

**‘Tell me what I need to know’: parent and teacher expectations and interactions in parent-teacher conferences****Denessen, Eddie\*, Heijns, Dennis\* and Beek, Suzanne\*\*.**

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Meetings between parents and teachers are said to be key events in linking school and family practices (Maclure and Walker, 2000). These meetings can serve a variety of goals set by teachers as well as parents. Some research has been done on the content of parent-teacher interactions (e.g. Symeou, 2003; Weininger and Lareau, 2001). These studies suggest that parent-teacher meetings mainly concern the student's school attainment and behaviour at school and at home. Also, teachers' contributions during these meetings are larger than parents'. Differences with respect to the content of parent-teacher meetings have been observed, which were mainly due to parents' social class background, with higher class parents being more active and assertive during parent-teacher meetings than lower class parents. In this paper, we will report an observation study on parent-teacher interactions. We will interview parents and teachers separately before their meeting about the questions, expectations and goals they hold regarding the content of the meeting. Also, an evaluative interview will be held with parents and teachers separately after the meeting about their satisfaction with the meeting. These interview data will be related to observations of parent-teacher interactions. These interactions will be coded following an interaction analysis approach. We expect lower class parents not only to differ from higher class parents in their contribution during their meeting with the teacher, but also to differ regarding their goals and expectations. Implications for intervention programs for improving parent-teacher meetings will be discussed.