ON READING INTERVENTIONS, FLOURISHING, AND AN OPEN FUTURE: CONSIDERING CHILDREN'S PRESENT AND FUTURE FREEDOMS

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INTRODUCTION

Justice issues in early childhood education contexts abound; these include substandard developmental opportunities and resource inequalities that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. However, *interpersonal* justice matters are often underexplored in both conceptual and empirical scholarship. It is essential to prioritize how children's voices and views of justice are engaged in their educational environments, alongside questions of which communities' views and values are endorsed.

This article focuses on US reading intervention programs, where efforts are made to expand freedoms and develop literacy as a pathway to greater autonomy. However, the assumption of a child's heteronomy often perpetuates established patterns of interpersonal and systemic racial/economic hierarchy, power, and privilege. To better understand justice requirements for children in these programs, the authors introduce the cases of Adriana, Jason, and Gisela (pseudonyms)—all participants in case studies of young children's motivation to read in mandated reading intervention programs.

Adriana and Gisela were learning English as an additional language, while Jason lived in subsidized housing with his grandparents. All three children, representing diverse backgrounds often underexplored in the literature, maintained that they would opt out of their pull-out reading intervention programs if given the choice, with a common theme between them of frustration related to limitations placed on their self-governance. This motivates the question: *Do present constraints on children's freedoms within reading interventions interfere with their developing capacities for freedom and impact their flourishing?* On our view, it is essential to balance the recognition of children's present freedoms with the protection of their future freedoms by involving them and their families in program design and modifications.

The normative analysis exploring these questions employs Brighouse et. al's "educational goods" framework to offer an account of flourishing as a central aim in educational justice projects.[1] Additionally, we reference

[1] Harry Brighouse et al., Educational Goods: Values, Evidence, and Decision Making (The University of Chicago Press, 2018).

Feinberg's work on "the child's right to an open future" to consider present-oriented and future-looking considerations of justice specific to children like Adriana, Jason, and Gisela and to the field of early childhood education, more broadly.[2] The children's accounts examined within this article suggest that their intervention programs may undermine their developing capacities for autonomy and violate their rights to an open future, specifically as related to an appreciation for reading.

NORMATIVE CONCEPTS

Flourishing

One of the fundamental responsibilities of schools according to Brighouse and others is to support the long-term flourishing of students.[3] Similarly, Tillson argues that the individuals who are responsible for making sure children's wellbeing does not fall below a threshold of adequacy are those persons best positioned to prevent that failing; a reasonable interpretation of this position suggests certain school faculty and staff (e.g., those working closely with students) have a considerable degree of moral responsibility to support the flourishing of those children they serve.[4] Additionally, Tillson maintains that the broader community has some moral responsibility to support the creation and maintenance of multiple caring professions that promote the wellbeing of children. Following these insights, we recognize that, *inter alia*, individual relationships (i.e., faculty and staff), local institutions (i.e., schools), and policy infrastructures (i.e., created and maintained conditions within which caring professions operate) are interrelated contexts that might promote (or hinder) student flourishing.

Brighouse describes a flourishing life as one that mainly goes well for the individual.[5] Tillson identifies being able to make choices that direct one's life towards good outcomes as a requisite for living a good life.[6] DeNicola argues that communal engagement is required to gain an awareness of a variety of options for existing in the world.[7] Though a good life can be realized in an infinite number of ways, we highlight two strong criteria:

1. One should deeply identify with the life they are leading.
2. One should obtain key objective goods.[8]

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[2] Joel Feinberg, "The Child's Right to an Open Future," in *Freedom and Fulfillment: Philosophical Essays* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 76–97.
[3] Harry Brighouse, "Moral and political aims of education," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education,* ed. Harvey Siegel (Oxford University Press, 2012), 35–51; Daniel DeNicola, Learning to Flourish: A Philosophical Exploration of Liberal Education (Bloomsbury Press, 2018).
[4] John Tillson, *Children, Religion and the Ethics of Influence* (Bloomsbury Press, 2019).
[5] Brighouse, Moral and Political aims of Education.
[6] Tillson, *Children, Religion and the Ethics of Influence*.
[7] DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish*.
[8] Harry Brighouse, *On Education* (Routledge, 2006).

