

USING LITERARY CONVERSATIONS TO DESIGN STIMULATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

CATERINA MEMPEL AND JOHANNES MAYER

Institut für deutsche Literatur und ihre Didaktik, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

Abstract

The paper presents results of the *LemaS-GRIP* project. The focus lies on literary conversations in inclusive literature lessons in primary schools. These conversations link individual aesthetic experiences and interests with a jointly responsible development of literary interpretations in exchanges between pupils and teachers. Based on a *Literary Classroom Conversation* in a fourth grade, we can show in a preliminary analysis how learners enter into the open-ended process of understanding and approach the ambiguity of the text. At the same time, all participants have a growing responsibility towards the text and for each other. In doing so, they are partly dependent on a competent other, who supports them in approaching the ambiguity of the text in the sense of scaffolding. Central instrument was a multimodal interaction analysis of videotaped lessons following the principles of the documentary method.

Keywords: literary classroom conversation, ambiguity of the text, documentary method, scaffolding, learning opportunities

1. STATE OF RESEARCH ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED IN THE SUBJECT OF GERMAN

LemaS-GRiP is part of the national research network *Leistung macht Schule*. The focus lies on literary conversations in inclusive literature lessons in primary schools. The aim of the network is to identify and support particularly and potentially high-performing children and adolescents in regular classes. While various separative concepts and strategies as well as empirical findings on the promotion of high achievers are available, the initiative breaks new ground in many respects. This includes a constructive approach to diversity in mainstream education. This is a prerequisite for participation-oriented support for as many students as possible. In this way, a school that promotes giftedness creates individualised and personalised learning situations and offers scope for the development of potential and individual strengths.

With regard to German lessons, the debate on giftedness and talent development raises in particular the question of how, in an inclusive setting, all learners can go through both common and individual literary learning processes. It is important to create a field of action and a resonance space in which pupils' potentials can develop. To this end, pupils need a stimulating learning environment (cf. Behrensen, 2019; Lagies & Kieso, 2019). Accordingly, German lessons must take into account the very different learning needs of pupils with their respective literary talents and performance potentials (cf. Farkas, 2017). One of the aims of LemaS is to create enabling spaces for the development of potential and for performance. In order to achieve this, Schrittmesser (2019) recommends that learners be given the opportunity to experiment with (resistant) learning experiences, to be given scope for pausing, deepening and questioning. On the other hand, they should be taken seriously in their dealings with a concrete learning object, be accompanied and yet be able to go their own way increasingly independently (cf. Schrittmesser, 2019, p. 65). Recognising and adaptively taking up these learning opportunities means understanding giftedness promotion as the promotion of learning experiences (ibid., p. 65).

In the context of teaching literature and literary learning, which is the focus of this article, this requires forms of encounter with literature that are directed at everyone. Literary conversations in class open up a trial-like practice of action in which learners are given the opportunity to experiment with resistance and to enter into an open-ended process of understanding (cf. Applebee et al., 2003). What is "individually perceived, recognised and grasped in the literary object during the text encounter becomes the object of sharing and sharing with one another" (Bräuer & Wiprächtiger-Geppert, 2019, p. 217). In the shared exchange, one's own literary experiences can be put into use, i.e., analysed, differentiated, modified, corrected (cf. ibid.). The confrontation with a polysemous literary text can bring the individual dispositions and potentials of the learners to light and if teachers recognise and acknowledge them, this can help them to support them. On the part of the teacher,

this requires a focused attention on the activities of the learners, on their questions, comments and contributions, without losing sight of the object of literature at the same time.

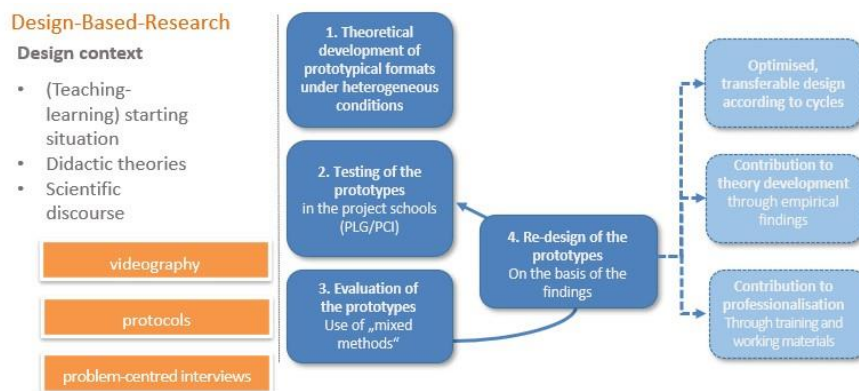
This led to the following research question, which will be addressed in this paper: How can learning opportunities in the individual and collective learning and appropriation process be seized through prudent, flexible, supportive teacher action within the framework of literary classroom conversations? And how can the literary potential of pupils be promoted in this way?

2. LemaS-GRiP—A PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM DEVELOPMENT

The guiding assumption in the LemaS-GRiP project (2018–2023) was that literary conversations are particularly effective and sustainable learning formats for the promotion of pupils' literary potentials in inclusive classrooms. We investigated how the literary learning of all pupils in a class can be promoted within the framework of the two conversation formats of *Read-Aloud* (cf. Spinner, 2011) and *Literary Classroom Conversation* (cf. Härle & Steinbrenner, 2004).

To that end, Lemas-GRiP combined a participatory research style with principles of developmental research (*design-based research*, cf. among others Prediger et al., 2012). The research project was designed as a *classroom experiment* (Cobb et al., 2003, p. 9). Together with 13 teachers at four different schools organized in *Professional Learning Communities (PLC)* (cf. among others Bonsen & Rolff, 2006; for implementation in the research project LemaS-GRiP cf. Mayer & Mempel, 2021a, b), the two formats of conversation were implemented, optimised for the inclusive setting of primary schools, and evaluated. The cyclical process of implementation and further development was understood as a dialogical process between the activities of the PLCs and the teaching action in the classroom. Teachers and researchers also participated equally in the practice- and theory-related reflective inquiry (*Professional Community of Inquiry, PCI*, cf. Bikner-Ahsbabs & Peters, 2019, p. 325).

