ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early Years Second Language Education

International perspectives on theory and practice

Edited by
Sandie Mourão and Mónica Lourenço

ROUTLEDGE

Early Years Second Language Education

The age for early language learning has dropped dramatically in the past decade to include children under 6 years old, yet very little published research exists to support the implementation of such programmes.

Drawing on a synthesis of theory, research and practice, this edited volume makes an innovative contribution to literature concerning language education for very young children. It explores language learning in a wide range of geographical contexts with reference to second and foreign language learning, bilingualism and plurilingualism with children under the age of 6 years old. Chapters present discussion around teacher education, policymaking, international case studies, school and home-based projects, code switching and language use, and methodologies and approaches.

Early Years Second Language Education: International perspectives on theory and practice will be essential reading for researchers, academics, teacher trainers, and post-graduate students in the fields of early years education, foreign and second language education, language didactics and teacher education.

Sandie Mourão is an independent scholar, teacher educator, author and educational consultant specializing in early years language education.

Mónica Lourenço is an Invited Assistant Professor at the Department of Education, University of Aveiro, Portugal, with a special interest in early years plurilingualism.

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Contributors

Ana Isabel Andrade is Associate Professor at the University of Aveiro and researcher for the Research Centre Didactics and Technology in the Education of Trainers (CIDTFF). She holds an education degree in Modern Languages and Literature (Portuguese and French) and a PhD in Language Didactics. She is one of the coordinators of the Open Laboratory for Foreign Language Learning (LALE). Her main interests are education for diversity in all levels of schooling and teacher education.

Polly Björk-Willén works as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social and Welfare Studies (ISV), at Linköping University, Sweden. She lectures on the pre-primary teacher programme. Her research interests include interactional studies in pre-primary education, investigating bilingual children's language use, ethnicity, children's computer use and language environment. Her present work is a Swedish Research Council study about language policy in the family and at pre-primary.

Anna Bylund is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Social and Welfare Studies (ISV), at Linköping University, Sweden, where she is a part-time teacher on the pre-primary teacher programme. She belongs to the Educational Practice research group and her dissertation project concerns multilingualism in early years education. She has a Master's degree in Hispanic studies and is a high-school teacher in Spanish, German and Swedish as a second language.

Monika Černá has been an English language teacher educator for two decades. Currently she works at the Department of English and American Studies at the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic. Her research interests include various aspects of second language acquisition. Regarding early years second language acquisition, she has been involved in international projects as an advisor. She has also contributed to the development of materials for pre-primary language teachers and also for the training of teacher trainees.

Anca Cristina Colibaba has over 30 years of experience in language education. She is the Executive President of EuroEd Foundation, with wide experience

in managing and coordinating over 25 transnational projects in the field of language education and training, adult education and lifelong language learning, implemented locally, nationally or trans-nationally. She also chairs the modern languages department at Gr.T.Popa University Iasi, in Romania, the oldest medical university in Romania. Anca is founder of QUEST, the Romanian Association for Quality Language Services and is also an EAQUALS inspector.

Madalena Cruz-Ferreira is an independent scholar, with publications on child and adult multilingualism in the home, in school and in clinic spanning over 35 years. She holds a PhD in linguistics from the University of Manchester, UK, and is the author of *Three is a Crowd?* (Multilingual Matters), *Multilinguals are . . .?* (Battlebridge Publications), *Multilingual Norms* (Peter Lang) and *The Language of Language* (CreateSpace). She maintains an active online presence through her blog *Being Multilingual*, which is featured on ASHA (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association) and TES (Times Educational Supplement), among other international networks.

Teresa Fleta teaches in the Master's Degree Programme on TEFL at Alcalá de Henares University. She holds an MA in Linguistics from Westminster University in England and a PhD in Theoretical Linguistics and Language Acquisition from Madrid Complutense University in Spain. She has carried out research on child language acquisition of English in formal settings. She has published articles in national and international journals. Her interests lie in teaching methodology and learning strategies. Her current research interests focus on pre-service English language teachers' education, teaching English to young learners.