Here, we focus on one desirable "objective good" often listed in these and similar contexts, namely, students' developing capacities for autonomy. Though we recognize that the definition is not settled, for the purposes of this project, we describe autonomy as one's evolving ability to make informed choices to better one's life. Autonomy supports individuals in selecting and engaging in "activities and relationships that reflect their sense of who they are and what matters to them."[9] Put differently, autonomy can be described as steering one's life towards one's core values and goals. The ability to make informed choices can support a person in identifying with the life they are living and promote a sense of inner coherence.

For example, many regard being able to properly execute foundational code-based reading skills (e.g., automatic word reading, prosody, etc.) as primary determinants of one's future freedoms and, therefore, believe a narrow set of foundational reading skills should be prioritized in the early years, over other reading-related skills and approaches to meaningfully engaging with a range of texts types (e.g., digital, audio, etc.). Though we sympathize with the view that all children have a right to a basic level of code-based reading proficiency, and we acknowledge the role of evidence-based practices in facilitating foundational skill acquisition, we question the potential messages expressed to children by the narrow view of reading privileged in US schools and specifically in "remedial" reading intervention programs which tend to be dominated by packaged approaches to simplified views of reading and reading instruction.

Readers from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds engage in a variety of forms of reading and employ reading for a variety of purposes. Readers read digital texts, visual images, sounds, and dramatic interpretations, for example. Readers read for pleasure, relaxation, and restoration. They read to connect to spiritual and/or natural worlds, and to gain new information and perspectives. Various forms of reading and purposes for reading assist different people in navigating their world, their fellows, and themselves. A deep knowledge of a range of ways to engage in reading, multiple purposes for reading, and benefits associated with reading is needed to make more autonomous choices about whether and how to employ reading in personally meaningful ways—to identify with the life one is leading. We are not suggesting that children should acquire this depth of knowledge by the end of early childhood; however, we are concerned about the ways in which children might narrowly understand their possible relationship to reading given the oversimplified view of reading privileged within many US schools. Until their capacities for autonomous thinking have further developed, children should be guided in their introduction to and selection of ways of engaging with reading that complement their individual personalities and cultural ways of knowing and being.

[9] Brighouse et al., *Educational Goods*, 24.

Though children's present capacities for autonomy may not be developed enough to make reasonable decisions about whether to participate in school reading initiatives, research suggests they can and should be encouraged to set goals for themselves and offer feedback about what they believe to be motivating and/or demotivating about specific reading programs.[10] As such, it seems important to consistently support children in recognizing and articulating their goals and views and also in acting upon them as a means of encouraging, practicing, and building their budding capacities for autonomy. Schools, and reading programs specifically, can offer guided opportunities for students to practice setting personally meaningful goals, provide feedback on programs, and make informed choices related to their individual reading journeys. Such opportunities offer students an array of potential options to employ when reading—options that can be filtered to align with their evolving personal and cultural goals and values. By introducing children to a wide variety of ways to engage with reading, educators might better honor the personhood of individual students, support their developing capacities for autonomy, and, by so doing, promote their flourishing.

An Open Future

According to Feinberg's account of autonomy, children are not yet fully autonomous, but someday will become autonomous; as such, they have a right to an open future.[11] On Feinberg's account, this is a right to sufficient opportunities to exercise their autonomy rights in the future. Though children cannot exercise their autonomy rights in childhood, argues Feinberg, they still possess latent autonomy rights that must be protected in order to keep the child's prospects open for their future autonomous choices. That is, those adults who care for children ought to protect and preserve these latent autonomy rights so that these rights can be exercised by the child in adulthood. According to Feinberg, adults must protect these latent rights, even against the damage that children might inadvertently visit upon their own future exercise of these rights. Crucially important for Feinberg's view is that, even when it might seem that an adult is limiting the freely chosen actions of a child, the adult might be justifiably limiting the potential damage the child may be doing to their own future right to autonomous choices.

