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MAYNOOTH

Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education

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How multi-dimensional reading, facilitated by differentiation & choice, motivates young readers: a case-study of a Reading Workshop

Rachel Noctor

A Research Dissertation submitted to the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Research in Practice)

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Supervised by: Máire Nic an Bhaird and Liam Mac Amhlaigh

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by

Rachel Noctor

M. Ed. (Research in Practice)

2019

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Abstract

For the purpose of this thesis an action research project was undertaken by the author, a primary school teacher, with children in an all-girl's second class setting aged between seven and eight years old. This experience is documented through a self-study action research methodology. The research examines the implementation of a multi-dimensional reading approach in the form of the Reading Workshop with a focus on differentiation and choice. The objective of this study is to develop the children's intrinsic motivation to read and to foster a love of reading. The research reports that providing children with a differentiated learning environment affords them the opportunity to experience success in their learning. Furthermore, providing children with choice of reading materials peaks their interest levels. Both elements combined support the development of intrinsic motivation in readers. This study explores the authors' experience of this research through a social constructivist lens and a self-study action research methodology. Qualitative data was collected in the form of open-ended participant questionnaires, interviews and a reflective diary over a six-week period. This data was then contextualised using the Charmaz grounded theory method. The study concludes that intrinsic motivation to read can be fostered in a child through the facilitation of differentiation and choice in the classroom, using the Reading Workshop framework.

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Abbreviations

Reading Workshop (RW)

Action Research (AR)

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Chapter One: Introduction

"For students of every ability and background, it is the simply miraculous act of reading a good book that turns them into readers. The job of adults who care about reading is to move heaven and earth to put that book into a child's hands"

(Nancie Atwell, 2007: 1).

This chapter illustrates the aims of the study and provides an outline of my professional values and the role they played in my choice of research topic. Reflection upon the application of an action research methodology and its impact on my practice is briefly examined. The historical background and significance of the Reading Workshop is explored. Lastly, a summary of the thesis structure is provided.

1.1 Aims of the study

An aim of this study is to engage in reflective practice using the Reading Workshop in a second-class classroom, in order to inform future actions. I explored the impact and importance of a differentiated reading framework on young readers and how the element of choice in their reading routine affected their perceived attitudes to reading for enjoyment. Particular focus was paid to these elements as influences on a child's intrinsic motivation to read (Tomlinson, 2014; Wigfield, 2016). This practitioner research endeavours to explicate the potential value of the RW in creating an environment and routine which fosters a love of reading (Calkins, 2001; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Atwell, 2007; Serafini, 2015).

For the purpose of this study, I focused upon two elements of the RW which correlated with my Froebelian values. I identified differentiation and choice as tangible actions which I could take in order to address the contradiction. Undertaking a self-study action research project has facilitated the realignment of my core teaching philosophy. It is a desirable methodology in this instance as it supports my ontological and epistemological values embedded in this research. These are considered further in chapter three. Once I became stronger in my values, the aims of this study became apparent.

1.2 Values and assumptions

An influential factor in the development of my values was my prior experience with Friedrich Froebel's teaching philosophy. Being a Froebelian practitioner has greatly influenced my teaching pedagogy. His philosophy of creating an independent and interdependent environment, allowing free choice and movement, having a warm, responsive and trusting relationship has remained at the core of my professional values (Bruce, 2012; Tovey, 2013).

To acknowledge all the ways in which our values influence our daily practice, we must become familiar with them. I value an environment that is learner centred, inclusive and built upon trusting relationships. I teach on the basis that children learn at their own pace, in their own time. I believe that respect and care are at the forefront of my teaching pedagogy. I acknowledge that the choices I make daily are influenced by these values, assumptions and beliefs.

Self-study action research is a deeply valued based approach to critical reflection on one's own work. At the outset of this research, I studied my values and assumptions in an attempt to bring clarity to an area of my practice which was shrouded in uncertainty (Brookfield, 2017). Whitehead (2015) challenges you to delve deep into your values and question the intent surrounding them. We make assumptions that our values serve a greater purpose and are 'life affirming' (Whitehead, 2015). However, the sincerity of our intentions does not always have this intended outcome. Yet I consider, am I living out these values daily in my practice or am I a 'living contradiction'? (Whitehead, 2015). McNiff and Whitehead (2005) describes a living contradiction as someone who has acknowledged their values and beliefs but can see that they are not living out their values in their practice. In order for one's beliefs and practice to live harmoniously, one must be living closely to one's values (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005; Sullivan et al., 2016). Through a rigorous and intentional consideration of my current practices, I identified an area where my values were not evident. I concluded that I was not living these values out in my practice of teaching reading. The emphasis on the importance of reading had lessened in my classroom. Subsequently, this led to a diminished focus on my core teaching values and my everyday practice left me experiencing what McNiff & Whitehead (2005) coin a 'living contradiction'. The RW framework provided me with a structure to challenge this contradiction.

1.3 The Reading Workshop background

Historically, a workshop has been utilised as a physical and mental space to organise human learning (Bennett, 2007). Vygotsky (Armstrong, 2015) advises that learning does not happen in isolation and is therefore a social act. During the 1980's, Nancie Atwell and Donald Graves co-constructed a RW and led a field of teachers in implementing it in American classrooms. Their ideas were the catalyst for future educators to further develop and adapt the workshop in tandem with the changing needs of the education system. Atwell (1989) describes the RW as a safe and comfortable learning space which is an open-ended, stable environment and invites the highest level of learning. At its core, the workshop consists of a structure which facilitates both teacher and students engaging in meaningful learning through mini-lessons, independent reading, whole class discussions and book talk.

According to Serafini (2015), a renowned reading workshop advocate, the aim of the reading workshop is to produce lifelong readers. Lucy Calkins (2001), well known for her expertise in the area, advises that children need to enjoy meaningful literacy experiences in order for them to compose richly literate lives (Calkins, 2001; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Serafini, 2015). Calkins (2001) asserts that in order for students to experience success and become competent readers, they must read widely and often, for extended periods of time. The RW framework provides the opportunity for sustained independent reading within a traditional classroom instructional setting. It facilitates dialogue about reading, furthering students understanding and interest in books (Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Atwell, 2007). Furthermore, Calkins (2001) recommends constructing a library containing a rich variety of literature. The library must meet the needs of all levels of readers affording them decision-

making power with the material they choose (Calkins 2001; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Serafini, 2001,2015; Atwell, 2007).

This thesis is underpinned by a positive view of the RW and its ability to provide teachers with a workable framework to improve their teaching of reading. By using the RW, teachers are afforded the opportunity to facilitate the above objectives and transform their approach. The structure of the reading workshop is outlined in detail in Chapter two, as the literature surrounding the framework is explored at a conceptual level. Elements of my RW were informed by the interrogation of my professional and personal values (Sullivan et al., 2016).

1.4 Thesis layout

This study comprises of five chapters. This chapter provides an introduction to the research project undertaken. Following this, chapter two gives an in-depth exploration of the relevant literature surrounding the topic of differentiation, attitudes to reading, facilitating choice and how the RW supports these elements. Chapter three provides a justification for my choice of methodology with particular focus on action research and grounded theory as my means of data analysis. Chapter four raises the data collected to a conceptual level and chapter five discusses the findings and implications for further research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

'Children are like tiny flowers: they are varied and need care, but each is beautiful alone and glorious when seen in the community of peers' (Froebel cited in Armstrong, 2015*)*

2.1 Introduction

The primary focus of this chapter is to collate literature surrounding this research study. Firstly, the literature review provides the background, benefits and relevance of differentiation. Secondly, the reading process and the models of literacy acquisition are set forth. Thirdly, how motivation to read can be encouraged through developing interest and choice is outlined. Fourthly, an overview of the structure and benefits of the reading workshop is explored, followed by its relevance to the Irish reading curriculum.

2.2 The background to differentiated instruction

This section will contextualise differentiated reading. Four key contributors that have established and developed this concept are set forth. Tomlinson, Gardner, Vygotsky and Froebel. Differentiation is evident throughout classrooms today and has been prevalent for many years. It is utilised as an effective teaching strategy however it needs nurturing and continuous professional development for its successful implementation. Carol Ann Tomlinson is arguably one of the most influential figures in the area of differentiated instruction. She is an American educator who has built upon many theoretical pedagogues' work to further develop the concept of differentiated instruction (Nedellec, 2014).

Tomlinson (2014) would caution the assumption that one's road map for learning is identical to anyone else's. Differentiation is the inclusion of all learners and their differing learning styles (Bruce, 2012, 2019; Tovey, 2013). It is a way of reaching out effectively to all learners who span the spectrum of learning readiness, personal interests and culturally shaped ways of experiencing their world (Tomlinson, 2014). An amalgamation of differing teaching approaches and instruction is used as a way of engaging each individual student. Similarly, Gregory (2002) would add that one size does not fit all. As a teacher who differentiates instruction, you become both a facilitator and a collaborator (Heacox, 2002 cited in Tomlinson 2014; Chapman, 2003).

Tomlinson (2014) suggests that a differentiated classroom begins when a teacher asks themselves how they can maximise their time, resources and self to be an effective and progressive catalyst to learning. It is stated that 'our experiences, culture, gender, genetic codes, and neurological wiring all affect how and what we learn' (Tomlinson, 2014: 16). Tomlinson (2014) drew upon the works of many educational theorists who paved the way for inclusive and multi-faceted teaching approaches. One of these great influential educational theorists was Howard Gardner who developed the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which guides the approach of differentiation for all types of learners.

"According to Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, each human being is capable of eight relatively independent forms of information processing, with individuals differing from one another in the specific profile of intelligences that they exhibit" (Gardner & Hatch, 1989: 1). He notes that in order to access, engage and motivate learners, a teacher must adapt their teaching style and learning activities to support these defined intelligences. Gardner's (1989) theory suggests that traditional style teaching facilitates rote learning and

memorising skills, leading to a neglect of questioning, reflecting and comprehension. His claims are supported by Concannon-Gibney and Murphy who investigate the lack of comprehension focus in Irish schools. As a consequence of this, learners lack a deep and meaningful understanding and are constrained to shallow learning (Concannon-Gibney & Murphy, 2012; Gregory, 2002).

The impact of Gardner can be seen at a practical level in the classroom and at an academic level in the literature. From a practical perspective, the development of this theory has led practitioners to analyse their teaching styles, methods and learning environment to ensure that they are catering for the variety of learners amongst their student cohort (Tomlinson, 2014). From an academic perspective, Gardner's (1989) theory of multiple intelligences has been the catalyst for educational theorists to build upon the foundations that intelligences are multi-faceted and individual (Nedellic, 2014). I submit that this approach encourages education to move away from the exclusivity of traditional learning styles and into a more inclusive and prosperous approach. Gardner's theory is complimented by Vygotsky's work, another influential theorist in the area of differentiation.

Lev Vygotsky's work has become the foundation for much psychological and educational research over the last number of decades but his idea of the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD) arrived at the forefront of educational theory during the 1980's. This was during a shift towards a more social constructivist educational movement (Armstrong, 2015). He believed that every child can learn if given the correct range of tasks. Furthermore, an individual can perform a select number of tasks but in collaboration with others, can perform a far greater number of tasks (Zaretskii, 2009; Armstrong, 2015). Vygotsky (1984) suggests that tasks which are too simple or are too complex do not facilitate learning.

Learning occurs in the zone of proximal development when a person is presented with a task which is just beyond their reach of present ability but can achieve it through assistance from a competent other (Vygotsky, 1984, cited in Zaretskii, 2009; Armstrong, 2015; Tomlinson, 2014). Eventually, these tasks will be performed independently and will shift from the ZPD. This is the point at which learning occurs (Vygotsky, 1984, cited in Zaretskii, 2009). Teachers who resonate with this theory are cognisant of the fact that each child has a differing ZPD. They will demonstrate differentiation in practice by designing lesson plans which meet the needs of these learners (Joseph, 2013). A similarity of Froebel and Vygotsky is that they both recognise that the students learning is fluid and Vygotsky's ZPD shifts to the next level once learning has occurred, Froebel submits that each learning point leads to the next.

Friedrich Froebel was a German pedagogue who transformed education during the 19th century with his belief that children should be viewed through a multitude of lenses which include their thoughts, feelings, physical selves and how they interact with others and develop relationships (Bruce, 2012, 2019; Tovey, 2013). Froebel places the child within their context and does not look at them in isolation from others. He proposes that each child is an individual and each classroom setting is individual but when brought together, they create a powerful collaborative learning experience. He celebrated diversity and focused on child-centred learning (Tovey,2013). 'The focus is on letting children develop their own learning agenda. Pursuing their own interests and going at the pace suitable for them' (Bruce, 2012: 79). Most educators today would agree that children learn best by being active participants (Bruce, 2012; Tovey, 2013). Froebel believed that each point of learning leads to the next point through interconnection of these experiences (Bruce, 2012). According to Froebel, the most important years of a child's life are the earliest years where all future learning relies

upon this foundation (Tovey, 2013). It is noted that the works of these prominent educational theorists are emerging today as foundational influences for current curriculum development and practices (Bruce 2012; Tovey, 2013).

2.3 Differentiated instruction in Ireland

Having given a background to differentiation, differentiated instruction at a domestic level is discussed in this section. The key areas of exploration will be the 1999 curriculum in Ireland, Helen Heneghan and the New Language Curriculum (2015).

In the 1999 Irish Curriculum drafted by the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), it highlights that all children have the right of access to the highest quality education appropriate to their needs. It also notes that classroom provisions should be made to cater for the special needs of individual children at the various stages of their development (NCCA, 1999). It does not however, acknowledge the range of developmental stages children are at across the board in a classroom, irrespective of special needs or socio-economic backgrounds mentioned. To close the gap on these unmet needs, a greater importance was placed on differentiated instruction (NEPS, 2016). In addition to this, Concannon-Gibney and Murphy (2010) and NEPS (2016) recommend a balanced approach to literacy to tackle these issues in the Irish context.

Helen Heneghan (2013), an Irish lecturer and researcher, conducted a study in Ireland which explored teachers perceptions of differentiated reading. It was found that overall, Irish teachers had a positive attitude to differentiation but that more support was needed in the area. The issues at the forefront of this study for teachers were lack of time, poor student behaviour and large class sizes (Heneghan, 2013). These all presented as obstacles to the

differentiated instruction of reading due to the broad curriculum overload in Irish schools (Morgan & NicCraith, 2015). In an NCCA (2010) report on curriculum overload in Primary schools, time was identified as the greatest challenge to teachers. Teachers and Principals noted the growing range of abilities in their large classes and the insufficient time available to meet all of these varying needs (NCCA, 2016). A similar study was conducted by Nedellic (2014) in a Swiss context and uncovered the same results.

Irrespective of this, differentiation was advised in the NCCA publications in 2007 *Exceptionally Able Students: Draft Guidelines for Teachers* and in 2010 *Curriculum Overload in Primary Schools* NCCA, having previously been omitted from the 1999 curriculum (Heneghan, 2013). I submit that although the expectations are there for teachers to facilitate a differentiated classroom to the best of their ability, the Irish curriculum overload and a lack of time allocated to subjects is a physical block to many educational practitioners (Morgan and NicCraith, 2015).

The New Language Curriculum developed by the NCCA in 2015 is a welcomed development in this area. This New Language Curriculum acknowledges the need to cater for all abilities and learners and has developed upon the 1999 curriculum by providing teachers with the support material needed to further aid the implementation of an accessible curriculum (NCCA, 2015). It has also changed limiting language, for example it has replaced the word 'level' with 'stage' to further distance itself from the confining of children to levels (NCCA, 2015). In addition to this, the New Language Curriculum provides teachers with guidelines outlining which reading milestones (progression continua) the students have reached and are working towards (NCCA, 2015). We are yet to see the benefits of this curriculum as it has not been fully immersed into all Irish Primary schools. It is hoped that it

will serve to tackle some of the issues facing teachers today with regards to the support provided (Heneghan, 2013; Morgan & NicCraith, 2015).

With this in mind, I would argue that with this New Language Curriculum, comes a greater amount of work for Irish teachers (Joseph, 2013; Gaitas & Alves Martins, 2017; Algozzine & Anderson, 2010). They must navigate their way through understanding it and utilising the support materials available to them without face to face, hands on training. It will be imperative that the department of education phase in the new changes and provide further support for teachers in order for them to feel competent in implementing the new plan. In the section that follows, I will outline the key barriers for teachers with the practical implementation of differentiation.