Elza Gheorghiu is a trainer and teacher at EuroEd Foundation, the British Council and Vasile Alecsandri High School, Iasi, Romania. She coordinates international educational projects. Her field of interest covers work with innovative educational web 2.0 methodologies in training and teaching and non-formal education, where she works with young learners and adults. Elza has a special interest in working with children with special needs and their teachers for the purpose of foreign language communication.

Belma Haznedar is the head of Foreign Language Education Department in the Faculty of Education at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul. She completed her MA and PhD studies at the University of Durham, UK, specializing in child second language acquisition. In her current research, she works with three groups of children: simultaneous and successive bilingual children, monolingual children, and young second language learners in classroom settings. Belma has international publications in refereed journals on childhood bilingualism and she is the co-editor of two books, *Current Issues in Child Second Language Acquisition* (John Benjamins, 2008) and

Handbook for Teaching Foreign Languages to Young Learners in Primary Schools (Anı Yayıncılık, 2010). She has been teaching at Boğaziçi University since 1998.

Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto has taught English and ESL in the US, and EFL in Japan for more than 25 years. She has a BA from Western Oregon University and an MA in TESOL from Northern Arizona University. She has conducted teacher training workshops throughout Asia, the US and Latin America, and is an online workshop presenter as well. Barbara is co-author of *Let's Go* (Oxford University Press) and an online course, *English for Teachers* (iTDi.pro). Currently, she is a faculty member at the International Teacher Development Institute, where she also serves as the institute's Program Director. Barbara maintains an award-winning blog, *Teaching Village*, and is active in various online social media networks.

Nayr Ibrahim is Assistant Teaching Centre Manager in charge of the Young Learner and Bilingual programmes at the British Council in France. She has co-authored, *Hullabaloo Levels 1 and 2* and *Bookbox* (Hatier 2006, 2010), for the teaching of English as a foreign language in French primary schools. Nayr is also a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University of Reading, where she is exploring the link between trilingualism, triliteracy and identity. Nayr's interests include language development in early childhood education, bi/multilingualism, foreign, heritage and second language education, multiple literacies, language and identity.

Sophie Ioannou-Georgiou holds a PhD (Applied Linguistics) from the University of Nottingham, an MA (TEFL) from the University of Reading, a BEd from Aristotle University, Greece, and Teaching Diplomas from the University of Reading and the Cyprus Pedagogical Academy. She began her career as a generalist primary school teacher and later specialized in EFL. She has extensive experience in EFL teaching and teacher training and has trained teachers in Europe, India, Southeast Asia and North Africa. Sophie is currently Inspector for English in Primary Education at the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture where she coordinates the Ministry's EFL programme for primary and pre-primary education.

Kristin Kersten is professor of EFL and language acquisition at the University of Hildesheim, Germany. She received her PhD from Cologne University. Her dissertation focused on morphosyntactical structures in child language development. From 2008 to 2010 she coordinated the multilateral EU COMENIUS project ELIAS. As a result of this project, she co-authored an international study on second language acquisition, intercultural competence and environmental education in bilingual pre-primary schools. Her current research interests include principles and mechanisms of language learning, representation, and teaching with a special emphasis on bilingual education

(Content and Language Integrated Learning / immersion programmes) and young learners. Kristin is involved in teacher training both at university level and for practitioners in pre-primary schools.

Edgar Lasevich received his MA in linguistics at the University of Latvia. He has taught diverse age and interest groups from pre-primary to adult learners. Edgar is one of the key authors and developers of the multiple educational products of the 'Thinking Approach Group'. His biggest involvement is within development of learners' thinking and creativity skills through motivating and engaging activities. Most of these principles are found in the PASS materials, the text technology of the 'Thinking Approach' and 'Creative Games'.