Figure 1. Research design LemaS-GRiP



The qualitative research design builds on a data and researcher triangulation. The findings were obtained iteratively from a combination of theory based (deductive) and data based (inductive) approaches and tested for generalizability. Central instrument was a multimodal interaction analysis of videotaped lessons following the principles of sequential analysis in accordance with the documentary method (cf. Asbrand & Martens, 2018). Interviews with the participants (13 audiotaped interviews and 11 videotaped interviews with teachers, 60 audiotaped interviews with pupils and one group discussion with teachers) and protocols were included in a triangulated manner. A comparative analysis of findings allowed a comparison of the orientations and perceptions of the participants and a reconstruction of learning opportunities within a literary conversation.

3. DOCUMENTARY ANALYSES OF CLASSROOM VIDEOTAPED DATA MATERIAL

The documentary method was used to reconstruct 20 of the 99 recorded lessons. Following Asbrand & Martens (2018), the verbal and non-verbal or visual levels of the videotaped data material were considered in all interpretation steps. As both a methodology and a method, the Documentary Method represents one way of scientifically analysing various phenomena in schools. The method offers the possibility to reconstruct not only the theoretical and explicable subject knowledge of pupils. Their evaluations, attitudes, convictions (communicative knowledge) as well as their routines in dealing with subject-specific requirements and their internalised school, subject, and peer cultural experiences (implicit, conjunctive knowledge) can also be worked out (cf. Martens et al., 2015, p. 180). The reconstructions underline that learning is an event. Students draw on implicit experiential knowledge incorporated in the course of their socialisation and, "at the same time—developmentally—continually form new, expanded, increasingly

differentiated patterns of thought and action." (Nentwig-Gesemann & Nicolai, 2014, p. 51).

The potential of the documentary method lies in its ability to analyse the complex multidimensionality of learning processes (cf. Heizmann, 2018, pp. 83 ff.) In doing so, not only the locally produced content-related meaning actualisations of the students are captured. Rather, the practices of action used and the students' orientations—including the ways of speaking—are reconstructed inductively and typified. It is precisely this double focus on the content (formulating interpretation) and the structure of interactions (reflective interpretation) that makes the documentary method interesting for the research project (cf. Bonnet, 2009).

4. BRINGING IN INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES INTO THE SOCIAL LEARNING SPACE: INDEPENDENT AND ACCOMPANIED APPROACH TO THE AMBIGUITY OF THE TEXT

Based on a Literary Classroom Conversation on Else Lasker-Schüler's poem *Mein blaues Klavier* ([1943] 1997, p. 328) in a fourth-grade class, we present initial findings and show how learning opportunities can be used in current *Literary Classroom Conversation*¹ to support and enhance individual and collective learning processes. One teacher and eighteen children aged ten and eleven took part in the conversation. The sequence analysed here takes place at the beginning of the lesson (total length 47 min.) from minute 07:22 to minute 12:34. The selection criteria for this sequence were the interactive verbal and non-verbal density as well as the thematic relevance of the interaction for the research interest. We can show in a preliminary analysis how learners independently enter into the open-ended process of understanding and approach the ambiguity of the text (cf. chapter 5). At the same time, all participants have a growing responsibility towards the text and for each other. In doing so, they are partly dependent on a competent other, who supports them in approaching the ambiguity of the text in the sense of scaffolding (cf. chapter 6).

In Literary Classroom Conversations, the focus is on the conversation about a poem or short prose text itself. An important guiding function is to keep the conversation in an appropriate and dynamic balance, to stimulate topics and set impulses that give all students the opportunity to participate in the conversation and to have their own aesthetic experiences.

Together with the teachers we have chosen the poem because it is a text that we think is worth engaging with. Also, other empirical work in primary school has shown

¹ In the *Literary Classroom Conversation*, the focus is primarily on the understanding of a poem or short prose text itself. An important management function is to keep the conversation in an appropriate and dynamic balance, to stimulate topics and to provide impulses that give all students the opportunity to participate in the conversation and have their own aesthetic experiences.

that the themes and the language of the text stimulate the pupils to talk (cf. Heizmann, 2017, 2018; cf. Mempel & Mayer, 2021).

Table 1. Else Lasker-Schüler: My Blue Piano

	Mein blaues Klavier	My Blue Piano
1	Ich habe zu Hause ein blaues Klavier	At home I have a blue piano,
2	Und kenne doch keine Note.	I, who cannot play a note.
3	Es steht im Dunkel der Kellertür,	It stands in the gloom of the cellar door,
4	Seitdem die Welt verrohete.	Now that the whole world has grown coarse.
5	Es spielten Sternenhände vier	The four hands of the stars play there
6	– Die Mondfrau sang im Boote –	– the moonwife sang in her boat –
7	Nun tanzen die Ratten im Geklirr.	and the rats come out to dance.
8	Zerbrochen ist die Klaviatur	The keyboard and the works all busted
9	Ich beweine die blaue Tote.	My blubbing enters the blue of death.
10	Ach liebe Engel öffnet mir	O angels, open me your way,
11	– Ich aß vom bitteren Brote –	forbidden though it be the living.
12	Mir lebend schon die Himmelstür –	I who ate the bitter bread
13	Auch wider dem Verbote.	now call you at the door to heaven.
	Else Lasker-Schüler (1943)	(Translated from the German by Brooks Haxton) Q: https://muse.jhu.edu/book/43011

The poem is rich in metaphors and motifs. It does not convey a clear message and remains ambiguous and enigmatic even when studied intensively (cf. on the text interpretation framework Heizmann, 2018, pp. 176-184). As an object for a Literary Classroom Conversation, it opens up individual resonance spaces and invites us to embark on a joint search for different interpretations (cf. Mempel & Mayer, 2021]). The encounter with the alterity of the text and with different ways of seeing, thinking, speaking, and presenting stimulates the expansion of the learners' previous horizons of experience and understanding (cf. Heizmann, 2017).

In the reconstruction of the data collected, it becomes clear how learners enter the open-ended process of understanding, experiment with resistance and make an approach to the ambiguity of the text. We chose two approaches for the data reconstruction: One on the student side based on a lesson transcript (cf. chapter 5) and one on the teacher side based on lesson transcripts and interview excerpts (cf. chapter 6).

5. PUPIL ACCESS

5.1 *Initiation of a literary conversation*

With a stimulating impulse, the teacher tries to enable all participants—including themselves—to make short statements about the text in the first round. In this lesson the teacher's initial impulse for a first engagement in the individual space of experience was: *to mark a word or a passage that we might find irritating or that particularly appeals to us or that might make us think*. The impulse creates a connection between the text and the individual participants in the conversation. It is open to different directions and appeals to the aesthetic sensibilities of the students. A dialectical structure expressed in it allows for opposing possibilities of experience and action. Through the *we* and *us*, it signals that the teacher is part of the group and that it is a common concern in which everyone—including the teacher—can authentically participate (cf. Härle, 2004).