We accept the broad appeal of Feinberg's arguments and note that his analyses often seem to undergird much contemporary thinking about children's rights; still, we meaningfully complicate the picture he presents. First, we suggest that his conceptual division between the present developing child and the future fully autonomous adult is less helpful than it might appear. Namely,

[10] D. H. Schunk, "Self-efficacy for reading and writing: Influence of modeling, goal setting, and self-evaluation," *Reading & Writing Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (2003): 159–172; Joy Dangora Erickson "Young children's perceptions of a reading intervention: A longitudinal case study of motivation and engagement," *Reading & Writing Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (2023): 120–136.

[11] Feinberg, "The Child's Right to an Open Future."

Feinberg analyzes this developmental point as though it entails the moral conclusions at the core of the work. While we acknowledge that brain processes certainly appear to develop over the course of childhood and the transition to adulthood, this is a rather different matter than the assertion of moral rights that is often associated with observation of these patterns.[12] More nuanced normative argumentation closely wedded to those empirical data is necessary to conclude that these developmental points have the moral significance necessary for allocating rights amongst persons.

Second, while Feinberg observes that adults might justifiably limit the present choices of children in order to preserve their ability to make autonomous choices in the future, the argument is insufficiently attentive to the social locations of the actors in that exchange. For example, more nuanced analyses may be needed when the 'adult' and 'child' are members of hierarchically arranged social groups. A school full of well-intentioned white teachers limiting the choices of students of color may, in the aggregate, communicate to those children enduring lessons about their potential autonomy in the face of similar authority figures.[13] In real world circumstances (marked by race, gender, class, dis/ability, etc.), adult restrictions on children's actions might purport to pursue outcomes supportive of an individual's future exercise of autonomy rights, while also reinforcing the structures that frustrate a community's practice of the very same. Complex matters of individual, institutional, and community-sensitive trade-offs will likely need to be navigated in these moments.

In our work, we turn these considerations to reading intervention programs. Specific to US reading intervention programs, the education system, and its endorsed ideas about what constitutes reading, arguably pressures children from non-dominant cultural backgrounds to conform to the demands of a heavily scripted, teacher-centered, reading curriculum. Many US reading intervention programs make use of a pull-out model that forces children to leave their general education classroom to receive remedial reading instruction. Additionally, US reading intervention programs typically require dual language learners to read and write only in English despite ample evidence suggesting they develop code-based proficiencies best when taught to decode both in their home language and English.[14] Finally, packaged reading intervention programs afford children very little control over the flow of the intervention and the materials employed; children are told what to do and when to do it. These practices arguably promote a message that children should uncritically obey the program and educator in charge of delivering it.

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[12] Lucy Wallis, "Is 25 the new cut-off point for adulthood?," *BBC News*, September 23, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-24173194.

[13] Sigal Ben-Porath, "Deferring virtue: The new management of students and the civic role of schools," *Theory and Research in Education* 11, no. 2 (2013): 111-128.

[14] For a review, see L. M. López & M. M. Páez, *Teaching dual language learners: What early childhood educators need to know* (Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2021).

Given the associated outcomes, one might believe that the future-oriented right to be a proficient reader (in the narrow sense) is worth protecting. As such, it might seem justifiable, *a la* Feinberg, that many young children are not offered a choice in whether or not to attend school reading intervention programs. Perhaps children should be protected against their own self-damaging actions as related to the importance of literacy. However, children can and do choose, at least to some extent, the degree to which they actively engage in these programs—the effort they exert is at least partially within their control. Programming that is misaligned with children's individual interests, ways of thinking, and ways of being can result in them resisting such programming or specific components of it. In this case, their developing reading proficiency and their motivation to read are likely to suffer—potentially threatening both their present and future freedoms.