Mónica Lourenço is an Invited Assistant Professor at the Department of Education of the University of Aveiro, Portugal. She has a PhD in Didactics and Teacher Education, a Masters in Linguistics and Teaching, and a degree in Modern Languages and Literature (English and German). Her doctoral thesis explored the role of the awakening to languages approach in the development of phonological awareness by pre-primary children. Mónica has experience teaching languages at pre-primary, secondary and higher education levels. Her main interests are language teaching, bi-/plurilingualism, education for diversity in the early years, and teacher education.

James McElwee is a researcher at the University of Newcastle and has been involved in second language education for over 40 years. He has taught languages in all phases of education, from nursery to university level and is currently working in initial teacher training and continuing professional development. His particular interests are progression and continuity in language learning and very early second language acquisition in which he holds a PhD from the Sapienza University of Rome.

Sandie Mourão is an independent scholar, teacher educator, author and educational consultant specializing in early years language education. She has an MA in TESOL from the University of Manchester, UK, and a PhD in Didactics and Teacher Education from the University of Aveiro, Portugal. Sandie has over 25 years of experience in the field of English language education. She is author of a number of language learning courses and resource books, and is co-editor of the *Children's Literature in English Language Education* journal, an open access online journal, which supports the integration of children's literature and language learning. Her main research interests focus on early years language learning, children's literature in language learning and classroom-based research.

Sabine Pirchio is a researcher in Developmental and Educational Psychology at the Sapienza University of Rome. Her research interests cover language and communication development in monolingual and bilingual children and

in children with atypical development. She works in the field of first, second and foreign language teaching and learning with the Narrative Format model. She is the coordinator of the European funded projects 'Let's become a bilingual family!' (2010–2012), which proposed the introduction of a new language in the family context, and 'School and Family Together for the Integration of Immigrant Children' (2012–2015), with the aim of improving the integration of immigrant children through language learning activities involving parents and teachers. Sabine teaches Developmental Psychology to Psychology graduate students and she is the Director of the training courses in Children Language Teaching at the Sapienza University.

Zuzana Portiková is a lecturer at University of Prešov in Slovakia, specialising in English for Specific Purposes and methodology of English as a foreign language in pre-primary education. She has an MA in British and American Studies and a PhD in pre-primary and elementary education from the University of Prešov. Her research and teaching activities concentrate on various aspects of TEFL and initial and in-service teacher training programmes preparing future EFL teachers for pre-primary education.

Ekaterina Sofronieva is an Assistant Professor at St Kliment Ohridski University, Sofia, in Bulgaria. She teaches English language and methodology of early foreign language teaching and learning. She has been involved in several international projects and national programmes for pre-service and in-service language teachers in Bulgaria and abroad. Ekatarina's doctoral thesis focused on teacher efficacy and empathy in foreign language teaching at the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology of the Sapienza University of Rome. She publishes extensively on second language education and psycholinguistics and is interested in issues of empathy, compassion, patience and tolerance in education.

Alexander Sokol is the principal developer of the 'Thinking Approach' to language teaching and learning (www.thinking-approach.org). He earned his doctorate in developing inventive thinking in language education from the University of Strasbourg. Alexander used to teach at the secondary and tertiary levels in Latvia, however, now he is the academic director of TA Group (www.ta-group.eu) – an educational company dealing with teacher education, materials development and educational consulting. Alexander was the coordinator and one of the key materials developers of the PASS project (www.ta-parents.eu). Currently he is working with teachers in various European countries, delivers academic courses on thinking in education and helps organizations become more effective in problem-solving and problem management.

Traute Taeschner is a full Professor in Developmental and Educational Psychology at the Sapienza University of Rome, Faculty of Medicine and Psychology. For many years she has focused on the processes of language

acquisition in childhood and the relational and communicative strategies needed for an adequate language development. In particular, she has studied second language learning in family and school contexts. Traute has coordinated several European funded projects and is on the teaching committee of PhD programmes in Psychology. Her research interests concern educational and relational strategies fostering foreign language teaching and learning and language development in children with atypical development. She has written numerous papers in international journals and volumes, and is the author of several books and foreign language teaching materials.