After the text encounter, all participants have the opportunity in a first round to read aloud or recite from memory a passage in the poem that they have marked in advance. What is individually perceived, recognized and conceptualized in the literary object when encountering the text becomes the object of sharing and sharing with (each other). Social integration reveals the similarities as well as the differences in individual approaches to the literary subject. Many of the students choose the fourth verse *Seitdem die Welt verrohete. / Now that the whole world has grown coarse.* as a passage in need of interpretation. In the further course of the conversation, the participants continue with this line of verse most frequently mentioned by the students in the first round. This documents a serious interest on the part of the teacher to enter into a conversation with the pupils about the puzzling passage that is important to them. It also shows that the teacher is interested in the students' impressions and readings.

The lively exchange quickly gets going and the children express their interpretation of the verse. In this approximately five-minute sequence, a total of eight of the students embark on a tentative search with the question of what they understand by a brutalized world, and at the same time show an acceptance of the ambiguous lyrical text, which they now deal with more intensively.

In the following, we present excerpts from practices of approaching this verse line, which are followed by an open discussion phase. The open discussion phase of the following student contributions basically aims to ensure that the participants articulate their associations, hypotheses or inner images of the text at hand and at the same time are open to the contributions of others. This can reveal the diverse facets of the text, including the effects it triggers, including irritation, rejection or incomprehension. After the propositional content has been established, there is initially a dialectical oscillation between different patterns of meaning that really drives the conversations forward. In conversation, it becomes apparent that the passage contradicts one's own knowledge of the world and cannot be explained so

019		irgendwie sowas. <i>somehow something like that.</i>
[...]		
023c	SU02	als die ganzen pflanzen: (-) <<p> dann> die ganzen pflanzen aussterben. <i>when all the plants: (-) <<p> then> all the plants die out.</i>
[...]		
027	SU03	für mich klingt das irgendwie: auch so: (.) wie verROTten;; <i>to me it sounds somehow: also like this: (.) likeROTten;;</i>
028		und die welt alles ist (-) h° to:t irgendwie;; <i>and the world is (-) h° dea:d somehow;;</i>
[...]		

The three students in the first example trace the sound and sensual impact of the verse line (017c, 027), paraphrase (018-019, 027), interpret it (023c, 028) in expressing their own understanding. They associate *verrohte* / *Now that the whole world has grown coarse.* with verbs like *ROTting/ROTten* and *die out*. Expressive interpretation, as seen in the students' contributions, expresses the ideas triggered in the reading (cf. Zabka, 2003). By activating their everyday knowledge and projecting it onto the text, taking up interpretations of others, differentiating they provide explanations for the word they do not know. The activated linking with similar-sounding verbs gives rise to an idea in the pupils' minds that certainly includes aspects that apply to a brutalised world.

The following two student contributions show how they find explanations for the text line with their explanatory interpretations (cf. Zabka, 2003). They show their competences in the learning area of symbolic understanding. Their approach to the verse line is characterised by an interplay of subjective involvement and accurate textual perception (cf. Spinner, 2006)—Zabka (2015) speaks of immersion and reflection. The literary learning processes revealed here essentially arise from children's experiences of difference, i.e., from the tension between the "foreign, unfamiliar and new of literature on the one hand" and the "own, familiar and known on the other" (Heizmann, 2018, p. 252).

5.2.2 Orientation towards a metaphorical interpretation of the poem

In addition to many readings on a literal level, there are students who attempt a figurative interpretation of the passages. The interpretation shows that the poem could possibly be symbolically, metaphorically or allegorically loaded. He seeks an everyday explanation and contextualises the line on a temporal/historical level:

[...]

054	SU05	also (.) ICH glaube dass es: (-) äh: (--) äh: <<all> dass es eine zeit gab da war alles:> (-) äh (--) in ordnung; so (.) I believe that there was: (-) uh: (--) uh: <<all> that there was a time when everything:> (-) uh (--) was in order;
055		da wa:r (-) <<all> gab_s keine kriege oder sowas; there was (-) <<all> no wars or anything;
056		keine hungersNO:T>. (--) no faMI:NE>. (--)
057		ähm um
057a		und jetzt kommt halt wie: (.) wieder so_ne zeit; and now there is an: (.) another ti:me like that;
057b		also in der zeit als das gedicht geschrieben wurde. so in the time when the poem was written.
058		(2.0)
059		äh: uh:
059a		und das gedicht wurde halt in der zeit geschrieben wo es irgendwas ga:b was nicht gut war; and the poem was written at the time when there wa:s something that was not good;
060		und deshalb seitdem die welt verrohete. and therefore: now that the whole world has grown coarse.
		[...]

The pupil associates the time described in the poem as *something that was not good*. He cites *war* and *faMI:NE* as possible causes. He lets the verse line flow into his own speaking (060). His reading is also very close to the meaning of *verrohete* / *Now that the whole world has grown coarse*, as well as to the period in which the poem was written, which is not known to the students. In this example, the pupil succeeds in making complex connections coherently understandable by linking details from the text with a possible history of origins in an argumentative way.

5.2.3 Orientation towards the establishment of coherence

Unlike in the first example, this pupil contribution does not only focus on one line of verse but tries to interpret it by relating her reading to the whole text. By integrating

different parts of the text, she tries to develop a consistent reading that explains the whole poem. This documents an effort to achieve coherence in the attempts at interpretation.

- [...]
- 063 SU06 <<len> ich denke: da:ss-> (--)
<<len> I think: tha:t-> (--)
- 064 <<all> also (.) für mich klingt das so dass- > (--)
<<all> so (.) it sounds to me that- > (--)
- 065 wei:l das klavier ist ja BLAU;; (-)
becau:se the piano is BLUE;; (-)
- 066 u:n:d (-) dass die welt dann halt; (--)
a:n:d (-) that the world then just; (--)
- 067 <<len> das blau> dann sozusagen: (.) AUSgestoßen;
<<len> the blue> then so to speak: (.) Ejected;
- 067a <<dim> sag ich jetzt mal-
<<dim> I say now-
- 067b wird.> (--)
is.> (--)
- 068 ähm (-)
um (-)
- 068a weil da steht ja auch- (-)
because it also says- (-)
- 069 h° ähm es steht im dunklen der kellertü:r.
h° um it stands in the gloom of the cellar door.
- [...]