2.4 Teachers differentiating

As discussed in the above sections, it is understood that differentiation in the classroom supports learners of varying abilities. It is a teaching method that requires forward planning and extensive resources and materials. However, it is unsurprising to find that many teacher's do not differentiate in their classroom (Nedellic, 2014; Gaitas & Alves Martins, 2017). Teachers are under increasing pressures in relation to accountability and high stakes testing for teachers (Algozzine & Anderson, 2010; Morgan & NicCraith, 2015). Additionally, Tomlinson (2014) would argue that activities and availability of materials would be the main barriers for a teacher differentiating. Anderson (2010) poses the question, is it 'idealistic' to assume that learners of varying attitudes, learning styles and capabilities can 'co-exist' in the same environment and continue to flourish? The development of the New Language Curriculum in Ireland with its focus on stages of development and progression continua

would argue that irrespective of state standard requirements, it is possible and indeed not idealistic for varying learners to co-exist and flourish together (NCCA, 2015).

2.5 The reading process

In this section, the three models of reading are set forth and a consideration of the most desirable model is presented. The activity of reading can be a complex and challenging feat when first learning to read (Campbell, 2002). Particular emphasis is placed upon the teaching of literacy from the beginning of primary school and there are many varying recommendations as to the most comprehensive teaching methodology for literacy (Browne, 2002). As there are a wide variety of learners situated in one class, it is imperative that the teacher considers how they will cater for these learners when teaching reading (NCCA, 2015). There are multiple ways in which a teacher can adapt their teaching of reading to facilitate all learners (Browne, 2002). This and the value of reading will be considered through the exploration of the various literatures surrounding this topic below.

Teachers need to 'appreciate the individual and societal, personal and functional, immediate and future applications of reading' (Browne, 2002: 2). Ann Browne, an educational lecturer from East Anglia, challenges teachers to consider why literacy is important. Why do we value reading in our classroom? Teachers need to be able to articulate why it is important to be a reader and to reflect on the many reasons there are for becoming a reader. Nancie Atwell (2007) would agree with this statement and notes that it teaches children the importance of reading in their lives. The obvious reason presents itself in the form of access to the curriculum. Browne (2002) emphasises that children are required to obtain a high reading standard in order to support their learning across all areas of the

curriculum (Concannon-Gibney and Murphy, 2012). Taking aside educational goals, reading opens up a world for children outside of their immediate environment. It gives them opportunity to explore diverse and alternate points of views. 'Engaging with print promotes the ability to think about issues and ideas and develops understanding and agility with language in all its forms' (Browne, 2002: 3).

Many jobs now require high levels of literacy and qualifications. Alongside these benefits to reading, ultimately it can provide an individual with an immense sense of satisfaction and enjoyment (Fives, 2016). Delving into the unknown worlds of literature can be a hugely valuable and insightful activity (Ostrow, 2015).

Brown (2002) suggests that there is 'no single description of the reading process or one agreed way of helping children become readers' (Browne, 2002: 1). Teachers use their personal and professional knowledge of reading to construct a reading process that they feel has the most potential to develop literacy in their classroom. With this in mind, there are three main models for the acquisition of literacy to be considered from a professional standpoint.

The bottom-up model

The 'bottom-up' model moves to teach decoding skills and word recognition. It is a skills learning approach and develops knowledge of word identification and sentence structure. It does not encompass a child's experiences or attitudes to reading which can give a narrow viewpoint of literacy for the learner (Browne, 2002).

The top down model

The 'top-down' approach focuses on the child's experiences and how this allows them to draw on what they know about language structure and the world around them. It is a focus on semantic cues rather than skills acquired (Barnyack & Paquette, 2010). The focus of this model is on the context of the reader and it is thought that the phonic and word matching skills develop within this context. The skills are taught secondary to the readers experience and understanding of reading (Browne, 2002). Concannon-Gibney and Murphy (2010) would recommend implementing a balanced approach to literacy which is also known as 'the interactive model' (Browne, 2002; Concannon-Gibney & Murphy, 2010).

The interactive model

The 'Interactive model' puts the first two models together in a comprehensive reading approach. 'The readers knowledge and the textual details, work together'(Browne, 2002: 9). Students learn and understand the importance of reading in their lives. They are taught to understand how reading works and are exposed to explicit teaching around the structure and content of texts before embarking on a read alone activity. They learn specific and integral strategies to support their learning to read. The 'interactive model' is identified as the recommended model for teaching reading in the NCCA (2012) *effective language teaching report.* The NCCA (2012) identified key components to be considered when choosing your reading process for your classroom.

- The establishment of varied and rich vocabulary

- Development of phonological processes

- Framework for comprehension strategies

- Motivation and enjoyment

- Renewed focus on reading fluency (NCCA 2015, PDST research report *The Reading Process*, 2012).

One of these key components mentioned by the NCCA (2012) was motivation to read. A more detailed account of this is provided in the following section.

2.6 Fostering motivation to reading

An area identified by the NCCA (2012) as an integral part of the reading process is that of motivation, enjoyment and attitude. For the purpose of this research, I primarily looked at the literature surrounding motivation and attitudes to reading. Allan Wigfield (2000) a leader in the field of motivation, speaks about its ability to influence a learners experience. He states that a learners beliefs and expectations about their own academic abilities is a direct influence on their achievement levels and choices (Bembenutty, 2012). Studies suggest that 'student motivation impacts their processes and products of learning above and beyond cognitive characteristics such as intelligence or prior knowledge'(Schiefiele et al., 2012; Fives, 2016). In an interview with Hefer Bembenutty (2012), Wigfield talks about the 'expectancy-value theory', which looks at how motivation influences an individual's performance on different achievement activities and their choices of which activities to pursue.

There is a variety of elements involved with valuing achievement. Wigfield et al. (2012) discuss the interest value or enjoyment a person receives from an activity, the importance of this activity in relation to the individual and the usefulness around the activity. Another element to this would be a person's beliefs and values which act as intrinsic

motivational factors. An association between reading self-belief and achievement can act as a motivator to engage in reading activities, to value the reading activity highly, and to select increasingly challenging reading tasks (Bandura, 1984; Covington, 1984; Eccles et al., 1993; Weiner, 1985). In addition, Fives (2016) supports this view that attitudes are linked to achievement levels which leads to motivation to continue.

With this idea in mind, it asks teachers to challenge a learner's expectations of themselves by providing them with opportunities to succeed. It is paramount that the teacher provides reading texts which are interesting, engaging and at different ability levels to allow them to experience this success in reading and foster their intrinsic motivation (Boushey & Moser, 2009; Calkins, 2001; Lause, 2004).

2.7 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is described as something which motivates you to do something out of interest (Hall, 2016). Extrinsic Motivation is more consequence orientated (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). It is when you are motivated to do something in return for something else such as praise or a reward (Wigfield et al., 2012). To develop a deep level of intrinsic motivation with reading, it is important to provide the children with clear learning content goals which allow them to see the reasons behind their learning to read (Atwell, 2007; Serafini, 2015; NEPS, 2016). Teachers can do this by providing them with a variety of genres and interest-peaking materials. Teachers need to connect these activities to the students' everyday lives and allow them to see how reading permeates throughout their life in school, at home, with instructions, directions, information materials and so on (Wigfield et al, 2012; Bruce, 2012).

A teacher must provide an environment for learning where a student feels valued through their input in class discussions and contributions (Tovey, 2013). Collaboration in the classroom is an engaging process for learners which in turn intrinsically motivates them to work (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Atwell (2014) would echo this idea that social interactions between students fosters interest and enthusiasm. Providing opportunities for this through partnership and group reading has the potential to increase the student's motivation through the interactions and discussions with peers. Calkins (2001) mirrors this objective and discusses the importance of talking about what we are reading and recommending books to our peers. She draws comparisons with our own reading experience and suggests that the books that meant the most to us were the ones we discussed and shared with others (Calkins, 2001). Similar to Browne's (2002) idea that teachers need to challenge themselves to think about the reason reading is important in their lives, in order for a student to develop intrinsic motivation, they too need to recognise the importance of reading in their lives. A key contributing factor to the development of intrinsic motivation is the provision of choice and autonomy of learning.

2.8 Choice as a motivating factor

Choice and autonomy of learning cannot be underestimated in its ability to stimulate and encourage interest and self-efficacy (Covington, 1984; Eccles, 1993; Parker et al., 2017). The New Language Curriculum (2015) outlines in its stage two objectives that children should be able to choose, read and talk about text in a range of genres for pleasure and interest. The objective of facilitating choice in the classroom is part of the New Language Curriculum in Ireland and is an important element to making an uninteresting task, interesting.

Autonomy over learning leads to motivation which leads to effective learning. Deci and Ryan (2000) defined autonomy as action which is chosen, action for which one is responsible. Furthermore, Froebel celebrated the inclusion of choice in a child's learning as it is thought to encourage intrinsic motivation when it is guided by an adult (Tovey, 2013). Froebel talks of creating an environment with choice and self-activity, but within a framework in which the role of the adult for guidance is crucial (Tovey, 2013).

Providing students with real choices in their school lives with regards to materials, assignments, tasks and who they work with can boost their engagement and motivation to learn. It could potentially enable them to capitalise on their strengths and to meet their individual goals. However, with all teaching strategies, the importance of structuring choice is noted as a factor in the success of it (Parker et al., 2017).

Furthermore, there is conflicting opinions within the literature on the topic of choice as to its success with regards to motivating students. Some studies state that choice has a positive influence on students' motivation and learning (Assor et al., 2002) while others suggest that choice has the opposite effect on learners (D'Ailley, 2004). Katz and Assor (2007) consider both sides of the argument and conclude that what matters most is not the kind of choice given to students but rather how the students perceive the choice provided to them. "When students associate feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness with choice, then choice is most likely to result in beneficial outcomes, such as student engagement (Parker et al., 2017: 3; Katz & Assor, 2007).

Literature states that meaningful choice should be made available to students in order to develop engagement (Boushey & Moser, 2009; Tovey, 2013; Parker et al., 2017;). Glasswell and Ford (2010) suggest that we can afford to be much more flexible with the texts available to students. Many readers have the ability to access grade-level appropriate texts on condition that we facilitate their interactions with this choice of text. Providing lower level readers with the opportunity to choose their own text, affords them the ability to see themselves as competent and interested readers among their more able peers (Glasswell & Ford, 2010).

It is important to note that too much choice can also lead to decision paralyses, anxiety and poor performance (Boushey & Moser, 2009). This is seen particularly in low level readers who do not have the learning strategies to choose appropriately levelled material for their abilities. With this in mind, The New Language Curriculum (2015) includes choice as a motivating factor in its objectives and therefore, is rooted in extensive research supporting its facilitation. The following section provides a closer report on the significance of a reader's identity and how it impacts their reading ability.

2.9 Reading identity

Reading identity, a closely related concept to self-efficacy and motivation, plays a major role in reading comprehension (Hall, 2016). Self-efficacy is the personal belief that students have about their ability to succeed at a particular task (McCabe & Margolis, 2001: 1). If a child has high levels of self-efficacy, he or she views any weaknesses that they may experience in reading as isolated incidences and does not allow them to define their overall

ability (Fives, 2016). They believe they will make considerable improvements in their reading with moderate effort. As a result of this, such children develop the intrinsic motivation to read, practice reading strategies and are more likely to persist with challenging texts. Indeed, children who possess such high levels of self-efficacy have been shown to outperform their counterparts on tests of reading comprehension (McCabe & Margolis, 2001; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Similarly, a negative self-efficacy can catalyse a lack of motivation which can hamper comprehension endeavours and their subsequent overall successes in the area of reading. Students with low self-efficacy believe that they will fail to learn how to read, even with considerable effort. Literature shows that high-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer and have fewer adverse reactions when encountering difficulties (Zimmerman, 2000; McCabe & Margolis, 2001; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Wigfield et al., 2012).

Research highlights that intrinsic motivation for reading starts to decrease as children get older and as it is so closely linked to successes in reading comprehension, educators must create the climate for it to be sustained (Wigfield et al., 2012; Lause, 2004). This can be achieved through facilitating the growth of children's self-efficacy towards reading, highlighting the relevance of what they are learning, incorporating technology, allowing them a degree of autonomy over literature and learning and providing social interactions during reading (Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Serafini, 2015).

It can be a challenge for teachers to interpret broad statements for developing intrinsic student motivation such as 'make learning meaningful' and 'build their value of learning' (Wigfield, cited in Bembenutty, 2012). When we analyse all the elements of developing intrinsic motivation in students and fostering a positive attitude to reading, it is the intervention of the 'reading workshop' which encompasses all of these facets. Students need

to be provided with opportunities to succeed with an extensive classroom library, to feel valued in their input and contributions to class discussions, to experience collaborative work in small groups, have autonomy over texts and understand and appreciate the real-life practicalities of reading. (Parker et al., 2017; Tovey, 2013; Hann, 2018; Glasswell & Ford, 2010). A balanced literacy approach which facilitates and encapsulates all of these elements should elicit a high level of intrinsic motivation towards reading.

The National Educational Psychologist Service (NEPS) revealed that in order to prevent reading failures that evidence based practice, a balanced literacy approach and providing time for reading were key contributors to a successful reading framework. Their study showed that in Ireland, approximately 20% of children within first and second class were provided with learning support as they were considered to be under-achieving in literacy. 11% of children in disadvantaged areas were reading on or below the 10th percentile in second class and rose to 20% by sixth class (Weir & Denner, 2013; NEPS 2016).

NEPS psychologists gathered evidence from a number of Irish based schools who were implementing a balanced literacy approach. Their findings supported the claim that quality teaching can bring about above average outcomes for children (NEPS, 2016). Furthermore, there is international evidence which shows that schools which provide quality instruction in the early years find the vast majority of students achieve above average standards (Solity et al., 2000; NEPS 2016). It is recommended by NEPS to use a balanced literacy approach to support the effective implementation of The New Primary Language Curriculum (Gambrell, 2011). An example of a balanced literacy approach is detailed in the form of a reading workshop below.

2.10 The practicalities of a reading workshop

The concepts of differentiated reading, the reading process and motivation in readers has been explored, I will now outline what a balanced literacy approach looks like in practical terms in the form of a reading workshop (RW).

Historically, a workshop is a physical and mental space which organises human learning (Bennet, 2007). Vygotsky echoes this idea that learning does not happen in isolation but rather in collaboration with others. From this statement, we can derive that literacy is a social activity. Nancie Atwell and Donald Graves developed a RW framework in the 1980's and led a field of teachers in the implementation of it across the US. Together, they co-constructed a RW which provided an open-ended yet stable environment. Furthermore, it invited the highest degree of literacy (Atwell, 1989). Their workshop laid a strong foundation for the RW to be developed. According to Orehovec & Alley (2003), reading workshops are dynamic, stimulating places. It encompasses a rich and authentic reading experience. The participants are recommending books, responding, discussing and reflecting on their reading (Orehovec & Alley, 2003).

The idea of a RW is that it is fluid and open to interpretation by the teacher implementing it. The term RW can be used to describe many ways of doing literacy (Bennet, 2007). At its core, the workshop model can be used for teaching writing, maths, reading and other curricular areas. It consists of a structure which affords teachers and students the opportunity to develop their knowledge through mini-lessons, independent work, whole class discussions and reflection on learning (Calkins, 2001; Orehovec and Alley, 2003; Atwell, 2007; Serafini, 2015). Over the past few decades, a plethora of RW variations have emerged.

The original workshop developed by Atwell and Graves (1987) urged teachers to abandon levelled reading groups. It was a total immersion in reading, writing and talking about the books chosen by the students (Murray, 1984; Smith, 1986; Atwell, 1987; Rief, 1989; Ostrow, 2015). During the 1990's, researchers and teachers began developing upon the workshop framework to include explicit skill instruction. This became known as the 'balanced literacy approach' which emphasised the importance of differentiated instruction due to its multi-faceted approach to the reading experience (Cunningham & Allington, 2007; Dorn, 1998; Fountas & Pinnell, 2012; Calkins 2001; Concannon-Gibney & Murphy, 2010). However, in the early noughties, a cohort of teachers became frustrated with their inability to engage students in the independent reading aspect and as a result of this, the CAFE reading workshop was developed by teachers Gail Boushey and Joan Moser in 2006. This model facilitates choice of activities which include reading to self, work on writing, listen to reading, read to someone or word work. This workshop is self-directed, using self-selected texts. It emphasises the importance of purpose and choice which they claim leads to motivation for students (Boushey and Moser, 2009).

For the purpose of this research, Lucy Calkin's (2001) balanced literacy workshop approach was drawn upon to provide a structured framework. However, having read extensively on all three RW models mentioned above, I amalgamated elements from each which encompassed the components needed for my class context. These components were Atwell and Graves's abandonment of levelled reading groups (1987), Calkins (2001) explicit differentiated skill instruction and balanced literacy approach and Boushey and Mosers' (2009) facilitation of choice in the workshop.

