




Improving German Language Proficiency


Evaluation of Language Training Programmes for Preschool Children



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Overview



- Background
- Objectives of the Project **EVAS**
 - E**valuation der **S**prachförderung von Vorschulkindern
 - Evaluation of Language Training Programmes for Preschool Children
- Method
- Preliminary Results
- Conclusions

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Background



Guidelines for Training Programmes (Landesstiftung Baden-Württemberg)	Contents of Training Programmes
e. g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVAS → Compilation of training groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination by preschool teachers Auditory information processing and language development (<i>HASE</i>) Observation questionnaire (<i>Sismik</i>) Qualification of teachers Amount of time 120 hours per year Number of children per group 6 – 10 children 	e. g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syntax Morphology Vocabulary Phonology Pragmatics <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental Involvement

Objectives of the Project **EVAS**

- Evaluation** of language training programmes for preschool children in Heidelberg and Mannheim
- Testing the **effectiveness** of the programmes based on **performance at school**
- Recommendations**

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Method - Design -

Pretest	Language Training A	Posttest	Teachers' ratings (grade 1)	Achievement tests (grade 2)
	Language Training B			
	Language Training C			
	unspecified language related activities			
	unspecified language related activities			
2005	October 2005 – July 2006	2006	2007	2008
Documentation / Questionnaires				

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Method - Design / Sample -

language training programmes unspecified language related activities

A B C comparison groups

poor sufficient

German language skills German language skills

15 to 30% monol. German speaking children 74% monol. German speaking children

66	46	122	104	215
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N = 553

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Method - Documentation -

Programme

e. g. Language

- Lexicon
- Grammar
- Pragmatics

Child

e. g.

- Attendance
- Motivation

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Method - Documentation -

Grammar	Method	Topic
Syntax		
Main clause	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Subordinate clause	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Interrogative sentences	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Morphology		
Verb inflection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tense	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Grammatical gender / articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plural formation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Case: accusative, dative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepositions	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Method - Questionnaire I -

Individual characteristics and family background

- General Development
- Speech and Language Development
- Preschool
- Leisure Time
- Housing and Neighbourhood
- Socioeconomic Information

Additional items for multilingual families

- e. g.
- Proficiency in German language
- Use of other languages

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Method - Questionnaire II -

Use of Media

- e. g.
- Number of different media in household
- Amount of time spent watching TV
- Preferences for TV channels and programmes
- Parents' attitudes towards TV

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Method - Instruments -

- Cognitive Abilities
 - Coloured Progressive Matrices [CPM]
- Language Abilities
 - Heidelberger Sprachentwicklungstest [H-S-E-T]
 - VS Verstehen grammatischer Strukturformen
Comprehension of grammatical structures
 - IS Imitation grammatischer Strukturformen
Sentence Imitation
 - PS Plural-Singular-Bildung
Plural/Singular formation
 - WF Wortfindung
Organisation of subjective lexicon

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Instruments
H-S-E-T (VS)

Comprehension of grammatical structures

Passive structure
The mother is being washed by the little child.

Relative clause
The giraffe that grasped the bunny bites the duck.

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Instruments
H-S-E-T (IS)

Sentence Imitation

- passive structure
The little mouse is chased by the cat.
- temporal clause
Father had bought a rucksack before we went for a walk.
- relative clause
The cupboard that I have bought is a nice one.

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Instruments
H-S-E-T (PS)

Plural/Singular Formation

Auto → Autos Plabel → Plabeln

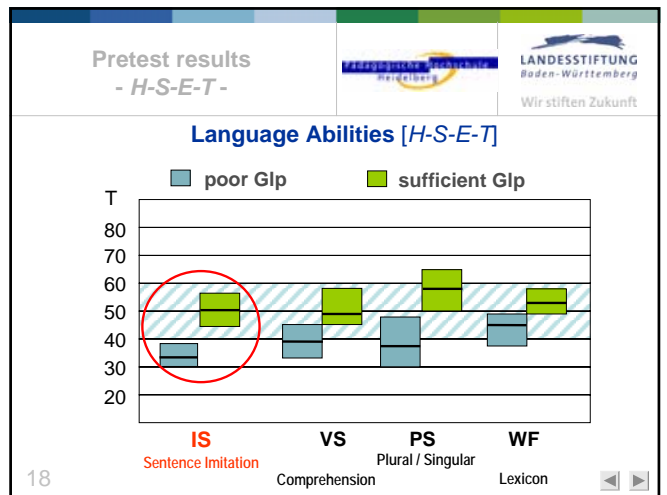
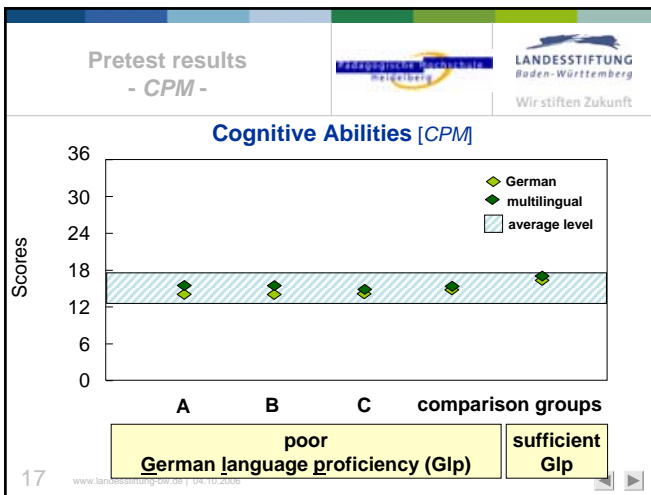
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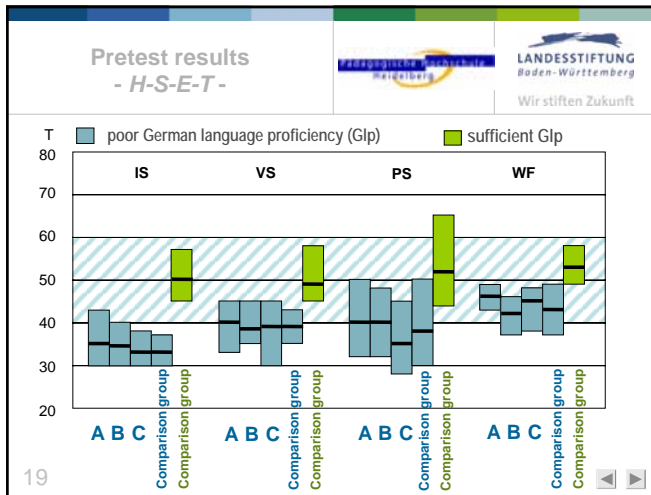
Instruments
H-S-E-T (WF)

Organisation of lexicon

Items	Possible correct answers
blue, red, yellow ...	green / colours
lion, tiger, elephant ...	giraffe / wild animals
jumping, walking, going ...	running / motion

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- ### Conclusions
- The applied measures are valuable in identifying children at risk.
 - Results showed comparable cognitive abilities for all groups.
 - Grammar is poor for all children with a deficiency in the German language.
 - Sentence Imitation (*H-S-E-T*) turned out to be the best indicator for grammatical proficiency.
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Thank you very much for listening!

Merçi pour votre attention !

Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

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