If schools have responsibilities to promote children's developing capacities for autonomy and flourishing, and to protect their future rights to read, perhaps they should seriously consider children's *motivations* for school programming and make changes with them and in reference to the broader institutional and social realities impacting them. By failing to do so, they risk feeding into established systems of oppression that strip children of their fundamental moral rights. Later in this article, we build on this philosophical analysis to explicitly advocate for regularly eliciting children's feedback on school reading programs and working with children to make changes that sustain their cultures and maximize their freedoms in the present and carefully considered future—we do this in response to empirical data from three case studies examining young Adriana, Jason, and Gisela's motivation for doing reading within their mandated reading intervention programs.

EMPIRICAL METHODS

Context

The three children (two girls, one boy) were selected from the first author's case studies on young children's motivation for reading intervention in public schools in the Northeastern United States. The schools primarily served white, monolingual, middle-class children, with a predominantly white faculty and staff. All reading interventionists working with children were identified as white, monolingual, females. Two children were selected as district-designated ELs who reported not wanting to participate in English reading intervention programs. The third monolingual child was chosen because of indicating disinterest in the intervention and having a lower socioeconomic status and different family structure. These three children were not considered mainstream students by their schools or districts. The girls received Scott Foresman Early Reading Intervention, and the boy received Fundations Intervention with connected text. Refer to Table 1 for participant demographics.

Table 1
Participant Demographic Data

Name	Grade	Sex	First Language	ESL Instruction	Reading Intervention	Years in program
Adriana	2	F	Portuguese	Y	LLI & Fundations	2
Jason	1 & 2	M	English	N	LLI & Fundations	2
Gisela	K	F	German	N	ERI	1

Data and Analysis

Data was collected for each case over a semester. Adriana was studied during her second-grade year in 2018, Jason was followed for two years starting in first grade in 2018 and 2019, and Gisela participated in 2021 as a kindergarten student. The researcher functioned as a participant observer in all three cases, taking detailed field notes during a 4–8-week period while carefully watching, listening, and building relationships with the children. Two types of interviews—drawing and walking tour—were conducted with each child. Drawing interviews involved children drawing what they believed they did during reading intervention sessions and discussing aspects they readily recalled. During walking tour interviews, children were asked whether they would choose to attend reading intervention and then showed the researcher their intervention space, materials, and reading spots while discussing how much they enjoyed using intervention materials and participating in activities. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Multiple video recordings were made of each child during intervention sessions in the third and fourth months of the studies. Two videos per child were randomly selected for analysis, and video data was logged specific to children's

behavioral engagement in the intervention. Analysis involved multiple rounds of coding and memo writing, with interviews being first coded for children's perceived benefits and drawbacks of intervention participation. The coded excerpts were then reviewed to explore if they supported or constrained children from acting autonomously. Logged video data and field notes were reviewed to consider how the children's behavioral engagement might be influenced by the factors they identified as constraining. Finally, individual narrative reports of students' motivation for and engagement in the intervention were written.

FINDINGS

Below we discuss findings specific to each child. For an overview of findings across cases (the three children) including the students' recommendations for intervention improvement, see Table 2.

Table 2
Overview of Findings

Name	Child's Self-identified Problematic Constraints on Individual Freedoms	Ideas for Improvement	Alignment with Motivation Research
Adriana	• Forced to leave classroom during free reading time • Could not choose books of high interest • Could not choose reading spot • Could not finish snack • Could not read independently for as long as desired	• Be permitted to remain in the classroom • Be able to bring independent reading books from the classroom into the intervention • Choose own independent reading spot • Be able to finish snack in the intervention • Be permitted to read independently for longer periods of time	• Increasing opportunities for students to make choices and exercise control over their learning supports motivation (Reeve et al., 2022)
Jason	• Forced to read and engage in related activities that are challenging and uninteresting	• Not attend the intervention or be forced to read anywhere	• Individuals for whom the perceived opportunity costs for engaging in an