Calkins (2001) states that in order for the RW to be successful, children have to be able to anticipate each step. The workshop structure should be simple and predictable, beginning with a mini-lesson. The mini-lesson is where reading strategies, concepts and techniques are explicitly taught with the view that they will use these during their independent reading time (Calkins, 2001). This is an integral part of the workshop as it provides a scaffold around key areas of concern for learners. It is during this time that the learners engage in meaningful and thoughtful discussion around the reading processes (Calkins, 2001; Serafini, 2001, 2015; Atwell, 2007). This echoes Froebel's claims that active participation leads to a holistic learning experience (Tovey, 2013).
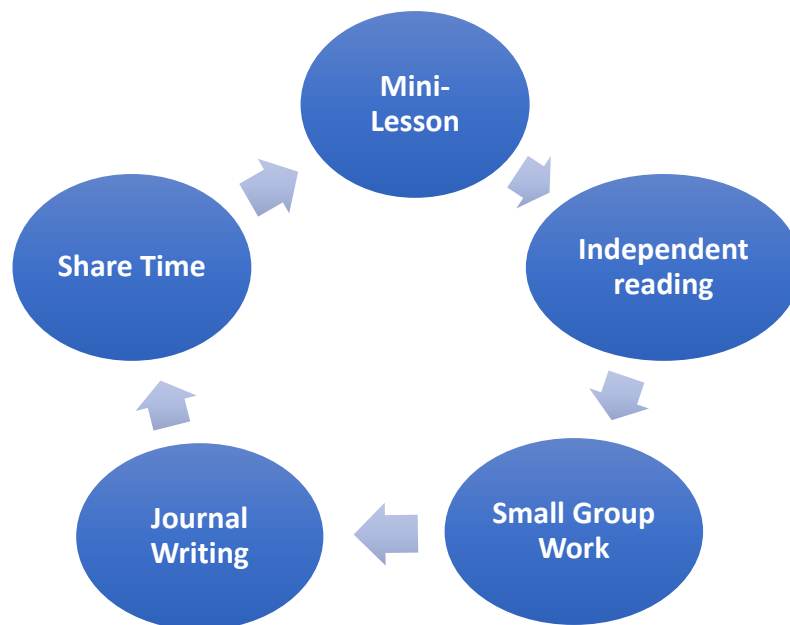
Figure 1. Reading Workshop Structure

When the mini-lesson is complete, the children disperse to read independently. Calkins (2001), Atwell (2007) and Serafini (2015) describe this as the most important part of the workshop. Orehovac and Alley (2003) maintain that independent reading lies at the heart of the RW. It is noted by Tiernan (2017) that in Irish schools, not enough time is spent on actual reading and more time is spent on instructional skill development for struggling readers. 'Children can't learn to swim, without swimming' (Calkins, 2001: 68). The same ethos is applicable to reading. Children cannot learn to read, without reading. During this independent reading time, the opportunity for the teacher to confer with children is a valuable way to inform future planning. Conferencing highlights areas of uncertainty and subsequently informs teachers of content which needs to be revisited in a mini-lesson.

After independent reading time, 'share time' invites students to present to their peers evidence of a skill or strategy they applied during reading. Moreover, they are encouraged to share their written responses to their reading. This is also known as 'book talks' which Calkins (2001) proposes is a vital part of the workshop as it supports talking and thinking about texts. It is an opportunity for children to share their reading successes with one another. "This sharing of beliefs, ideas and stories becomes the foundation upon which we build our learning community" (Serafini, 2001: 56).

The culmination of a whole class mini-lesson, flexible groups, skill and strategy instruction and share time creates a framework rooted in differentiation (NEPS, 2016). With this in mind, it is recommended that elements of the workshop are personalised to your context, and teachers are cautioned from relying heavily on one standard reading package.

Brenda Power, a literary expert, advocates for teachers to critically reflect on packaged or scripted programmes and to use professional judgement as to its benefits and indeed its shortcomings. Gambrell (2011) would agree that the importance of professional wisdom must be acknowledged and the teacher should be given the freedom and latitude to use this professional judgement (NEPS, 2016). Although Lucy Calkins (2001) provides an accessible and workable reading workshop structure, the inclusion of levelled ability groups is a widely contested practice. Atwell (1987), Swift (1993), Glaswell and Ford (2010) and Tiernan (2017) would claim the benefits of abandoning ability based groupings are extensive. Having analysed the research related to levelled readers, I would echo this belief.

2.11 Levelled readers

The stigma surrounding ability based groups is removed in the reading workshop (Swift, 1993; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Serafini, 2001). This claim is supported by Atwell (2014) and Graves (1987) who advocate for an abandonment of levelled ability based groupings. In contrast to this view, there are a number of sources who contest the topic of levelled ability based groupings and some find it a beneficial way to differentiate reading.

Bairbre Tiernan (2017) reviewed research related to the use of levelled readers in the Irish classroom. She noted that the use of levelled readers is popular in Irish classrooms as it supports the teacher in the decision making processes surrounding reading. The readers gradient levels of difficulty allow the teachers to track students as they move between the level's. It gives them a snapshot of where the reader is at in relation to their reading proficiency (Tiernan, 2017; Kontovourki, 2012). Tiernan (2017) and Kontovourki (2012) consider that the levelling system is used to chart reading growth and in turn to make

groupings. In essence, it supports teachers with assessment of and for learning. The use of levelled readers is said to support the learning of both struggling and accomplished readers. It develops the skills of decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

On the other hand, there is sufficient concern with regards the focus on assigned numbers and levels of a text which labels a child as to their reading proficiency (Glaswell & Ford, 2010). Alongside this, groupings often stay the same throughout the year, not allowing for fluidity or movement within them (Ankrum et al. 2008). Too much focus is placed on the number or letters labelling texts which represent their difficulty. Teachers are at risk of losing sight of the reader-text interactions (Lindner, 2017). This levelling system can constrain teachers in their organisation of these said groups (Atwell, 1987; Swift, 1993; Glaswell & Ford, 2010; Boushey and Moser, 2009). The ability-based groups are rigid and within the Irish educational system, there is a lack of resources to support teachers to continually reassess if children have outgrown their original grouping (NCCA, 2016; Tiernan, 2017). In lower level groups, the exposure to texts is less than the more accomplished readers (Ankrum et al., 2008). This plays a role in the development of their reading identity.

To ensure they develop a positive attitude, it is imperative that we support a child-centred, holistic and scaffolded approach to reading which is inclusive and motivating for all abilities (Atwell, 2007, 2014; Bruce, 2013). Affording students the choice of what they read is an important aspect of teaching children to love to read (Dickerson, 2015; NCCA, 2015). Although levelled readers supports the concept of differentiation, there is a variety of ways in which the reading workshop can facilitate a scaffolded and inclusive approach to reading without defining children to a level.

The reading experience is fluid and a child should be afforded the opportunity to move freely within it, at their own chosen pace (Tovey, 2013). Furthermore, the success of levelled readers is reliant on a schools access to a wide variety of high-level, interesting readers (Calkins, 2002; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Glaswell & Ford, 2010; NEPS 2016). Teachers report a lack of resources and materials made available to them and the reading materials are becoming increasingly outdated. As a result of this, children are finding it difficult to make connections to the content which in turn is affecting interest levels (Calkins, 2002; Glaswell & Ford, 2010). Hidi & Renninger (2012) states that interest is a predisposition to continue to engage with a task. Interested students are more likely to continue with a task and become more confident in their own abilities (Wigfield et al., 2012). With this in mind, I would strongly consider how the development of motivation and engagement of text relies mainly on the interest level of the children.

2.12 Conclusion

The multi-faceted approach to teaching within the reading workshop caters for all learners. It promotes motivation and excitement which in turn creates a positive attitude to the reading process (Boushey & Moser, 2009). It provides the children with a wide-ranging, rich choice of texts. It teaches the value of reading in our lives and teaches authentic purposes for reading (Atwell, 1989; Calkins, 2001). It provides them with opportunities to explore, interact and experiment with text while challenging their zone of proximal development. All of the above are key learning objectives outlined in the New Language Curriculum (NCCA, 2015). Although the research explored above supports the benefits of the RW, it does not compare the impact of the intervention of the RW on age levels. It raises the question, is it

more impactful at younger ages or older ages or indeed, does age matter at all. Therefore, to address the gap in the literature and my own findings, a more longitudinal study could shed light on this for policy in my own school and could perhaps have wider implications. Chapter three describes the procedures and methods used in this intervention.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodological approach I chose for this research is outlined and considered within this chapter. Firstly, my epistemological and ontological values are discussed followed by the theoretical perspective underpinning this thesis. Secondly, as this study is a self-study action research project, particular attention is paid to its advantages, validity and reliability of my work, along with the ethical challenges. Finally, the research design and the methods of data collection used are set forth, concluding with a brief introduction to grounded theory as my mode of data analysis.

3.2 Epistemology

The ontological assumption that reality is socially constructed is the basis of my research. As I explored the various methodological paradigms, I identified myself as working within the constructivist paradigm (Scotland, 2012; Mertens, 2015; Cohen et al., 2018). Qualitative methods allowed me to gain an understanding of these realities constructed by a cohort of people within varying contexts (Mertens, 2015). My epistemological commitments bring me towards a more personal, interactive mode of data collection (Scotland, 2012; Mertens, 2015). My interactions as the researcher with the participants of this research were carried out in a holistic manner. In order to understand each student, I had to understand their background and context in which they were in and engage with them in an open and interactive process (Scotland, 2012).

The interpretive paradigm is characterised by the concern for human beings and the individual (Cohen et al., 2007, 2018). As an interpretive inquirer, I collected and analysed data, with the intention of understanding individual's interpretations of their world around them. Through interpreting the data collected during this research process, it allowed me to discover emergent themes and meanings, which gave way to the generation of theory. As these meanings and recurring themes were identified and interpreted within situations, throughout the data collection process, they provided me a theory grounded in data.

The interpretive approach is focused upon action and human behaviours which provides a focal point for predicting future outcomes. Each interaction, activity and behaviour is richly affected by the context in which it resides. The interpretivists' lens looks through the eyes of the participant rather than their own (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2018) Through interactions and dialogues with participants and colleagues, it became apparent to me that I was co-constructing knowledge with others.

3.3 Theoretical perspective

The theoretical basis for my research stems from my training as a Froebelian teacher. Friedrich Froebel celebrated diversity and focused on child-centred learning. His educational stance is centred around creating an independent and interdependent environment, allowing free choice and movement, having a warm, responsive and trusting relationship, providing a place where individuals feel significant in the whole community (Tovey, 2013). Most educators today would agree that children learn best by being active participants (Bruce, 2012). Froebel believed that each point of learning leads to the next point through interconnection of these experiences (Bruce, 2013). This too can be said for teachers, who

can benefit from being active participants in their own learning. Action Research mirrors the Froebelian philosophy by taking the researcher back to their core values and assumptions within their practice. "A Froebelian environment is seen as flexible, transformable and responsive to children's changing interests and preoccupations" (Tovey, 2013:33). These principles remain at the core of my teaching philosophy and through my interrogation of my values and principles it was evident that often my values were not being played out in my everyday practice. Therefore, through my undertaking of this research, the hope was that I would realign my practice with my Froebelian values.

Throughout this process of realigning my values, I established myself as a social constructivist as I was socially constructing knowledge during this research through dialectic interactions (Scotland, 2012; Kukla, 2013). Through these interactions, situations and negotiations, meaning arose. Within this paradigm, the researcher acknowledges the complexity of lived experiences and they attempt to understand the point of view of those who have lived it (Scotland, 2012; Kukla, 2013; Cohen et al., 2018). The constructivist paradigm emphasises that research is a product of the values of researchers and cannot be independent of them (Mertens, 2015). These paradigms underpin the methodological choice for this research will be outlined in the next section.

3.4 Methodology

Methodology is the strategy of action behind the choice and use of particular methods used to collect data (Scotland, 2012). In this methodology section, action research will be defined, followed by the advantages, validity and ethical considerations associated with this form of research.

3.4.1 What is Action Research?

Action Research (AR) is a type of research whereby you investigate and evaluate your own professional practice (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006; Kemmis, 2009). It is informed by your own personal and professional values, norms and assumptions. Sullivan et al. (2016) describes AR as a means of studying your own work and everyday practices in order to understand them better and make systematic improvements. There are two reasons why a teacher undertaking researcher may choose AR as their method of research. The first is if they are looking to improve their practice and the other reason would be to generate new theory from their research (Ferrance, 2000; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

AR is growing in popularity worldwide according to McNiff (2017). She states that when a practitioner engages in the A.R process, they have the opportunity to completely transform their practice and self irrevocably (McNiff, 2002; Miller et al., 2003). To begin the action research process, I first analysed my values, norms and assumptions. I asked myself the questions such as "what are my personal values?", "what do I value most in my practice?", "am I living closely to my values?", "what is my concern and why?", "what can I change in my practice to live more closely to my values?". Asking myself these questions gave me a clearer picture of the area in my practice which I wanted to improve. Through a systemic and disciplined process, you can find out something new that was not known before. By investigating your practice, you become a knowledge creator (Kemmis, 2009; Whitehead, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2016).

3.4.2 Self-Study

According to Sullivan et al. (2016) self-study AR is an approach to practitioner AR. It examines the underlying assumptions and values that you hold both personally and professionally which help to inform and shape your practice (Miller et al., 2003; McNiff, 2011). The development of reflective practice shifted the focus onto the teacher as the researcher of their own practice (Kemmis, 2009). There are specific characteristics of language attached to self-study action research. Sullivan et al. (2016) states that it is a descriptive, anecdote that is careful and deliberate. A self-study action researcher must obtain a level of openness and willingness to collaborate with others and to be prepared to share experiences and ideas with critical friend groups (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). It is described as a deeply personal process of self-discovery as it requires you to identify your personal and professional values and analyse how your practice stems from these deep rooted values (McNiff, 2013; Sullivan et al. 2016). It provides an avenue for you to evaluate and critically reflect on your own work, allowing you to challenge your underlying assumptions in order to inform your practice and improve upon it.

3.4.3 Living Theory

Whitehead (2015) describes living theory as the explanations of live theory practices of live practitioners. It is said to be a highly effective research methodology for practitioners in the field of education. Sullivan et al. (2016) states that living theory ties in closely with our assumptions and values and draws upon our critical thinking lens to solidify our findings and claims to knowledge.

Action researchers seek to improve upon and to offer explanations for, personal and social situations (McNiff, 2013). It is a way for practitioners to critically analyse their live experiences and tell the story of their learning and journey towards the generation of educational theory and knowledge. It challenges you to support your claim to knowledge through the rigorous process of validity. Sullivan et al. (2016) agree with Whiteheads (2015) claim that propositional forms of theory are useful in many educational research contexts however the first-person language and the use of 'I' when speaking about first-hand accounts is extremely valuable and can't be underestimated. Whitehead challenges the idea that institutional writing should be explicitly third-person, objective language but rather should offer an insight into the lived experience of the practitioner in a first-hand account.

3.5 Advantages of action research

Cain (2011) states that AR is an attraction to teacher researchers as it combines action and research together and breaks away from the culture of 'spectator research'. AR is a discovery method which can be used to replace traditional research methods. I will be using it to help change the attitudes and values of my participants, to encourage a more positive attitude to work or to modify pupils value systems (Mertens, 2015; Cohen et al., 2018). It can also be of benefit towards developing continuous professional development by improving teaching skills and developing new methods of learning and illuminating one's ability to incorporate self-reflection into practice (Miller et al.; Cohen et al., 2018). Ferrance (2000) suggests that teachers work best when they identify a problem for themselves and are encouraged to delve into the problem through the examination of, and assessment of, their own work.

Noffke and Zeichner (1987) describe the benefits of AR as follows:

- It equalises the power dynamic by breaking the separation between researcher and participants.

- They often are of the same community.

- It increases the confidence and self-worth of the teacher through self-study.

- It increases one's awareness of classroom issues while improving dispositions towards reflection.

- It allows you to scrutinise your values and potentially transform them.

- It is 'situated learning' where the learning takes place *within* the workplace, about *the* workplace and *for* the workplace.

