

CENTRE FOR DIVERSITY AND LEARNING

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language-stimulating competencies

FROM TEACHERS' EYE GAZE TO UNCOVERING LANGUAGE-STIMULATING STRATEGIES IN PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS

FWO-SBO research project "TACOS"

(2023-2027)

A study into the effects of a blended professional development program on preschool teachers' language-stimulating competencies

- A collaboration between Ghent University, KU Leuven, Odisee and Arteveldehogeschool

The quality of language stimulating interactions in early childhood education (ECE) has an important impact on the academic language skills of young children, which in turn is a powerful predictor of learning success. Although research shows that high quality teacher-child interactions are crucial for academic language learning, paradoxically, a wide range of classroom interaction studies point to the relatively poor quality and low quantity of language stimulating interactions in preschool, which is even lower in the interactions with at-risk children.

This project aims to bridge the gap between evidence-based teaching practices and actual classroom practices through a blended (online and offline) learning professional development intervention (PDI) that enhances pre-service and in-service teachers' language stimulating (LS) competences (dispositions, situation-specific skills and classroom performance), both through individual and social learning.

Purpose of the study

= to identify the impact on (student) preschool teachers of this newly developed PDI

How to develop language stimulating strategies?

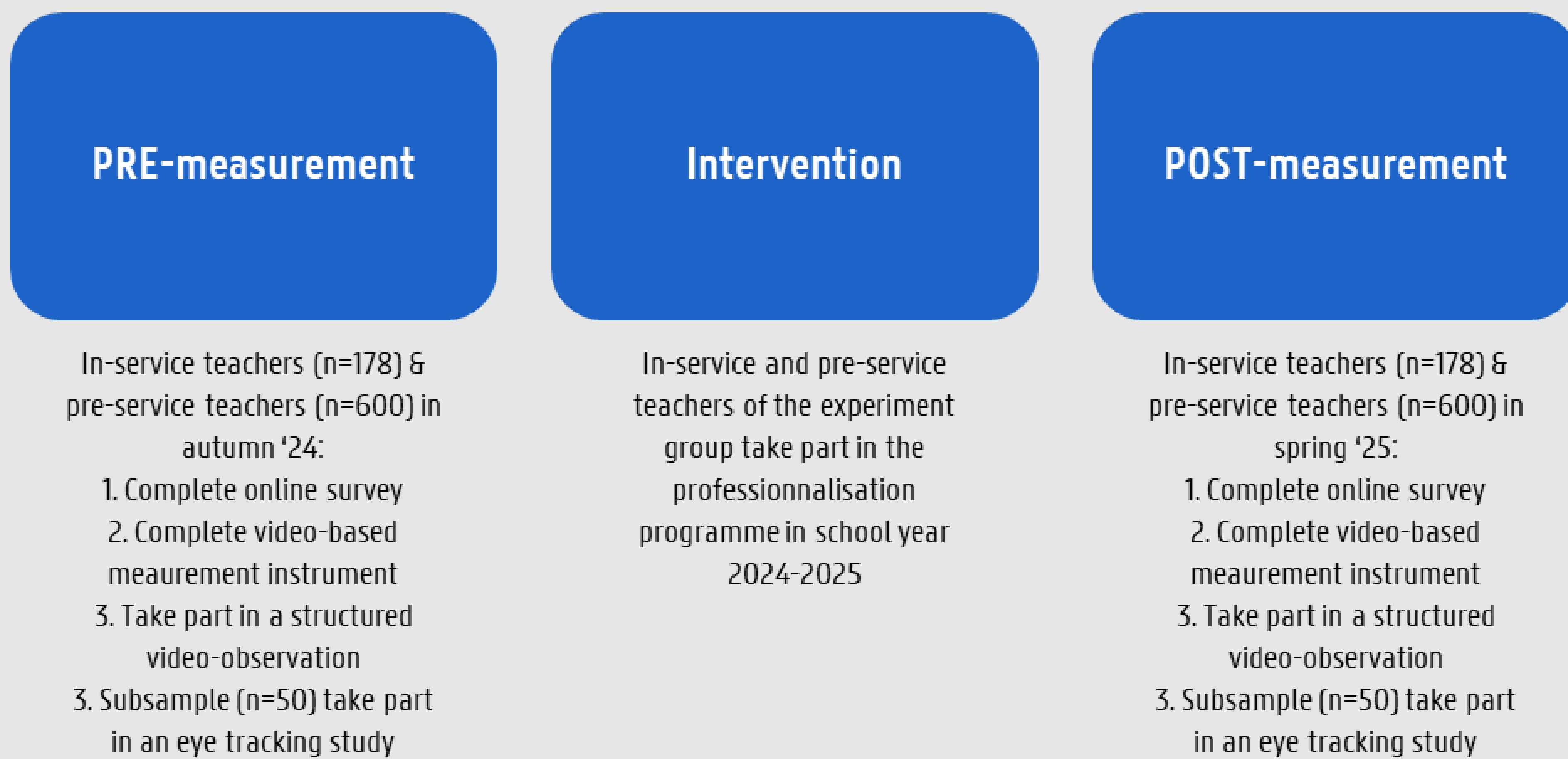
Three ingredients:

1. Language input
2. Opportunities for language production
3. Feedback

Very important: Don't focus on merely developing strategies, focus on developing strategies with **all** children (Superhero)



Research design of the study



SAMPLE

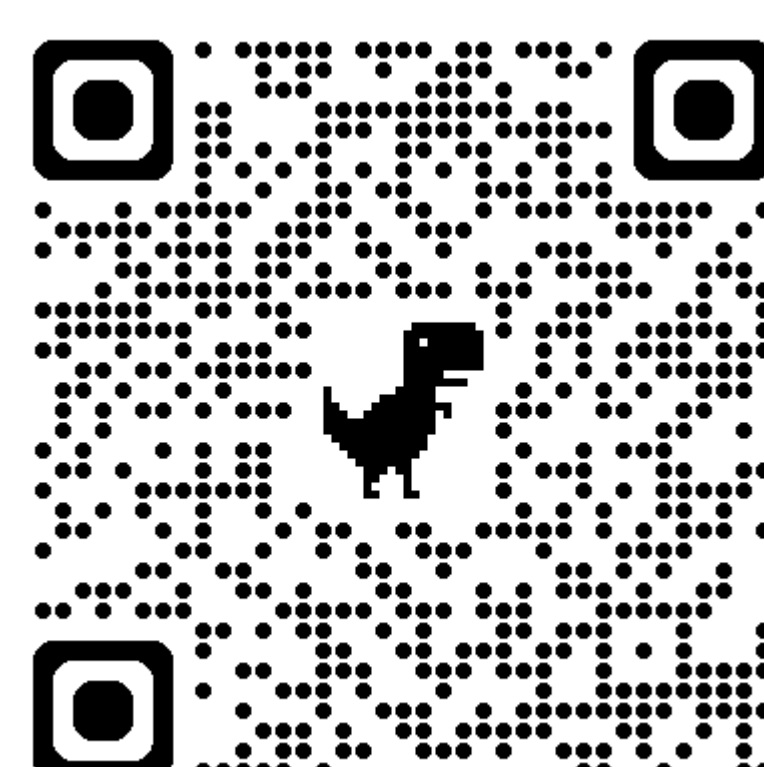
- **600** pre-service preschool teachers from 5 university colleges:
 - *Experiment group* = Odisee & Arteveldehogeschool
 - *Control group* = UCLL, HoGent and AP Hogeschool Antwerpen
- **180** in-service preschool teachers from Flanders and Brussels
 - from 2nd & 3rd kindergarten class
 - **90** teachers in the *experiment group* (i.e., they receive the PDI this school year 2024-2025) and **90** teachers in the *control group* (i.e., they receive the PDI next school year 2025-2026)

HOW?

Through **mixed-method** research, conducted by 5 PhD students, collecting:

- Survey data
- Simulation data
- Observation data
- Case study data from video reflections
- (Mobile) eye tracking data
- Focus group data
- Interview data

Visit the TACOS website



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