		• Be permitted to participate in activities that interested him (e.g., beyblades, recess)	activity become to great may avoid the activity all together (Erickson, 2023)
Gisela	• Forced to leave her friend behind in the classroom • Forced to engage in a round-robin style of reading	• Be permitted to remain in the classroom and read with her friend • Be permitted to have her friend read with her in the intervention • Be permitted to read independently at own pace instead of in a round-robin style	• The cultivation of meaningful relationships and opportunities to socialize with peers support motivation (Reeve et al., 2022). • Round-robin style reading can lead to boredom and inattention (Opitz & Guccione, 2009).

Adriana

Adriana, a second-grade student, participated in a reading intervention program for 30 minutes, three times a week. The intervention focused on Fundations activities and Leveled Literacy Intervention books. During the intervention, Adriana had to give up her free choice reading time and snack time, which she found frustrating. She preferred her classroom because she could read any books of her choosing and eat her snack while sitting in her favorite spot. Adriana expressed her frustration in her drawing interview and mentioned that she didn't like the interventionist stopping her to do spelling. In her walking tour interview, Adriana said she would not attend the intervention if given a choice. Field notes and video logs showed her rolling her eyes when asked to put her snack away and regularly requesting to use the bathroom during word writing activities. Adriana resisted the structure of the intervention and suggested changes including having ample time to eat her snack, read independently, and a greater selection of books from which to choose.

Jason

Jason participated in two case studies exploring his motivation for reading intervention during his kindergarten and first-grade years. He received a similar intervention to Adriana, consisting of phonological awareness drills and reading-connected decodable texts. Jason initially enjoyed practicing letters and sounds during the intervention, but his behavior suggested he struggled with multiple intervention constraints. He tried to make his peers laugh during tasks, rejected certain materials, and demanded others. During his second year, his resistance became more apparent, and he expressed his “hate” for reading. He rejected the rules and routines in the intervention setting and the classroom,

likely in part due to difficult family issues. As permitting him to read books of personal interest may have offered him some peace, it does not seem unreasonable to conclude that he could be better supported by being encouraged to exercise more autonomy over books and reading tasks.

Gisela

Gisela, a bilingual kindergartener who spoke German and English fluently, participated in a case study examining her motivation for an even more highly structured reading intervention. Despite being proficient in both languages, Gisela struggled to meet normed reading benchmarks and, as a result, was enrolled in a Scott Foresman Early Reading Intervention (ERI) for 30-minute sessions four times a week. During this time, her peers engaged in reading workshop or small group instruction. Like Adriana and Jason, Gisela spent most of her intervention time on phonological awareness drills and reading decodable texts.

In her interview, Gisela expressed a strong preference for reading in her classroom rather than attending the intervention. She perceived the intervention as preventing her from reading with her friend, who was a better reader and didn't need help. Gisela's reluctance to leave her classroom was also evident in her behavior, requiring multiple redirections and showing little enthusiasm for the intervention. On some occasions, she even requested to work on the research project with the researcher instead of attending the intervention.

Gisela also shared her dislike of the round-robin style of reading required in the intervention, saying she preferred reading at her own pace and with her friend. These suggestions reveal that Gisela was dissatisfied with the way her autonomy was constrained by the intervention.[15] Overall, the case study suggests that Gisela's motivation for reading was negatively impacted by the intervention and that her preferences for reading with her friend and at her own pace should have been taken into consideration.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

School faculty and staff are entrusted with making decisions in support of children's present and future prospects. While educators are influenced by various agencies, they have considerable control over the instructional norms and routines they implement in the classroom. However, many packaged reading intervention programs do not provide opportunities for children to understand how reading might support their development, nor do they encourage informed reading-related choices. Teachers must modify these programs to better support their individual students.