3.6 Validity with action research

Feldman (2003) notes that for a self-study action research question, it should transcend the purely personal and expand into the broader world. He adds that one of the largest challenges facing self-study research is that of establishing validity. Mertens (2015) describes the validity process as one of great importance because when we focus on ourselves and are relying on personal interpretations of complex scenarios, one cannot be sure that 'what we see in the mirror is accurate or the distorted view provided by funhouse mirror' (Mertens, 2015). In order to show validation and accuracy of the data I gathered, I cross-checked my work from varied perspectives, which is known as triangulation (Sullivan et.al, 2016). Through conversations with critical friends, I was able to document their observations and comments. Furthermore, I was able to use them within my research to show validity in my work. Using questionnaires and informal conferences with my participants and partner teacher, whilst maintaining a reflective journal, provided me with a variety of different

perspectives to analyse and support my claims during the validation process. The establishment of a validation group allowed me to engage in dialogue surrounding the validity of my work. Habermas (1976) refers to the four stages criteria for social validity which are paramount to enhancing rigor and validity within my work. The criteria are as follows:

- *Comprehensibility*: To endeavour to ensure understanding among my participants by communicating my messages clearly, accessibly and with transparency.

- *Authenticity:* To draw upon my values and speak authentically throughout the action research process, ensuring my values are at the core of my research.

- *Truthfulness:* To show honesty within my work and findings, producing evidence to support any claims to new knowledge and be open to the critique of others with these claims.

- *Appropriateness:* To use appropriate academic language associated with action research and critical reflection.

These four criteria can be used by my validation group to challenge the validity of my work.

3.7 Ethical considerations

I sought and was granted ethical approval from the taught Masters programme in the Froebel Department of Maynooth University, Maynooth. As my action research involved a group of vulnerable people I ensured that each participant received a detailed overview, at the appropriate language level, of what was expected of them during the research process. I sought signed consent from guardians and assent from participants. Within these consent forms, all relevant details associated with this study were outlined clearly. The aims and

objectives of this study were identified and emphasis was placed upon the data collection process, how it would be stored, who would have access to it and how it would be destroyed thereafter. Anonymity would be maintained throughout the study and pseudonyms would be used to ensure this (Mertens, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2016; Cohen et al., 2018)All children in my second class, regardless of background, were invited to take part in this study. They were assured that if they decided to opt out of the study, they could do so without repercussions.

3.8 Research design

For this intervention, I used my current second class group and comprehensively discussed their role within the research. The nature of this study took place over a six week period, three times a week, for one hour during allocated class time. An initial meeting with my partner teacher was conducted to identify the specific reading skills we would like to address within the reading workshop mini-lessons. The research was focused on second class and their experience of the introduction of the reading workshop into their class. The specific elements of the reading workshop are outlined in Figure 2 below.

| Mini-Lesson | → | Read Aloud | → | Independent reading and Conferring | → | Response and Reflection | → | Sharing |

Figure 2. Components of a Reading Workshop by Orehovec and Alley (2003)

The elements of the reading workshop were discussed with the second class during the first session. The routines within the workshop were outlined clearly to the children. Firstly, I handed them out an open-ended questionnaire to assess their levels of reading interest. Next, I gathered them together on the mat in front of me where a mini-lesson was conducted on the chosen reading skill. I then read aloud and modelled the skill being taught to the students (Rief, 1989). They then dispersed around the room, trying out various places within the classroom which they eventually called their 'reading nook'. A reading nook is an area that a reader has identified as their 'chosen place' to sit and read in a comfortable and warm space (Calkins, 2002; Orehovec & Alley, 2003). Once the children settled themselves into their reading nooks, they began to read independently. During this time, I observed and conferred with children quietly and gathered a group of children who needed particular support with a reading skill (Serafini, 2001). Children were invited to join these discussions if they felt they would like further support with the said reading skills.

The children were given options about how they would like to respond and reflect on their chosen book in their reading journal. They could keep their journal with them and jot down things in it as they went along or they could take some time after independent reading to write their responses and reactions to what they had read, or simply, log the names of the books they have read in the workshop to date. 'These verbal and written responses offer ways to engage your students while providing you with substantial information for assessment and evaluation' (Orehovec and Alley, 2003). After the reading and reflection period, we came back together as a whole class and the children shared their reading experiences with their peers. They engaged in 'book talk' where they describe and discuss what they have read and recommend a book to their peers. They may share their favourite parts and their least favourite parts of the book (Atwell, 2014). This encourages an environment of enthusiastic readers who share experiences and show appreciation and listening skills towards others views and opinions (Atwell, 2007; Calkins, 2002). During this time, I made a connection back to the mini-lesson at the beginning to solidify the explicit reading skill taught.

Initial Planning Session

Introduce reading workshop concept to partner teacher

Discuss and Outline chosen reading skills for a 6 week reading workshop

Design Questionaire for Pupils

Data: Field Notes

Mini-Lesson

Introduce/Discuss Workshop

Establish Routines

Teach Specific Reading Skill

Data: Field Notes

Read Aloud

Model Specific Reading Skill

Reading workshop

Independent Reading / Group Reading

Differentiate groups for reading skill reinforcement

Opportunities for conferencing during reading time

Data: Interviews, Field Notes

Interim Evaluation

Discuss/critique elements of the reading workshop with partner teacher

Adapt workshop in response to feedback

Data: Field Notes, Interview

Response and Reflection

Children take time to reflect and write in their journals on what they have read, draw pictures in response to material etc.

Data: Interviews, Field Notes

Sharing/Book Talk

Oral languagge discussions on childrens thoughts about what they have read, recommendations of books to others.

Data: Interviews, Field Notes

Figure 3. Data to be collected during the Reading Workshop over a six-week period

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Questionnaire	Interview	Interview	Interview	Interview	Questionnaire
Reflective Journal	Reflective Journal	Reflective Journal	Reflective Journal	Reflective Journal	Reflective Journal
Field Notes	Field Notes	Field Notes	Field Notes	Field Notes	Field Notes

Table 1. Data collection schedule

3.9 Data collection

The data collected for this study was primarily qualitative data such as questionnaires, interviews and my own reflective journal and field notes. The advantages and disadvantages associated with these chosen methods are outlined below.

3.10 Questionnaires

3.10.1 Advantages of open-ended questionnaires

I chose to distribute an open-ended questionnaire due to the smaller scale research I was conducting. An open-ended questionnaire is an attractive device as it can illicit insightful and telling responses from the respondents which a closed questionnaire otherwise may not obtain (Mertens, 2015). Cohen et al. (2018) suggest that open-ended questionnaires can catch the 'authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour' which is the hallmark of valid quantitative data collection (Cohen et al., 2018). It affords respondents the opportunity to address and shed light on issues of concern and allows them to answer as much or as little

as they deem necessary, in their own descriptive words (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012). Open-ended questionnaires afford the generation of rich and meaningful data. It is particularly insightful when the potential answers are unknown to the researcher or are exploratory in nature. Furthermore, it avoids the limitations of a closed questionnaire with pre-set category responses (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.10.2 Disadvantages of open-ended questionnaires

However, there is a danger with open-ended questionnaires that if the questions are not refined, it can leave respondents unsure as to how to respond. Others may have difficulty in articulating their thoughts and compacting their answers appropriately to the questions. It is imperative to keep this in the forefront of the researcher's mind and to challenge the assumption that each respondent will be sufficiently or equally capable of articulating their thoughts. Understanding the approximate reading level of your respondents will be essential when designing the questions (Mertens, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2016). Furthermore, researchers must be aware of data overload, due to too many questions, and the difficulty with comparisons between respondents as there may be very few common responses, leading to difficulty in coding, classifying and analysing the data (Cohen et al., 2007). I will endeavour to ensure necessary steps are taken to avoid the above pitfalls of open-ended questionnaires.

3.10.3 Piloting questionnaires

The piloting of the questionnaire was crucial to the success of the implementation of it. In order to obtain valid and rich responses to the questions, a pre-test was issued to a group of children of similar age, in an attempt to ensure the wording and language of the questions

were appropriate and easily interpreted by the participants. The benefits to piloting a questionnaire are considered below (Mertens, 2015; Cohen et al,. 2018):

- To obtain clarity of the questions

- To gain feedback on the validity of the questionnaire

- To eliminate unfavourable wording

- To test the readability levels for its audience

- To obtain feedback on leading questions and irrelevant questions

- To gain an insight into the time needed to take the questionnaire.

3.10.4 Suitability for this Study

I chose this particular data collection instrument as I am undertaking an action research method which supports the voice of the participants and encourages open dialogue between researcher and participants (Miller et al., 2003). As I am working with a small-scale group of children, open ended questionnaires are an attractive form of data collection as their responses can be insightful and authentic (Mertens, 2015).

3.10.5 Advantages of interviews

Interviews allow the researcher to delve further with their questioning in order to elicit depth in responses from participants. According to Cohen et al., (2018) there is a marked higher response rate with interviews over other methods of questioning, due to the involvement of the respondents, which in turn motivates them to share more details. Within this research, I have chosen to do informal conversation interviews whereby my questions will emerge and be built upon observations (Charmaz &Belgrave, 2012). This will allow me

to cater my questions to individuals and to differentiate my questioning to where the child is at during that moment, which is in line with the Froebelian philosophy which guides my practice.

Other advantages to interviews noted by Cohen et al., (2018):

- It can serve as the principle means of gathering information for the researcher.

- It can be used alongside other forms of data collection.

- When seeking to identify variables and relationships, it can be used as an 'explanatory device' and as a means of testing or creating a hypotheses for research. (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.10.6 Disadvantages of interviews

Although there are many advantages to using interviews as a means of eliciting data from respondents, there are also particular pitfalls which the researcher must be cognisant of when using this method (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012). The development of trust between the interviewer and the respondent is paramount to the quality of the answers given. If this is not established, respondents may feel uneasy and will 'adopt avoidance tactics' to dissuade the researcher from delving too deep with their questioning (Cohen et al., 2018). If the comfort level of the respondent is not established early, the researcher can miss a prime opportunity to receive rich, informative and powerful personal responses. Furthermore, the interviewer must be aware of the implication of the lack of transparency with the meanings of questions as these may be interpreted differently than originally intended. Clarity of questioning is essential in diminishing this risk factor.

3.10.7 Suitability of interviews

Researchers who favour qualitative methods for their research tend to use semi-structured or unstructured interview formats. As I am working with children, I plan to use informal strategies to establish a warm and open relationship with my students (Mertens, 2015). Using open ended questioning, I will be able to broaden 'the lens of my researcher's gaze' by allowing the respondents to share their concerns and interests openly (Mertens, 2015). Interviews serve a greater purpose for my research as I am socially constructing knowledge and generating information between humans, through social interactions and conversations (Kvale, 1996).

3.10.8 Diaries

"Reflective diaries are used as a means of tracking ones progress and transformation with regards their thinking and their actions in practice" (McNiff, 2013: 108). Furthermore, they highlight how, in particular, new knowledge can have an impact on the thinking and actions of the researcher (Kemmis, 2009). The purpose of a reflective journal is to allow the researcher to track their evolution of thinking. It is vital to the success of an action research study as it is evidence of one's personal and professional transformation of values. This is done through the interrogation of ones thoughts, feelings and observations during the research process. I endeavored to ensure that my accounts were true and accurate and were not influenced by time and distance (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010). Furthermore, it served as a useful data collection tool with rich and detailed observations and insights allowing me to pinpoint recurring themes in my practice.

3.11 Data Analysis

The method of enquiry I used is that of grounded theory. Grounded theory is an approach which guides future data collection by identifying emerging themes during the time of the data collection process (Clarke, 2015). This is with the viewpoint that it will culminate into the development of a theory grounded in analysed data (Mertens, 2015). The systematic procedures enabled me to further my theory development throughout the reading workshop as I analysed and identified these emerging patterns through the use of coding.

The grounded theory constructivist model, designed by Charmaz (2006), states that the subjective meanings attached to the data can lead to multiple interpretations and perspectives collated by the researcher and participants. The construction of concepts comes about through the interactions and involvements of participants and researchers, looking at both past and present influences, the multiple ways of looking, interpretations and meanings which leads to one or more 'constructions of reality' (Strauss & Corbin, 1997; Scotland, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018).

3.11.1 The place for grounded theory in action research

'The interpretative analyses attempt to describe, explain and understand the lived experiences of a group of people' (Charmaz, 1996: 30). Charmaz (2014) describes the 'interpretative tradition' as relying on knowledge from the 'inside'. As AR allows the researcher to live the research experience and to interact with the community and participants, it requires a level of 'knowing' within the context (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, 2013, 2019). The aim of AR is to both transform your practice and to generate new theory

from the research (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005). Grounded theory researchers study the meanings, intentions and actions of the research participants and 'actively constructs the data in concert with his or her participants' (Charmaz, 1996: 32). These compliment my choice of methods as the modes of data, which should be collected for grounded theory studies, are rich, detailed data including field notes, interviews, journals and personal narratives of lived experiences. These produce raw and illuminating thoughts, feelings and actions which encompass the hallmarks of what AR is. AR can change people's patterns' of 'saying', 'doing' and 'relating' so as to form new patterns, new ways of life' (Kemmis 2009: 463). Through the interpretivist, constructivist lens, theory grounded in data gives way to the generation of new knowledge (Scotland, 2012; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012; Mertens, 2015; Cohen et al., 2018).

3.12 Conclusion

Figure 4. Summary of Research Methodology

As an interpretivist inquirer, my concern was for human beings and the individual and so my desire was to better understand their interpretations of their world around them. Although I was undertaking a self-study AR with the focus on the self, I drew upon the social constructivist perspective to co-construct knowledge with both my colleagues and participants in order to deepen my knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. My preferred methods of data collection were qualitative methods such as interviews, questionnaires and reflective journaling. The analysis in Chapter four focuses on the coding and thematic analysis of these methods of data collection through the use of grounded theory, which was briefly outlined above.

Chapter Four: Data Analyses and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

The qualitative data collected during this research was analysed using grounded theory. I began chapter 4 by outlining my process with open coding. I then explored how axial coding interconnected the data and how I considered this using memo-writing. I concluded with the selective coding which identifies the core category of this research, to be further discussed in my conclusions in chapter 5. The researcher creates these categories and concepts as a result of interaction with the field and the questions that arise during the research process (Cohen et al., 2018). As this is a self-study, I paid particular attention to myself as the facilitator of learning during my memo-writing as I endeavoured to maintain validity and reliability with my action research.

'Grounded theory methods provide systematic procedures for shaping and handling rich qualitative materials' (Charmaz, 1996: 28). As we are focusing on the reconstruction of experiences but not in fact, the experiences as they happen, they are open to multiple interpretations. The benefit for using a grounded theory method of enquiry is that it allows 'novices and old hands alike' to conduct qualitative research efficiently and effectively (Lal & Suto, 2012). This is due to its methods which help structure and organise the data-gathering and analysis process. 'A major contribution of grounded theory methods is that they provide rigorous procedures for researchers to check, refine and develop their ideas and intuitions about the data' (Charmaz, 1996: 28).

Open	Axial	Selective
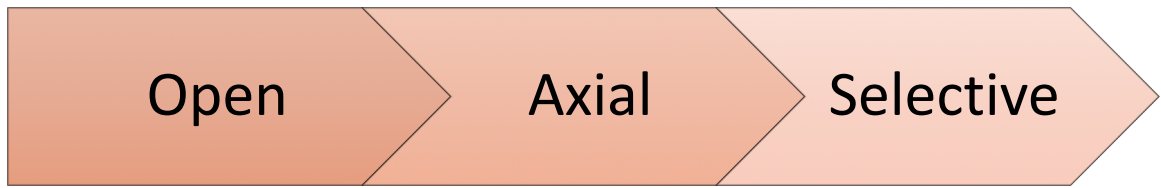
Figure 5. Sequence of coding

4.2 Data coding

Coding helps to define what is emerging from the data. *Points of departure* provide a place from which the grounded theory researcher can develop ideas (Charmaz, 1996, Glaser & Strauss, 1967 , Strauss and Corbin, 1997; Charmaz, 2014). Grounded theorists often begin their research with certain research interests and a set of general concepts. These guiding interests act as a starting point for the researcher to develop their ideas during the data analysis process (Bryant, 2017). My points of departure were informed by my interests, assumptions and literature review. They were as follows:

Pedagogy of the Reading Workshop, *Attitudes* to Reading and *Knowledge* of the Curriculum.

- *Pedagogy* of the reading workshop focuses on the teacher's experience with the reading workshop, their prior and current knowledge of it and their ability to implement it in their classroom. The focus is on my teaching and how I can transform it through the use of the reading workshop.

- *Attitudes* towards reading pays particular attention to the children's experience with reading and the factors at play which influence their attitude towards it.

- Having *knowledge* of the curriculum is an integral part of teaching and within this study, factors such as time constraints, curriculum overload and pressure and the knowing of the curriculum were recurring themes for both participating teachers.

These three concepts helped me illuminate my initial interests in this research and gave me freedom to pursue unanticipated leads which arose during the process. How I then coded the data, using these points of departure as my guiding concepts, is considered below.

