

Summaries of ECHA Theses

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Den Otter-Berkman, Erina & van Diggelen, Bernadette (2012). *The Counselor of a Pull-out Programme as an Expert*

This essay describes two related studies to test the following hypothesis:

If counselors of pull-out programmes in the Netherlands want to assist and counsel teachers of gifted students in regular schools in a way that is appropriate for each individual child, then the utility and value of 'Pull-out programmes' can be improved. In this way 'pull-out programmes' can spread like an oil stain and the teachers in mainstream schools will be more able to give proper guidance to their (highly) gifted students. In this way it will be possible to implement the recommendations from studies like that of Hoogeveen et al (2012) and Mooij et al (2007) to live within each school, in every classroom.

In study 1 experts in the field of giftedness in children of primary school age were interviewed on tutoring these students in 'pull-out programmes'. These interviews revealed that there is no single approach for the gifted student. In the different ways of counseling, the student was always central. Study 2 describes a practical approach to the counseling of teachers of (more) gifted students, taught by teachers of the 'pull-out programme' in which the gifted students participated. There are surveys of parents and teachers of students in upper school 'pull-out programmes' 'De Raket' of Protestants Christelijk Primair Onderwijs Barendrecht/Ridderkerk. Data were collected during five periods of six months and processed in reports and a trend analysis. Taking into consideration the results and conclusions of the study, we suppose that there is support for the hypothesis described above. The teachers of students in the pull-out programme De Raket saw value in teacher counseling. Following the conclusions of the studies and literature we can say that the direction of gifted students must be customized. To be able to offer this custom, counseling by an expert trained 'pull-out programme' tutor is a possibility. This form of guidance for teachers by pull-out programme tutors enables teachers to select the proper guidance for their gifted students.

References

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- Mooij, T., Hoogeveen, Lianne, Driessen, G., van Hell, JG., Verhoeven, L. (2007). *Succescondities voor onderwijs aan hoogbegaafde leerlingen. Eindverslag van drie deelonderzoeken*. Nijmegen: Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, ITS/ CBO/ Orthopedagogiek

Bernadette van Diggelen has been a teacher at a primary school since 2006.

Erina den Otter-Berkman has been a teacher since 1982, at the moment she teaches autistic children part of the week.

In August 2009 Bernadette and Erina also started the pullout programme for PCPO Barendrecht Ridderkerk in the Netherlands.

To do the ECHA-training was one of the conditions for getting the job. During this training they were getting more and more inspired to help the children in their pullout programme in a way that the children also get a helpful and appropriate curriculum

when they are in their regular class. They teach the children study skills they can use in their regular classes and, more important, they train the teachers of the regular classes how to teach the gifted children. When Bernadette and Erina had to write their paper, they wanted to do research about the way they arranged and organized the pullout programme. They wanted to know if their approach was effective. The results were positive.

Althuizen, Mariken (2011). *One Small Step for Schools, One Giant Leap for Gifted Education. Implementation of a Problem Based, Cooperative Learning, Science Curriculum*

This article depicts how, over a period of one year, both teachers and gifted students of a Dutch secondary school tried to find their way in an educational method constructed around Problem Based Learning (PBL) and Cooperative Learning (CL).

For the science curriculum the so-called 'Design-based Learning' concept developed by Eindhoven University of Technology was adjusted to the specific situation at school. At the heart of this Design-based Learning lie PBL and CL, since problem solving and cooperation are thought to be of high value in today's research and development practice. The goal of this project was to see if Design-based Learning could be translated to a problem based, cooperative learning science curriculum for secondary school gifted students.

The teachers were instructed and trained before the start of the school year. During the school year, teachers and students were observed and questioned about their efforts and the outcomes.

The cooperative learning approach was appreciated by all students, even though they acknowledged the difficulties of being dependent on someone else and having to negotiate and compromise. But they need help with this; feedback by the tutor and the teacher on their teamwork skills is important and necessary.

The problem based approach proved to be much more difficult for the teachers than it was for the students. The teachers had to reinvent their way of teaching. Some succeeded better than others. PBL is so fundamentally different from traditional teaching that it is almost impossible for them to change autonomously. They will need more help with this during the first years. They can turn to each other or they might want to think about a mentor for themselves.

For the students PBL was less of an obstacle, but they, too, had some changes to make. They needed a wake-up call: this is school "not-as-you-know-it", take your opportunity to learn and explore, not just sit and wait for the right answers to be given by the teacher!

This was not a one-year-success story, but it turned out well. An educational transformation like this takes time, years even. Teachers have to learn to let go and trust, to take a step back. Students will have to learn to take a step up and take the opportunity to shape their own education.

Mariken Althuizen (1972) was educated in chemical engineering (MSc, Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e)) and teaching. After 15 years of working in teaching,

communication and education development at TU/e she graduated from the post-academic ECHA studies at Radboud University Nijmegen in 2011, and started as an independent education developer and teacher trainer (2Wicked). Mariken is the proud mother of two gifted children, aged 12 and 8.

Here is her thesis in Dutch: <http://www.2wicked.nl/images/stories/pdf/echa-artikel.pdf>.

Hendriks-Sutmuller, Renate (2010). *Gender Differences in Meta-cognition of Gifted Teenagers*.

This study mainly sets out to measure the gender difference in high-ability students' and grade level students' reflection on learning processes, such as consciously planning, monitoring and assessing their own learning behaviour. As it turned out no significant differences were found between high ability boys and girls and grade level boys and girls in these aspects of reflection. Significant results were however found on help seeking between grade girls and grade level boys, and on peer learning between grade level girls and the other three groups of students (grade level boys and high ability students). These two categories differ from the other categories (meta-cognitive self-regulation, effort regulation, time & study environment, reflection) in that they involve communication with others.

Grade level girls showed a significantly higher score on peer learning than grade level and high ability boys and high ability girls. On the other hand, high ability girls scored the same as high ability and grade level boys. This is a very interesting conclusion that cannot be explained from earlier research and deserves more investigation.

Renate Hendriks-Sutmuller is a teacher of English language and literature in secondary education. She has worked at Cambium College in Zaltbommel (The Netherlands) since 1998, where she started and developed a special programme for gifted students. She graduated the ECHA course Specialist in Gifted Education with a thesis on Gender Differences in Meta-cognition of Gifted Teenagers at the Center of The Study of Giftedness at Radboud University Nijmegen.

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