Zlatica Jursová Zacharová is researcher of Developmental and Education Psychology at the Faculty of Education, University Comenius in Bratislava. She received her PhD in the field of primary and pre-primary education. Her dissertation focused on the teaching of English in pre-primary education by means of the Narrative Format approach. Zlatica has co-authored a scientific monograph on first and second language acquisition and bilingual education in school and family contexts. Her current research interests include developmental psycholinguistics, first and second language acquisition, bilingual teaching through the Narrative Format approach, and teachers' socio-psychological competence. She is involved in teacher training at the university and for specialists in pre-primary and primary schools.

Foreword

Madalena Cruz-Ferreira

Independent Scholar, Singapore

The claim that 'The earlier, the better', for purposes of language learning, currently stands as an unquestionable nugget of wisdom. Sound wisdom, however, arises from questions confronting what we think we know with factual knowledge. This is precisely what this book does, by providing readers with timely evidence to enable critical assessment of this claim. The cogent insights that this book affords about the *what*, the *how* and the *why* of early language learning (ELL) show that the evidence is both sobering and heartening.

Sobering, first, in the candid account of ELL initiatives that fell short of intended goals, due to factors as diverse as inadequate teacher qualification, lack of funds, and governmental deafness towards published research findings; and second, in laying bare resilient misconceptions about language matters. These include mistaking languages for mere inventories of sounds, words and grammar rules, assuming that teaching languages to young learners requires no dedicated training, and entertaining paradoxical myths about multilingualism itself, concerning its purported beneficial and/or detrimental 'effects' among users of more than one language. Factors and misconceptions such as these, while having nothing to do with (early) multilingualism, do rub off on our understanding of it, because they shape *language*-related decisions and programmes.

In contrast, the wealth of evidence collected in this book is heartening, in that it shows beyond doubt that ELL works, wherever and whenever its agents choose to inform and engage themselves. Regardless of whether ELL implementation results from top-down statutory rulings or from bottom-up public demand, this book also supports the core point that language learning has little in common with traditional views of languages as 'school subjects'.

Learning languages cannot simply mean learning the language(s) in question, because languages are there to serve our everyday needs, from exercising thinking skills to demonstrating good manners. There are indeed many, diverse 'languages' to be learned as a child, not all of which can be spoken, or written. Parents and teachers know this, whether they are aware of it or not, because they nurture children. Parents and teachers also know the children in their care

through their shared daily interactions, and therefore know best which content and method favours their learning. This book is rich in practical guidelines on how this knowledge can be brought to bear upon language teaching and learning in home or school settings, through the use of customized resources that go beyond strict curricular frameworks.

It is particularly refreshing to find real-life evidence of how children's natural inquisitiveness can be successfully incorporated into language teaching. Children's knowledge about the world likewise seamlessly integrates into the learning process, in order to nurture awareness of differences, whether cultural, ethnic or linguistic. Familiarization with the differences that are part and parcel of everyone's life in turn boosts sensitivity to one's and others' emotional and social identities, fostering respect for those differences. Children's curiosity about their own and others' budding or well-established multilingualism is also called into play. Regardless of which language is being taught, and regardless of everyone else's competence in other languages where the teaching takes place, children are encouraged to make use of their whole linguistic repertoire, because this is what multilinguals naturally do.

This is why the ELL methodologies reported in the research presented here emerge as practicable and, not least, enjoyable. They engage the children with what engages them, both intellectually, through letting them ask questions and negotiate answers, and physically, where all five senses find their due role in the learning process. Drawings, mimic, role-play, songs, chants, dance, indoor and outdoor activities complete the battery of teaching resources, because this is how children naturally learn.

Children are children wherever they may happen to be born. The studies collected in this volume reflect this awareness, by offering an invaluable buffet of possibilities to serve all language learning settings, from home to school, from isolated small villages to cosmopolitan mega-cities. The take-home message is a *can-do* approach to early language teaching, empowering parents, teachers and, crucially, the children to engage in learning as a shared construction.