4.2.1 Open codes

Beginning with these points of departure (Charmaz, 2014), I identified seventy open codes through the analyses of my data. Throughout my 6 week intervention, I collected and studied the emerging data and began to identify repeated patterns and recurring themes within my own reflections, the children's interviews and the questionnaires administered. Open coding is used to identify, name, categorise and describe the phenomenon under investigation (Birks & Mills, 2011). It is at this point I asked myself the questions 'what is this about and what is being referenced here?'. I searched through each line, sentence and paragraph of data collected in an effort to answer the above questions. Line by line coding helps you to start taking an analytic stance towards your data (Charmaz, 1996, 2014; Lal and Suto, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018).

Using line-by-line coding, it allowed me to see the familiar in new light (Bryant, 2017). It provided me with the ability to distance myself from both my participants and my own pre-conceived assumptions and it was at this point I began to 'build my analysis from the ground up' (Birks & Mills, 2011). In order to make analytic sense of the detailed and rich

stories and descriptions compiled, Charmaz (1996) suggests asking yourself some basic questions:

1. What is going on?

2. What are people doing?

3. What is the person saying?

4. What do these actions and statements take for granted?

5. How do structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede or change these actions and statements?

In an attempt to maintain validity and reliability, I made my codes specific and active. 'By being specific and active you will begin to see processes in the data that otherwise would likely remain implicit' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). To further increase the validity and reliability within this study, I endeavoured to consider multiple interpretations and representations in the data, rather than relying on my own perspective as the truth (Feldman, 2003). In doing so, I have included explicit extracts from participant interviews and questionnaires in order to show their thinking and feeling during the research. To maintain authenticity, the quotes were recorded verbatim. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used.

4.2.2 Categories

The initial open codes were created and there afterwards they were broken into categories which allowed me to see which processes were emerging (Charmaz, 2014). I condensed these categories down to eighteen which are outlined in the figures 2-4 below. These categories represented what was happening in the data and were connected to one of

my 'points of departure'. My initial points of departure acted as starting blocks and led to the development of sub-categories which I have outlined in the figures below:
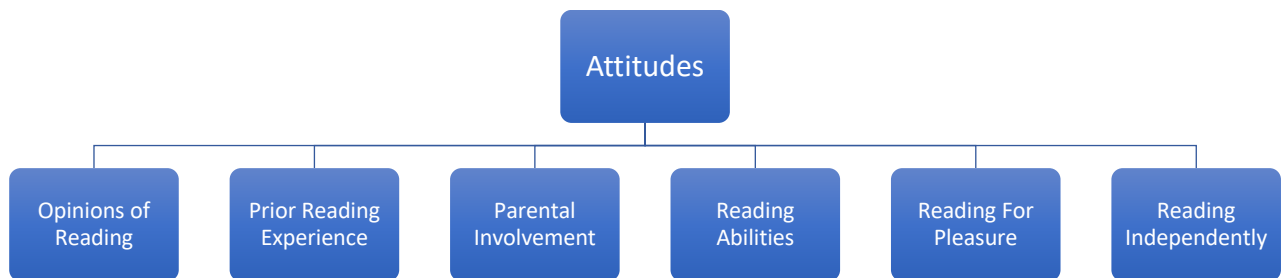
Figure 6. Attitudes categories
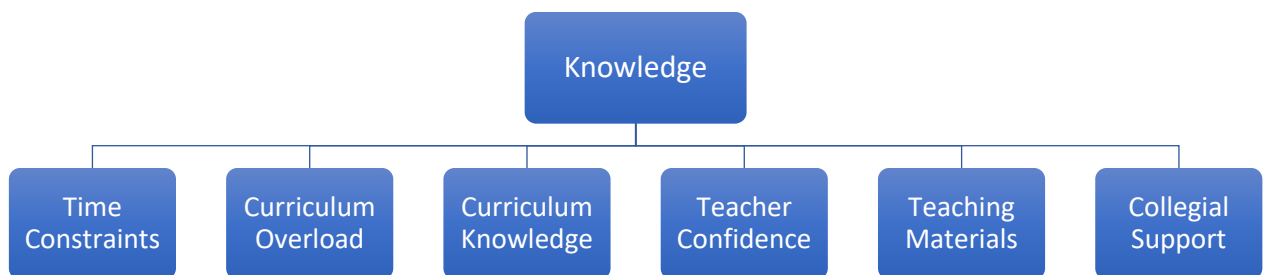
Figure 7. Knowledge categories
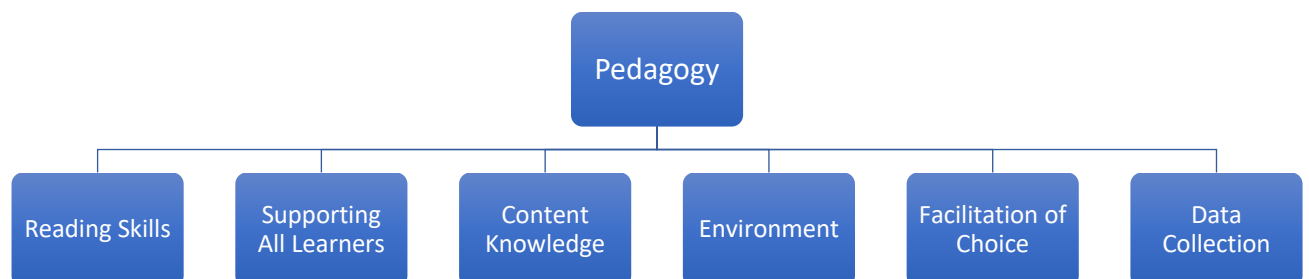
Figure 8. Pedagogy categories

4.2.3 Axial coding

As I studied my open codes and raised them to categories, I began to explore the inter-linking of these categories and developed two axial codes (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, 2013, 2019). These axial codes emerged as *differentiation* and *choice* and enabled me to interconnect the meanings arising from the above categories in Figures 2-4. Although the categories initially were segregated, axial coding allows you to see the overlapping themes and draw them closer together in search for an overarching theme (Corbin & Strauss, 1993). I could see that there were many overlaps in the data relating to differentiation and choice and so began to sort my categories under these two axial codes (Charmaz, 2014). I began with differentiation and through the use of memo-writing, was able to raise the data further to a conceptual level and begin developing ideas (Mertens, 2015). I constructed a key for the data and began considering both differentiation and choice and the role it played in my research.

Table 1.

Data Keys

Data	*Key*	*Week 1*	*Week 2*	*Week 3*	*Week 4*	*Week 5*	*Week 6*
My Reflective Journal & Field Notes	**RJF**	**RJF1**	**RJF2**	**RJF3**	**RJF4**	**RJF5**	**RJF6**
Open-Ended Questionnaire	**OEQ**	**OEQ1**					**OEQ6**
Children Interview	**CI**	**CI1**	**CI2**	**CI3**	**CI4**	**CI5**	**CI6**

Table 2. Data keys

The keys developed in the table above are used throughout my memo-writing as a reference point to the rich qualitative data collected. It is used to support my memo-writing and to help further develop the ideas emerging.

4.3 Differentiation and pedagogy

Differentiation is described as a way of reaching out effectively to all learners who span the spectrum of learning readiness, personal interests and culturally shaped ways of experiencing their world (Tomlinson, 2014). I began analysing my research and looking at how effective the reading workshop was at facilitating differentiation in my classroom. I reflected upon the many opportunities available within this intervention for effective differentiation and whether or not I utilised this to the best of my teaching ability. The NCCA (2012) recommend the fostering of enjoyment of reading in the classroom through the use of a broad range of reading materials matching the children's stages of development and interest. I considered whether this environment was created in my classroom during this research and explored this concept by analysing the recurring categories from my data. These inter-linking categories are outlined below:
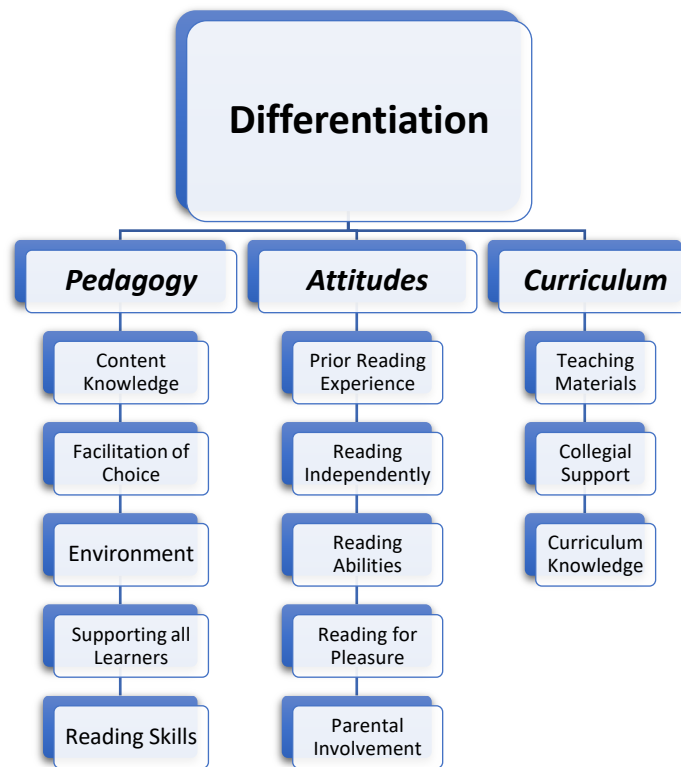
```
                         ┌─────────────────────┐
                         │                     │
                         │   Differentiation   │
                         │                     │
                         └──────────┬──────────┘
            ┌───────────────────────┼───────────────────────┐
      ┌───────────┐           ┌───────────┐           ┌───────────┐
      │ Pedagogy  │           │ Attitudes │           │Curriculum │
      └─────┬─────┘           └─────┬─────┘           └─────┬─────┘
      ┌───────────┐           ┌───────────┐           ┌───────────┐
      │  Content  │           │   Prior   │           │ Teaching  │
      │ Knowledge │           │  Reading  │           │ Materials │
      └───────────┘           │Experience │           └───────────┘
      ┌───────────┐           └───────────┘           ┌───────────┐
      │Facilitation│          ┌───────────┐           │ Collegial │
      │ of Choice │           │  Reading  │           │  Support  │
      └───────────┘           │Independently│         └───────────┘
      ┌───────────┐           └───────────┘           ┌───────────┐
      │Environment│           ┌───────────┐           │Curriculum │
      └───────────┘           │  Reading  │           │ Knowledge │
      ┌───────────┐           │ Abilities │           └───────────┘
      │Supporting │           └───────────┘
      │all Learners│          ┌───────────┐
      └───────────┘           │Reading for│
      ┌───────────┐           │  Pleasure │
      │  Reading  │           └───────────┘
      │   Skills  │           ┌───────────┐
      └───────────┘           │  Parental │
                              │Involvement│
                              └───────────┘
```

Figure 9. Axial coding: differentiation

'I began in September focusing on the differentiation of reading and how this can help develop more proficient readers. I paid particular attention to the levelling of readers in the classroom. Having read extensively on the topic and having looked at the benefits of the reading workshop, I realised that my energy should not be going into differentiating the readers but rather differentiating the reading experience.' (Noctor, RJF1, 3/2/19)

Before I began this research journey, my understanding of differentiation of reading was limited to teaching materials such as levelled basal readers (Glaswell & Ford, 2010; Atwell, 2014; Tiernan, 2017). As I continued on with my research and with the development of my intervention, I deepened my understanding of the differentiation process to close the gaps in my knowledge. Researching the literature surrounding the differentiation of reading

afforded me the opportunity to visualise how I wanted it to look like in practical terms in my classroom. I could see that my values were deeply rooted in an inclusive and open environment and in order to facilitate this, I had to find a framework which allowed me to live closer to these values. Understanding that differentiating reading materials was not the only way to include all learners was empowering.

'I think I had to broaden my understanding of what exactly differentiation was. I had a fixed, out dated view on what it looked like in the classroom. You are told that material is the main focus, differentiate their work, their homework, their readers. So, for me, moving away from basal readers and offering choice of reading material frightened me in a way' (Rachel, RJF1, 9/2/19)

4.5 Differentiating materials and environment

I began by looking to differentiate basal readers and assign them to learners depending on their ability. Basal readers are textbooks which have short stories illuminating specific reading skills. They are usually sequenced and follow a step by step process. The children move up along the varying levels of difficulty (Tiernan, 2017; Atwell, 1987; Glaswell & Ford, 2010). There is copious amounts of literature supporting the claim that this is best practice for developing readers (Calkins, 2001; Shields, 2012; Tiernan, 2017). However, the wider I read the more apparent it became that to support all learners I had to create a learning environment which encompassed all the elements of differentiation, not just the reading material (Joseph, 2013; Tomlinson, 2014; Nedellic, 2014). The reading workshop embodies all the elements of classroom differentiation, allowing for a variety of materials, a

change in environment, for small group and individual work to take place (Calkins, 2001; Boushey & Moser, 2009; Serafini, 2015).

4.6 Extended reading time

The challenge which arose for me during their independent reading time was ensuring that each child was engaged during it. I reflected on the validity of the extended reading time (Boushey & Moser, 2009). I worried about the curriculum time pressure and was concerned for some students who found reading more of a struggle than others. After discussions with my partner teacher, I noted how they tended to move around and at times, couldn't settle.

"We both agreed the attention span will be something to build upon but that the first workshop routine session went very well and the children seemed excited to get started." *(Rachel, RJF1)*

I gradually increased the reading time as the weeks went on and as a result of this, they developed their concentration skills and were less prone to distraction due to the progressive increase in sustained reading. Boushey and Moser (2009) introduced choice of materials to their workshop to address their concerns around student engagement with texts. This aspect was included in my workshop which I detail later in this chapter.

It is recommended by Orehovec and Alley (2003) that you allow talk during this reading time as it introduces the social aspect of reading and facilitates 'book talks'. This is mirrored by Atwell's (2007) idea that children learn from talking, discussing and sharing their thoughts. Furthermore, Vygotsky (Armstrong, 2015) talks about how learning occurs

not in isolation but rather in collaboration with others. I now recognise the difference between engagement in 'book talk' and disengagement of the reading process. When they are engaging in book talk they are discussing, reflecting and sharing their opinions about a story they have read (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 2001). Disengagement from the reading process was evident through their lack of focus, their inability to maintain sustained reading and tendency towards distraction (Fives, 2016).

"I don't like read because I kind of find them boring" (OEQ1, Mary)

"I like it because we get some quiet time and we get a break from hard work"(OEQ6, Mary)

"Its not interesting beacus well its just not for me and I kind of get bored" (OEQ1, Helen)

"I like picking my own book cus I kno what I like now so its nice" (OEQ6, Helen)

"I read sometimes…" (OEQ1, Judy)

"The reading workshop made me read more becose then I realised that reading is fun and exiting" (OEQ6, Judy)

4.7 Differentiation and content knowledge

A focus of the reading workshop is to support all learners by explicitly teaching reading skills during the mini-lesson and taking small groups during independent reading time to consolidate the skills further. This is an integral part of the workshop as it provides a scaffold around the key areas of concern for learners (Calkins, 2001). The skills such as predicting, decoding, summarising and inferencing are not part of our whole school plan in second class. These skills were taught during the reading workshop. They were new to the children and I had to familiarise myself with them as I had not directly taught them in my school yet. Seeing the children respond positively to the reading strategy lessons and putting them into practice was a motivating factor for me to continue this practice.

"*I like learning new skills*" (CI6, Mary)

"When I get stuck on a word I use my fix-up strategy to help me figure it out, before the workshop I just skipped the word." (CI4, Rebecca)

Using the small group instruction during reading time allowed me to differentiate my instructions for both weak readers and high ability readers. However, I was cognizant of the fact that those who were struggling readers could use it as a way to avoid independent reading time. Research shows that in order for readers to improve their reading, they have to read often (Orehovec & Alley, 2003). It was of paramount importance for these children to re-join the independent reading time when they had accomplished their learning goal (Boushey & Moser, 2009).

4.7.1 Recommendation

As this was a six week intervention, a new reading strategy was introduced each week. "Reading strategies are the 'in the head processes' that readers use to make sense out of print" (Pearson, et al., 1992). On reflection, by the time the children would learn a strategy, we would quickly move on to the next one. Those who did not master the strategy immediately, would have benefited further from putting it into practice during their independent reading time. This time was often spent in small group instruction with me, thus missing out on this 'actual reading time'.

 If I was to implement the reading workshop over the course of a full school year, I would spend a month on one skill or strategy and build upon it slowly over the year (Calkins, 2001; Orehovec & Alley, 2003; Serafini, 2015). This would ensure each child felt confident with the skills and strategies. The small instruction group, which is invaluable to the consolidation of new knowledge, would be of greater benefit to the children as they would have numerous occasions to access support on one skill before moving on the next (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 2002; Tomlinson, 2014; Serafini, 2015). There would be more opportunities for them to consolidate their learning of one skill before beginning the next.

