

## Use of modern technologies by young CLIL/bilingual learners: Evidence from longitudinal micro-development studies

**Prof. Dr. Simone E. Pfenninger**, University of Zurich

Second Language Acquisition research has identified three recent trends that are particularly pervasive in language education of young learners. First, very young foreign language (FL) learners have become a new population of learners, which opens challenging questions regarding not just expectable outcomes but also the very nature and aims of FL learning at this age (Muñoz 2019). Second, as a “major educational initiative” (Heras and Lasagabaster 2015: 72) in Europe, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has been taking root in recent decades, with the promise that early bilingual instruction will result in higher levels of FL proficiency, while simultaneously equipping students with other key skills such as intercultural awareness (e.g. Wode 2004). Third, today’s multilingual and technology-supported culture is redefining when, why, and how languages – in particular English as a foreign language (EFL) – are learned and used (Douglas Fir Group 2016; Larsen-Freeman 2017). Each of these three topics has received a lot of attention in its own right in SLA, albeit not in interaction with the others.

Drawing on my own research on the long-term EFL development of children attending bilingual and regular (pre)primary FL programs for up to 8 school years in Switzerland, I offer a critical review of empirical and theoretical results concerning understanding of CLIL, age and the extracurricular use of digital technologies. My main goals are (1) to discuss ways to implement dynamically oriented methodology that can provide much needed insights into the inherent dynamic, emergent, and contextually and socially embedded nature of FL learning in young children, and (2) to outline implications for multilingual education when decisions are made about early teaching of different languages and early instruction *through* different languages in the FL classroom.

### References

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- Muñoz, C. 2019. A new look at age: young and old L2 learners. In John W. Schwieter & Alessandro Benati (eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of language learning*, 430–450. Cambridge: CUP.
- Wode, Henning. 2004. *Frühes Fremdsprachenlernen. Englisch ab Kita und Grundschule: Warum? Wie? Was bringt es?* Kiel: Verein für frühe Mehrsprachigkeit an Kindertageseinrichtungen und Schulen FMKS e.V.

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**Prof. Dr. Simone E. Pfenninger, University of Zurich**

Simone E. Pfenninger is Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Zurich. Her principal research areas are (variationist) second language acquisition, psycholinguistics and multilingualism, especially in regard to quantitative approaches and statistical methods and techniques for language application in education. Recent books include *SLA and Lifelong Learning* (2023, Routledge) and *The Changing English Language: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (2017, CUP). She is co-editor of the SLA book series for Multilingual Matters, President of the International Association of Multilingualism (IAM), and Vice President of the European Second Language Association (EuroSLA).