The pupil implicitly links the blue colour of the piano (065) with the focused line of verse (066-067b). In the mode of an argumentation, she tries to appropriately verbalise her own approach to understanding. In doing so, she creates new linguistic images. Thus, the colour blue is contrasted with the brutalising world. She experiments with poetic language and divines the meaning of the verse line by tracing its subjective effect on her and grasping for a coherent inclusion in her situation model of the text.

5.2.4 *Summary*

In the examples above, the pupils were able to explore word meanings associatively, to guess and experiment with language. As has been shown, the children can arrive at hypotheses—even in a roundabout way—that are quite consistent with the (deeper) layers of meaning in the poem. The transcript excerpts show how students approach the literary subject with their individual interests, abilities, and potentials. By talking together about a passage, it is possible to reflect on different ways of understanding it. In the conversation, each participant can "reflect on different possibilities of understanding that seem equally plausible" (cf. Zabka 2003, p. 25), reflect on and weigh up others and his/her interpretation. It is not so much the result as the process that is important. It is precisely the creative ambiguity that provokes the desire for explanatory interpretation. At the same time, the exchange in the group makes it clear that this is not entirely possible. And thus, also enables the experience "that a uniform explanation of meaning is in contradiction to the very ambiguity of the object that provokes such explanations" (ibid., p. 30).

The students repeatedly revisit the tensions evoked by the text. It is the interplay of horizon and counter-horizon that decisively structures their actualisations of meaning. While the piano and the colour blue stand in the positive horizon, representing music as something good, the brutalised world appears in the negative horizon of evil, because they are to blame for the destruction of the instrument. The students' contributions are valuable and versatile in their own way and should not be read as individual statements. The conversation is much more about

- the dialogue with the literary text, into which one's own knowledge of the world and literature flows, as well as
- 'talking about literature', in which one's own experiences and judgements are discursively negotiated in dialogue with the other participants.

The pupils approach the literary object tentatively and meanderingly in cooperative activity and togetherness. They use language forms of uncertainty such as: I believe, it sounds like, somehow. The statements suggest that the students do not claim exclusive interpretation for their individual readings. It seems clear to them that their reading is only one among many, which has no claim to sole correctness. In doing so, they refer to each other and to the text in a sometimes argumentative way. The tracing of sound and sensual effect, the multiple reading, quoting, and paraphrasing of individual passages of the text and the consideration of the context in the poem enable an intensive form of approach to the polyphonic text. They also show a willingness to let themselves be triggered in conversation by the text as well as by the ideas of the others.

The identified groping search movements are particularly appropriate to the subject of literature in its ambiguity as well as to the principal incompleteness of understanding. They can be qualified as both language-forming and literary learning processes. From the data we can show how learners enter the open-ended process of understanding, experiment with resistance and approach the ambiguity of the

text. The learning experience also includes making experiences with the alterity of literary texts. It includes learning to endure moments of ambivalence and to use them as a starting point for a renewed search for interpretation. The aesthetic experiences with the poem are taken from the individual space of experience and brought into a social learning space, from which literary learning processes can unfold.

6. TEACHER-ASSISTED ACCESS

6.1 Evaluate vs. process-oriented/supportive teaching actions

The students in the examples above approach the verse line relatively independently. Teacher action tends to be evaluative (cf. example 6.1.1). The interpretative openness of the discussion format enables the pupils to make their own approaches and constructions of meaning, with the teacher holding back. The teacher adaptively supports the learners' independent thinking processes as much as possible through her restraint. In accordance with the principle of minimal help, the teacher allows the students' independent thinking to take its course as long as they continue to approach the verse line. This attitude can lead to many readings being found, but these remain unconnected and are neither considered nor dealt with.

Our data also show lesson sequences in which a similar amount of space is given to the students' readings, and these are valued. But at the same time the teacher offers support measures on the interactional and comprehension-oriented level in the sense of micro-scaffolding (cf. example 6.1.2). Micro-scaffolding refers to the ad hoc interaction between teacher and learner. Literary Classroom Conversations are not a one-to-one situation in which the teacher can carefully observe the learning process of individual students and offer appropriate support if necessary. It is more about sensitively perceiving whether the learners are affectively and cognitively activated and are making independent progress in their learning process. On this basis, the teacher opens a conversation in which everyone can participate, and which leaves room for interpretations, ideas and questions. When it comes to didactic modeling of the conversation and understanding processes, teachers face the challenge of giving as many students as possible their own access to the literary text and triggering individual interpretations while at the same time involving them in a participatory manner.

In the following, we will therefore use examples from the data to show different forms of scaffolding in the conversations and then reflect on possible verbal actions and differentiating methods.

6.1.1 Evaluate teaching action

The teacher validates the group's development of understanding by ending the interaction phase with a conclusion:

[...]

- | | | |
|------|------|--|
| 104 | LP01 | =ich hab mal ein bisschen mitgeschrieben. (-- ähm (--) worüber
ihr euch gedanken gemacht habt.
= <i>I wrote down a little bit. (--) um (--) what you have thought
about.</i> |
| 105 | | <<all> oder (.) was ihr darunter versteht. (.)
<<all> or (.) <i>what you understand by it. (.)</i> |
| 106 | | ich hab->
<i>I have-></i> |
| 107 | | VERrottet.
<i>ROTten.</i> |
| 107a | | VERgessen. (.)
<i>FORgotten. (.)</i> |
| 107b | | nicht gut. (.)
<i>not good. (.)</i> |
| 107c | | ausgestoßen
<i>ejected.</i> |
| 107d | | rot verdenkt (-) verDRÄNGT blau. (.)
<i>red denies (-) disPLAces blue. (.)</i> |
| 107e | | nicht SCHÖ:N. (--)
<i>not BEAUTIful. (--)</i> |
| 108 | | so.
so. |
| 108a | | das war_n so (--) unsere bedeutung im kopf fü:r verrohete.(.)
<i>those were so (--) our meaning in the head fo:r brutalised.(.)</i> |

