

Online Conference
June 19-20, 2025
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ATFLY 2025

ADVANCES IN TEACHING
FOREIGN LANGUAGES
TO YOUNG LEARNERS

CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

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Plenary Speakers



Prof. Dr. Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe
University of the Basque Country, Spain
*Transforming Multilingual Classrooms:
An Analysis of Content and Language
Integrated Learning (CLIL) Practices
with Young Children*



Prof. Dr. Annamaria Pinter
University of Warwick, UK
*What insights can we gain
from young learners
through engaging them
actively in research?*



Dr. Karen Roehr-Brackin
University of Essex, UK
*Metalinguistic awareness
in children's additional
language learning:
Context counts*

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Day 1: Thursday, 19 June 2025 (NB: All times are German times, i.e. CEST)			
9:30-10:00	Conference Opening: Stefanie Frisch, Karen Glaser, Constanze Dreßler, Anne Schrader		
10:00-11:00	Plenary 1: Prof. Dr. Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe, University of the Basque Country, Spain: <i>Transforming Multilingual Classrooms: An Analysis of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Practices with Young Children</i>		
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break		
	Section 1: Virtual Exchange for Social and Language Learning Chair: Begoña Clavel Arroitia	Section 2: Assessment Chair: Jules Bündgens-Kosten	Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives Chair: Melanie Ellis
11:15-11:55	<i>Exploring the potential of the RFCDC descriptors for young learners to promote democracy education in the primary English classroom: The PEACE Project</i> Raphaëlle Beecroft, Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany & Motoko Abe, Tokyo Gakugei University, Japan	<i>Classroom-based assessment: Transformation of teachers' practices through a blended MOOC</i> Sandie Mourão & Carolyn Leslie, Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal	<i>Feelings towards learning English and spontaneous oral English production skills by pupils at the end of elementary school in France</i> Marie-Ange Dat, Laboratoire de Linguistique Nantes, France
11:55-12:35	<i>Successful tasks for virtual exchange projects with young learners</i> Annika Kolb, Kirsten Birsak De Jersey, Harriet Jeeves & Nurjona Pinguri, Freiburg University of Education, Germany	<i>What primary English really accomplishes: An evidence-based test for fourth graders in Rhineland-Palatinate</i> Sarah Wunderlich, University of Koblenz, Germany	<i>Using captioned animated cartoons with young L2 learners</i> Daniela Avello, University of O'Higgins, Chile & Carmen Muñoz, University of Barcelona, Spain
12:35-13:30	Lunch Break		
	Section 4: Inclusivity and Civic Learning Chair: Raphaëlle Beecroft	Section 5: Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) Chair: Constanze Dreßler	Section 3 (cont'd): Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives Chair: Daniela Avello
13:30-14:10	<i>Fostering inclusive EFL teaching to young learners: Effects of a training course</i> Maria Paz Azparren-Legarre, Public University of Navarre, Spain	<i>Metalinguistic explanations and reflection on form by young EFL learners during a dictogloss task</i> Paloma Delgado-Garza & María del Pilar García Mayo, University of the Basque Country, Spain	<i>Motivation in the primary classroom: Voices of Chilean young language learners</i> María Jesús Inostroza, University of Concepción & Pia Tabali, Universidad Autónoma de Chile, Chile
14:10-14:50	<i>Children with AD(H)D in primary school programs with different English intensity: An exploratory study</i> Anja Steinlen & Thorsten Piske, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany	<i>Designing context-sensitive tasks for young language learners</i> Lorraine Sova & Veronika Timpe-Laughlin Educational Testing Service, USA	<i>Visual approaches to motivation of young language learners: Motigraph as data elicitation tool</i> Junjie Li, University of Warwick, UK
14:50-15:30	<i>A social justice language curriculum: Insights from learning materials for TEYL</i> Maria Gimena San Martín, Melina Tejeda & Agostina Escobar Bosco, National University of Córdoba, Argentina	<i>Exploring task design practices in primary school EFL contexts: leveraging technology within the design process</i> Vera Trager & Roger Gilabert University of Barcelona, Spain	<i>The earlier the better? Primary school learners' opinions towards the appropriate time to start foreign language teaching</i> Julia Reckermann, University of Münster & Stefanie Frisch, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
15:30-15:45	Coffee Break		
15:45-16:45	Roundtables RT1: CLIL and Young Learners Amparo Lázaro-Ibarrola, Public University of Navarre, Spain RT2: Teaching and Learning L2 Pragmatics with Young Learners Milica Savic & Anders Myrset, University of Stavanger, Norway RT3: Picturebooks in the Young Learner Language Classroom Sandie Mourão, Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal		
16:45-17:00	Coffee Break		
17:00-18:00	Plenary 2: Dr. Karen Roehr-Brackin, University of Essex, UK: <i>Metalinguistic awareness in children's additional language learning: Context counts</i>		



Day 2: Friday, 20 June 2025 (NB: All times are German times, i.e. CEST)

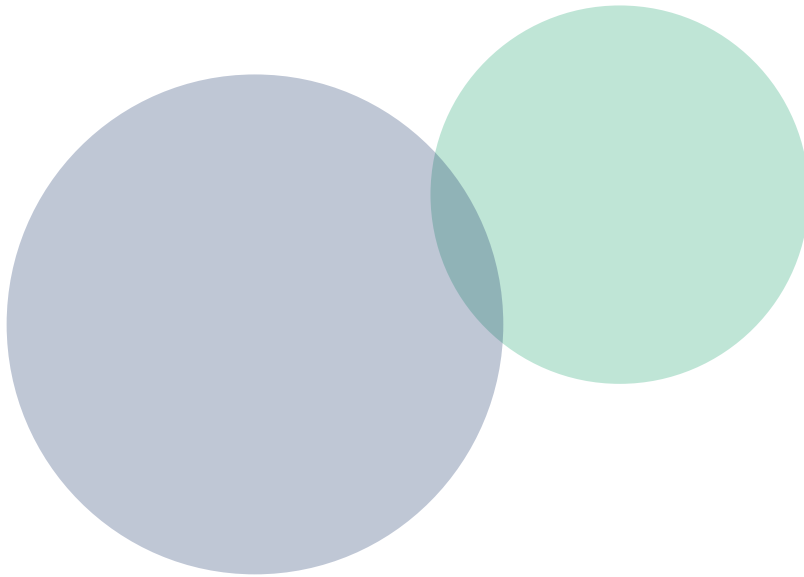
	Section 6: Content-and-Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL) Chair: Julia Reckermann	Section 7: Literacy Chair: Anja Steinlen		Section 8: Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development Chair: Rowena Kasprowicz
9:30-10:10	<i>French in primary school? Bien sûr! An empirical study on the effects of CLIL and regular French lessons on majority and minority language students' French writing and speaking skills</i> Patricia Uhl & Thorsten Piske, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany	<i>The use of learner-generated materials in writing skills development with young Norwegian EFL learners</i> Nina Lazarević, University of Stavanger, Norway		<i>The effect of attentional abilities on vocabulary and grammar acquisition in young ESL learners</i> Ramona Boettcher, University of Mannheim, Katharina Ponto, University of Hildesheim & Kristin Kersten, University of Mannheim, Germany
10:10-10:50	<i>Beliefs and perceptions on translanguaging in CLIL primary classrooms</i> Marc Miret & Sara Feijoo, University of Barcelona, Spain	<i>The connection of teachers' linguistic knowledge, classroom practices, and self-reflection in the teaching of emergent literacy to young learners of English</i> Anne Schrader & Karen Glaser, Leipzig University, Germany		<i>Attrition or retention? The impact of instructional gaps on French language competencies</i> Pia Reimann & Thorsten Piske, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany
10:50-11:00	Coffee Break			
11:00-12:00	Poster Presentations (for the individual posters in each room, see next page)			
	Poster Room 1: Tasks in Early L2 Education	Poster Room 2: Primary L2 Teacher Education	Room 3: Promoting and Researching Young Learners' L2 Skills	Room 4: Cognitive and Affective Aspects of Young Learners' L2 Learning
	Poster Pitches by the contributors in a room take place at 11:00 and 11:30.			
12:00-13:00	Lunch Break			
	Section 9: A Focus on Teachers Chair: Sandie Mourão	Section 7 (cont'd): Literacy Chair: Nina Lazarević		Section 8 (cont'd): Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development Chair: María Jesús Inostroza
13:00-13:40	<i>Understanding teachers' perspectives: A qualitative study on non-specialist early foreign language teachers' educational and curricular needs</i> Katharina Ghamarian, Pia Resnik, Silvia Rieder-Marschallinger, University College of Christian Churches of Teacher Education and University of Vienna & Silvia Lasnik, University College of Teacher Education Carinthia, Austria	<i>Fostering multilingual literacy in Primary Education: Advancing writing skills through the PYCTO methodology</i> María Orcasitas Vicandi, Andrea Perales-Fernandez-De-Gamboa, Imanol Galeano Díez, Izaskun Molás Olalde, Paloma Rodríguez Miñambres, University of the Basque Country, Spain		<i>'May I have a donut, please?' The impact of L2 pragmatics instruction on request strategies with third-grade Norwegian EFL learners</i> Vibeke Klovning, University of Stavanger, Norway
13:40-14:20	<i>Evaluating two approaches to the teaching of foreign languages to young learners in England: Impacts on pupils and teachers</i> Elaine Minett, University of York and University of Chichester & Emma Marsden, University of York, UK	<i>Evaluating the impact of phonics and whole word approaches on L2 English literacy in young L1 German ELLs</i> Heike Mlakar & Joanna Hirst-Plein, University of Hildesheim, Germany & Martin J. Koch, University of Würzburg, Germany		<i>Investigating primary school children's L2 receptive vocabulary progression in England: A longitudinal study</i> Nicola Morea, Rowena Kasprowicz, Carmen Silvestri, Jasmin Silver, Clare Savory & Suzanne Graham, University of Reading, UK
14:20-14:45	Coffee Break			
14:45-15:45	Plenary 3: Prof. Dr. Annamaria Pinter, University of Warwick, UK: <i>What insights can we gain from young learners through engaging them actively in research?</i>			
15:45-16:00	Conference Closing and Information on Follow-up Publication: Stefanie Frisch, Karen Glaser, Constanze Dreßler, Anne Schrader			



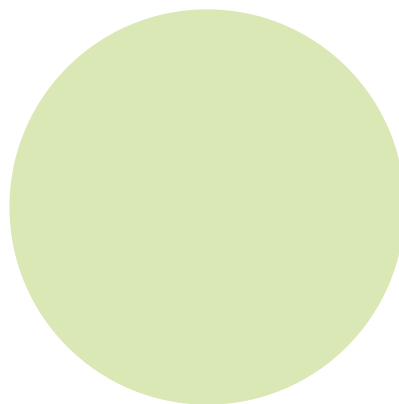
Poster Presentations Friday, June 20, 11-12am