4.8 Accessibility of the Reading Workshop for other practitioners

My partner teacher implemented the reading workshop simultaneously in her class which allowed me to see how the structure of the lesson could be tailored and changed to suit any class, not just within my personal context.

'During my initial planning meeting with my colleague, I realised that there was a great deal of clarity still needed from me in order for her to successfully implement the reading workshop in her classroom. She had never heard of it before and many of the reading comprehension strategies decided on for the workshop, had never been explicitly taught in our classes. This proved to me that there is a huge gap in our teaching of reading as we had to remind ourselves of what the actual strategies even were. I found this very interesting and alarming at the same time. It shows that we have a great deal to gain from engaging in the reading workshop programme.' (Noctor, RJF1, 12/1/19)

During our whole school self-evaluation, the lack of reading skill focus was noted by staff members as an area needing particular focus. With the New Language Curriculum (2015) in place, more innovative and structured ideas were requested by staff members to support them implementing the new curriculum objectives (NCCA, 2015). Teachers from both junior and senior classes within my school observed my reading workshop lesson during week five in order to upskill in this particular area. This taught me the value of collegial support and I welcomed feedback from my partner teacher as to how I was delivering my knowledge of the reading workshop and how she was receiving the information, with a total lack of previous knowledge (Fenwick, 2012; Biesta, et al. 2019;).

'I came to realise that in order to explain the concept of the reading workshop, I would have to lay out the instructions in an accessible way. I created lesson plans for the R.W which I presented to my colleague later in the week. She found it much more accessible and could follow the plan step by step. This helped me a great deal as I was feeling pressure to deliver a clear and hassle-free instruction around the reading workshop while at the same time still trying to navigate my own understanding of what I wanted from the workshop. I was

glad that the structure of a lesson plan alleviated that feeling of information overload and provided a simple structure plan which could be distributed to any teacher in the school to try.' (Noctor, RJF1, 19/1/19)

4.9 Attitudes to reading

As I analysed the data I received from the pupils in their questionnaires, it became apparent to me that there were a variety of factors at play which contributed to either a positive or negative attitude towards reading. I used the children's standardised test scores from the previous school year to identify strong, middle and weak readers. Interestingly, the child's reading ability corelated with the amount of time spent reading independently. In conjunction with this, a question directly related to parental involvement in the reading process showed that parental involvement had an influence on their child's attitude to reading at home. This finding was derived from the children's responses in their questionnaires. 100% of the responses were positive towards parents reading to their children, however, the strongest of readers had transitioned from parental reading to independent reading and found it more interesting reading stories to themselves.

> *'I find it a bit boring and I prefer reading to myself' (CI3, Katrina)*
>
> *'No I do not like being read to at night time because I get kind of bored and just fall asleep' (CI3, Rebecca)*
>
> *'No because I don't get time to think about what the word means' (CI3, Lucy)*
>
> *'I like to read to myself because then I'm quiet'(CI3, Sarah)*

The most common recurring response from weaker readers was that they enjoyed being read to at bed time to help them fall asleep:

> *'Becus I like listening to pepol becus I like audiowbooks and im not intrested in reading' (OEQ1)*
>
> *'becos it helps me fall asleep' (OEQ1)*
>
> *'yes because if I get tired I can fall asleep'(OEQ1)*
>
> *'when someone reads to me I get very comfy and go to sleep easeayr' (OEQ1)*

The middle readers liked being read to due to the use of expressions and tones their parents used in an effort to make the reading material more interesting and exciting.

> *'I like it because the make expretion' (OEQ1)*
>
> *'yes so I can understand the word' (OEQ1)*
>
> *'cus they read in difrent exprestions' (OEQ1)*
>
> *'I like when someone reads to me because I might not know them and hear how they read' (OEQ1)*

15 out of 27 children noted at the beginning of the research that they did not read that often at home and that their parents read occasionally to them.

- Those who were read to more frequently had a positive attitude towards the reading process.
- Those who read independently daily had a high level of ability and a positive attitude to reading.

- Those who were read to sporadically and infrequently had a dislike of reading and I noted they struggled with concentration during independent reading time.

It was evident to me that their prior reading experience both at home and in school played a large part in their overall opinions of reading for pleasure. 'Children learn to read through reading, and they aren't doing enough reading' (Calkins, 2001: 68).

4.10 Choice

A learning outcome for the New Language Curriculum Stage 2 for second class is that of motivation and choice. It states that children should be able to choose, read and talk about text in a range of genres for pleasure, interest and specific purposes. (NCCA, 2015)
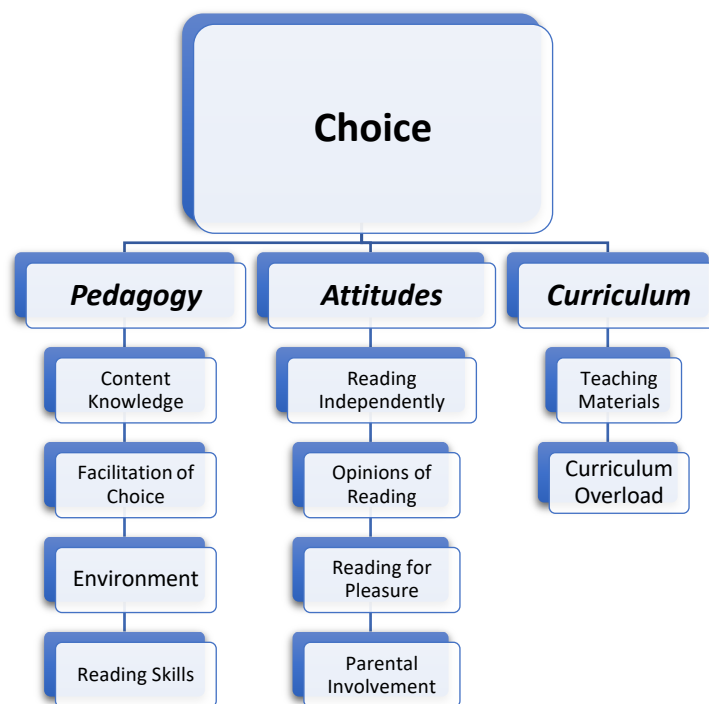
Figure 10. Axial coding: choice

4.11 Facilitating choice in the reading workshop

Wigfield and Eccles (2000) states that encouraging students to see the relevance of reading in their lives, and why it is a valuable skill and activity, will enhance their reading motivation and also their comprehension. A large factor in encouraging the children to develop a literate rich world for themselves was by providing choice for them (Boushey &

Moser, 2009). I began this research with a focus on differentiation, and found that it meandered towards autonomy of learning and facilitation of choice.

'For me, moving away from basal readers and offering choice of reading material frightened me in a way. It meant that I had to trust that they would choose the correct book, the correct space and person to sit beside and the best book to suit their interest and reading level. I know from the research I did during my literature review that autonomy of learning supports a differentiated environment and increases a child's motivation to learn, but how do I provide this while maintaining a high standard of teaching? This is completely out of my comfort area…' (Noctor, JE1)

From the above reflection, I had to consider how I would facilitate this environment of choice while ensuring that I did not provide 'too much choice' leading to 'decision paralyses' (Assor et al. 2002; Dickerson, 2015; Parker 2017). The children were allowed to choose their reading material, their reading nooks and to choose when they needed more support with reading strategies through a small group 'opt in' system. In order to ensure that the children had autonomy over these factors, I had to guide them in order for them to reach this point of independent thinking. Froebel promotes the importance of a well-planned environment to enable children's autonomy (Tovey, 2013). I had to develop a level of trust with them before I felt I could stand over this practice as a professional.

'Spoke with A today, she suggested that using Froebel to link into values would be a great way to bring in choice and why I value choice. This is the reason I am focusing on the element of choice in my workshop as it is deep rooted in my values of autonomy and freedom to explore. It will be important to differentiate between total and complete autonomy and

choice and guided choice…. Making sure that they are able to choose the correct book for themselves is the first step in handing over ownership to them.' (Noctor, 12/2/19)

The first lesson in the reading workshop explicitly teaches them how to choose a book which is at their level and also which will be of interest to them. This element of guided choice is paramount to the success of it as it ensures the children are making informed choices. Froebel would echo this idea that free-movement, choice and self-activity are successful within a framework where the role of the adult is crucial (Tovey, 2013; Bruce, 2012; NCCA, 2015; Parker, 2017).

'I like the way I can put a book down if I find it boring, I always try to finish it but then I forget what it was about at all' (CI1)

'I like chooing my own buck bcause I can change it if I don't lick it' (OEQ6)

4.12 Developing interest

Along with choice of material, interest level in the genre of the book played a huge role in the development of the children's motivation to read during the reading workshop. Hidi (2006) describes a psychological state that occurs during interactions between person and their objects of interest, and is characterised by increased attention, concentration and affect.

Before the reading workshop, the children were assigned readers by the teacher and instructed with how many pages to read per night. This lack of autonomy for the children was

a source of interest for me. As it was part of their homework, they had to complete the task and yet, were they enjoying the process of reading or simply going through the motions? Their responses in interviews highlighted that they did not enjoy the stories assigned for homework and indeed, went through the motions to tick the homework box.

"I find the stories we get for homework so boring but my mum makes me read it every night because teacher says I have to even though I read it in like ten seconds" (CI1, Laura)

Providing the children with choice, allowed them to pursue their interests and triggered their intrinsic motivation to engage in the task asked of them. Interested students are more likely to continue with a task and become more confident in their abilities (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). When asked if they preferred choosing their own book or being given one by their teacher, the unanimous response was in favour of personal choice.

'I like piking out my own books because maybe if someone chooses my book sometimes I might not like it and whene I pick my own books, if I don't like it I don't have to read the whole thing.' (OEQ6, Sarah)

'I like choosing my own book cus I know what I like'(OEQ6, Rebecca)

'I like to pick my own book because I like reading long books with 243 pages'(OEQ6, Lucy)

'I would like to choose my own one because I like dork diaries a lot and dork diaries are intresting'(OEQ6, Mary)

'I deffinetly prefer choosing my own books because the others are boring. Plus their not really my style.' (OEQ6, Christine)

'I prefer choosing my own book because I hate the books we get in school cus they are realy boring.' (OEQ6, Anna)

It was interesting to me that the response to that question was unanimous among all levels of reader. Choice came to the forefront as the leading motivating factor in the children's want to read. Froebel believes that child-centred learning is when the "focus is on letting children develop their own learning agenda, pursuing their own interests and going at the pace suitable for them" (Tovey, 2013: 79). When asked if getting to choose their own book made them want to read more and for longer, the response from 20/27 respondents was positive.

'Yes because I choose the author I like'(OEQ6, Rebecca)

'Choosing my own book does make me want to read more because I mite have the same book at home and I can read the same book at home and in school.'(OEQ6, Sophia)

'Choosing my own book make me read more "why" because if you read book you like you want to read the howl seeris'(OEQ6, Jennifer)

'It makes me want to read more because I really enjoy choosing any book I want'(OEQ6, Kerri)

4.13 Social element to reading

The children spent time mulling over their book choice, picking up books, reading the blurbs, putting them back if they did not capture their imagination or claiming them as their own if it did. This time before the workshop began was short but invaluable. They shared with each other their recommendations and actively engaged in 'book talk' which was an aim of the workshop (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 2001). This was a factor in developing their opinions of reading and letting them see the value of reading in their lives from a social aspect. Calkins (2001) urges you to consider how the books you loved, are the ones you share with others. Mirroring our adult experiences with reading for the children affords them the opportunity to deepen the reading experience for themselves (Serafini, 2015).

'At first when observing, I was unsure of whether they were using the time to talk to their friends off topic but as the weeks went on, and more books were read, I could see them showing their friend a particular funny part in the story, sharing a laugh together and continuing on their reading independently. That to me was wonderful to see. The ability to dip in and out of their story and maintain their focus on reading, was all I could have hoped for from this intervention.' (Noctor, RJF3)

In tandem with the social aspect, came their choice of seating arrangements. They chose where to sit in the room and who to sit beside. The children were familiar with the practice of sitting in their assigned reading groups based on ability. Affording them the opportunity to sit beside their peers regardless of their reading level challenged their self-efficacy (McCabe, 2001; NCCA, 2016). Children associate themselves and others with a

particular level or group after a period of time of engaging in the same ability based practice. Allowing them to move freely from peer to peer and engage in topical conversations around the book they are reading encourages their self-confidence, self-belief and perception of themselves. They no longer associate themselves with a grouping (McCabe and Margolis, 2001). Orehovec and Alley (2003) recommend creating authentic reading experiences and opportunities to talk about their books and their thinking. McCabe (2001) encourages teachers to challenge a student's self-efficacy by providing them opportunities to experience success with reading. Giving children the choice of material, which is at their level, peaks their interest and allows them to see themselves as capable readers.

The children found the change in physical environment most appealing and enjoyed getting out of their seats and settling into a space of choice in the room. They brought with them blankets and cushions which they used to create a comfortable space. They found it easier to maintain reading focus when in an inviting, cosy space which we called our 'reading nooks' (Calkins, 2001).

"I love the reading workshop because I get lost in my book. I love getting all cuddled up with my pillow."(CI6, Mary)

"I like when I get to read in a special quiet place in the classroom and relax and I feel all calm and stuff"(CI6, Joanne)

"My favourite part is lying down and reading my book. It is really relaxing." (CI6, Rebecca)

"I like the reading work shop because I't is quiet and I like piece and quiet you get some piece to your'self" (OEQ6, Sarah)

4.14 Making room for reading in their lives

It was important to me that the children embraced a culture of reading into their lives and that they created a space for their imagination to wander and explore. The children were asked if they had begun reading more at home after the six-week intervention. The responses from a cohort of the respondents are outlined below:

Yes I even have a reading nook (CI6, Lucy)

Yes it is fun the more you read the more you learn (CI6, Ciara)

I read a bit more at home than I used to now, I never realy enjoyed reading that much befor the reading workshop (OEQ6, Ailish)

It has made me enjoy reading because then I can learn to read more (OEQ6, Mary)

It has made reading fun more. And I think everyone shud experiense it (OEQ6, Sinead)

The reading workshop made me read more because then I realised that reading is fun and exciting. (OEQ6, Sorcha)

These responses are in comparison to a question asked on the first day of the reading workshop. Do you read at home?

Not much like never (OEQ1, Orla)

Not that often(OEQ1, Jennifer)

I don't read a lot myself, only sometimes (OEQ1, Sophia)

I don't read at home (OEQ1, Siofra)

Sometimes but not everyday (OEQ1, Sadhbh)

This change of attitude towards personal reading time is also evident in the classroom. They have piles of books on their table, one for in school, one they take home, one they want to share with their friend. Most of them will pick up a book immediately when a task is completed. When they finish their break and lunch, they settle into their reading nooks with their blankets and cushions and read. I walk into a classroom filled with engaged readers, silently trawling the pages of their books. Each time I enter the room to this new and wonderful environment, I think of how a short six-week intervention had such a powerful impact on the culture within my classroom and consider the impact the reading workshop could make if implemented for the full school year.

"I feel like I am finally teaching the skills of reading. I feel like a culture of reading is happening in my classroom. The children are doing it now without being told to." (Rachel, RJF5, 21/3/19)

When speaking of this culture of reading in the above reflection, I am referring to the children and their want to engage in reading for pleasure. This is the biggest change I see in my classroom now as a result of the reading workshop, the desire and motivation to read independently without any extrinsically motivating factors. The children are intrinsically motivated to continue reading and are now finding places in their lives for reading. (Calkins, 2001).

4.15 Summary of findings

The central phenomenon which arose from my axial coding was that of *Motivation*. Through my exploration of the data, the connecting factors influencing motivation were identified as that of differentiation and choice. Wigfield (2016) talks of how students at all levels must have opportunities to succeed. They need to feel that their input in classroom discussions is valued and that they can make valuable contributions to lessons (Tomlinson, 2014). They enjoy interactions with others about what they are reading and find collaboration engaging. In turn, this motivates teachers to modify their teaching practice based on this motivational principle. A child's positive attitude towards reading for pleasure can be nurtured and fostered in a differentiated classroom where choice and autonomy is celebrated (Tovey, 2012). In order for children to create space for reading in their lives, they must be intrinsically motivated by their environment, reading material and peers.

