

Title: Simultaneous and sequential adoption of another language in the early phase (german language)

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Abstract

The subject of examination of this rigorous work is the phenomenon of bilingualism. It particularly examines the early phase of adoption of another language. In the theoretical part, two forms of bilingualism are broken down in detail, and these differ from each other based on the criteria of the period when the additional language was adopted. Simultaneous bilingualism means adoption of a mother tongue and an additional language at the same time. The term sequential bilingualism is used to describe subsequent adoption of another language, which occurs after a mother tongue is adopted. Both of these forms are processed from the point of view of the scientific disciplines of psychology, pedagogy, psycholinguistics and neurobiology. Attention is focused on comparing both types of adoption of another language. The aim is to create a theoretical basis for the entire process, which occurs at pre-school and young school ages. The empirical part describes research regarding children who are located in or have just been through the early phases of sequential adoption of another language during visits to an educational facility. The examination method involves a survey conducted with the parents of those children, discussion with educators who take part in the process of educating and raising the children and a description of the environment where the adoption of the language occurs. Based on the information obtained in that manner, detailed case studies of the children are processed. The outcome is proposal of methodical recommendations related to the early phase of adoption of another language in an educational context during the pre-school and young school ages.

The introduction presents three basic hypotheses. The formulation of all hypotheses is based on the actual need to provide parents, particularly those of pre-school children, with an answer to the question of where and how it is best to begin with adoption of another language by children, so that the best communication competence is achieved both

in the mother tongue and in the foreign language. The first hypothesis reads: *The sooner the adoption of the foreign language occurs, the better.* The second hypothesis is formulated as follows: *Adoption of a foreign language at a pre-school age as part of sequential bilingualism involving immersion of the child in a foreign-language environment is an optimum way for the child to learn a foreign language at that age.* The third hypothesis is similar to the second hypothesis, but the difference is in the age when the adoption of the language occurs. *Adoption of a foreign language at a young school age as part of bilingualism involving immersion of the child in a foreign-language environment is an optimum way for the child to learn a foreign language at that age.*

The first hypothesis seems ambiguous in the light of scientific examination. The age when adoption of the additional language occurs is a very important factor, but of course there are also other important factors, such as the method of and methodical approaches to adoption. Moreover, the language needs to be looked at from the point of view of all parts of the learning process: phonetic-phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic as well as non-verbal and socio-cultural. Each period in an individual's development is predisposed for a different part of the language learning process. In the context of the second hypothesis, adoption of an additional language at a pre-school age during visits to a foreign-language facility appears effective. Inter-cultural communication is of course a crucial moment. During adoption of another language, it is necessary to bear in mind that a language is not only a system of signs for communication, but also has its socio-cultural elements. This aspect of language needs to be taken into consideration, just like psycho-linguistic elements that accompany the entire process. The third hypothesis fully reflects the conclusions resulting from verification of the second hypothesis. During the process of adopting another language by visiting a foreign-language elementary school, it is also necessary to consider formal instruction of the majority language as a main subject in the school's curriculum. The written form of the language also enters the entire process. The mother tongue in this respect needs to be taught individually.

I based my formulation of the methodical recommendations on the perspectives of the theoretical part of this work as well as on results of research in the empirical part, which I evaluated in the final summary both from the point of view of my own educating experience and from that of my own experience with bilingual children.

Keywords: bilingualism, adoption of another language, pre-school age, jung school age, to code a language, interkultural kommunikation