Pitches take place at 11:00 and 11:30 in each room

Poster Room 1: Tasks in Early L2 Education Chair: Constanze Dreßler	Poster Room 2: Primary L2 Teacher Education Chair: Anne Schrader	Poster Room 3: Promoting and Researching Young Learners' L2 Skills Chair: Karen Glaser	Poster Room 4: Cognitive and Affective Aspects of Young Learners' L2 Learning Chair: Stefanie Frisch
1A <i>Task-based interaction and pre-task grammar instruction with young EFL learners: A study on the interplay between metalinguistic explanations, language-analytic ability and metalinguistic knowledge of English possessive determiners</i> María Basterrechea, Kevin Iglesias-Diéguez & María Martínez-Adrián University of the Basque Country, Spain 1B <i>Task planning competence: A model for describing and assessing primary EFL teachers' professionalism regarding task planning</i> Alessa Haase Weingarten University of Education, Germany 1C <i>Pre-task grammar instruction: Its effect on young learners' performance and individual variables</i> Janire Guerrero-Gomez & Irene Balza University of the Basque Country, Spain	2A <i>Building bridges: Collaborative teacher training for smooth transitions in English education</i> Claudia Zeppetzauer Vorarlberg University of Education, Austria 2B <i>Insights from teaching assistants: Examining primary school English education in Japan</i> Tomoko Hashimoto Tokyo Future University, Japan 2C <i>Early English language teaching and linguistic diversity – (language) action-orientated teaching methods</i> Sandra Bellet Vorarlberg University of Education, Austria 2D <i>Primary English teachers' professional learning: A review of its effectiveness</i> Mili Saha University of Wollongong, Australia	3A <i>The influence of L1/L2 syntactic transfer on the acquisition of English as an additional language from a processability perspective</i> Katharina Egger University of Innsbruck, Austria CANCELLED 3B <i>Investigating vocabulary teaching and learning in year 4 primary school English classes: Exposure, quality of encounter and engagement</i> Melanie Ellis Silesian University of Technology, Poland 3C <i>Towards productive speaking? Chunks with open slots in primary English coursebooks</i> Katja Schwemmer Heidelberg University of Education, Germany 3D <i>Dramatizing picture books with young EFL learners to improve oral skills</i> Rachel Hall Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany	4A <i>Bridging the gap: Navigating the emotional and academic challenges of transition from primary to secondary school – insights from young learners of English in Austria</i> Marie-Theres Gruber, Private University College Augustinum & Petra Kletzenbauer, Private University College Augustinum and Joanneum University of Applied Sciences, Austria 4B <i>Exploring young language learners' motivation for EFL writing: A study of 5th and 8th Graders</i> Gloria Vickov & Eva Jakupčević University of Split, Croatia 4C <i>Enhancing early foreign language learning in a Montessori context: The role of linguistic landscape tasks</i> Ulla Fürstenberg University of Graz & Petra Kletzenbauer, Private University College Augustinum and Joanneum University of Applied Sciences, Austria 4D <i>Promoting multilingualism in school education: Results from a multi-site project</i> Kristin Kersten, Inga Benz, Ramona Böttcher & Helena Mengeu, University of Mannheim, Germany Nils Jäkel, Lynn Jedamski & Katharina Ponto, University of Hildesheim, Germany Dorothee Kohl-Dietrich, Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany Jana Roos & Friederike Schirmag, University of Potsdam, Germany



Abstracts of
Plenary Speeches





Plenary 1

Transforming Multilingual Classrooms: An Analysis of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Practices with Young Children

Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe
University of the Basque Country, Spain

Thursday, June 19
10:00-11:00 CEST

This presentation provides an overview of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in the context of young children, with a particular focus on primary education settings. Drawing from several research studies conducted over the years, we examine key factors related to CLIL. First, we address the importance of metacognitive awareness and explore methods for enhancing it through targeted training. Second, the presentation delves into critical literacy with young children. By fostering reflective thinking and self-regulation skills, we propose strategies to support their active engagement in the learning process. More recently, our research has focused on the role of translanguaging and multimodality in CLIL classrooms. Translanguaging, the flexible use of multiple languages, has been shown to support cognitive and social development in multilingual environments (Cenoz, 2017; Lin, 2020). We analyze how, even at a very young age, students benefit from the practice of translanguaging to break down linguistic barriers and improve communication. Additionally, we explore the role of multimodality, where the use of various semiotic modes such as gestures and facial expressions interact with language learning in CLIL settings, enriching the educational experience for all learners, including young children (Ruiz de Zarobe & Querol-Julián, forthcoming 2025). With this synthesis of our research, we present effective strategies to enhance the learning process in multilingual classrooms for young learners.

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Plenary 2

Metalinguistic awareness in children's additional language learning: Context Counts

Karen Roehr-Brackin
University of Essex, UK

Thursday, June 19
18:00-19:00 CEST

In this talk, I will provide an overview of the current state of research on metalinguistic awareness in additional language learning, followed by some specific suggestions for future investigation. Research on young learners (defined here as children under the age of 12) has yielded strong evidence for their capacity to develop and utilise metalinguistic abilities in the context of explicit teaching and learning (Lichtman, 2013, 2016; Roehr-Brackin, 2018, 2024a). Moreover, much progress has been made in the measurement of children's metalinguistic awareness, as exemplified by recent work taking a range of approaches that include more traditional test-based assessment as well as innovative analyses of behavioural responses (Haugen et al., 2024; Roehr-Brackin, 2024b; Spit et al., 2021). With these foundations established, the research agenda can be refined. If metalinguistic awareness can be developed and has a positive role to play in principle, what is its specific impact in different contexts? Drawing on recent work with learners of different ages, I will argue that key variables to be taken into account are levels of bi-or multilingualism (Donnerer & Roehr-Brackin, under review; Hopp & Thoma, 2021), levels of literacy (Siekman et al., under review; Spit, 2024), language learning aptitude (Roehr-Brackin & Tellier, 2019) and learners' metacognition (Roehr-Brackin & Pavlekovic, under review; Udry & Berthele, 2024). I will outline how these variables relate to each other and to metalinguistic awareness and what this interplay implies for additional language learning by children at primary-school level. Moreover, I will highlight issues which should be addressed next, ideally in terms of multivariate research designs that take the complex interrelations of different factors into account and thereby duly make context count.

References

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Plenary 3

What insights can we gain from young learners through engaging them actively in research?

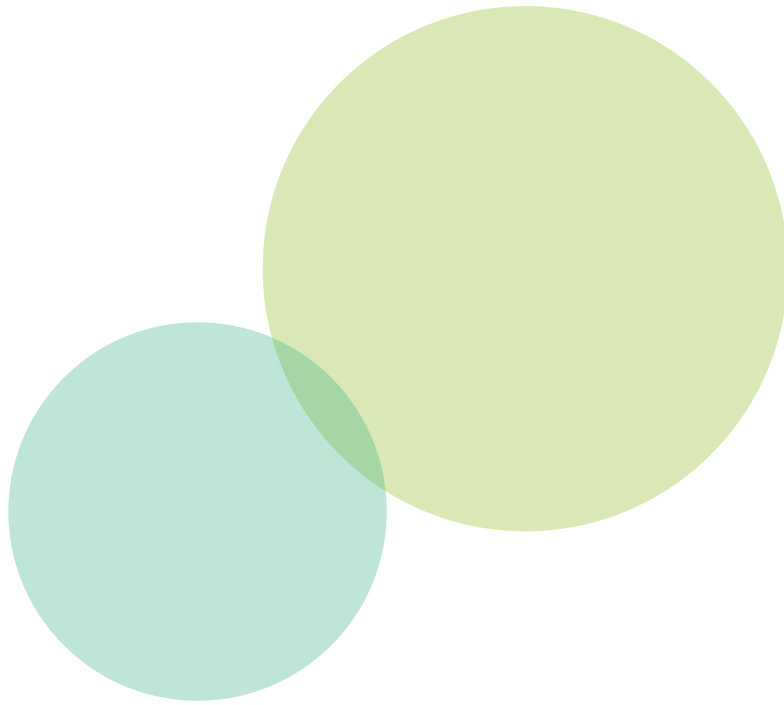
Annamaria Pinter
University of Warrick, UK

Friday, June 20
14:45-15:45 CEST

In this keynote talk, based on my recent book entitled *Engaging Children in Applied Linguistics Research* (Winner of the BAAL book prize 2024), I will outline some key justifications for involving children of all ages in research in an active way. I will then discuss some methodological and ethical dilemmas that adult researchers who work in partnership with children in research need to grapple with. I will include a few of my own recent examples for illustration. I will promote an argument that engaging children in research is possible and desirable in any context and it does not need to be an '*all or nothing*' approach but rather can be interpreted differently in different projects with different research questions, including traditional research where children are passive participants to begin with. Engaging children in research even in a small way can bring many tangible benefits to all (teachers, researchers and children) and it is the adult researcher's duty and responsibility to consider children's roles and engagement in any piece of research they are planning. The talk is relevant for teacher researchers as well as researchers who undertake projects in schools as outsiders.

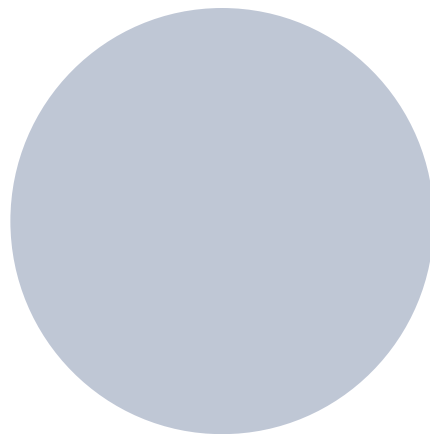
Reference

Pinter, Annamaria (2023). *Engaging Children in Applied Linguistics Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Presentation Abstracts

in order of conference sections



Section 1: Virtual Exchange for Social and Language Learning

Thursday, June 19
11:15-11:55 CEST

Exploring the potential of the RFCDC descriptors for young learners to promote democracy education in the primary English classroom: The PEACE Project

Raphaelle Beecroft, Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany
Motoko Abe, Gakugei University, Japan

The PEACE project was a teaching unit which was designed, implemented and evaluated in two primary school classes in Japan and Germany respectively. The project was carried out in an asynchronous virtual exchange format between the two classes. Using a Backward Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) approach, the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture was employed as a basis for the teaching unit, with the framework's descriptors for young learners serving as tools for designing and assessing both the teaching unit and its outcomes in the form of the participating students' products and utterances. Using the NVivo coding software for content analysis, the accompanying explorative action research study investigated the deployment of the various areas of competence by the students during the teaching unit and compared these across the classes. This was done to gain insights into both the context-dependency of the deployment of competences for democratic culture as well as the practicability and potentials of carrying out a bilateral asynchronous virtual exchange aiming to promote competences for democratic culture in young learners. Data analysed included learner worksheets and questionnaire results as well as the teacher-researchers' journals. The proposed talk will present the PEACE Project teaching unit as well as the accompanying research study and its results and will likewise address the question of the adequate fostering of linguistic competences in democracy education situated within English language pedagogy.

References

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Thursday, June 19
11:55-12:35 CEST

Successful tasks for virtual exchange projects with young learners

*Annika Kolb, Kirsten Birsak De Jersey, Harriet Jeeves & Nurjona Pinguri
Freiburg University of Education, Germany*

Virtual exchange (VE) provides ample opportunities for language, cultural and digital learning and it is claimed that even young learners can benefit from these authentic communicative situations (e.g. Dooly & Vinagre 2022; Pennock-Speck & Clavel Arroitia, 2022). While there is a considerable body of evidence for the effects of VE on older learners and university students (e.g. O'Dowd 2021), research on VE in primary and preschool settings is scarce. Since the choice of tasks seems to be a determining factor for the success of VE projects (Kurek & Müller-Hartmann 2017), we would like to focus on the question: What are criteria for successful tasks for VE projects with young learners? Our research has been conducted within the framework of the Erasmus+ project INVITED (Integrating primary and preschool virtual exchange projects into language teacher education). It includes an online survey with approx. 300 in-service teachers in five European countries (INVITED consortium 2024). Participants were asked to report on their experiences with and their attitudes towards VE. Furthermore, expert interviews with practitioners as well as several case studies in different primary school classrooms were conducted. Both the quantitative data analysis of the survey and the qualitative analysis of classroom observations, student and teacher interviews as well as learner texts shed light on criteria for successful VE tasks in the young learners' classroom. Based on these results, we will draw conclusions and present some recommendations on how to implement VE in the young learners' language classroom.

