

Problems of practice

Instructional quality and working with
non-L2-proficient children in ECE

Kees Broekhof, Netherlands



Two problems of practice

1. Instructional quality is generally low
2. Insufficient attention for the problems of non-L2-proficient children

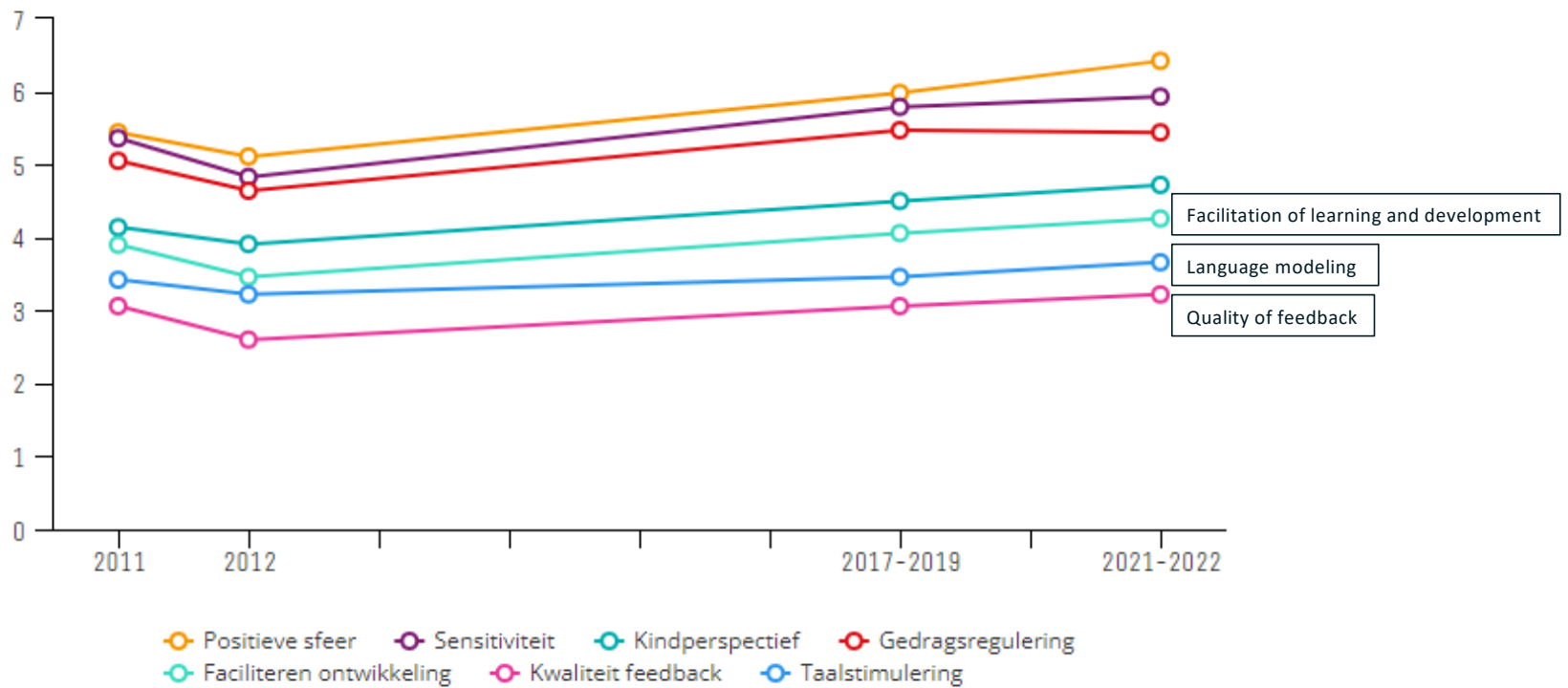


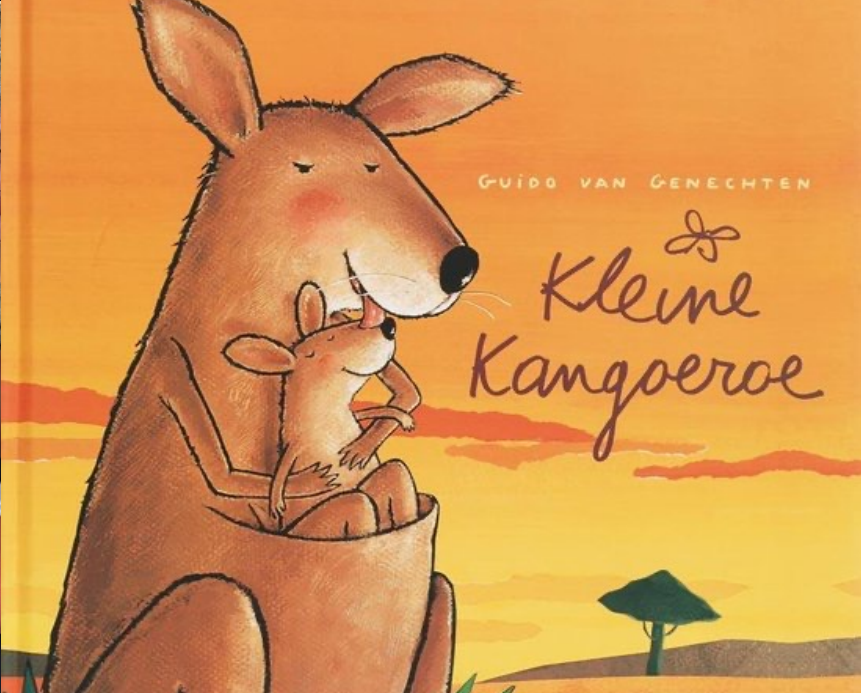
Facilitation of learning and development

Quality of feedback

Language modeling

CLASS toddler Netherlands (2-4-year-olds)