She summarises the students' contributions, which she has noted down during the conversation, in key words (107-107e) and paraphrases them as *our meaning in the head for brutalised*. The pronoun *our* reveals the group's common frame of orientation. This documents a teaching stance, which is characterised by trust in the students' ability to approach the literary text independently. The teacher succeeds in respecting and recognising the students as equal partners in interaction and

cooperation and in dealing sensitively with their own power of interpretation and action and refraining from abusing power. This is based on an understanding of literature as ambiguous, multi-voiced and in need of interpretation. This fits in with the "hermeneutics of the penultimate word" described by Ivo (1994), "which thus renounces ultimate certainty as well as the desire to be absolutely right" (ibid., p. 268). The teacher succeeds in showing the diversity of literary experiences while at the same time emphasising their equal value (cf. Bräuer & Wiprächtiger-Geppert, 2019, p. 219). She credits the students with the ability "to (in principle) participate in the conversation and understand the text" (Steinbrenner & Wiprächtiger-Geppert, 2010, p. 7). She is interested in the impressions they gathered upon hearing and reading the poem (she even takes notes). The teacher embodies her role as participatory leader (cf. Mayer, 2020), as envisaged by *Literary Classroom Conversations*, especially regarding the initiation and accompaniment of interactional processes (through non-verbal attention in the direction of the speakers). She largely refrains from steering the conversation.

6.1.2 *Approaching the ambiguity of the text through supportive teaching*

In the following examples we show how the teacher offers support measures on the interactional and comprehension-oriented level in the sense of scaffolding. Thus, in a parallel class, several students name the verse line *Seitdem die Welt verrohete. / Now that the whole world has grown coarse* in the first round and dedicate themselves to it afterwards. The teacher, however, controls the group's process of understanding and seizes constitutive learning opportunities in the collective learning and appropriation process and uses them for the promotion of all. On the understanding-oriented level, she takes up the individual topics of a pupil and opens them up for the group. To support individual and shared understanding, she asks questions, encourages students to elaborate their thoughts. She also contrasts interpretations to help learners correct or question their readings/ideas (modifying activity). It establishes balance between textual details and subjective ideas and requests textual evidence.

Addressing individual issues and opening them up to the group. On the understanding-oriented level, the teacher takes up the individual topics of a pupil and opens them up for the group. She addresses the class directly (066, 073).

[...]

066 lasst uns das mal bisschen aufbröseln

let's break it down a bit

066a um das zu verstehn was SU09 alles gesagt hat.

to understand all that SU09 has said

[...]

073 jetzt müssen wir mal sehen dass wir genau auf SU09 bezug

nehmen.

now we have to see that we refer exactly to SU09.

074

was hat SU09 eigentlich ges alles für gedankengänge?

what did SU09 actually sa all for thought?

[...]

Demanding justifications/elaborations. To support individual and shared understanding, she asks questions and encourages students to elaborate their thoughts. By asking for elaborations, students are invited to add further information for clarification, to show relationships or connections to prior knowledge.

[...]

101

jetzt müssen wir grad SU26 gedanken aufbröseln

now we just have to break down SU26 thoughts,

101a

dass ihn auch alle verstehn;

so that everyone understands it;

102

kannst du das n bisschen erläutern?

can you explain this a bit?

[...]

Confronting interpretations. The teacher also contrasts interpretations to help learners correct or question their readings/ideas (modifying activity).

[...]

113

ist das dein gedanke [auch gewesen?

has that been your thought [too?

[...]

305

wie sehn die andern das

how do the others see it

[...]

Require alignment with the text/evidence of the text. Finally, the teacher balances textual details with subjective ideas and asks for textual evidence.

[...]

143

wie kommst du darauf dass es kaputt ist?

What makes you think it's broken?

143a

kannst du das irgendwie belegen?

Can you prove that in any way?

[...]

By looking closely at the text, the teacher tries to mediate between the children's ideas and the clues in the text and to let the text come to the fore. The teacher's impulse encourages the pupil to go back to the poem, to read it and to check her subjective interpretation, to differentiate it and, if necessary, to revoke it. This provides the pupil with a model for dealing with literature in an appropriate way.

Through the supportive teacher action described here, the pupils are given room to pause, to deepen their understanding, and to question. They are accompanied and supported in their successive reading and orientation to the linguistic world of the text. In dealing with the subject matter, the teacher takes them seriously and accompanies them "so that they do not get lost in the unfamiliar terrain and can nevertheless go their way increasingly independently" (Schrittesser, 2019, p. 65).

6.2 Methodological interventions

Co-researching in the sense of the Design-Based-Research approach, we have further developed the literary conversation formats together with the teachers through methodological interventions. In addition to aids for reflection and going into depth ("stop" and "magnifying glass"), aids for training social and communicative competences ("murmur conversation" and "5-minute clock"), aids for multimodal acquisition of learning content ("multi-sense and play") have proven to be productive in practice. The methods are intended as an offer and need to be selected and used adaptively.

As an example, this chapter shows how the methods of stop, magnifying glass and murmur conversation can be used to methodically support the pupils in their development of potential.

6.2.1 Stop

[...]

044 manche sachen muss dann noch überlegen,
um some things still need to be thought about

045 mach ich das jetzt?
I do that now?

046 hat das n sinn
does this make sense?

047 oder ist das einfach totaler quatsch?
or is that just complete nonsense?

048 also da hab ich immer so die angst sag ich jetzt totalen quatsch.
so i'm always so afraid i'll say total nonsense now.

In the context of the project, it has been shown that a conversation can also have pauses and stops for reflection (cf. interview excerpt of a pupil involved in the project). This means taking time for a text and for talking about it. Even if it is not always easy to endure the resulting silence, learners benefit from such pauses. They have the opportunity to think more carefully about individual statements or to pursue a thought of their own. The pause can help to collect previous ideas and different readings. At the same time, the stop offers pupils the chance to develop new ideas or formulate thoughts. But the teacher can also reflect more closely on the course of the conversation, for example.

6.2.2 *Magnifying glass*

One of the central tasks of the participatory leader in the context of literary conversations is to accompany the individual and joint understanding. It can help to pause at a passage in the text and take a closer look at it: because it was identified as particularly significant in the preparation or because it proves to be exciting, irritating or puzzling for many of the participants in the conversation. The magnifying glass helps especially high-achieving and potentially high-achieving learners—in relation to a particular passage or aspect—to go into depth and not just dwell on the surface. For other learners, it helps them to practice focus and reference.