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Section 2: Assessment

Thursday, June 19
11:15-11:55 CEST

Classroom-based assessment: Transformation of teachers' practices through a blended MOOC

Sandie Mourão & Carolyn Leslie
Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal

Age-appropriate assessment in ELL should primarily contemplate formative approaches with a focus on oral skill development. Nevertheless, assessment practices remain troublesome, often involving testing and targeting literacy skills (Rixon & Prošić-Santovac, 2019). Assessment thus remains at odds with playful, oral-based approaches and is often influenced by general education which overlooks the specificities of ELL (Nikolov & Timpe-Laughlin, 2020). In Portugal this incongruence between teaching and learning goals in ELL teachers' assessment practices was identified in a nationwide study (Moreira et al., 2021) and a professional development intervention has been planned in response. The aim is to transform primary English teachers' classroom-based assessment practices through participation in a blended MOOC and understand the why and how of that change. The intervention follows a design-based research approach which is relevant for authentic, real-world interventions in educational contexts (McKenney & Reeves, 2012) and this presentation reports on the results of the first edition of the MOOC which is presently underway. The research question which we attempt to answer here is 'How, in what ways and why do the teachers' classroom-based assessment practices change by participation in the MOOC?'. Following a mixed-methods approach, data comes from pre-, post- and delayed post-intervention surveys, interaction data from social network analysis, teachers' e-portfolios, and teacher focus groups. The hypothesis is that the intervention will have a positive effect on teachers' classroom-based practices over the long term, resulting from the MOOC's learning environment which uses content as a trigger for learning through reflection, integrates theory with practice, enables immediate transferability and includes online peer interaction and peer review activities. Our presentation will conclude with a brief overview of the identified revisions made to the second edition of the MOOC to further improve the transformational process.

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Thursday, June 19
11:55-12:35 CEST

What primary English really accomplishes: An evidence-based test for fourth graders in Rhineland-Palatinate

Sarah Wunderlich
University of Koblenz, Germany

In 2004, Rhineland-Palatinate introduced compulsory foreign language education – either English or French – beginning in primary school (Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Weiterbildung, 2011). Starting today in grade three, the current administrative directive aims to integrate teaching across various subjects through "Integrierte Fremdsprachenarbeit" (IFA) (Unterrichtsorganisation in der Grundschule, 2024), an interdisciplinary approach similar to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Ideally, this approach involves daily language exposure through different subjects, yet, in practice, English is also taught as a standalone subject based on textbooks. Secondary teachers observe that this inconsistent instructional model results in highly heterogeneous language skills among fifth graders, complicating efforts to cater to all proficiency levels (Kolb & Legutke, 2019, p. 14). The absence of a standardized primary-level English test compounds this issue, as Primary English does not follow a binding curriculum but instead features a general framework. Consequently, student motivation suffers (Kolb, 2019, p. 137), highlighting the need for a clear, standardized measure of English proficiency. This paper introduces a project to develop a standardized English test for fourth graders in Rhineland-Palatinate. The project begins with a survey of topics, textbooks, and methods used in primary English classrooms, ensuring that the test reflects the content and approaches actually employed. This approach also seeks to garner support among primary educators by aligning test questions with familiar materials. The standardized assessment developed from the initial survey targets CEFR level A1, providing secondary teachers with diagnostic information on incoming students' proficiency. This tool is intended to help secondary teachers establish appropriate starting points in grade 5 and reduce redundant reviews, enabling differentiated instruction based on documented skill levels. With the study still in its early stages, this paper presents the preliminary test design and validation efforts, discussing implications for smoother primary-to-secondary transitions, and continuity in language education.

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Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives

Thursday, June 19
11:15-11:55 CEST

Feelings towards learning English and spontaneous oral English production skills by pupils at the end of elementary school in France

Marie-Ange Dat

Laboratoire de Linguistique, Nantes, France

Our study focuses on learning English in elementary school in France. We are interested in the recurrent difficulties experienced by pupils in terms of psycho-affective well-being and oral production in their second language. We seek to find out 1) how they perceive this learning, and 2) what effective level of spontaneous oral expression they reach when they enter secondary school at the age of 11, after five years of learning English. Indeed, the immediacy in which oral exchanges take place, combined with the lack of competence in the early stages of learning, makes oral production particularly anxiety-provoking, and leads to a documented phenomenon known as language anxiety (Horwitz and Cope, 1986; Dewaele, 2017). In addition, the ability to interact orally and spontaneously appears to be a skill that can hardly be mobilized in today's learners (Narcy-Combes & Mcallister, 2011). To answer our questions, we first conducted 51 semi-structured interviews in 6 classes of 6th graders (aged 11, first year of secondary school) from three different socio-economic backgrounds. Qualitative analysis enables us to show where the main problems lie for the learners themselves: language anxiety; lack of interest; poor quality and quantity of teaching. Then, we administered an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI, a standardized test of spontaneous speaking ability with scores ranging from 10 to 21; Macfarlane, 2020) to 179 pupils from the same classes (post-test). These 179 pupils had never learned English before entering elementary school at age 6, i.e. 5 years earlier (pre-test, OPI score equivalent to 10). We'll see that the average OPI score is significantly (P value < 0.001) low at 11.1 (standard deviation 0.7), indicating a very low level of spontaneous speaking ability in English L2 after 5 years of learning at elementary school. We will analyze these disappointing results and discuss what might enable a more favorable evolution.

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Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives

Thursday, June 19
11:55-12:35 CEST

Using captioned animated cartoons with young L2 learners

Daniela Avello, University of O'Higgins, Chile

Carmen Muñoz, University of Barcelona, Spain

An increasing number of researchers have devoted their attention to the use of audiovisual input for L2 learning purposes since viewing has not only been found to be one of the most popular out-of-school activities but also an effective language learning tool (De Wilde et al., 2022). While the use of textual support (i.e., captions) has proven to be effective at fostering comprehension and the learning of different language aspects, only a handful of studies have been conducted with young L2 learners. Likewise, the scant evidence with primary school learners from input-limited contexts (where dubbing is the norm) has revealed that their exposure to audiovisual input is limited, and it only gradually increases over the years (Muñoz, 2020). Hence, the incorporation of audiovisual input and explicit training for viewing in the L2 classroom may be the key to improve young L2 learners' viewing experience and encourage them to use these resources at home (Webb, 2015). The present study adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore a group of fourth and fifth graders' perceptions of their extensive viewing experience with a captioned animated cartoon (11 episodes) by means of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview to shed light on some of the aspects that should be considered when using audiovisual materials with this underrepresented group in the L2 classroom, namely age, input characteristics and the length of the time lags between viewing sessions (i.e. viewing distribution). On the whole, learners reported high levels of enjoyment and showed evidence of their capacity to take advantage of multimodality (audio, captions and images) to fill knowledge gaps and enhance comprehension. Yet, their perceptions and capacity to face challenges appeared to be influenced by age, input characteristics and viewing distribution.

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Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives

Thursday, June 19
13:30-14:10 CEST

Motivation in the primary classroom: Voices of Chilean young language learners

Maria-Jesus Inostroza, University of Concepción, Chile

Pia Tabali, Universidad Autónoma de Chile, Chile

In Chile, as in many Latin American countries (Copland et al., 2024), a curriculum for Primary English Language Teaching (PELT) has been suggested for state schools (Barahona, 2016). After a decade of its implementation, there remains limited understanding about children's language learning experiences (Inostroza et al., 2024; Tabalí, 2020). Over the past decade, it has become clear that motivation in early language learning (ELL) is a distinct phenomenon (e.g. Mihaljević Djigunović & Nikolov, 2019), requiring an eclectic approach that integrates elements from traditional models (e.g. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2000) while also considering specific learning conditions and experiences (Fenyvesi, 2020). This talk presents a study that explores children's perspectives on the learning experiences that motivate them to learn English as a school subject. The study, involving 4th and 5th grade students from two state-run schools in Concepción, used participatory interviews and diamond ranking activities. Thematic analysis revealed that children value collaborative activities, outdoor games, and opportunities for autonomy. They also emphasized the role of Spanish (L1) in the English classroom, advocating for pedagogical translanguaging to support their learning. The discussion will emphasize the value of incorporating children's voices in shaping educational policies to enhance their language learning experiences.

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Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives

Thursday, June 19
14:10-14:50 CEST

Visual approaches to motivation of young language learners: Motigraph as data elicitation tool

Junjie Li
University of Warwick, UK

Children's motivation to learn English as a foreign language remains a much-debated domain in applied linguistics research. Existing literature suggests a general decline in early language learning motivation throughout primary schooling, yet little is known about how young learners themselves make sense of such motivational trajectories in context. The lack of learner voice is partly due to insufficient methodological innovations in acknowledging children's agency. In this qualitative study, I examine the role of a visual instrument, namely the motigraph, in a longitudinal project involving children ages 9 to 12. Drawing on data from a bilingual school in China, I attempt to visualise participants' motivational ups and downs by researching with children. The participatory role of children is reconsidered as social actors, rather than traditional passive informants (Pinter, 2023). Two learner groups are instructed to self-monitor their motivation change via motigraphs, over five months. This process is supplemented by reflective tools, including bi-weekly focus group interviews, writings, and visual artefacts. All sessions are facilitated iteratively to elicit participants' perceptions of English as a foreign language learning and related experiences in and outside the school settings. Following a person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009), I analyse the micro-processes of young participants' meaning-making in situ to unveil how motigraph mediates language learners' metacognitive thinking and talk-in-interaction over time. Thematic analysis is adopted to inductively analyse the 25-hour video transcripts and 258 copies of visual artefacts. The initial findings attest to the highly fluid and context-sensitive nature of learners' second language learning motivation. While visualising motivation, young learners agentively make sense of their personal lifeworlds, construct L2 selves, reinterpret the meaning of motivation, and appropriate the motigraph task for addressing their immediate social goals. Learners also report that the embodied participation experience itself is enjoyable, motivating, and even transformative, with the simple affordance of motigraph curves. Concluding with pedagogical implications, this study aims to shed light on how self-determined and self-regulated L2 learning behaviours could be sustained in school contexts.

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Section 3: Young Learners' Voices and Perspectives

Thursday, June 19
14:50-15:30 CEST

The earlier the better? Primary school learners' opinions towards the appropriate time to start foreign language teaching

Julia Reckermann, University of Münster, Germany
Stefanie Frisch, Goethe-University Frankfurt, Germany

Early foreign language learning has become established in Europe in the context of its key policy of promoting linguistic diversity. In Germany, though, English teaching is facing a great deal of opposition, particularly in educational politics (Wilden & Porsch, 2020), since learners in Germany cannot keep up in international comparisons in the subjects of Mathematics and German (e.g. McElvany et al. 2021). Politicians are thus discussing what should be included in basic education in the 21st century and a central argument is to give priority to German literacy as well as numeracy and to not put too excessive demands on the learners. So far, only experts of educational policy and of foreign language education as well as parents have expressed their opinions on the topic. Yet, children develop metacognitive abilities from as early as primary school age. Research suggests that they develop a certain awareness of their own abilities and willingness to learn and are often able to state quite precisely what motivates them and what is overwhelming for them (Flavell 1979). Against this background, the attitude of 3,274 Year 3 and 4 primary school learners towards foreign language teaching was investigated via a questionnaire consisting of mainly closed items. The results show that the majority of the learners prefers an onset of English in either Year 1 or Year 3 and only a little minority wishes the onset to be at secondary school level in Year 5. Reasons outlined by the learners are manifold and, for instance, include the learners' understanding of English as a global language or their experience of joy and success in English lessons. Results also provide insights into multilingual children's priorities – a group of learners that is often at centerstage in the political debate.

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Section 4: Inclusivity and Civic Learning

Thursday, June 19
13:30-14:10 CEST

Fostering inclusive EFL teaching to young learners: Effects of a training course

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In a society that is increasingly diverse and where English has established itself as lingua franca, promoting EFL inclusive education that makes the FL accessible to all seems essential to guarantee equity in the full development of pupils' social and professional relationships (Masoni, 2021). Since research about inclusion in the EFL classroom remains scarce (Camila-Villarreal, & Méndez-Rivera, 2021), this study aims to contribute to this area of research by investigating pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices to know whether the beliefs-practice relationship may either be congruent or dissonant, to recognise weak areas that may be causing the latter, and to know the effects that a teacher education course about inclusion in the EFL classroom may have on that beliefs-practice relationship so as to contribute to the implementation of inclusive instruction. Participants were 48 pre-service primary education teachers during an EFL programme at a university in Spain. Data about beliefs was collected before and after the course by means of questionnaires, which were the same at both moments to observe any evolution in the participants' beliefs. Data about teaching practices was collected through didactic units that the participants created. A mixed-methods approach was used to analyse the data. Results showed that participants did not know what inclusive instruction was, had never thought about implementing it, and lacked knowledge both about specific pedagogies that can be implemented and about the characteristics of effective inclusive teaching materials. The course, however, proved itself effective at shaping participants' beliefs, which was further confirmed by a congruent beliefs-practice relationship that the didactic units evidenced. Participants were able to construct an EFL professional cognitive framework that considered inclusive education, and were able to design effective inclusive EFL teaching materials. These findings raise awareness on the significance that teacher education has in shaping pre-service teachers' beliefs into more favourable ones in order to support those teachers in implementing inclusion in the EFL classroom deliberately and successfully.