The reading interventions that the three children described in this article attended appear to be largely unsupportive of their developing motivation to read; all three children indicated a preference not to participate in the required

[15] M. F. Opitz & L. M. Guccione, *Comprehension and English language learners: 25 oral reading strategies that cross proficiency levels* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2009).

reading interventions. Children's autonomy to make decisions about their reading were heavily constrained within the interventions. Their individual interests, ways of knowing, and ways of being were largely neglected. As such, it is not a surprise that children's motivation for the interventions suffered; a large body of evidence indicates that an autonomy-supportive teaching style boosts motivation while more controlling styles erode it.[16] Because their intervention experiences discouraged the children from reading in this context (and potentially beyond it), they stand to threaten the children's reading development in both the narrow and broader senses. Children who are not motivated to participate in their reading intervention programs are likely to gain less from them in terms of the advancement of targeted foundational skills, than if they were motivated to participate, setting the stage for a cycle of low English reading achievement. Additionally, children were not encouraged or introduced to reading for a variety of purposes in a variety of ways: they were primarily taught to crack the sound-symbol code to improve automaticity of word recognition. Despite arguably being in community with others as recommended by DeNicola, the children's reading interventions did not afford children knowledge of a variety of ways of engaging with reading from which they could select those that they might be interested; communal engagement may be necessary to introduce one to a variety of ways of engaging with text, but it does not guarantee it.[17] As such, it is plausible that the children's reading interventions threaten both their present and future flourishing. As noted earlier, we agree with others who view the promotion of children's flourishing to be (1) a primary responsibility of schools and (2) a moral responsibility of those charged with their immediate care. [18] Therefore, we find ourselves concerned by the potential for negative short- and long-term outcomes.

Additionally, we worry about the ways in which such programs threaten children's rights to open futures, perhaps suggesting that an alternative conceptualization of autonomy might be promising in determining valuable opportunities for young children. For such an account, we engage with the work of the late bell hooks.

The three children described above hold diverse backgrounds often underexplored in the literature and were initiated into an extremely narrow model of what it might mean to be a reader. Their white teachers and packaged intervention programs do not evidence consideration—or appreciation—of their cultural epistemologies and productions.[19] They do not harness the power of

[16] For a review, see J. Reeve & S. H. Cheon, "Autonomy-supportive teaching: Its malleability, benefits, and potential to improve educational practice," *Educational Psychologist* 56, no. 1 (2021): 54-77.
[17] DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish*.
[18] Brighouse et al, *Educational Goods*; DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish*; Tillson, *Children, Religion, and the Ethics of Influence*.
[19] bell hooks, *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom* (Routledge, 1994).

children's own interests, goals, knowledge (e.g., home languages), or ways of being and knowing. These children were expected to conform to the demands of a mainstream reading intervention facilitated by a white, middle class, monolingual interventionist—potentially reinforcing messages of racial superiority and domination. Hidden reading intervention curricula arguably encourage culturally and linguistically diverse students to uncritically accept the ways these programs and the adults in power expect them to think and act—messages that could significantly interfere with the children's right to an open future in a broader sense. In a narrower sense, if the children's negative attitudes about reading specific to their intervention programs persist and/or expand to other contexts and/or experiences, each child's right to an open reading future may be compromised by resultant adopted or not adopted reading habits. If the children largely avoid reading altogether, their acquisition of foundational reading skills is likely to suffer, jeopardizing the very future prospects the interventions were intended to secure. Enlarging the range of considered views of autonomy, liberation, and criteria for personhood may be helpful here.