Causal: Disinterest in Reading
Action Strategy: Reading Workshop
Consequence: Motivation to read

Table 3. Cause and affect

4.16 Conclusion

I began with my points of departure which informed the development of my seventy open codes. These open codes were then condensed into 18 categories. These categories inter-linked many themes within my research and gave rise to two axial codes, differentiation and choice. This self-study action research focused on how my implementation of the reading workshop would facilitate differentiation and choice to motivate readers. In chapter 5, I will detail my findings from this research and further discuss the implications for practice, policy and finally, the personal implications of this self-study action research.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Implications

"When we consider the culture of schools, very often the smallest change can have the biggest impact." (Fenwick, 2012).

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overall conclusion to the thesis which explored the effect of the reading workshop on readers' motivation. The study also explored differentiation and choice within the reading workshop and pays particular focus to the attitudes and opinions of the students towards reading. I will explore and present the most significant findings within this chapter and examine these in light of previous literature. Furthermore, a consideration of the limitations of this study will be outlined in section 5.3 which will be followed by the implications for practice, policy and further research. I will conclude with the consideration of the personal implications associated with the type of research undertaken and closing comments.

5.2 Findings of the study

This research is a bottom-up process and the localised circumstances dictated the nature of the emerging findings. Miller et al. (2003) suggests that AR confirms the status of teacher researchers as powerful and influential agents of change, with the capacity to bring about improvement in their practice and to develop theories from their practice, through a process of critical reflection and action. At the outset of this research, I sought to improve the children's experience of reading in my classroom. I began investigating the current literature

discussing this area of interest and settled upon the reading workshop as my practical intervention. The reading workshop structure encompassed the various elements needed to support an environment of learning and enjoyment (Serafini, 2001, 2015; Atwell, 2007, 2014). The findings in relation to the aims outlined above are as follows:

5.2.1 Differentiation

Differentiation is the inclusion of all learners and their differing learning styles (Tomlinson, 2014). By differentiating content, instruction and the environment, the children were able to see themselves as competent and able readers. The availability of a wide range of reading materials allowed them the freedom to choose the book that was just right for them, and one that they enjoyed and were interested in. This afforded them the opportunity to experience success in reading and therefore challenged their self-efficacy (Schunk, 1987; McCabe & Margolis, 2001**).**

The provision of small group instruction allowed for struggling readers to revise and consolidate the reading skills needed to be successful readers. Interestingly, many high and middle ability readers opted in to the small group instruction along with low level ability readers, which created a healthy dynamic of varying abilities, all working in tandem together (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001). This further challenged their assumptions of groupings and labels and they saw the reading workshop as accessible for all levels of readers.

The availability of a variety of reading materials, the freedom to move and sit in a comfortable space and the fluidity between whole class discussions, small group instruction and individual work meant that the reading workshop facilitated a multi-dimensional teaching

approach. The NCCA recommends this differentiated teaching approach as a way to encourage readers (NCCA, 2012). Therefore, each child was provided with the opportunity to access what they needed to experience enjoyment of reading. When we think about how we like to read in our own lives, we curl up in a comfortable, soft space and get lost in a book. The children found the change in environment the most attractive and loved the freedom to curl up with a good book and relax (Guthrie et al., 2000). Additionally, specific competencies of the practitioner were required when differentiating for individual children. It was imperative that a wide selection of reading material was made available in order to challenge and meet the child's zone of proximal development. This ensured the avoidance of boredom and frustration while also encouraging new learning to occur (Armstrong, 2015).

5.2.2 Choice

The fostering of autonomy and choice within this research came to fruition through my Froebelian values. Rather than focusing on basal readers and small ability-based grouping, a range of reading materials was made available to the children in conjunction with the choice of where to sit during reading time (Glaswell & Ford, 2010; Kontovourki, 2012). Two-thirds of the children enjoyed this element of choice during reading time as it separated their association from groupings and abilities further (Parker et al, 2017). They could sit beside their peers, irrespective of ability. As a consequence of this, their own beliefs and assumptions towards reading were challenged as they were no longer defined by a level or a number (Schunk, 1989, McCabe & Margolis, 2001). As the literature states, there is too much focus on the number or letters labelling texts that represent their difficulty. We lose sight of what matters in reader-text interactions (Glasswell & Ford, 2010). 23 out of the 27 girls in my class enjoyed the freedom to read what they were interested in, comfortable with and able

for. This autonomy over their own learning led to a positive disposition towards reading for fun (Schiefele et al., 2012).

Free movement, choice and self-activity give meaningful learning to a child's experience however it must be within a framework where the role of the adult is acknowledged (Bruce, 2012; Tovey, 2013). While the hope is that each child will choose the correct book for their ability, in reality this is not always the case. To counteract this challenge, I used guided choice as a means to scaffold particular students. In some instances, I guided certain learners to a selection of books which were suited to their ability while still facilitating choice (Calkins, 2001; Parker et al, 2017). The reading workshop, with choice as an element, allowed them to break away from the labels of book levels and to read. By providing choice of materials and reading spaces, the children developed intrinsic motivation to engage in reading.

5.2.3 Motivation

As a result of both differentiation and choice, the children's self-motivation levels to read were the most evident changes. Having a multi-dimensional reading workshop allowed the children to see the value of reading in their lives. They created space in their day to read. Feedback from parents noted the effects were not solely situated in the classroom. The children created reading nooks at home and are now engaging in the activity of reading in their spare time.

"I had bought her fairy lights and pillows and looked up Pinterest to help me create a beautiful space for her, I had all these visions, and then she chose under the kitchen table instead!" (Quote from a Parent, RJW6)

"We now read together at night in her reading nook. I read my book and she reads hers" (Quote from a Parent, RJW6)

The social aspect and the 'book talk' surrounding them during this process taught them the value of social interactions with books and how it can enrich the reading process further. We all know that the books which made the most impact in our lives are those we then share with our friends (Calkins, 2001). The shift from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation to read is the concluding finding of this research.

The reading workshop has the ability to transform a child's reading motivation from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation (Wigfield, 2016; Schiefele et al, 2012; Hall, 2016)**.** Learners are equipped with the learning strategies needed to access material at their level while also peaking their interest by providing a choice of material. Furthermore, low-level readers have the opportunity to see themselves as competent and confident readers alongside their peers which solidifies the value of choice in a readers' life (Hall, 2016).

5.3 Limitations of the study

Due to the small-scale nature of the six-week study, there are limitations to the implications of the research which can be drawn. As this study was implemented in a small group, middle class, all-girls school, generalisations cannot be made. Each school must make considerations and amendments to the research in question depending on their own context

(Sullivan et al., 2016). The availability of book resources in a school could be a limiting factor to the success of the workshop. Furthermore, as this study was a self-study action research project, my own assumptions, values and ideals are embedded within the research and this needs to be considered as a limitation to the implications (McNiff, 2002; Sullivan et al., 2016). In recognising these limitations, there are further implications for practice and policy which I outline below.

5.4 Implications for policy

If there is one recurring theme in the discussion about educational research, it is the idea that such research should contribute to the improvement in educational practice (Biesta et al., 2019:1). Action Research is a systemic, disciplined process of finding out something that was not known before. It is important to disseminate the new knowledge found and show it to others with the hope that it will be critically evaluated by other people and improved upon for future purposes (McNiff, 2002). This research may be adapted in order to suit an alternative context.

At micro level, the reading workshop programme offers an opportunity for teachers to implement the aims and objectives outlined in the New Language Curriculum. It is a tangible support for teachers and offers an overhaul of standard practices in an effort to move towards a more play-based curriculum. This could be a focus for the School Self Evaluation which would subsequently provide teachers with an opportunity to develop knowledge of the reading workshop. In order for a culture of learning to emerge, schools should create structures for regular dialogue and knowledge exchange where lessons learned are shared (Stoll & Kools, 2017). As this study was conducted in my school context, others may learn

from my findings and adapt or build upon the workshop to suit their own context. This could be done by including or excluding certain parts of the workshop depending on the space and materials available to the teacher (Serafini, 2015; Orehovec & Alley, 2013).

At macro level, the Department of Education could consider the benefits of providing professional development courses in this area to help support teachers in the practicalities of a reading rich classroom. This affirmation from the Department would mean that resistance towards implementation of said workshop would be minimised. Supporting schools in initiating and sustaining their own innovations would promote team learning and collaboration amongst staff (Stoll & Kools, 2017). An allocated training day could be provided for a school representative to attend and to learn about the structure of the reading workshop. This representative would have the opportunity to feedback to staff and develop a learning community which facilitates peer collaboration (Fenwick, 2012; Sullivan et al., 2016). Following on from this, the opportunity for teachers to be released from class during the school day to observe the workshop in practice could alleviate any queries and provide them with the tools and understanding to implement it in their own classrooms.

The meso level agencies such as the PDST could provide professional support by delivering a practical workshop based tutorial on how to adapt and implement the reading workshop into differing school contexts. Their role would be to offer a concrete example of a differentiated programme incorporating all the values and objectives identified in the New Language Curriculum. Today's management of information systems should allow for storing and easy access to data, to further foster continuous improvements to practice (Stoll & Kools, 2017).

5.5 Implications for practice

Initiatives such as the National Assessments for English Reading and Mathematics-Field Trial 2019 show that there is current scope for change in the area of teaching reading. I participated in this pilot study in my school with the purpose of providing the Educational Research Centre (ERC) with data surrounding aspects of the reading process which included reading strategies and skills. This pilot study opened up a dialogue in my school around the potential opportunities for professional development in this area.

I presented the findings of my research which was underway concurrently with this study. Communicating these concepts to my peers helped me to develop my language further around this topic. As I began developing feedback loops with my colleagues in an effort to expand my research within my school context, I came to realise that in a complex system, it is all about communication (Fenwick, 2012; Stoll & Kools, 2016). In order to disseminate my work at school level, I had to challenge the mindset and assumptions of colleagues but also be open to criticism and feedback about my findings. By expanding upon these connections with my staff, we built knowledge together which gave the opportunity for the teachers to become agents of change (Greene, 1973).

Due to the non-linearity of my research, in particular the movement towards choice and autonomy of learning, some colleagues were more sensitive to change (Fenwick, 2012). After discussing the benefits of a school wide reform to the way we teach reading skills, it was agreed upon that this would be a focus of our School Self Evaluation. This inter-connectedness and communication, which underpins the Froebelian philosophy, brought about an openness to possibility, 'the possibility of change' (Greene, 1973). The distributive

power of our discussions meant that everyone was enabled to be a leader and have their opinions heard.

Many schools struggle to become 'research engaged' because staff lack necessary skills, resources or motivation to do so (Brown, 2015). Many reform efforts prepare schools inadequately for the changing environment meanwhile schools are under pressure to learn fast and evolve with the changing environment (Schleichner, 2012, 2015). However, it is evident that an internal, bottom-up structure can evolve within a small system in the absence of any external intervention from higher governing bodies. When we consider the culture of schools, very often the smallest change can have the biggest impact (Fenwick, 2012).

5.6 Implications for further research

I would recommend that the findings from this research be expanded upon in the future on a larger scale to increase the validation of said findings. There are copious amounts of literature supporting the benefits of the RW from other countries however there is minimal research conducted in an Irish context (Orehovec & Alley, 2003). Having this research explored further within this context would be invaluable for Irish teachers and students alike. Furthermore, having this research undertaken in other countries has provided us with reference points for improvement and learning (Stoll & Kools, 2017). It is now necessary for Ireland to undertake its own research within the context of our own specific educational system. In an ideal world, in-class support would be utilised for the reading workshop however recognition of the benefits of this programme would have to be known for schools to invest teachers time into it. As the New Language Curriculum is currently in its beginning stages, incremental awareness could be attained over a number of years to achieve the above.

5.7 Personal Implications

My professional practice was in juxtaposition with my values and undertaking this self-study action research helped me to align myself closer to my values (Sullivan et al. 2016). During this year, I have felt myself transition from a newly qualified teacher towards a confident active member of the staff who has something of value to say. This research has shown me the importance of self-motivation and professional development. It has pushed me to challenge myself and to develop my professional confidence and identity. Undertaking research has the power to change your thinking and practice and in my opinion, is imperative for any professional in order to keep growing and adapting. In actual fact, this course has opened my eyes to the possibilities of teaching, and it has given me a sense of fulfilment within my profession. It is impossible to predict where my research journey will take me, but I am confident in the fact that in this short space I have engaged with the action research process, I have reaped the benefits to no end. I am by no means finished on this path of professional discovery but in the words of Maxine Greene, a renowned educational theorist, "our identity is never fixed, we are always becoming" (Greene, 1973).

5.8 Concluding Comments

This thesis contextualises the area of differentiation, reading instruction and motivation by highlighting the key theorists in this realm. Through critical reflection on my own practice, I was able to draw parallels between what was presented in the literature and what was evident in my classroom. Thereupon, I could draw an evidence based conclusion through the use of action research and grounded theory. The data driven results concluded

that facilitating a multi-dimensional approach to reading through the use of differentiation and choice, intrinsically motivated students to read for enjoyment. These results echo the recommendations in the New Language Curriculum which notes that choice and motivation are key elements in facilitating a positive learning environment. This thesis serves to empower teachers to become agents of change, starting with their own classroom (Greene, 1973).

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Appendices
Appendix 1. Ethics Forms

Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education

Master of Education (Research in practice) (MEd)

Ethics Approval for Master of Education (Research in Practice)

Student name:	Rachel Noctor
Student Number:	12273864
Supervisor:	Dr. Máire Nic an Bhaird Liam Mac Amhlaigh
Programme:	Master of Education (Research in Action)
Thesis title:	How multi-dimensional reading, facilitated by differentiation & choice, motivates young readers: a case-study of a Reading Workshop
Research Question(s):	How do I differentiate reading in my classroom? How do I foster a love of reading in my classroom? What does a reading workshop look like? How is this going to help differentiate my classroom? How do I cater for all levels of readers in a reading workshop?

Intended start date of data collection:	January 2019
Professional Ethical Codes or Guidelines used:	I will adhere to: • Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy • Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education Ethics Policy • Maynooth University Research Integrity Policy • National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children • National Disability Authority for research among children with disabilities • School Child Safeguarding Statement • School Data Protection Policy • Maynooth University Policy for Child Welfare

1(a) Research Participants: Who will be involved in this research? *(Tick all that apply)*

Early years / pre-school	☐	Provide a brief description of the individuals and their proposed role in your research below [Max 50 words]: The individuals involved in this study will be second class children I teach and my partner teacher in the other second class. I will be putting a reading workshop intervention in place to differentiate children's reading experiences in the classroom. Children will be asked to engage with this workshop 2-3 times a week for 6 weeks. I will observe, survey and discuss with them about the process throughout.
Primary school students	X	

1(b) Recruitment and Participation/sampling approach: *How will these participants become involved in your research? What type of sampling is involved? Please describe the formal and informal recruitment processes? Please describe the type of participation and level of engagement of participants? Are there gatekeepers and what is their part of sampling process? [Max 100 words]*

In accordance with Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy, I will invite the children in my class to take part in the study by distributing consent forms to both them and their guardians. I will seek the permission through letters of consent of my partner teacher to consent to working closely with me during this research. The gatekeepers to this project are the Board of management, Parents/guardians and school principal who I will seek written consent from. The gatekeepers will be given information sheets to fully inform them of the nature of the study prior to gaining consent. The children will also be asked to take part in a reading workshop intervention in order to differentiate reading in the class. Children will be asked to participate through giving informed consent and will be reminded that they can withdraw from the study. Children will be instructed by me as to how to engage effectively in this workshop and I will assess and collect data during their participation through observations, surveys and conferencing while adhering to the school Data Protection Policy and the school Child Safeguarding Policy.

2. Summary of Planned Research (*please indicate anonymised location type, purpose and aims of research, research questions and design, methods to be used and time frame, process of analysis) [250 words]*

My research will take place in an all girl's middle-class school in second class. The purpose of this research is to develop a reading workshop which is supporting all levels of readers. The reading workshop has proven to be a successful reading intervention in various other countries, particularly for struggling readers and is an area which could be further developed in Ireland. The reading workshop is designed to begin with a mini-lesson which focuses on a particular teaching point which then leads on to independent and small group reading and finishing with shared learning. I seek ethical approval in line with Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy as my study involves me working with children who are a vulnerable group as well as with my colleagues. I will be developing a reading workshop which suits the needs of my current class group in the aim that it creates an inclusive approach to differentiated reading time in the classroom. Through the methodology of action research, I will be looking at myself in this study and how best I can improve my teaching of reading with differentiation as a core strategy. I will be recording my observations and conferences with the children during the workshop to collate data for this study. I will be putting this intervention in place in January for six weeks and will analyse the data which will include conferences, surveys, fieldnotes, journal entries and recorded responses collected post intervention.