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Section 4: Inclusivity and Civic Learning

Thursday, June 19
14:10-14:50 CEST

Children with AD(H)D in primary school programs with different English intensity: An exploratory study

Anja Steinlen & Thorsten Piske
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Bilingual programs often have an elitist reputation, and students with cognitive or linguistic difficulties, such as those with AD(H)D, are frequently excluded from these programs. Yet, effective school programs should be open to all student groups, including at-risk students (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2021). AD(H)D, a hereditary disorder affecting attention, concentration, and impulsivity, impacts approximately 10% of all students (WHO, 2022). Research on the foreign language (FL) skills of students with AD(H)D is limited (see e.g., Angelovska & Kaldonek-Crnjaković, 2024 for a review), which is particularly true for research investigating primary school children attending bilingual programs. This pilot study examines the linguistic performance of 273 fourth graders with and without attention deficits in four German-English primary programs with varying FL intensity. The 26 L1 German students with ADHD were identified by using a standardized attention test (d2-R; Brickenkamp et al., 2010). They were not reported to have any other deficits. The students' results on two standardized German (L1) reading and writing tests and four English (L2) tests were compared with the results of their non-AD(H)D peers in each program. As expected, higher FL intensity correlated with better FL test outcomes (cf. Steinlen, 2021). Interestingly, this trend also held true for students with AD(H)D, who achieved higher scores in more intensive programs than in less intensive ones. Moreover, AD(H)D students scored similarly to their peers without AD(H)D in some English tests and performed comparably well in the German tests. These findings suggest that, regardless of program intensity, AD(H)D does not necessarily hinder FL competence. However, this outcome depends on teachers trained to address AD(H)D students' needs. How these needs can be addressed by teachers will be discussed at the end of this talk.

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Section 4: Inclusivity and Civic Learning

Thursday, June 19
14:50-15:30 CEST

A social justice language curriculum: Insights from learning materials for TEYL

María Gimena San Martín, Melina Tejeda & Agostina Escobar Bosco
National University of Córdoba, Argentina

Current agendas for social justice (Banegas & Sanchez, 2024; Ortaçtepe Hart, 2023) and intercultural citizenship (Porto & Byram, 2015) in language education resonate with critical pedagogy (Freire, 2000), since they conceive of students as agents of change who can effect transformations in and beyond classroom contexts. From these perspectives, education can play a critical role in helping students develop civic competences (Giroux, 2010) as they critically reflect upon social justice issues, actively and systematically engage in collaborative dialogue and problem-solving thinking and agentically take different courses of actions to question and address inequities and exclusion. This study aims to explore the intersection of social justice and teaching English as foreign language to young learners (TEYL). Recognizing the relevance of social justice both in the literature and the national curriculum, we sought to answer the following research question: To what extent do materials support a social justice language curriculum? Data gathered came from curricular documents, syllabi and textbooks used for teaching EFL to young learners (aged 9 to 12) at semi-private schools in Córdoba, Argentina. We resorted to qualitative content analysis to identify themes that show adherence to social justice principles. The findings indicate varying degrees of correspondence between curricular guidelines regarding social justice and teaching materials, as well as gaps and emerging needs in the curriculum to help students move from awareness to advocacy, activism and action (Ortaçtepe Hart, 2023). Ultimately, our findings will contribute to the development of more effective language teaching strategies to equip learners with the linguistic skills and ethical framework needed to develop social responsibility and global citizenship. The affordances of formulating a social justice language curriculum for young learners as well as implications for research and pedagogy will be discussed.

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Section 5: Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Thursday, June 19
13:30-14:10 CEST

Metalinguistic explanations and reflection on form by young EFL learners during a dictogloss task

Paloma Delgado-Garza & María Del Pilar García Mayo
University of the Basque Country, Spain

As content-based approaches have been gaining traction during the last few decades, research has turned to identifying successful paths to redirecting attention to forms (e.g. Ellis, 2016; Lyster, 2007). In this regard, explicit interventions such as metalinguistic explanations (ME) can constitute a promising tool for grammar learning in the classroom. ME explicitly debrief how a given morphosyntactic feature works, have been proven to promote reflection on form in both adults and teenagers (e.g. Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Bozorgian & Yazdani, 2021). In spite of the above, there is still a dearth of studies focusing on young learners (YLS) and offer inconclusive evidence (Delgado-Garza & García Mayo, 2024; Gorman & Ellis, 2019; Serrano, 2011), as it is not yet clear how factors such as age, the target feature (TF) of choice and the nature of the instructional setting can affect how learners profit from ME. The purpose of this study is to discover whether ME can a) foster oral accuracy at the time of using two TFs during child task-based interaction b) increase written accuracy in regards to these TFs, and c) promote discussion about form among YLS. Using a pretest/post-test design, 35 L1 Spanish 11-to-12 year-olds were paired up in homogeneous dyads and a trio and then split into a control (17, CG) and a treatment (18, TG) group. They were then asked to complete a pre-test dictogloss task, which was considered a suitable meaning-focused activity for promoting collaborative discussion on form. The treatment group engaged with the ME in two weekly separate 60-minute sessions, which focused on two TF: third person singular morpheme –s and possessive determiners his and her. Immediate and delayed post-test dictogloss tasks were carried out one and six weeks after the last of the two intervention rounds. The TG reflected significant gains in both oral and written accuracy at the task during the immediate post-test; likewise, the treatment pairs engaged in significantly more discussions about form than their control group counterparts. However, these gains were not retained over time, suggesting a need to make consistent efforts to engage students in metalinguistic reflection to promote both oral and written accuracy in task-based environments.

Section 5: Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Thursday, June 19
14:10-14:50 CEST

Designing context-sensitive tasks for young language learners

Lorraine Sova & Veronika Timpe-Laughlin
Educational Testing Service, United States

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has become increasingly popular in young language learner (YLL) education. However, YLL teachers are often uncertain how to appropriately design and implement pedagogic tasks (Carless, 2003). In this presentation, we will report on a case study conducted with an English teacher, a principal, and a third-grade class at a German primary school in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, in which educators sought to introduce a more interactive teaching approach for supporting YLLs' English language development. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of TBLT (e.g., Long, 2015; Kolb & Schocker, 2021) and sustainable learning in education (Hays & Reinders, 2020), we explored how the educators designed and implemented a task-based lesson for promoting YLLs' oral skills to understand educators' perceptions regarding the usefulness of the approach with their students. The study was guided by three research questions:

- What contextual factors (e.g., classroom environment, learner characteristics) are considered in task development?
- What considerations guide the sequencing and implementation of the pedagogic tasks?
- How do the educators perceive the use of tasks in fostering oral language skills and sustainable language learning?

To answer these questions, we collected data through observations and semi-structured interviews with the educators. We accompanied them in their development and implementation of a storytelling task, which included pre-, during-, and post-task phases involving pedagogical activities, including interactive read-alouds and role-plays. Data were analyzed using descriptive analysis (Miles et al., 2014). The findings provide a contextualized account of how the educators designed locally relevant, student-centered tasks, and how they sequenced the activities to support target task completion. We will critically discuss the findings, while also highlighting educators' perceptions regarding how well TBLT aligns with sustainable learning principles. Finally, we will discuss practical recommendations for designing sustainable, context-sensitive tasks while suggesting further research on TBLT and sustainable learning approaches for YLLs.

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Section 5: Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Thursday, June 19
14:50-15:30 CEST

Exploring task design practices in primary school EFL contexts: Leveraging technology within the design process

Vera Trager & Roger Gilabert
University of Barcelona, Spain

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as a prominent approach in foreign language instruction, emphasizing language acquisition through meaningful tasks (Ellis, Skehan, Shintani & Lambert, 2019; Long, 2015). Empirical evidence suggests that TBLT outperforms traditional approaches in fostering language acquisition, enhancing learner engagement, and receiving positive teacher evaluations (Bryfonski & McKay, 2019). A growing number of countries worldwide have introduced mandatory English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction into primary school curricula, making TBLT increasingly relevant in these contexts. While theoretical foundations and methodological aspects of TBLT have been widely explored, there remains a notable lack of empirical research on task design practices, specifically in primary school settings. This gap particularly affects our understanding of the task design process of teachers. This study addresses this research gap by investigating how primary school EFL teachers design tasks within the TBLT framework, with a specific focus on the integration of a web-based design tool. It aims to elucidate the cognitive processes and procedural steps employed by teachers during task design, providing a deeper understanding of their practices and the theoretical aspects they prioritise. Research Question: What specific steps and cognitive processes do primary school EFL teachers engage in when designing language teaching tasks? The study involved 11 in-service and 24 pre-service primary school teachers who participated in think-aloud sessions during task design. Data collection included audio and screen recordings, which were analysed using Atlas.ti. An adapted coding scheme (Johnson, 2003) was employed, and intercoder agreement was established to ensure reliability. Findings reveal task design as a multi-layered cyclical process, highlighting the cognitive processes and design steps teachers follow. For instance, they create roles, groups, and prompts, consider pre- and post-task activities, and brainstorm innovative ideas. This research contributes to the field of early language learning by providing evidence-based insights into task design practices that can inform further research and enhance teacher education.

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Section 6: Content-and-Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Friday, June 20
9:30-10:10 CEST

French in primary school? – Bien sûr! An empirical study on the effects of CLIL and regular French lessons on majority and minority language students' French writing and speaking skills

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The effectiveness of bilingual primary school programs (early CLIL programs) in comparison with mainstream foreign language lessons is still an important research topic (e.g. Gebauer et al. 2013; Möller et al. 2018). Various studies have shown that pupils' foreign language competencies are strongly affected by the overall intensity of a foreign language program and that an intensive mainstream program can be at least as effective as a less intensive CLIL program (cf. Steinlen 2018). Another variable that has recently received more attention in the literature is linguistic background. In studies examining German-English CLIL programs, primary school students' foreign language competencies have usually not been found to be affected by linguistic background (e.g. Böttger & Müller 2020, Steinlen & Piske 2016, Zaunbauer & Möller 2006, 2007). This study investigates whether this finding also holds true for primary school students attending German-French programs, which have only been examined in a rather small number of studies so far. We present the data of more than 400 Bavarian primary school students who either attended a German-French CLIL program or a voluntary regular French program. The major goal of the study is to determine which level of competence majority language and minority language students attending either the CLIL program or the regular program can reach in French speaking and writing skills. In addition, we examine whether the minority and the majority language students show differences in their development of L2/L3 French between grades 1 and 4. In order to investigate these research issues a large test battery is employed which includes questionnaires for the parents and teachers, cognitive base-line tests (cf. Raven 2001), self-developed French tests adapted to the program (cf. ISB 2023; Schwanke/Uhl 2023) as well as standardized tests for German (cf. Lenhart et al. 2018). Statistical mean value comparisons and regression analyses were employed for the evaluation. Our results show that in the first year of learning, majority language students tend to achieve better results in French in the regular program whereas minority language students in the second and third year tend to achieve better results in the bilingual program. Most importantly, the longer the learning time, the more minority language students seem to benefit from the bilingual program.