6.2.3 *Murmur conversation*

001	und dann haben sich die kinder- <i>and then the children-</i>
002	selbst wenn sie selber in dem zwiegespräch nicht so viel beitragen konnten- <i>even if they were not able to contribute so much in the dialogue-</i>
003	das vom anderen gemerkt. <i>remembered what the other one had said.</i>
004	und haben dann im gespräch dann trotzdem was gesagt und das vom anderen aufgegriffen. <i>and then said something in the conversation anyway and picked up on it from the other person.</i>
[...]	
006	nachahmung ist ja auch ein lerneffekt. <i>imitation is also a learning effect.</i>
007	wenn ich dann noch mal was wiederhole; <i>if I repeat something again;</i>

008

noch mal was sag.

say something else.

From time to time, it may be useful to interrupt the conversation in plenary and enter into an exchange in pairs or small groups. Depending on the didactic goal, the parallel murmur conversations can take place on the basis of a given impulse or openly. The two- to three-minute marble conversations can initiate new processes of understanding, stimulate exchange in the protected space of the small group, activate silent students, practise active listening and negotiation of meaning, and create opportunities for reflection (cf. interview excerpt of a teacher involved in the project). Similarly, individual interpretations and readings can be pre-formulated before they are taken to the plenary.

6.3 Summary

Such adaptive teacher action pursues the goal of "expanding the literature-related reception process that has taken place so far, or else to stimulate understanding of literature-related reception processes/products expressed by the pupils, which are initially to be understood as individual" (Harwart et al., 2020, p. 261). Within the framework of the project, the following leadership practices could be observed that support individual and shared understanding (cf. Mayer & Mempel, 2023, p. 36):

- Help with framing (e.g., impulses, hints, targeted questions, additions, summarising).
- Recognising ideas, interests or even misunderstandings and errors on the part of the pupils, taking them up, making them connectable and using them as learning opportunities in the sense of fruitful moments.
- Reflecting together with the pupils on the meaning of individual passages (Explicit Reflection)
- Helping students to reflect (stop)
- Helping students to go deeper (magnifying glasses)
- Opening up private spaces for rest and learning (marble conversations)
- Aids to modal acquisition of learning content (multi-sense and play)
- To express the ideas, thoughts and hypotheses of the pupils in their own words, without judging (mirroring)
- Confronting and pointing out (pointing)
- Guidance on how to approach the text (direct instructions)
- Confrontation of interpretations (reinforce/correct/question/modify readings/ideas)

For teachers, this means (1) keeping the conversation in an appropriate and dynamic balance between the text and the children's ideas, (2) keeping the text present in the open phase of the conversation, (3) stimulating topics, (4) setting impulses and (5) giving time that allows the students to participate in the conversation and to make and contribute their own aesthetic experiences. To open up individual learning

opportunities for the students with their different prerequisites in the conversation and to support them cognitively and metacognitively in an even more targeted way, it is necessary to perceive and adaptively accompany the interaction and understanding processes, the necessity of which is clearly indicated by the empirical reconstructions. The joint work on the learning object or the dynamics of the group must not be disregarded.

7. CONCLUSION

Literary conversations have proven to be particularly suitable learning formats for inclusive teaching. They bring the ambiguity of literary texts into play and thereby address constructive conditions of reading and literary socialisation. In this way, they enable participation in a common cultural practice, no matter what prerequisites the pupils bring with them. In order to be able to recognise literary experience and learning processes as such, to assess their content and to plan appropriate subject didactic modelling, there is a lack of concrete conceptual orientation and empirical evidence. The analyses follow previous research on orientations and show the potential of ambiguous, challenging texts to create learning opportunities and develop potential. The conversation opens a space of experience and reflection for the pupils, considering their inter- and intra-individual diversity, into which they can bring their own processes of understanding. The poem encourages them to make initial assumptions and to develop these associatively and interpretatively together. In a language-sensitive handling of the language of the text, they pursue their own lines of interpretation. At the same time, experiences of alterity are fostered.

We are also focusing more strongly than before on leadership, which supports the potential of the text and the students' efforts to understand it even more in the heterogeneous primary school setting. The conversations in primary schools tie in with individual previous experiences, needs and interests. However, they do not leave the children alone with this, but open a collective space of experience and reflection. Precisely because literary texts are open to interpretation, they motivate children to contribute their own reading and understanding processes. Based on discoveries in and experiences with the text, the teacher and the class go in search of meaning together and consider what the literary text can mean to them.

For the didactic modelling of the conversation and comprehension processes, this results in the challenge for the teacher to open up their own access to the literary text for all pupils and to initiate individual interpretations, but at the same time to involve them in a participation-oriented way in the shaping of a cultural practice and a jointly responsible development of the interpretative potential.

TRANSCRIPT CONVENTION

(.)	Micro pause, estimated, up to approx. 0.2 sec.
(-)	short estimated pause of approx. 0.2-0.5 sec.
(0.0)	Measured pause of approx. 0.4 sec.
:	Stretch by approx. 0.2-0.5 sec.
::	Elongation by approx. 0.5-0.8 sec.
(anscheinend)	assumed wording
h°	Inhale or exhale for about 0.2-0.5 sec.
<<p> ...>	quiet
<<all> ...>	fast
<<len> ...>	slow
<<dim> ...>	fading
=	Fast, immediate connection of new speaker contributions or segments
akZENT	Focus accent
?	high rising
,	medium increasing
-	constant
;	medium falling
.	low falling
‘	Why is that? = Divergence
‘	That's strange! = complex divergence
-	Maybe, but... = pre-divergence
∨	On(understood)! = convergence
LP01	LP = teacher
SU20	SU = student, 20 = number in class group

REFERENCES

- Alexander, R. (2017). *Towards dialogic teaching: Rethinking classroom talk* (5th edition). Dialogos.
- Alexander, R. (2018). Developing dialogic teaching: genesis, process, trial. *Research Papers in Education*, 33(5), 561–598.
- Applebee, A. N., Langer, J. A., Nystrand, M., & Gamoran, A. (2003). Discussion-based approaches to developing understanding: Classroom instruction and student performance in middle and high school English. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40(3), 685–730.
- Asbrand, B., & Martens, M. (2018). *Dokumentarische Unterrichtsforschung. Basiswissen zur Analyse von Unterrichtsprozessen. [Documentary classroom research. Basic knowledge for the analysis of teaching processes]*. Springer VS.
- Behrens, B. (2019). Inklusive Begabtenförderung – eine Antwort auf Bildungsherausforderungen in Zeiten von Fluchtmigration [Inclusive gifted education—a response to educational challenges in times of refugee migration]. In C. Reintjes, I. Kunze, & E. Ossowski (Eds.). *Begabungsförderung und Professionalisierung. Befunde, Perspektiven, Herausforderungen [Gifted Education and Professionalisation. Findings, perspectives, challenges]* (pp. 86–98). Klinkhardt.
- Bikner-Ahsbahr, A., & Peters, M. (2019). How does change happen? Ein Modell zur Innovation im Fachunterricht [How does change happen? A model for innovation in subject teaching]. In A. Bikner-Ahsbahr & M. Peters (Eds.). *Unterrichtsentwicklung macht Schule. Forschung und Innovation im Fachunterricht [Teaching development makes school. Research and innovation in subject teaching]* (pp. 309–330). Springer VS.
- Boban, I., & Hinz, A. (Eds.) (2016). *Arbeit mit dem Index für Inklusion. Entwicklungen in weiterführenden Schulen und in der Lehrerbildung [Working with the Index for Inclusion. Developments in secondary schools and in teacher education]*. Klinkhardt.

