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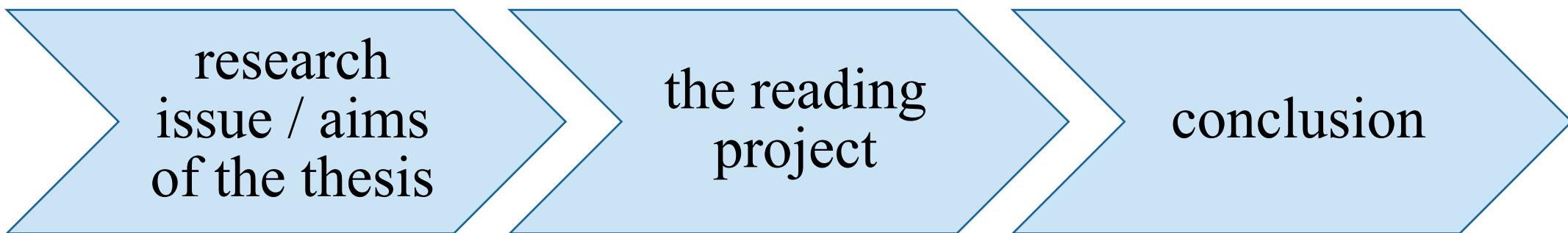
Scaffolding and Reading in German Lessons in Lower Secondary Education

**Using Scaffolding Tools to Become
Successful Second Language Readers**

About the author of the thesis

- Master of Education: German and French (University of Vienna, High Distinction)
 - teacher at a secondary school in Vienna: German as a first and second language
 - language education coordinator
 - MIKA-D tests (standardized language level tests for children with German as a second language)
 - form teacher of a fourth grade

Content



research
issue / aims
of the thesis

the reading
project

conclusion

Research issue and aims of the thesis I

- heterogeneous multilingualism as the lived reality in Austrian schools
- double challenge of second language learners:
 - learning new instructional content through the medium of a new language
 - simultaneously learning a new language (Gibbons, 2015, p. 10)
- everyday language skills and academic language skills
- one of school's primary functions: access for all children to academic language and education - providing equal educational opportunities

Research issue and aims of the thesis II

- language education as a corner stone in creating equal educational opportunities:
 - instructional content and knowledge conveyed through language
 - learning outcomes monitored via language
- importance of reading skills: understanding the content of textbooks as well as task instructions
- second language learners particularly affected by reading difficulties
- German as a subject: language education and creating equal educational opportunities

Pauline Gibbons: The Scaffolding Concept

- didactic concept that enables beneficial learning for German native speakers as well as for second language learners (Belke, 2017, p. 15)
- second language learners are able to achieve demanding learning goals with adequate support from the teacher (Gibbons, 2015, p. 3)
- learning as a future-oriented process: learners supported by teachers who can use scaffolding tools are able to achieve more than they could on their own

Scaffolding tools

- step-by-step instructions (oral and written)
 - subject-specific vocabulary and phrases
 - text modules / framework texts
 - tasks following a progressive structure
- regulating the tension between curricular aims and the actual competences of the students by providing the necessary support in the form of scaffolding tools

Scaffolding / Pauline Gibbons

“[T]he achievements of second language learners cannot be seen as simply the result of aptitude, background, or individual motivation. They are also dependent on the social and linguistic framework within their language takes place [...]. Thus what teachers choose to do in classrooms, and in particular the kind of support they provide, is of crucial importance in the educational success of their students.”

(Gibbons, 2015, p. 14-15)

Research question

To what extent can teaching tools according to Pauline Gibbons' scaffolding concept (2015) be used in German lessons in lower secondary education to support second language learners in becoming successful readers in their second language?

The focus of the thesis: reading

- *The Role of Vocabulary Components in Second Language Learner's Early Reading Comprehension* (Röthlisberger, Schneider, Juska-Bacher, 2021): second language learners as particularly affected by reading difficulties
- importance of frequent reading (Gibbons, 2015, p. 175):
 - adequate reading skills as a necessity for successful learning
 - developing reading competence → reading enjoyment
 - promoting second language acquisition: recognition and learning of linguistic patterns
- goal of German lessons in lower secondary education: promoting of and engaging in reading (Rosebrock & Nix, 2014, p. 111)

The reading project

- second-grade class (secondary school in Vienna): 22 pupils, 20 second language learners
1. hand-pick a book supported by the teacher as an expert
 2. activities before, during and after reading
 3. portfolio-style reading diary
 4. oral book presentation

Scaffolding tools:

- accompanying the whole learning process
- the teacher as an expert (teacher-student-interaction)
- activities before, during, after reading (tasks following a progressive structure)
- phrases and text modules
- the reading diary as a scaffolding tool for the oral book presentation

Conclusion I

- support second language learners in building linguistic competences
- teachers as linguistic role models
- content of lessons aligned with the learners' lifeworld
- offer authentic linguistic input, possibility to produce linguistic output
- prior knowledge of the students as a resource
- empower learners to push past their limits by using scaffolding tools → zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 240)
- regulate the tension between challenging tasks and need for support (Mariani, 1997, pp. 7-8) / reading success: teacher-student-interaction, scaffolding tools

Conclusion II

- scaffolding tools as a part of my everyday teaching: for promoting reading skills, supporting writing processes and for grammar teaching
- subject-specific vocabulary and phrases
- text modules / framework texts
- step-by-step instructions
- the reading project as a corner stone in my annual programme for all my classes

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Thank you for your attention!