Section 6: Content-and-Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Friday, June 20
10:10-10:50 CEST

Beliefs and perceptions on translanguaging in CLIL primary classrooms

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University of Barcelona, Spain

This study explores translanguaging in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classrooms. CLIL has been praised for advancing L2 acquisition by integrating content learning and language use (Muñoz & Navés, 2007). However, the role of translanguaging – strategically using the L1 within L2 instruction – remains contentious. Some argue that translanguaging facilitates comprehension, supports meaningful interaction, and enhances social development as multilingual speakers (Wei, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011). However, others contend that it may reduce L2 immersion, lower content learning, or foster inequalities due to varying proficiency levels found in the same classroom (Escobar Urmeneta, 2011; Llinares & Evnitskaya, 2021). To address these concerns, this study looks into the perceptions and beliefs about translanguaging of all the members of the educational community in a primary school context, and tries to answer the following research question: In what ways do beliefs about translanguaging vary among primary school students, teachers, and stakeholders, and how do these beliefs shape CLIL implementation? Data were gathered through the use of surveys and interviews with 60 students, 5 teachers, 3 stakeholders and 60 parents to get a clear idea of the perception each member of the educational community may have over the use of the L1 in CLIL lessons. Data will also be used to assess the influence, if any, that those perceptions can have over the design and implementation of CLIL courses. Findings aim to shed some light on how translanguaging is perceived across different educational levels among young learners in a primary school context and its connection with course development policies.

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Section 7: Literacy

Friday, June 20
9:30-10:10 CEST

The use of learner-generated materials in writing skills development with young Norwegian EFL learners

Nina Lazarevic
University of Stavanger, Norway

Writing in English as a foreign language (EFL) is a dual endeavour for young learners (YL): They are both learning English and developing literacy skills (Larsen, 2013). Studies that explore learner-generated materials (LGM), objects that pupils use for self-study and peer-teaching, focus on older students (Lambert et al., 2017) where creating audio-visual materials outperforms creating textual materials (Ribosa & Duran, 2022); the emergent writing skills and literacy development of young EFL learners are under-researched. Studies suggest that LGM may support writing development through increased ownership and metacognitive awareness (Choi & Nunan, 2022). To examine the affordances of using LGM for developing writing skills and increasing engagement, a longitudinal qualitative study is being conducted with YL (aged 8-10) in Norway. The paper presents a section of this study, focusing on how LGM can be used to help YL with paragraph writing. The data collected through surveys and focus-group interviews over a two-year-period with 18 YL are analyzed using thematic analysis (Brown & Clarke, 2021) while writing samples (prompts, sentence starters, individual sentences, collaborative and narrative writing) are analyzed for required language according to the National Curriculum (MER, 2019) and CEFR (2020). Comparing the development of writing and metacognition of learners might provide an insight into how best to incorporate LGM into EFL instruction with YL. The data analysis is still being conducted; however, preliminary findings showed pupils' positive reactions, increasing positive engagement and development of cohesive texts reflecting the pupils' own interests.

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Section 7: Literacy

Friday, June 20
10:10-10:50 CEST

The connection of teachers' linguistic knowledge, classroom practices, and self-reflection in the teaching of emergent literacy to young learners of English

Anne Schrader & Karen Glaser
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Teachers' subject knowledge is considered a prerequisite for the design of teaching-learning processes and for teaching performance (Legutke et al., 2022). However, the relationship between the Content Knowledge (CK; Shulman, 1986) generated in the reference disciplines and the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) necessary for good pedagogical practice has still not entirely been clarified (Appel, 2018). This is also true for the role of teachers' linguistic knowledge for emergent L2 literacy instruction in primary English language teaching (PELT) (Moats, 2009). To address this gap, this study examined the development of the linguistic CK and PCK of two PELT teachers on the phonography (phonology-orthography relationship) of English and relates this to their teaching practice. Classroom videos and qualitative interviews were collected as part of an overarching design-based project on teaching literacy in PELT using a phonics-based approach. Using Reflective Thematic Analysis (Brown & Clarke, 2012), the interviews were analyzed deductively using the FALKO-E (Kirchhoff, 2017) classification for CK (subject-matter knowledge) and PCK (student-oriented representation, knowledge of cognitions, knowledge of teaching/learning potential) as well as inductively for emerging categories, and subsequently related to critical incidents from the lesson recordings. In addition to the development of PCK and CK and its manifestation in teaching activities, the data provide numerous meta-comments on perceived (lack of) knowledge/certainty and beliefs. The data thus provide insights into the extent to which the increase in cognitive knowledge about the phonography of English (CK) and the phonics approach (PCK) affected teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of literacy in the classroom and thus both directly and indirectly influenced their teaching activities. Based on the fact that linguistics often excludes aspects of spelling in its consideration of phonetics/phonology, the presentation identifies phonographic professional knowledge as a desideratum and concludes with implications for L2 teacher education programs.

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Section 7: Literacy

Friday, June 20
13:00-13:40 CEST

Fostering multilingual literacy in primary education: Advancing writing skills through the PYCTO methodology

Maria Orcasitas Vicandi, Andrea Perales-Fernandez-De-Gamboa, Imanol Galeano Díez, Izaskun Molás Olalde & Paloma Rodríguez Miñambres
University of the Basque Country, Spain

In response to the growing need for enhancing literacy across multiple languages in primary education, the Basque Government's Department of Education has launched an ambitious project aimed at improving children's writing, reading, and oral skills in Basque, Spanish, and English. At the core of this initiative is the PYCTO methodology, first developed in Barcelona in 2012, which was introduced in select schools within the Basque Autonomous Community during the 2021/2022 academic year as a pilot program. The methodology has already shown promising results in Catalonia, particularly in improving the quality of student writing in narrative and explanatory texts. While previous studies between 2013 and 2016 explored its impact on third to sixth graders in Spanish and Catalan, its effectiveness in earlier grades and across three linguistically distinct languages-Basque, Spanish, and English-remains underexplored. To address this gap, the Basque Government initiated an investigation focusing on the impact of PYCTO on reading comprehension, writing development, linguistic proficiency and transfer, as well as teachers' perceptions of this multilingual approach. This study centers specifically on the gains in writing skills observed during the 2023/2024 academic year, examining the outcomes of the intervention among students in the second and third grades of primary education. Utilizing both holistic and analytic approaches, the study assessed 843 compositions across Basque, Spanish, and English from students aged 8-10. Quantitative measures of lexical diversity, along with holistic evaluations of writing competence across four dimensions, provided a comprehensive analysis of students' progress. The findings reveal that students who participated in the multilingual intervention exhibited significantly stronger writing performance compared to those in control groups. The results were consistent across both third and fourth-grade levels, indicating that integrating a multilingual pedagogical approach yields more substantial improvements in writing proficiency than treating each language in isolation. These outcomes underscore the potential of multilingual education strategies to enrich literacy development in diverse linguistic settings.

Section 7: Literacy

Friday, June 20
13:40-14:20 CEST

Evaluating the impact of phonics and whole word approaches on L2 English literacy in young L1 German ELLs

Heike Mlakar & Joanna Hirst-Plein, University of Hildesheim, Germany
Martin J. Koch, University of Würzburg, Germany

L2 English spelling and reading are complex activities involving cognitive-linguistic processes that require learners to integrate phonetic, orthographic and semantic knowledge to accurately comprehend and produce written language (Ehri, 2014). This study aimed to compare second-language (L2) spelling, reading and linguistic abilities in young first-language (L1) German English-language learners (ELLs) following two years of phonics, whole word or combined instruction. Additionally, the focus of our investigation was to identify and analyse the most common types of misspellings and to examine how L1 German phonology and orthography affect L2 English spelling errors. Participants (N = 75) were ELLs in grades 3 and 4 with German as their L1. Our research employed a longitudinal approach, assessing spelling accuracy with both real words and pseudowords. We also administered three measures of reading skills (L2 reading comprehension, L2 oral reading rate and accuracy) and six standardised assessments of cognitive-linguistic abilities (working memory, phonological short-term memory, non-verbal intelligence, phonological awareness, L2 receptive grammar and vocabulary). Our findings reveal that there were no significant differences between groups regarding real word and pseudoword spelling accuracy. However, phonics instruction was associated with improved L2 receptive vocabulary knowledge, while a combined approach (phonics and whole word instruction) enhanced children's L2 reading rate. Spelling errors were classified using a modified version of the Phonological, Orthographic and Morphological Assessment of Spelling (POMAS) framework (Bahr et al., 2012). Results indicate that groups differed significantly in the types of errors learners made. Phonological errors were predominant in all three groups, but the fewest phonological and L1 interference errors were observed in the phonics group. We discuss the results in relation to the Triple Word Form Theory (e.g., Bahr et al., 2012; Berninger et al., 2010) and Orthographic Mapping Theory (Ehri, 2014). Furthermore, we highlight educational implications to enhance L2 spelling instruction in foreign language settings.

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Section 8: Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development

Friday, June 20
9:30-10:10 CEST

The effect of attentional abilities on vocabulary and grammar acquisition in young ESL learners

Ramona Böttcher & Kristin Kersten, University of Mannheim, Germany
Katharina Ponto, University of Hildesheim, Germany

Foreign language acquisition takes place within a complex interplay of internal and environmental factors (de Bot et al., 2007). While studies highlight an interrelation between cognitive abilities and language acquisition (Bialystok et al., 2017), recent research focuses increasingly on the role of stimulating interactions as provided in the classroom ('input quality') and in the family ('parent-child-interaction'); the latter often correlates strongly with the family's socioeconomic status (SES) (Kersten, 2023). This study examines the longitudinal effect of teachers' input quality and young learners' attentional abilities and SES on their L2-English vocabulary and grammar acquisition. N=333 learners (grades 1-3) from different German elementary programs were tested for cognitive and linguistic skills over the course of two years. At test-time T1, Participants carried out a standardized attention test. A year later (test-time T2), L2-vocabulary reception was elicited via the British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS), L2-grammar reception via the ELIAS Grammar Test. Teachers' input quality was measured through videography using the Teacher Input Observation Scheme (TIOS) (Kersten et al., 2018), and children's SES through a parental questionnaire. Research question: Do young learners' attentional abilities and SES, as well as their teachers' input quality, predict learners' L2 lexical and grammar skills at T2? Regression analyses including attentional abilities, teacher input quality and SES as independent variables showed a positive prediction of T2-lexical skills (attention: $R^2 = .301$, $\beta = .155$, $p < .001$, teaching: $R^2 = .260$, $\beta = .213$, $p < .001$, SES: $R^2 = .244$, $\beta = .217$, $p < .001$), as well as of T2-grammar (attention: $R^2 = .278$, $\beta = .174$, $p < .001$, teaching: $R^2 = .183$, $\beta = .182$, $p < .001$, SES: $R^2 = .225$, $\beta = .243$, $p < .001$). School program (immersion/ regular school) and grade level were controlled for in both analyses. While strong effects of SES on language development are a robust finding in SLA research, the effects of teachers' input quality as a predictor of L2-development (with a comparable effect size for L2-lexicon) highlights the potential of language-sensitive strategies in the classroom. The positive effect of attention on both L2 lexical and grammar outcomes a year later, moreover, adds an important aspect to research on the association of linguistic and cognitive skills. Results will be discussed with regard to the interplay of learners' attentional capacities and teachers' input strategies for L2 development (cf. Kersten, 2021).

Section 8: Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development

Friday, June 20
10:10-10:50 CEST

Attrition or retention? The impact of instructional gaps on French language competencies

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Our study is a follow-up investigation to a Bavarian Bilingual Primary School Program, in which French is taught either in extracurricular learning groups who receive two regular French lessons per week or as part of a bilingual German-French program (cf. Uhl et al. 2023). Previous findings show that students finish primary school with basic French skills ranging between A1.1 and A1.2 of the CEFR. This study seeks to trace the long-term development of the students' French language competencies after their transition to secondary school. The central aim of our study is to examine whether the students' foreign language skills are retained or attrite (cf. Weltens 1989) during the gap in French language instruction that typically occurs in grade 5 when students transition from primary to secondary school. Most students who continue to learn French at a German "Gymnasium" experience a one-year hiatus because they usually continue with English as their first foreign language in fifth grade and resume French only in sixth grade. We test students' foreign language skills at the beginning and end of their first year of French in secondary school, evaluating listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The study compares three groups: students who learned French in a bilingual primary school program and continue to learn French after a one-year hiatus in grade 6; students who also started to learn French in a bilingual primary school program and continue to learn French without any interruption in grade 5; and students who start to learn French in grades 5 or 6 without prior exposure in primary school. This design allows for a comprehensive analysis of the sustainability of different approaches to French instruction in primary and secondary school. Additionally, the study also examines students' motivation and attitudes, as well as the pedagogical strategies used by teachers. In this talk, preliminary findings from the first data collection will be presented. This research will contribute to understanding the long-term impact of early (bilingual) foreign language education and provide insights into the possible effects of a one-year hiatus in French language education on the long-term development of students' foreign language competencies.