- Bonnet, A. (2009). Die Dokumentarische Methode in der Unterrichtsforschung. Ein integratives Forschungsinstrument für Strukturrekonstruktion und Kompetenzanalyse. [The documentary method in classroom research. An integrative research tool for structural reconstruction and competence analysis]. *ZQF*, 10(2), 219–240.
- Bonsen, M., & Rolff, H.-G. (2006). Professionelle Lerngemeinschaften von Lehrerinnen und Lehrern [Professional Learning Communities of teachers]. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 52(2), 167–184.
- Bräuer, C., & Wiprächtiger-Geppert, M. (2019). Literarische Erfahrung. [Literary experience]. In C. Hochstadt & R. Olsen (Eds.). *Handbuch Deutschunterricht und Inklusion [Handbook German Lessons and Inclusion]* (pp. 208–224). Beltz.
- Cobb, P., Confrey, J., di Sessa, A., Lehrer, R., & Schauble, L. (2003). Design experiments in educational research. *Educational Researcher*, 32(1), 9–13.
- Else Lasker-Schüler. Mein blaues Klavier [My blue piano] [Faks. Repr. des korrigierten Typoskripts 1943, DLA Marbach]. In *Marbacher Magazin*, 71 / 1995, 3., rev. and suppl. ed. 1997, p. 328.
- Farkas, K. (2017). Hochbegabtenförderung im Fach Deutsch. Das Modell Sprachkommode [Support for the highly gifted in German. The Language Commode Model]. In C. Fischer, C. Fischer-Ontrup, F. Käpnick, F.-J. Mönks, N. Neuber & C. Solzbacher (Eds.). *Potenzialentwicklung. Begabungsförderung. Bildung der Vielfalt. Beiträge aus der Begabungsförderung [Development of potential. Promoting giftedness. Diversity Education. Contributions from the field of gifted education]* (pp. 57–72). Waxmann.
- Härle, G., & Steinbrenner, M. (Eds.). *Kein endgültiges Wort. Die Wiederentdeckung des Gesprächs im Literaturunterricht [No final word. The rediscovery of conversation in literature classes]*. Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- Harwart, M., Sander, J., & Scherf, D. (2020). Adaptives Lehrerhandeln. Zu Modellierung, Nachweis und Wirkung eines potenziellen Qualitätsaspekts gesprächsförmigen Literaturunterrichts [Adaptive teacher action. On modelling, evidence and impact of a potential quality aspect of conversational literature teaching]. In F. Heizmann, J. Mayer & M. Steinbrenner (Eds.). *Das Literarische Unterrichtsgespräch. Didaktische Reflexionen und empirische Rekonstruktionen [The Literary Classroom Conversation. Didactic reflections and empirical reconstructions]* (pp. 255–276). Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- Heizmann, F. (2017). „seitDEM die welt verrohete als wenn_s mega so RIEsiger fleischklops der noch ROH ist“. Unbekannte Wortbedeutungen in Literarischen Unterrichtsgesprächen mit Grundschulkindern. [\"sinCE the world is brutalised, as if_s mega so HUge meatball that is still RAW\". Unknown word meanings in Literary Classroom Conversations with primary school children]. *Fokus Lehrerbildung. Blog der Heidelberg School of Education*. Retrieved from <http://hse.hypotheses.org/409>
- Heizmann, F. (2018). *Literarische Lernprozesse in der Grundschule. Eine qualitativ-re-konstruktive Studie zu den Praktiken und Orientierungen von Kindern in Literarischen Unterrichtsgesprächen über ästhetisch anspruchsvolle Literatur. [Literary learning processes in primary school. A qualitative-reconstructive study of children's practices and orientations in Literary Classroom Conversations about aesthetically demanding literature]*. Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- Ivo, H. (1994). Reden über poetische Sprachwerke. Ein Modell sprachverständiger Intersubjektivität. [Talking about poetic linguistic works. A model of language-understanding intersubjectivity]. In H. Ivo (Ed.). *Muttersprache, Identität, Nation [Mother tongue, identity, nation]* (pp. 222–271). Westdeutscher.
- Lagies, J., & Kiso, C. (2019). Begabungsgerechtigkeit—eine pädagogische Einordnung [Giftedness justice - a pedagogical classification]. In C. Kiso & J. Lagies (Eds.). *Begabungsgerechtigkeit. Perspektiven auf stärkenorientierte Schulgestaltung in Zeiten von Inklusion [Giftedness justice. Perspectives on strength-oriented school design in times of inclusion]*. (pp. 3–25). Springer VS.
- Martens, M., Petersen, D., & Asbrand, B. (2015). Die Materialität von Lernkultur. Methodische Überlegungen zur dokumentarischen Analyse von Unterrichtsvideografien. [The materiality of learning culture. Methodological considerations on the documentary analysis of classroom videographies]. In R. Bohnsack, A. Baltruschat, B. Fritzsche, & M. Wagner-Willi (Eds.). *Dokumentarische Film und Videointerpretation. Methodologie und Forschungspraxis [Documentary Film and Video Interpretation. Methodology and research practice.]* (2nd, revised ed., pp. 179–203). Barbara Budrich. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvdf03gd>