The importance of getting children to talk

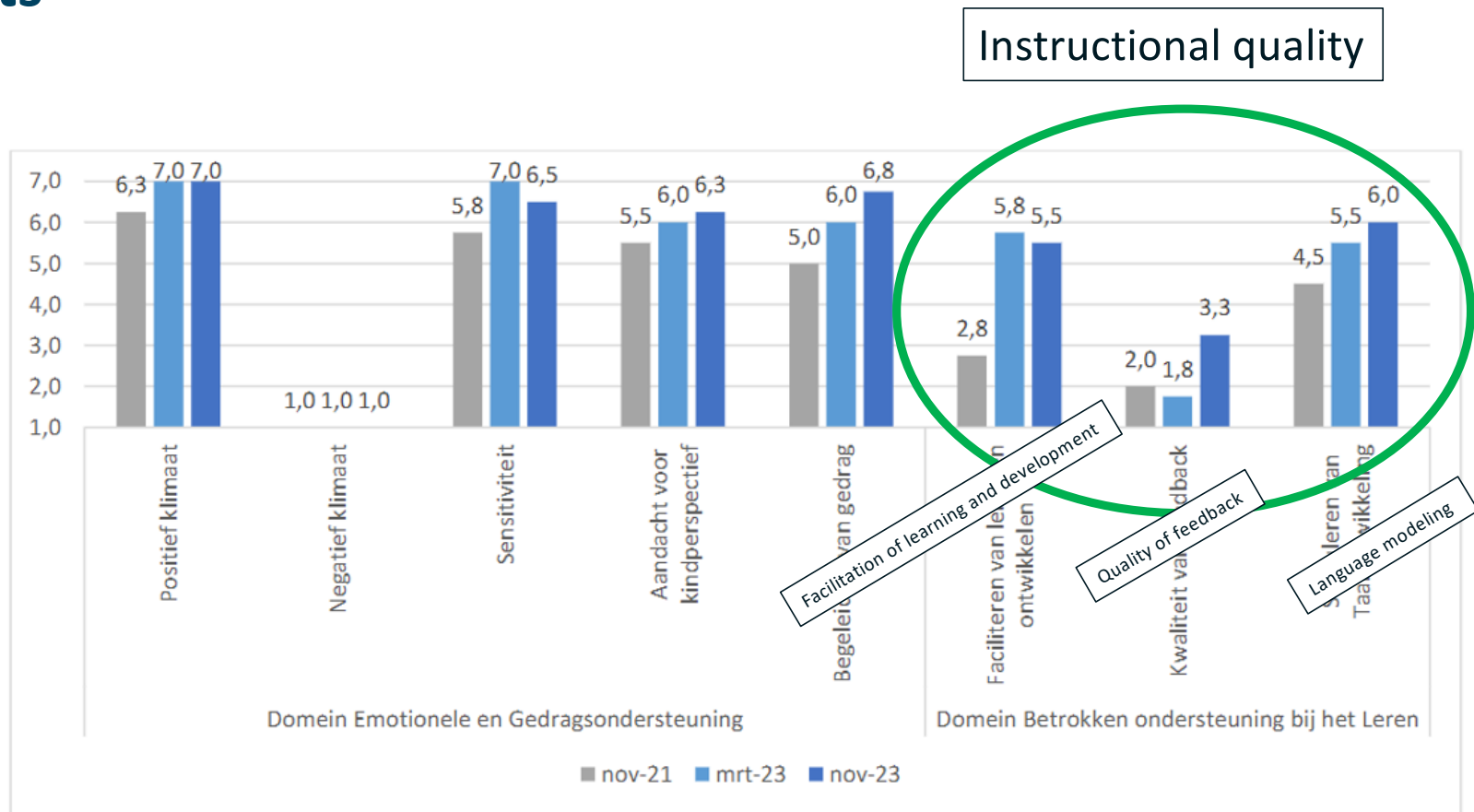
“Children learn more if they can talk more. They learn more from talking than from listening.”

Prof. Catherine Snow
Harvard University

Professional development program for EC staff

- Theoretical principles of instructional quality translated into practical application of Sustained Shared Thinking (SST)
- Team training sessions (6-8 x)
 - What is SST and why does it matter?
 - SST in exploratory activities
 - SST in dialogic reading
 - SST in play activities
 - reflecting on videos of practice
- On the job coaching (4-5 x)
- Professional learning community (4-6 x)
- Total PD duration: generally 6-9 months.