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Section 8: Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development

Friday, June 20
13:00-13:40 CEST

'May I have a donut, please?' The impact of L2 pragmatics instruction on request strategies with third-grade Norwegian EFL learners

Vibeke Klovning
University of Stavanger, Norway

The study aimed to address a research gap by examining whether L2 pragmatics instruction impacted the request production abilities of Norwegian third-grade EFL learners (Klovning, 2024). This research focused on the often-overlooked pragmatic needs of young language learners (YLLs). Drawing on theories of pragmalinguistics and request strategies, the instructional intervention was structured around three phases: Input, Awareness Raising, and Practice (Glaser, Forthcoming). Over three weeks, learners engaged with diverse materials, including picture books, interactive request prompts, and role-play exercises to build awareness and practice using various English request strategies from Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project coding manual. The study used a pre- and post-test design, with data analyzed through Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) CCSARP coding manual to assess changes in the learners' request production, directness levels, and use of internal and external modification. This approach captured changes in the learners' communicative competencies. The findings reveal a progression in the learners' pragmatic abilities as they moved from simple object naming to conventionally indirect forms, accompanied by a variation of modal verbs. These results suggest that even brief, structured interventions can have an impact on the pragmatic competence of YLLs, supporting their ability to communicate effectively in a second language (Klovning, 2024). This research adds to a growing body of evidence supporting the inclusion of L2 pragmatics in early language education (Myrset, 2021). By demonstrating the benefits of pragmatics instruction in elementary EFL contexts, this study offers valuable insights for educators seeking to foster communicative competence through structured, pragmatically focused activities.

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Section 8: Longitudinal Studies of YLs' L2 Development

Friday, June 20
13:40-14:20 CEST

Investigating primary school children's L2 receptive vocabulary progression in England: A longitudinal study

*Nicola Morea, Rowena Kasprowicz, Carmen Silvestri, Jasmin Silver, Clare Savory & Suzanne Graham
University of Reading, UK*

In September 2014, foreign languages became a compulsory part of the primary school curriculum in England, with the clear expectation that learners should make "substantial progress in one language" (DfE, 2013) throughout the four years of language learning at primary school (age 7-11). However, schools face considerable difficulties (e.g., limited time, low teacher confidence and expertise, limited guidance), in particular due to lack of clarity regarding core content and learning outcomes for language learning at this level. Existing research exploring young learners' linguistic progression in instructed settings demonstrates progress in vocabulary size and grammatical knowledge development (Courtney et al., 2017) and in listening, reading and speaking skills (Cable et al., 2012). However, progress tends to be slow, variable and influenced by the amount and quality of language input available (Graham et al., 2017). Further research is needed to examine in depth the route and rate of language learning, in contexts where teaching time is limited and out-of-school exposure is minimal. In this paper, we will present the initial findings of a longitudinal study exploring the rate of primary school children's receptive vocabulary knowledge in French, German and Spanish in England. Approximately 2,000 students aged 7-11 completed a receptive vocabulary test in January 2024 and January 2025. The presentation will initially discuss the test design process, including the identification of target language and the psychometric properties of the tests (e.g., person and item reliability, construct validity). We will then present both cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence from test data to evaluate the presence and magnitude of progression in students' receptive vocabulary knowledge. Based on our findings, we will consider the extent to which the rate of vocabulary learning aligns with the National Curriculum objectives as well as with the findings from previous research. We will conclude with recommendations for teachers and researchers engaging in vocabulary teaching and assessment in primary schools, particularly in English-speaking national contexts.

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Section 9: A Focus on Teachers

Friday, June 20
13:00-13:40 CEST

Understanding teachers' perspectives: A qualitative study on non specialist early foreign language teachers' educational and curricular needs

Katharina Ghamarian, Pia Resnik & Silvia Rieder-Marschallinger, University College of Christian Churches of Teacher Education and University of Vienna

Silvia Lasnik, University College of Teacher Education Carinthia, Austria

This research project was initiated in response to a recent reform of Austrian education policy (BMBWF, 2022) and the consequent introduction of new curricula for foreign language (FL) teaching in primary and lower secondary schools, including making FL classes mandatory in years 3 and 4 of primary school, with formal grading. The study aims to address the needs and prerequisites identified by teachers regarding teacher education and the curriculum. In total, 27 primary school generalist teachers with differing levels of teaching experience from all nine Austrian provinces were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The interviews sought to gather opinions on the prerequisites for successful early FL teaching, in terms of teacher education and curriculum design, as well as identified needs. In alignment with prior studies (e.g., Cameron, 2001; Papp, 2011), qualitative content analysis of the interviews revealed that while teachers expressed satisfaction with the language didactic courses offered within their teacher education, they expressed a need for greater support regarding their own language competence. Furthermore, the findings indicated that teachers desired a more integrated approach to theory and practice based on the perception that theoretical aspects presented in programmes were not fully aligned with the realities of the classroom (see Buchholz, 2007). In terms of curricular needs, the majority of teachers wished to enhance not only the extent of English education at tertiary level but also the instructional time for FL teaching in primary schools. Moreover, teachers expressed concerns regarding the implementation of FL assessment at primary school level and felt ill-equipped for this new responsibility. Consequently, teacher education needs to adapt and offer more insights into formative assessment. Overall, the study demonstrates the great value of listening to teachers when striving for positive curricular changes.

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Section 9: A Focus on Teachers

Friday, June 20
13:40-14:20 CEST

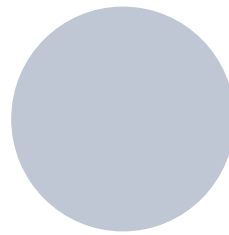
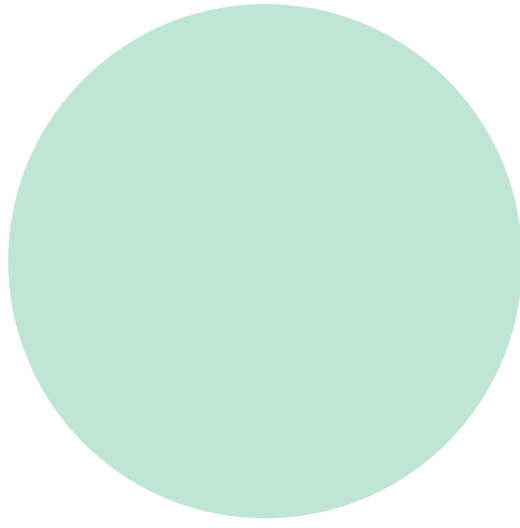
Evaluating two approaches to the teaching of foreign languages to young learners in England: Impacts on pupils and teachers

Elaine Minett, University of York and University of Chichester
Emma Marsden, University of York, UK

Primary-aged pupils in England are required to make 'substantial progress' in a foreign language (DfE, 2013), yet little (research-informed) guidance is available for this limited-exposure context, with no experimental studies in schools evaluating holistic approaches. Enabling substantial progress may challenge non-linguist teachers (Collen, 2022). This mixed methods study evaluated the impact of a novel, language-driven approach, (systematically embedding vocabulary, grammar, phonics) on French learning and motivation and on non-linguist teachers' confidence and enthusiasm, alongside an approach representing 'standard' topic-/phrase-driven pedagogy. 158 pupils aged seven-eight with no experience of French, from five schools in England, were split into two 'matched' groups, using an adapted Language Analytic Ability test (Kasprovicz et al., 2019) to create pairs randomly split to follow an approach for 30 hours over one year. Teachers alternated between approaches, to reduce 'teacher effects' and elicit views on both. Pupils' self-efficacy and enjoyment were surveyed (Carreira, 2006) at start, mid- and endpoints, supplemented by focus groups. Tests of vocabulary, sound-spelling correspondences, grammar, and speaking (picture description, elicited imitation), were administered one week and two months post-intervention. Teacher interviews elicited confidence and perceived impact on subject knowledge and enjoyment. Mixed effects models and qualitative analyses indicated: learning in both approaches, though with some differences (e.g., small benefits for novel on written vocabulary recognition and spoken grammar recall); and teachers' developing confidence, suggesting challenges delivering novelty but positive perceptions about learning.

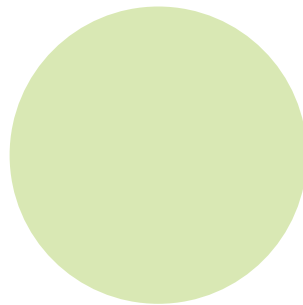
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Roundtables

**The Roundtables take place on
Thursday, June 19, 15:45-16:45 CEST.**



ATFLY 2025 features the following three roundtables:

Roundtable 1: CLIL and Young Learners

Chair: Amparo Lázaro-Ibarrola
Public University of Navarre, Spain

Roundtable 2: Teaching and Learning L2 Pragmatics with Young Learners

Chairs: Milica Savic & Anders Myrset
University of Stavanger, Norway

Roundtable 3: Picturebooks in the Young Learner Language Classroom

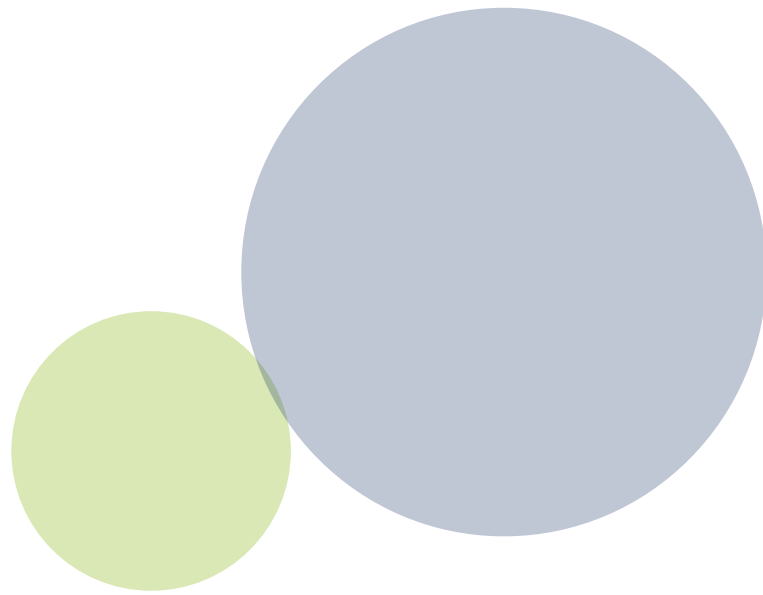
Chair: Sandie Mourão
Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal

Description:

ATFLY 2025 offers three thematic Roundtables on the afternoon of the first conference day (Thursday, June 19, 15:45-16:45 CEST). This is an open format for all conference attendees who are working in the respective field or who are generally interested in this topic. Each roundtable will last for an hour and is meant to provide opportunities for inspiring discussions and for networking among participants on shared research interests.

The Roundtable Chairs will open with a brief input and then moderate the exchange and discussion among the roundtable attendees.

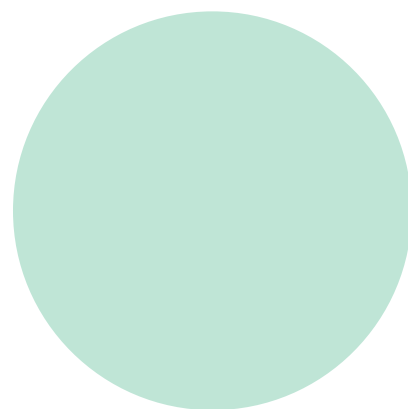
Participants do not need to pre-register for a roundtable but simply enter the respective ZOOM room on the day. In other words, the Roundtables will form spontaneously at the conference itself, to provide a space for participants to connect with other colleagues, ask questions, hear what other people are working on, raise issues they have encountered in their own work, get advice on how they may deal with those challenges, exchange good-practice examples etc.



