
.. den Text einfach vom Comic ... nicht selber schreiben...
In der Gruppe arbeiten ist viel leichter, jeder hat eine Idee...
... beim Video haben wir nicht gesprochen... das war einfach
... tut sich leicht beim Sprechen, die hat den Text geschrieben und gesagt.

9.9 Pictures of students' "Stories-in-the-box"



9.10 Visual representations of categories (written feedback forms)