Vulnerability *(minimising risk, discomfort, coping with unforeseen outcomes, can any aspect of the research give rise to any form of harm to participants, including the researcher)?) [Max 100 words]*
I will address our school policies in order to deal with any unforeseen outcomes that may arise. I will use pseudonyms to ensure anonymity for pupils and teachers and the school in all written data, reports or publications from the research. I will be mindful of the children's differing cognitive abilities and their lack of autonomy when giving their informed consent to the study and will ensure it is explained thoroughly. In accordance with the Maynooth University Policy for Child Welfare and Maynooth University Research Integrity Policy, I will help create an open and safe space for them to air their feelings throughout the study by providing opportunities for discussions throughout. In the case of a harmful, unforeseen event involving a participant during the research activity, I may seek the support of my principal, our Designated Liason Person, or guardians of the child as I have a duty of care to all participants.

Power dynamics *(between researcher-participants, amongst participants, insider-research, reflexivity, gatekeepers, working with your colleagues, working with students, etc)*: *[Max 100 words]*
I will seek consent from guardians of participants to ensure they are acting as an intermediary between myself and the children and to ensure there is no undue pressure placed upon them to participate due to my influential status and their need to please the teacher. Alternative arrangements will be made for a student who may opt out of this study, with minimal attention placed on it. They will take part in the workshop but I will not collect any data from them for this project. A comfortable and open environment will be created to ensure my partner teacher/participants feel at ease. I will check in with participants regularly and ensure that the study is child-centred and inclusive throughout by listening to their experiences within the workshop. I will acknowledge with my colleagues with regards to team teaching roles and the shift from equal teaching to me leading another teacher.

Informed consent and assent *(for participants - and guardians where appropriate. Please also note* any *other approvals that may be required from other bodies (i.e. Board of Management.): [Max 100 words]*
In accordance with Maynooth University Ethics Policy, the children will be given letters of assent using child- appropriate language to explain clearly what it is that I am asking of them. I will provide the parent with an information letter which they can read together with their child detailing the role of the children in this study. I will construct a letter to the Board of Management of my school, outlining the nature of my study and seek written consent for it. If at any stage a child decides to opt out of this study, it is within their rights and will be adhered to. They will have been informed that they are free to make this decision at any stage without any repercussions attached to the decision.

Sensitivity *(topics that may be potentially sensitive, intrusive or stressful, have you considered what to do in relation to dealing with the aftermath of a sensitive disclosure? how do you intend to deal with unexpected outcomes?) [Max 100 words]*

I would address our school Child Safeguarding Statement in the aftermath of a sensitive disclosure and seek the support of my principal who is also our Designated Liaison Person. I will use pseudonyms to ensure anonymity for participants. I will use age appropriate material and take into account the backgrounds and social context of my students. In the case of parental concern's, I will allow them access to their child's data which is collected and I would ensure they feel listened to by providing them with contact details such as an email address for them to air their concern's with me. `I would ensure I respond in a timely fashion. I will adhere to the Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy and the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education Ethics Policy.

Data storage *(where will the findings be stored; will they be published? And by whom?) [Max 100 words]*
I will adhere to the School Data Protection Policy and I will sign and date all pieces of data. Data will only be used by myself. I will keep the data stored on my personal laptop which is encrypted with a password, has anti-virus software and is resistant to security breaches. Any audiotapes used will be transcribed and the recording destroyed at a later date, in line with with Maynooth University Research Integrity Policy. Teacher survey forms and children's work will be anonymous and scanned to my computer under a password protected mechansim. I will store the data for the required 10 years, , should I be called upon to submit it at any stage for further examination/ interest.

Declaration

'I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of undertaking this research.' If any of the conditions of this proposed research change, I confirm that I will re-negotiate ethical clearance with my supervisor.

Signed: ___Rachel Noctor_____   Date: 12/11/18

Appendix 2. Consent Forms

Maynooth University logo

Maynooth University Froebel Department of

Primary and Early

ChildhoodEducation

Roinn Froebel Don Bhun- agus

Luath- Oideachas

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I am a student on the Master of Education programme at Maynooth University. As part of my degree I am doing a research project. The focus of my research is based on differentiated reading and whether this leads to an improved reading experience.

In order to do this, I intend to carry out research in the classroom by implementing a reading workshop.

The data collected will include observations, a daily teacher journal and children's written and oral accounts. The children will be asked for their feedback throughout the workshops. Images of the children taking part in the reading workshop may be taken to show the set-up of the workshop in action but will be anonymised for the purposes of the study analysis.

The child's name and the name of the school will not be included in the thesis that I will write at the end of the research. Your child will be allowed withdraw from the research process at any stage.

All information will be confidential and information will be destroyed in a stated timeframe in accordance with the University guidelines. The correct guidelines will be complied with when carrying out this research. The research will not be carried out until approval is granted by the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education.

I would like to invite you and your child to give permission for him/her to take part in this project.

If you have any queries on any part of this research project feel free to contact me by email at Rachel.Noctor.2019@mumail.ie

Yours faithfully,

…………………………………………………...

Child's name ………………….

I am trying to make reading fun in our classroom. I would like to have you reading more during school. I would like to watch you and listen to you when you are reading and to write down some notes about you.

Would you be ok with that? Pick a box

Yes   **No**

I have asked your Mum or Dad or Guardian to talk to you about this. If you have any questions I would be happy to answer them. If you are happy with that could you sign the form that I have sent home?

If you change your mind after we start, that's ok too.

Maynooth University Froebel Department of

Primary and Early Childhood Education

Roinn Froebel Don Bhun- agus Luath- Oideachas

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I have read the information provided in the attached letter and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to the participation of my child in this study. I am aware that I will receive a copy of this consent form for my information.

Parent / Guardian Signature_____

Parent / Guardian Signature_____

Date: _____

Name of Child _____

Child's signature: _____

Date: _____

Roinn Froebel Don Bhun- agus

Luath- Oideachas

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

Information Sheet

Parents and Guardians

Who is this information sheet for?

This information sheet is for parents and guardians.

What is this Action Research Project about?

Teachers on the Master of Education programme in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood, Maynooth University, are required to conduct an action research project, examining an area of their own practice as a teacher. This project will involve an analysis of the teacher's own practice. Data will be generated using observations, reflective notes and questionnaires. The teacher is then required to produce a thesis documenting this action research project at the end of the process.

What are the research questions?

How do I foster a love of reading in my classroom?

What does a reading workshop look like?

How is this going to help differentiate learning/reading in my classroom?

How do I cater for all levels of readers in a reading workshop?

What sorts of methods will be used?

Observations, Reflective Journal, Questionnaires, Discussions with children/teachers

Who else will be involved?

The study will be carried out by me, Rachel Noctor, as part of the Master of Education course in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education. The thesis will be submitted for assessment to the module leader Dr Bernadette Wrynn and will be examined by the Department staff. External examiners will also access the final thesis.

What are you being asked to do?

You are being asked for your consent to permit me to undertake this study with my class. In all cases the data that is collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and the analysis will be reported anonymously. The data captured will only be used for the purpose of the research as part of the Master of Education in the Froebel Department, Maynooth University and will be destroyed in accordance with University guidelines.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at:

Contact details: Rachel.Noctor.2019@mumail.ie

Maynooth University Froebel Department of

Primary and Early Childhood

Education

Roinn Froebel Don Bhun- agus

Luath- Oideachas

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

Child's assent to participate

My parent/guardian has read the information sheet with me and I agree to take part in this research.

Name of child (in block capitals): ⁻

_____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Roinn Froebel Don Bhun- agus

Luath- Oideachas

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

Declaration by Researcher

This declaration must be signed by the applicant(s)

I acknowledge(s) and agree that:

a) It is my sole responsibility and obligation to comply with all Irish and EU legislation relevant to this project.

b) I will comply with Irish and EU legislation relevant to this project.

c) That the research will be conducted in accordance with the Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy.

d) That the research will be conducted in accordance with the Maynooth University Research Integrity Policy.

e) That the research will not commence until ethical approval has been granted by the Research and Ethics committee in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education.

Signature of Student: Rachel Noctor

Date: 22/ 10/ 2018

Appendix 3. Lesson Plans

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan	

Key Vocabulary:	**Materials:**
Five-Finger Rule, choice, sifting through, finding, searching, easy, hard, challenging, interesting, difficult	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Choosing the 'Just Right' book*

Questions for Discussion:
1. How do you know if a book is right for you?
2. What do you do to make sure you pick the right book when your looking through them in the library?
3. Do you always choose the same type of book?
4. What makes you want to take a book from the shelf and read it? How do you decide if it's something you will like?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*five finger rule'* strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time. The teacher will model this by reading a page of a book and showing how 5 mistakes on words means its too hard, 2 or less mistakes means it's too easy and 3 mistakes is just right.

Lay out a group of books on each group table, send then back to their seats and allow them time to sift through these and try out the '*five finger rule'* method.

Small Group Instruction Focus:

Reinforce the '*five finger rule'* and walk them through the process, listening to them read a page or two of some books to help them identify their book that's just right.
Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. How are you finding this book, is it easy or hard?
2. Do you think it is *just right* for you? How can you tell?
3. What genre is the book? Do you usually choose this type of book to read?
4. Would you be able to use the '*five finger rule'* outside of the reading workshop?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 15-20 minutes, after using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Reading Workshop, Structure, Mini-Lesson, Independent reading time, Group Reading time, Reflecting and Response, Sharing, Reading Nook, Reading Journal	Reading Journals, Reading Nooks/Pillows, Books

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Reading Workshop Routines*

What does the reading workshop look like? *Whole class lesson, independent reading, group discussions, reflecting and sharing.*

Why are we doing this in our classroom? *To see if the reading workshop can make reading more enjoyable and fun and to help us to read more books.*

What is a reading journal and how will we use it? *You use this after you finish the reading workshop each time and answer questions given by the teacher or ones that you have yourselves, or simply write your thoughts about the book you've read.*

Modelling:
Modelling the routine of the reading workshop, walking them through the movement within the room, where a group will gather for discussions and so on.

Small Group Instruction Focus: N/A for this lesson
Journal/Conferring Questions:
N/A for this lesson

Independent Reading: Choose a book they will use for the next week or two, reading alone for 20 minutes, to practice building up concentration time.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on the workshop and discuss what they are looking forward to most about doing the reading workshop.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Predicting, guessing, previous knowledge, experience, title, cover, strategy	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Looking Ahead*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What do you think this book will be about?
2. Do you know anything about e.g horses (Look at the pictures on the cover)?
3. Looking at the cover, what would you call this book?
4. Do you think the cover is interesting? Would it make you take it off the shelf? Why?
5. Does this book remind you of anything?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the 'looking ahead' strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce predicting and discussing what they think will happen.
Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. Do you like this book so far?
2. Did what you predict come to life?
3. Did anything in this book remind you of something else you might of read already?
4. Did anything in this book remind you of something you have experienced?
5. Would you like to continue reading this book?
6. What do you think might happen next?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Tricky Word, Reread, Fix-up strategy, Thinking Cap, Context, Unfamiliar word, Rate of Reading	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Fix-Up Strategies*

Questions for Discussion:
1. When you come across a tricky word, what do you do?
2. When you don't understand something you are reading, what do you usually do?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Fix-Up'* strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time. Demonstrate this by coming to an 'unfamiliar word' and looking for a chunk in the word, search for the context of the word, read ahead to establish meaning or context, slow down.

Reread the word to help clarify it or reread a passage (slowly) to make sense of a confusing part. Adjusting rate of reading is important to help with understanding**.**

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce previous strategies or check in with a group who may be struggling with the *Fix-Up strategy*.

Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. Did you come across any problems while you were reading your story?
2. What did you do when you came to a confusing part in the book?
3. Did you come across many tricky words?
4. How did you tackle them? Did you try our skills we learnt today?
5. Have you learnt anything today that you did not know before?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Connections, Links, Characters, Similar, Author, Experiences	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Connections*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What type of things do you usually like to read about?
2. Do many of the books you read have anything in common with each other?
3. Are they written by the same author? Are they about animals? Do the characters have a similar story to tell?
4. Is the setting, event or theme similar?
5. What does the word *connection* mean?
6. What are the *connections* between the type of books you like to read?
7. Did you find any connections between books during your independent reading time?
8. Did anything you read today remind you of something from your own life?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Connections*' strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time. Model connections by choosing a book by an author who has written many books with similar characters, settings and plots. Model how you make the connection between a previously read book.
Demonstrate how to consider the connections to their own life during their reading time also.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce predicting and discussing what they think will happen.

Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. Did you make any connections between your own life and what you read today? Did anything you read remind you of something that has happened to you?
2. Have you read any other books which are similar to this book? What are they? What was it that was similar about them?
3. Have you read anything by this author before?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Questioning, Stick notes, Conferring, Reading journal, Mini-lesson, Independent Reading, Group Book Talk	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Questioning*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What type of questions might you ask yourself before you start reading?
2. What questions might you ask yourself during your reading?
3. Why do you think certain events are happening in your books?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Questioning*' strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time. "I want you to see how I stop myself during my reading to ask myself some questions'.
Model using the sticky notes to mark pages they would like to revisit.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce previous strategies for those who need reminding.

Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. What questions did you have before you began reading?
2. What questions did you have during your reading?
3. How did stopping and asking yourself a question help you understand what you were reading better?
4. Did any text or pictures help you understand better your questions?
5. Did you use the sticky note? How did this help you?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Visualising, Images, Illustrations, Adjectives, Descriptions, Mind, Passage, Reflect	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Visualising*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What does visualise mean?
2. How do you create images in your head of what you are reading?
3. When there are no illustrations in your story, how are you able to imagine what you are reading?
4. What type of words help us to visualise what we are reading?
5. What does the author need to do to help you visualise their story and make it come to life in your mind?
6. What did you see when I read to you?
7. What details in the story helped you see the characters/setting?
8. How do you think visualising what you are reading helps you?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Visualising*' strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time. Close your eyes and listen to a passage I am going to read to you. I want you to visualise the story in your mind using only the authors words to help us.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce previous strategies for those who need reminding.

Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. Describe to me the images you were able to create in your head.
2. Did any of the images in your head seem different to what the illustrations in the book may be?
3. How did your images help you understand the story?
4. Can you write a passage that might help someone in your class create an image in their mind if you let them read it or you read to them?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Making Inferences, Prior Experience, Personal Knowledge, character, Experiences, Passage	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Making Inferences*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What did the author do to help you understand the character and their actions?
2. What prior knowledge or personal experiences have you had that helped you figure out this story?
3. How do you think making inferences can help you understand a story and make it your own?

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Making inferences*' strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time.
You are a detective looking for clues. We will use our prior knowledge, and our prior experiences to help us figure out any clues the author is giving us in the text to help us understand the character more.

For example:

- A child outside playing hurling suggests they are sporty and most likely living in Ireland.
- Person who wears an apron and scrubs floors suggests they work as a maid.
- Christmas tree and lights in the window of a house suggests the time of year.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce previous strategies for those who need reminding.

Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. What clues did the author give to help you figure out a passage?
2. How did making an inference help you while reading?
3. Did your own personal experiences help you understand what you were reading better?
4. Did you find any clues in your story?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.

Reading Workshop Lesson Plan

Key Vocabulary:	Materials:
Making it your own, Summarising, Sticky notes, Conferring, Reading journal, Mini-lesson, Independent Reading, Group Book Talk	Book of choice for teacher to model strategy Individual readers for independent reading Reading Nooks/Pillows

Mini-Lesson Focus – *Making it Your Own- Summarising*

Questions for Discussion:
1. What does the word summarise mean?
2. If you could summarise what we just read in just a few sentences, what would you say?
3. Pause and reflect during reading, how can that help you to summarise?
4. Use your sticky notes to mark the parts of the story you would like to summarise after you finish reading.

Modelling:
Teacher uses the '*Making it Your Own'* strategy to show the children how it can be used during their independent reading time.

- Read, pause and reflect, verbalise what was read by restating in own words.
- Take notes in a journal of key points and events
- Mark passages with sticky notes
- Reread parts to remember
- Adjust rate of reading.
  After Reading
- Share notes made in journal or marked pages with sticky notes
- Use these notes to verbally summarise what was read
- Model writing a summary on the passage you read using a whiteboard and/or sticky notes.
- Show how your summary can include conclusions, judgements, new ideas, or thoughts you have drawn from your reading.

Small Group Instruction Focus: Reinforce previous strategies for those who need reminding.
Journal/Conferring Questions:
1. Use your journal to summarise parts of the story you read.
2. How did pausing and reflecting during your reading, help you to make it your own by summarising?
3. Why is it important not to rewrite the story in the authors words?

Independent Reading: Reading alone for 20 minutes, using the strategy taught during mini-lesson.

Reflecting and Sharing:
Children take time to reflect on what they have read, through journal entries or group discussions, using the questions above to guide them.