- Mayer, J. (2020). Grundfragen der Gesprächsleitung im Spannungsfeld von individuellen Erfahrungen, konzeptionellen Anforderungen und institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen. [Basic questions of discussion leadership in the field of tension between individual experiences, conceptual requirements and institutional framework conditions]. In F. Heizmann, J. Mayer, & M. Steinbrenner (Eds.). *Das Literarische Unterrichtsgespräch. Didaktische Reflexionen und empirische Rekonstruktionen* [The Literary Classroom Conversation. Didactic reflections and empirical reconstructions] (pp. 339–359). Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- Mayer, J., & Mempel, C. (2021a). Wortkünstler entdecken und fördern. Ein Projekt zur kooperativen Schul- und Unterrichtsentwicklung [Discovering and promoting word artists. A project for cooperative school and lesson development]. *Schulverwaltung. Spezialheft „Begabungsförderung“*, 23(4), 168–170.
- Mayer, J., & Mempel, C. (2021b). Unterrichtsentwicklung kooperativ: Literarische Gespräche gemeinsam planen, durchführen und auswerten [Developing lessons cooperatively: planning, conducting and evaluating literary conversations together]. *Labyrinth*, 44(145), 30–31.
- Mayer, J., & Mempel, C. (2022). Potenziale von Grundschulkindern in literarischen Gesprächen erkennen und entfalten [Recognising and developing the potential of primary school children in literary conversations]. In G. Weigand, C. Fischer, F. Käpnick, C. Perleth, F. Preckel, M. Vock & H.-W. Wollersheim (Eds.). *Dimensionen der Begabungs- und Begabtenförderung in der Schule. (Leistung macht Schule, Bd. 2)* [Dimensions of the Promotion of Giftedness and Talentedness in Schools. (Leistung macht Schule, Vol. 2)] (pp. 327–339). wbv. <http://u.wbv.de/9783763967841>
- Mayer, J., & Mempel, C. (2023). *Literarische Unterrichtsgespräche gemeinsam planen, durchführen und reflektieren—Manual* [Planning, conducting and reflecting on literary conversations in class - Manual]. Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Germany: Forschungsverbund LemaS.
- Mempel, C. (2022). „Sie glänzte im blassen Schein der Sterne“ Literarische und sprachliche Potenziale in Vorlesegesprächen entdecken und entfalten [„She shone in the pale glow of the stars“ Discovering and developing literary and linguistic potential in Read-Alouds]. In K. Farkas, B. Laudenberg, J. Mayer, & D. Rott (Eds.). *Begabte Figuren in Literatur und Unterricht. (Begabungsförderung: Individuelle Förderung und inklusive Bildung, Bd. 13)* [Gifted characters in literature and the classroom. (Gifted education: Individual support and inclusive education, vol. 13)] (pp. 113–130). Waxmann.
- Mempel, C. (2023). Das weiß ich von jener Hexe. Peerinteraktive Bedeutungsaushandlung im Vorlesegespräch [That's what I know about that witch. Peer-interactive negotiation of meaning in a Read-Aloud]. In B. Lingnau & U. Preußner (Eds.). *Anschluss- und Begleitkommunikation zu literarischen Texten* [Connecting and accompanying communication to literary texts.] (pp. 94–117). SLLD Sprachlich-literarisches Lernen und Deutschdidaktik. <https://doi.org/10.46586/SLLD.263>
- Mempel, C., & Mayer, J. (2021). Diversität als Ressource und Zielperspektive für die Gestaltung offener Gespräche im inklusiven Literaturunterricht [Diversity as a resource and target perspective for the design of open conversations in inclusive literature classes]. *k:ON - Kölner Online Journal für Lehrer*innenbildung*, 2(1), 83–108. <https://doi.org/10.18716/ojs/kON/2021.1.5>
- Nentwig-Gesemann, I., & Nicolai, K. (2015). Dokumentarische Videointerpretation typischer Modi der Interaktionsorganisation im Krippenalltag [Documentary video interpretation of typical modes of interaction organisation in everyday life in a crèche]. In R. Bohnsack, B. Fritzsche, & M. Wagner-Willi (Eds.). *Dokumentarische Video- und Filminterpretation. Methodologie und Forschungspraxis* [Documentary Video and Film Interpretation. Methodology and research practice], (2nd, revised ed., pp. 45–72). Barbara Budrich. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvdf03gd>
- Prediger, S., Link, M., Hinz, R., Hussmann, St., Ralle, B., & Thiele, J. (2012). Lehr-Lern-Prozesse initiieren und erforschen [Initiating and researching teaching-learning processes]. *MNU*, 8, 452–457. Retrieved from http://www.mathematik.tu-dortmund.de/~prediger/veroeff/12Prediger_et_al_MNU_FUNKEN_Webversion.pdf
- Schrittesser, I. (2019). Auf der Suche nach dem Phänomen Begabung: Von der Begabungsförderung zu den fruchtbaren Momenten des Lernens. [In Search of the Phenomenon of Giftedness: From the Promotion of Giftedness to the Fruitful Moments of Learning]. In I. Schrittesser (Ed.). *Begabungsförderung revisited: Begabungsförderung als Kinderrecht im Kontext von Diversität* [Gifted education revisited: Gifted education as a child right in the context of diversity] (pp. 43–68). Klinkhardt. Retrieved from

https://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2019/16588/pdf/Schrittesser_2019_Begabungsfoerderung_Revised.pdf

Spinner, K. H. (2006). Literarisches Lernen [Literary learning]. *Praxis Deutsch*, 33(200), 6–16.

Spinner, K. H. (2011). Gespräch über Literatur. Was Schülerinnen und Schüler lernen sollen. [Talking about literature. What pupils should learn.]. In J. Kirschenmann, C. Richter, & K. Spinner (Eds.), *Reden über Kunst [Talking about art]* (pp. 63–77). kopaed.

Steinbrenner, M., & Wiprächtiger-Geppert, M. (2006). Verstehen und Nicht-Verstehen im Gespräch. Das Heidelberger Modell des Literarischen Unterrichtsgesprächs. [Understanding and non-understanding in conversation. The Heidelberg Model of Literary Classroom Conversation] *Literatur im Unterricht*, 7(3), 227–241. Retrieved from

http://www.lESEforum.ch/myUploadData/files/2010_3_steinbrenner_wipraechtiger.pdf

Zabka, T. (2003). Interpretationskompetenz als Ziel der ästhetischen Bildung [Interpretive competence as a goal of aesthetic education]. *Didaktik Deutsch*, 9(15), 18–32.

Zabka, T. (2015). Was ist Hochschulreife im Umgang mit Literatur? [What is university entrance qualification when dealing with literature?] *Didaktik Deutsch*, 20(38), 136–150.