Poster Abstracts

in order of poster rooms

**The poster session takes place on
Friday, June 20, 11:00-12:00 CEST.**



Task-based interaction and pre-task grammar instruction with young EFL learners: A study on the interplay between metalinguistic explanations, language-analytic ability and metalinguistic knowledge of English possessive determiners

Maria Basterrechea, Kevin Iglesias-Diéguez & María Martínez-Adrián
University of the Basque Country, Spain

Focused tasks such as dictogloss have been found to be effective for drawing learners' attention to grammar aspects, although they may not always concentrate on the target feature seeded in the text (Author 1 & Co-Author, 2019). Additional treatments such as pre-task grammar instruction (PTGI) have been proposed as a solution to enhance the learning potential of these tasks (Loewen & Sato, 2018). In this respect, little research has been conducted along these lines with children and adolescents in low-input settings (Ellis et al., 2019), and a call has been made for more investigations exploring a wider range of PTGI treatments. Likewise, the interaction between different form-focused instruction treatments and individual differences such as language-analytic ability deserve further attention, particularly with young learners (Iglesias-Diéguez & Martínez-Adrián, in press). This study examines the potential effect of explicit PTGI before the performance of a collaborative dictogloss task targeting the possessive determiners his/her. To this end, twenty-one 10-to-11-year-old EFL learners were paired up to perform two dictogloss tasks. Half of them acted as the PTGI+task group, whereas the second half received no treatment. Participants also completed a grammaticality judgement task (GJT) in a pretest/post-test design to gauge the effect of adding PTGI to collaborative writing, and their gains were then correlated with their language-analytic ability, as measured by the MLAT-ES. Although the intragroup analysis showed a significant improvement in both groups, confirming the efficacy of the focused tasks employed, the intergroup comparison did not unveil any difference, suggesting that the additional treatment in the form of PTGI did not maximize the learning potential for the possessive determiners his/her. As regards language-analytic ability, a compensation pattern was attested, in line with other explicit treatments (Iglesias-Diéguez & Martínez-Adrián, in press; Suzuki, 2022).

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Task planning competence: A model for describing and assessing primary EFL teachers' professionalism regarding task planning

Alessa Haase

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Task-oriented language learning has been a focus in education policy for years (e.g. Baden-Württemberg Primary School Curriculum 2020, p. 7) as a means to address the heterogeneity of primary school EFL learners using complex tasks with an "inherent differentiation concept" (Hallet, 2013). To effectively implement such tasks, teachers need professional knowledge of task design and its interaction with individual learners' learning requirements, and must apply this knowledge when planning, implementing, and (retrospectively) reflecting tasks (Baumann, 2023; Abendroth-Timmer & Gerlach, 2021). While there are tools for measuring professional task implementation (e.g. TIOS Kersten et al., 2020), models for operationalizing professional task planning that go beyond normative claims are lacking (Rothland, 2022). This talk introduces a model for measuring primary EFL teachers' task planning competence developed from theoretical and empirical modelling processes, using reflexivity as an access to competence. The focus is on written task reflections from future and practicing primary school EFL teachers, which were analyzed qualitatively (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2022). Examples from this data are used to illustrate how the four following reflexivity parameters indicate professional task planning:

- Depth of reflection: How deeply do teachers reflect when planning tasks?
- References to knowledge: What knowledge do they draw on when planning tasks?
- References to self: How aware are they of their subjective perspective when planning tasks?
- References to others: How do they account for heterogeneity when planning tasks?

Finally, an overview of the model's potential fields of applications in research and teaching will be discussed.

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Pre-task grammar instruction: Its effect on young learners' performance and individual variables

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The benefits of form-focused instruction (FFI) have been widely proved in the second language (L2) learning literature (Spada & Tomita, 2010). Recently, research has shifted its focus from whether FFI is beneficial to how and when to implement it for more effectiveness, and what factors influence its success. An ongoing debate within task-based language teaching (TBLT) hinges on the appropriateness of instructing explicit grammar prior to tasks (Long, 2015), but studies on the topic are scarce and mainly with adults (see Li et al., 2018, 2019 with adolescents). The impact of individual variables on learners' task performance, such as task engagement (Lee & Lee, 2020) and willingness-to-communicate (WTC) (Mac-Intyre et al., 1998) has also garnered attention, yet requires further investigation (Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021). To address these gaps, this study investigates the effect of pre-task explicit grammar instruction on children's language-related episode (LRE) production of two problematic aspects of English grammar (3rd person singular subject pronouns *he/she* and present simple agreement morpheme *-s*), considering their language-analytic ability, task engagement and WTC. Ten pairs of young Basque-Spanish learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (10-12 years old) were split into an experimental (explicit instruction + task) and a control (task-only) group. After completing a proficiency test, an MLAT-e test and a questionnaire about their WTC and interaction mindset (IM), participants performed two collaborative dictogloss tasks targeting the mentioned forms, during which the experimental group generated fewer LREs than the control, but displayed a better outcome and more elaborated engagement. Results also show that individual variables affect LRE generation differently: Proficiency level and language-analytic abilities correlate with a higher frequency of LREs, but pre-task intervention appears to minimise their effect. However, regardless of the intervention, students with moderate or high WTC levels still generate more LREs (whether target-related or not) than those with low or very high WTC.

Building bridges: Collaborative teacher training for smooth transitions in English education

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A smooth transition from primary to secondary school is of considerable importance for students' educational careers and can promote continuous and successful foreign language acquisition (Jaekel et al., 2022). However, if this transition is unsuccessful, it may result in a loss of motivation among children (Kolb, 2018). Numerous studies have identified the challenges associated with transitions in the subject of English (e.g. Baumert et al., 2020; Brunsmeier, 2019). These challenges include the heterogeneous performance levels of pupils at the beginning of secondary school, the limited understanding among teachers regarding the English instruction in the other type of school and associated false expectations, the insufficient collaboration between different school types, and differences in methodology. Experts emphasize the necessity for teacher education programs to address these challenges and prepare future teachers accordingly. One potential way of reducing the problems of transition are joint courses for primary and secondary student teachers (e.g. Brunsmeier, 2019; Wagner, 2009). However, research on the effectiveness of such courses remains limited. To address this gap, the University College of Teacher Education Vorarlberg introduced a cross-school methodology course for primary and secondary student teachers in English in the academic years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This course is being evaluated using a mixed-methods approach including questionnaires, research diaries, and lesson transcripts. This presentation will outline the course design and present findings from the questionnaire-based survey on students' attitudes from both cohorts (2023 and 2024, n = 39). The final results for both cohorts are expected by March 2025.

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Insights from teaching assistants: Examining primary school English education in Japan

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The aim of this study is to provide an objective perspective on the challenges and opportunities associated with English education in primary schools in Japan. The Japanese Course of Study for primary school, which was fully implemented in 2020, introduced English as a subject from the third grade and made it a graded subject starting in the fifth grade. To gain deeper insights, this study involved interviews with two assistant teachers actively engaged in English instruction in primary school classrooms. These teachers were selected due to their previous experience teaching English at the middle school level, making them particularly qualified to assess primary classroom environments. In their roles, these assistant teachers collaborated with primary school teachers and assistant language teachers (ALTs), effectively functioning as a third teaching figure within the classroom. Their presence provided an additional perspective on the classroom dynamics and instructional processes. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately one hour, and the discussions were recorded and transcribed for analysis. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2022) reflexive thematic analysis method, following their established six-phase framework. The findings from the analysis revealed that the teachers observed that students generally enjoyed learning English and showed an increased interest in different cultures. The assistant teachers also noted that when ALTs demonstrated an understanding of Japanese culture and were adaptable and accommodating, a trustful and cooperative relationship formed between them and the main teacher, contributing to a positive classroom atmosphere. However, challenges were also identified, particularly the lack of support and resources necessary for main teachers to deliver effective lessons. These gaps, if addressed, could greatly improve the teaching environment and overall learning experience for students. This study implies that addressing these challenges is essential for the successful realization of the goals set out in the new Course of Study for primary school English education in Japan.

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Early English language teaching and linguistic diversity – (language)action-orientated teaching methods

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English lessons have particular potential for teaching in classes with a high degree of linguistic diversity, as English is the common learning language for all and can be used as a bridge language to German and other first languages (Bellet 2022; BIG-Kreis 2015). In English lessons (especially at primary level), pupils with first languages other than German are not disadvantaged from the outset, as they understand as much or as little as their German-speaking classmates and they perform equally well or better (cf. Kieseier 2021; Krumm 2017; Rymarczyk 2024). If the teacher plans interdisciplinary, action-orientated units with linguistic support measures (facial expressions, gestures, paraphrasing, repetitions, visual aids, etc.) in English, the pupils – even those with low competence in German as the language of instruction – can successfully complete tasks. What's more, English can act as a bridge language for working together in linguistically mixed small groups and, together with language competence in the foreign language English, language competence in the language of instruction German can also be developed. The talk will present a university course that takes up the combined language support in English as a foreign language and in German as the language of instruction and presents concrete proposals for implementation using (language)action-orientated teaching concepts. In all concepts, English is also used as a bridge language to German and other first languages, whereby the exchange and interaction of different linguistic resources can be promoted. The course has already been held several times at the PH Vorarlberg and the PH Heidelberg and evaluated by students using reflective papers. The results of a qualitative content analysis of the evaluations show a high level of acceptance of the course as well as a change in the view of English teaching and the motivation to apply the teaching concepts presented themselves.

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Primary English teachers' professional learning: A review of its effectiveness

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According to Evişen (2021), professional learning for language teachers significantly impacts their practice and is regarded as a means of self-improvement. However, there are few reviews of language teachers' professional learning literature available; Li (2022) examines the significance of effective professional learning for language teachers; Çinarbaş and Hoş (2018) discuss the integration of educational policy, technology, and collaboration in teachers' professional learning activities; and Alzahrani and Nor (2021) look at L2 teachers' needs for professional learning. However, none of them have addressed the gaps in studies on language teachers' experiences after they attended professional learning programs. This review will provide the results of a scoping review of 25 articles and theses investigating language teachers' professional learning, published between 2011 and 2024. The studies were sourced from three databases-UOW Library, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar-using Boolean search expressions such as language teachers' professional learning, impact, and EFL/ESL contexts. Each study has been analysed to identify the nature of the research, settings, and participants, along with a detailed review of the aims and results. This analysis aims to identify gaps in the current understanding of the role professional learning plays in developing primary teachers' knowledge and practices. The studies mainly examined the impact of continuing professional learning on teachers' language proficiency and pedagogical knowledge, impacting their confidence and self-efficacy. However, only a few attempt to explore their changing understanding of language teaching, influenced by professional learning. However, little is known about how collaborative professional learning programs impact primary EFL teachers' practice, students' achievement, and school effectiveness, especially in low-income countries. This study identifies the gap and argues that more studies should use primary teachers' reflections on collaborative professional learning to investigate its developmental evaluation before, during, and after attending the program.

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The influence of L1/L2 syntactic transfer on the acquisition of English as an additional language from a processability perspective

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I will present the theoretical basis and the results of the first data collection of my PhD project that focuses on the influence of German and Bosnian/ Croatian/ Montenegrin/ Serbian (BCMS) as L1/L2 on the acquisition of English as an additional language (LX) in Tyrol/Austria. In this longitudinal study, I collect oral speech data of 15 German and 15 BCMS L1/L2 learners of LX English (5th grade, age 10-11) via communicative tasks performed in pairs. I collect the data at three points in time to capture the learners' acquisition process and potential changes in their L1/L2 transfer development over the course of one and a half school years. To investigate as to whether the learners systematically transfer structures from their L1/L2, I perform linguistic profile analyses and qualitatively compare the speech samples to detect potential instances of language transfer. I assume that L1/L2 transfer is developmentally constrained and follows the principles of Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann, 1998, 2005) and the Developmentally Moderated Transfer Hypothesis (DMTH) (Håkansson et al., 2002). PT suggests that morpho-syntactic structures can only be produced when learners are developmentally ready to process them. In turn, the DMTH implies that language transfer is constrained by the architecture of the human language processor. Consequently, L1/L2 features are claimed to be only transferred when the respective processing procedures are processable in the LX. Hence, transfer only plays a minor role in language acquisition and does not lead to the alteration of the so-called route of acquisition of English, which has been defined in the PT hierarchy of processing procedures (Pienemann, 1998, 2005). The presentation of the individual learners' linguistic profiles and the transfer-based qualitative analyses of the first data collection will be the focus of the talk. Additionally, first trends in terms of testing the aforementioned PT- and DMTH-related assumptions will be discussed. Furthermore, these findings should shed a positive light onto the multilingual background of the participants.