Results

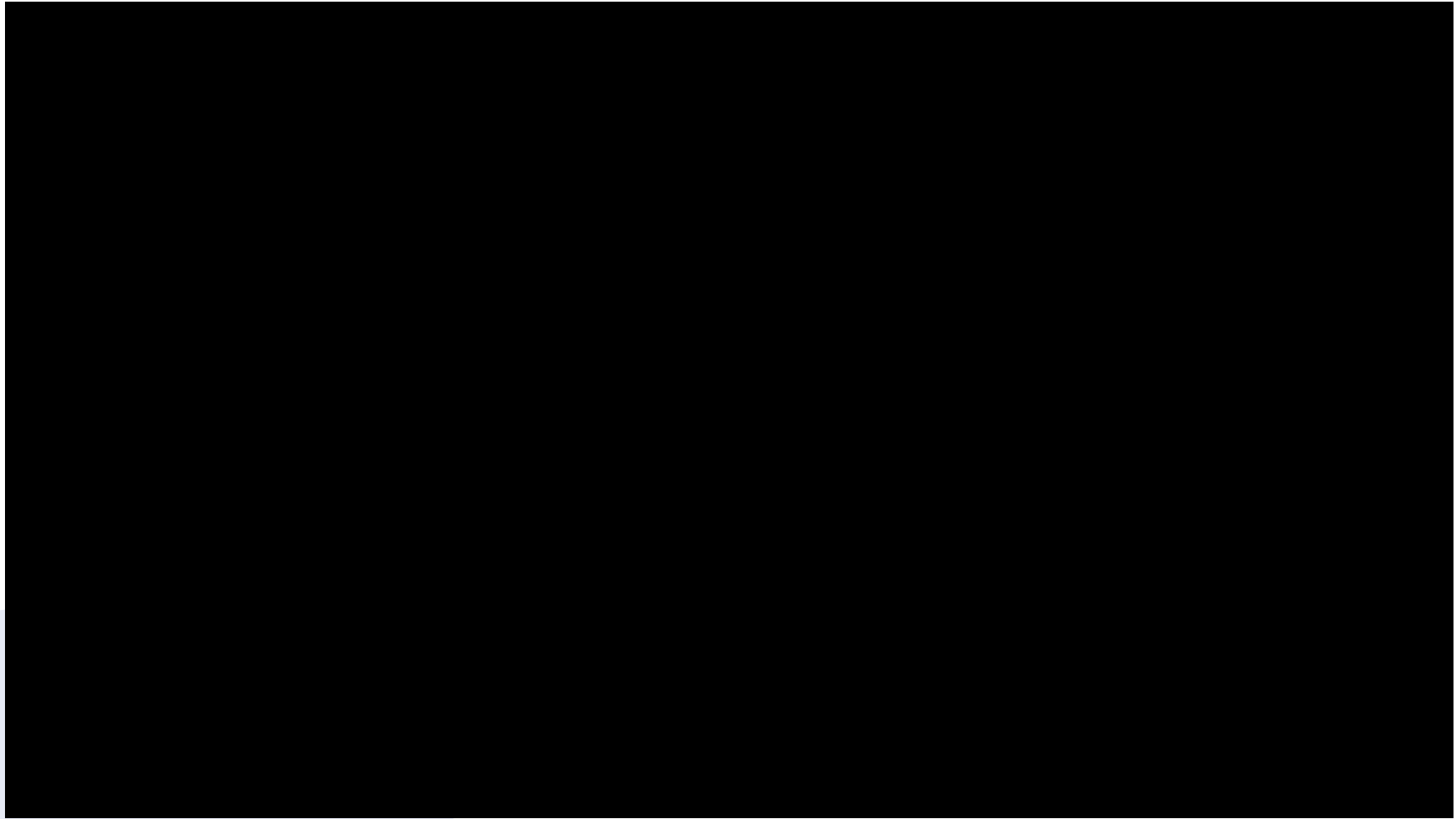


Who do not benefit?

- Non-L2-proficient children
- They do not understand a word of the instructional language.
- As a result, they are doubly disadvantaged: **they they do not learn (educational disadvantage) and they feel excluded (emotional disadvantage)**
- Additional problems: staff are unaware of the plight of these children; and there is little research to go by for devising a PD program.







Instructional quality for non-L2-proficient children: an opposite approach ('reverse language stimulation')

'Regular' L2 learners

- Wide range of language input (compound sentences, explanations with the help of language)
- Interaction aimed at triggering language production, e.g. through open-ended questions
- Feedback mostly on language

Non-L2-proficient ('absolute beginners')

- Narrow range of language input (separate words, brief sentences, visual support)
- Interaction aimed at triggering non-verbal response, e.g. through instructions and closed questions like pointing questions)
- Feedback mostly on non-verbal behavior

Working with non-L2-proficient children

- Differentiation during group read alouds
 - Using daily routines to teach language through fixed language ‘formulas’
 - Using limited, but focused, language input during 1-to-1 play moments
 - Selecting and reading picture books individually or in small groups of non-L2-proficient children
 - Using IT (e.g. digital storybooks) for differentiation and accelerating learning
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- Outcomes: anecdotal evidence from ECE staff