In *Teaching to Transgress*, hooks argues for engaged pedagogy to support education as the practice of freedom.[20] She contends that for education to be liberatory and autonomy-supporting, teachers should connect learning to students' experiences. hooks contrasts her early Black education in the apartheid South, which resisted colonization, with her integrated education where obedience, not learning, was expected. Children like Adriana, Jason, and Gisela, with diverse cultural backgrounds, face assimilation into instructional norms that disregard their identities. Their interests and goals are not probed, nor are they integrated into their learning. While some argue that highly structured reading interventions will protect their reading futures, the potential costs to diverse learners, including reinforcing racial domination, overlooking their full personhood, and undermining motivation and proficiency, should be considered.

To mitigate these threats, educators and policy makers need to reimagine reading intervention programs, support children's flourishing, and promote their rights to open futures and present personhood. Educators must show a deep concern for each child's well-being, learn about students' individual ways of knowing and being by visiting their homes, attending extracurricular and social events, and using effective interview techniques. However, knowledge of children's multifaceted identities does not guarantee meaningful integration of content and pedagogy. Interventionists need to appreciate and utilize students' multifaceted identities, introduce them to various ways of engaging with reading, and increase opportunities for developing autonomy. They must recognize that learning about students and making instructional changes to meet their evolving identities and needs is an ongoing process. Regular feedback from students is necessary for a liberatory education.

Normative analyses of the empirical case studies suggest that children are experts of their lived experiences, and their identities and needs should

[20] hooks, *Teaching to transgress*.

inform educational practices. Such analyses suggest that children can be meaningfully understood as experts of their lived experiences and that, as others have carefully argued, their self-expressions may deserve to be taken seriously as legitimate commentary on their educational experiences.[21] Adriana, Gisela, and Jason formed and articulated clear opinions about their reading instruction, and they offered ideas about how it could be improved. They pushed back against the ways they understood the interventions to be constraining their freedoms. Specifically, they resisted aspects of interventions each found intolerable: Gisela expressed disappointment about leaving her friend in the general education classroom and avoided round robin reading. Jason used humor, anger, and bathroom breaks to avoid participating in all aspects of intervention except independent reading tasks that aligned with his interests and goals. Adriana spoke out about having to leave her classroom and not being able to finish her snack and choose her own books and reading spot, and she employed avoidance tactics similar to Jason's to evade tasks she did not enjoy. Particularly noteworthy is that much of the children's feedback aligns with what research indicates supports or undermines reading motivation (see Table 2) and, in turn, achievement.[22] For example, research clearly indicates that children's motivation is supported when they are able to exercise true choice over what they read. Research also demonstrates how close social connections with peers can enhance motivation to read. These three children appear far more capable of making informed choices about their reading engagement than many adults may think. They are well positioned to partner with their teachers to make informed instructional decisions—decisions potentially capable of nurturing their developing motivation, autonomy, and foundational reading skills. This is not to say that educators should omit any and all activities children express frustration with or disinterest in and adopt all they favor. It is to say that all children including young children and especially children with nondominant identity traits should be much more involved than they currently are in the design, implementation, and modification of their reading intervention programs.

CONCLUSION

We urge action based on our normative analyses of flourishing and the right to an open future in the context of empirical case studies of reading intervention programs. Prioritizing a narrow conception and application of reading science over the personhood of individuals served by reading intervention programs perpetuates injustices. Instead, individuals should be placed at the center of program design and modifications. Children should not

[21] Ann Diller, "Facing the Torpedo Fish: Becoming a Philosopher of One's Own Education," in *Philosophy of Education 1998,* ed. Steve Tozer (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 1998), 1–9.

[22] For a review, see J. T. Guthrie & A. Wigfield, "Literacy engagement and motivation: Rationale, research, teaching, and assessment," in *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts,* eds. D. Lapp & D. Fisher (Routledge, 2017), 57–84.

be expected to conform to one-size-fits-all interpretations and applications of reading science, but, rather, reading science should serve the needs of each individual child. To achieve this, school policy makers, leaders, and educators must have a deep understanding of both the children they serve and reading science. They should involve children and families in the design, implementation, and modification of reading intervention programs in ways that recognize their current level of autonomy (broadly understood) and future potential.