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**Investigating vocabulary teaching and learning in year 4 primary school English classes:
Exposure, quality of encounter and engagement**

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Theoretical studies on vocabulary suggest conditions needed for effective learning should include frequent encounters with new words (Laufer & Rostovski-Roitblat, 2015) through a variety of modes and tasks (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001) and active engagement with them (quality of encounter, Nation, 2018). Yet there appears to be little research (Butler, 2019) on the existence of these conditions in early stage instructed EFL in a naturalistic primary classroom setting. This paper addresses this research gap. The study investigates the teaching and learning of target food vocabulary through observation of lessons covering one coursebook unit. The research questions are:

- In what ways is the target vocabulary encountered by learners during the classes and how do they engage with it?
- How frequently are the target items encountered and in what modes?
- In what ways does the teacher highlight the target items?
- What (if any) relationship is discernible between outcomes on items in the vocabulary test and treatment of those items in class?

Three lessons in a Polish year 4 primary class were observed. Data consisted of recordings of the lessons, teaching materials, field notes, and an end of unit vocabulary test (n=22). The analysis categorizes a) observed classroom activities for vocabulary focus (intentional/incidental, receptive/productive, meaning/form); b) learner activity (task type; output(s); interaction; time; perceived engagements). Frequency of occurrence and mode of the target vocabulary and teacher highlighting of word form/ spelling, meaning, or phonology were noted. The ratings will then be compared to the outcomes for written production of individual food items in the vocabulary test, to evaluate if there are any relationships between items found to be more problematic for learners and treatment of these words in the teaching materials and during the lessons. Recommendations are made for teachers for implementation of activities with a vocabulary focus, and an outline of a possible agenda for further studies is suggested.

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Towards productive speaking? Chunks with open slots in primary English coursebooks

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The importance of formulaic sequences or chunks for foreign language (FL) teaching was already emphasised by the Lexical Approach in the 1990s (Lewis 1993) and aligns with Construction Grammar approaches, promoting a lexicogrammatical continuum instead of a strict lexis-grammar divide (Herbst 2019). Primary curricula also acknowledge the relevance of chunks (KM BW 2020). In transitioning from mainly formulaic to productive speaking, patterns with open slots (*I like ...*) appear crucial (Kostka 2020). Schulz et al. (2024) found that children were better able to use a newly learnt FL construction in new contexts when exposed to more input variability in the verb slots. Overall, however, empirical studies on the role of chunks in early FL learning are scarce (Schulz et al. 2023). This quantitative and diachronic study analyses to what extent chunks with open slots to be filled individually by children are provided in speaking exercises of older and newer editions of five primary English coursebooks used in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The results show a statistically significant increase ($p < 0.05$) of chunks with individually fillable slots (*I can ...*) as compared to slots to be filled based on the book (*Number 1 is ...*) between the 2000s and the 2020s editions. However, the findings also reveal inter-coursebook differences in the frequencies and types of chunks with open slots in speaking exercises. The talk concludes by advocating national educational standards for primary FL teaching to provide coursebook makers with more uniform guidelines.

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Dramatizing picture books with young EFL learners to improve oral skills

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Both the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Primary School English Curriculum in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, place a strong emphasis on the development of communicative competences, particularly speaking (Council of Europe, 2020; Zentrum für Schulqualität und Lehrerbildung Baden-Württemberg, 2016). However, the acquisition of EFL speaking skills is a process which takes time (Böttger, 2016) and is challenging for young learners in educational settings, where there is limited time in the curriculum for English teaching each week (Read, 2020). Therefore, young learners need to be offered ample opportunities to speak in different situations (Böttger, 2016) and need support for understanding and production (Cameron, 2001). Young learners love listening to stories (Ellis & Brewster, 2014). Therefore, picture books are often used in English lessons (Böttger, 2020) and are recommended for use in primary schools in Baden-Württemberg (ZSL Zentrum für Schulqualität und Lehrerbildung). Stories provide learners with examples of language in meaningful contexts (Böttger, 2020). They can also be dramatized in varied and child-appropriate ways (Winston, 2022) to allow the language from the story to be used by learners in context. Drama activities encourage learners to speak (Phillips, 1999) and can provide them with many speaking opportunities (Böttger, 2020). This study investigates whether picture book dramatization has the potential to further develop young learners' oral skills, and in what ways. A selection of picture books were first analysed for suitability according to the vocabulary that they contained and the criteria for choosing a good story for EFL learners (Ellis & Brewster, 2014). The books were divided into categories according to difficulty and one book from each category was selected. The chosen books were dramatized and a series of twenty, 45-minute English lessons were planned for learners in the fourth class (aged 9-10). More than a hundred learners participated in the project in the school year 2023/24. Quantitative data on speaking was collected through audio recordings of short speaking assessments before and after the intervention, and then analysed using SPSS and Excel. Structured and unstructured lesson observations were also conducted in the classroom to find out what learners said during the intervention. These were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively respectively. Analysis of the data collected in a pilot study, indicates that the intervention had a positive effect on learners' oral skills.

Bridging the gap: Navigating the emotional and academic challenges of transition from primary to secondary school – insights from young learners of English in Austria

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The move from primary to secondary school is often seen as a significant and often emotional milestone in a child's development, marked by various changes in both the school environment and social context. This shift has long been recognised as one of the most demanding phases in a child's educational journey having potential impacts on both their socio-emotional and academic development (Evans et al., 2018; Harris & Nowland, 2021) as it raises concerns across various curriculum subjects, including foreign language learning. This is also true for the Austrian educational context where views of Young Learners (YL) of English are rarely heard in this context. Hence, this study aims to examine firsthand experiences of pupils transitioning from primary to secondary school. For that purpose, a qualitative case study was designed (Yin, 2009) in an iterative process (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). A total of 42 learners were interviewed individually both before and after their transition to secondary school. These interviews were complemented by focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into how students perceive the transition, not only in terms of foreign language education but also with respect to their psychological well-being. The participants' personal accounts revealed both shared themes and unique experiences, not only in relation to foreign language learning but also in broader educational and emotional contexts. Aspects of this include a lack of communication between teachers, discontinuity and stagnation of content and abrupt changes in teaching methods. The data suggests that future transition programmes should focus not only on academic preparation but also on social-emotional support for YLs at this critical stage. Introducing YLs to their new school environment prior to the actual transition, familiarising them with the school's social norms and frameworks, and fostering collaboration, co-production, and communication between schools and teachers can help better align with students' realities, expectations, and preferences. These efforts can significantly mitigate stressful moments during a period of change.

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Exploring young language learners' motivation for EFL writing: A study of 5th and 8th graders

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Due to its complex, multi-layered nature, writing, though being an important skill, poses a great motivational and cognitive challenge for foreign language learners, especially for young EFL learners, whose poor writing performance has become a globally identified issue (Bai et al, 2020). Studies focused on EFL writing motivation, which are particularly scarce with young language learners (YLLs), have found that YLLs have a positive attitude towards writing when at the beginning of their EFL learning (Vickov, 2006). However, existing literature suggests that motivation for learning foreign languages, in particular English, often declines as students progress through their schooling (Henry, 2009). The aim of the present study is to determine whether a similar trend exists specifically for writing motivation by exploring the level of its four constructs (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and effort) among 120 Croatian primary school learners in the 5th and 8th grade (aged 10/11 and 13/14). Another objective is related to exploring the correlation between YLLs' motivation for EFL writing and their writing performance. Participants' writing motivation will be measured by a writing motivation questionnaire, while the students' essays written in English will be used to assess their writing performance. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the nature of YLLs' motivation for EFL writing during primary education, particularly within the context of possible differences with respect to the grade level. The study will also shed light on the correlation between motivation and the YLLs' EFL writing performance. Apart from contributing to the scant literature on early EFL writing motivation research, the present study yields certain educational implications primarily related to raising EFL teachers' awareness of changes in YLLs' motivation for EFL writing as well as of the necessity to enhance their motivation as years go by.

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Enhancing early foreign language learning in a Montessori context: The role of linguistic landscape tasks

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Unlike many traditional pedagogical approaches, Montessori pedagogy is characterized by curiosity-driven learning in a prepared environment encouraging independent and hands-on learning practices. Regarding foreign language teaching, Linguistic Landscape (LL) tasks could be expected to fit in well with this approach as they offer young language learners the chance to observe various characteristics of a foreign language in their environment and encourage them to interact with diverse aspects of the language in a creative and critical manner. In addition to fostering language awareness, an active and learner-centered engagement with LLs can also serve as a catalyst for initiating language learning. The project discussed in this talk was carried out at a Montessori school in a rural region of Austria. Learners (ages 6-9 years; n=16) took part in an intensive LL workshop followed by semi-structured interviews in which they reflected on their experiences with the LL. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using Thematic Analysis. The interviews show that the learners are enthusiastic about learning from the LL. They are aware of the role and functions of English, especially its use as a global lingua franca. This language awareness seems to be amplified and strengthened by the workshop and interviews. Learners also demonstrate curiosity about specific linguistic aspects of English, such as pronunciation and word formation. In this talk, we discuss parallels between modern approaches in English Language Teaching (ELT) and Montessori pedagogy and suggest that LL tasks could be a promising element in a Montessori approach to teaching foreign languages.

Promoting multilingualism in school education: Results from a multi-site project

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Large-scale studies have repeatedly shown that learners' linguistic and cognitive abilities are significantly related to their social and migration background, which, however, are often statistically confounded (Winsler et al., 2014). This educational gap can be explained, among other things, by a lack of language support in families with low educational background ('parent-child-interaction') (Paradis, 2023). In contrast, recent research increasingly demonstrates the potential of multilingual competencies in learners with a migration background for learning processes and their interrelation with cognitive development (e.g., Kersten, 2023, Steinlen, 2021). We report on the first assessment of the longitudinal multi-site project PROMISE (Promoting Multilingualism In School Education), which employs the same research design across five regions in Germany. It investigates the effects of teaching quality in all subjects on learners' linguistic and cognitive development from grades 5-7. In this paper, we present results from baseline-tests (T1, beginning of grade 5) on selected variables, focusing on the following research questions:

- How do learners' cognitive abilities (working memory, phonological awareness) interrelate with their degree of multilingualism and a) their L2-English competences / b) their German competences, when controlled for social status and school program?
- Do parent-child-interactions mediate the effect of social status on these cognitive and linguistic competences?

The sample consists of N=250 5th-graders from 12 classes across different German school programs. Cognitive and linguistic variables were operationalized using standardized instruments (working memory: WISV-V, phonological awareness: BAKO, L2-lexicon: PPVT-5, L2-grammar: ELIAS, German lexicon: PPVT-4, German grammar: CELF-5). Learners' home language/s, degree of multilingualism, social status and scales of parent-child-interaction were elicited with a well-established parental questionnaire (Kersten et al., 2021). Data are analyzed using regression and mediation analyses, structural equation and multi-level modeling, accounting for the nested data structure. As the final tests are currently being elicited, we formulate hypotheses based on our previous studies:

- We expect a positive relation between learners' cognitive abilities and their language competences in both the majority language (German) and the L2 (English), with a strong effect of social background on all skills. We further expect a negative association between degree of multilingualism and learners' German, but not L2-English skills.
- We expect that the effect of social status on all cognitive and linguistic variables will be mediated by parent-child-interaction.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the data at T1, no causal explanations can be derived at this point. The longitudinal design of the study, which will allow for this, will be explained.