Abbreviations

AtL	Awakening to Languages
Bilfam	Bilingual Family
BPs	Bilingual Pre-Primary Schools
BPVS II	British Picture Vocabulary Scale II
CHAT	Codes for Human Analysis of Transcripts
CHILDES	Child Language Data Exchange System
CILT	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CLL	Communication, Language and Literacy
CSI	Czech School Inspectorate
EC	empathic concerns
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELIAS	Early Language and Intercultural Acquisition Studies
ELL	Early Language Learning
EQ	Empathy Quotient for Adults
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FS	fantasy scale
GI	green immersion
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IQOS	*Input Quality Observation Scheme*
IRI	Interpersonal Reactivity Index
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
L1	first language
L2	second language
ME	Ministry of Education (Portugal)
MLT	Multiple Literacies Theory
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Czech Republic)
NF	Narrative Format
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, UK

PA	phonological awareness
PASS	Parents As Successful teacherS
PD	personal distress
PT	perspective taking
RRA	repeated read aloud
SD	standard deviation
SEB	socio-economic background
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TA	Thinking Approach
TBP	Teacher Behaviour Profile
TRIZ	Theory of Inventive Problem Solving
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Introduction

Sandie Mourão and Mónica Lourenço

Motivations

1979 was proclaimed the 'International Year of the Child' by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and one of the many initiatives to celebrate this year was the compilation of an edited volume, *Teaching Foreign Languages to the Very Young* (Freudenstein, 1979). The volume was the result of a Round Table meeting, which took place in Zurich, and was organized by the *Fédération Internationale de Professeurs de Langues Vivantes*, who brought together experts in the teaching of languages to children aged 4 to 8 years old. There were nine chapters in this volume, covering both theory and practice in relation to teaching and learning with young children. The chapters made reference to learning English, but also French and German, as a foreign or second language and the majority were related to working with children in pre-primary education. One of the optimistic hopes for the book was that it would 'lead to the growth of new activities in this field' (Waespi, 1979, p. xi).

This was 35 years ago and since then publications in English have emerged that further discuss research and the theoretical underpinnings of language learning with child learners[1] (see, for example, Brumfit *et al.*, 1991; Cameron, 2001; Daloiso, 2007; Davies and Tarona, 2012; Enever, 2011; Enever and Moon, 2000; Haznedar and Uysal, 2010; Kennedy and Jarvis, 1991; Moon, 2000; Murphy, 2014; Nikolov, 2009; Nikolov and Curtain, 2000; Nikolov *et al.*, 2007; Pinter, 2006; 2011; Rixon, 1999). Several of these publications use the term 'young learners', commonly referring to children from around the age of 5 to 12 years old.[2] Others use 'children' as a referent, alluding to 'preschool' through to early adolescents (Pinter, 2011), or children from 6 to 12 years (Moon, 2000). Still other publications refer to 'early [foreign language] learning', writing about children in primary education (Daloiso, 2007; Enever, 2011; Nikolov, 2009), or children from 3–14 years old (Davies and Tarona, 2012). Although some refer to learners who, as yet, do not attend compulsory education, to our knowledge, no publication has concentrated solely on the dissemination of research into second language learning in formal learning contexts with children under the age of 6 years, despite a growing interest in this age group (Murphy, 2014; Rixon, 2013).

At a European level, in the last decade, second or foreign languages are being taught to children at an ever-younger age. In the most recent Eurydice report (2012), two countries were shown to officially introduce a foreign language into their pre-primary curriculum: German-speaking Belgium at the age of 3 years and Malta at the age of 5 years. Ten out of 17 Autonomous Communities in Spain also provide a foreign language programme from the age of 3 years, the remaining Autonomous Communities from the age of 6 years. By September 2015, Cyprus will have phased in the teaching of English as a foreign language from the age of 5 years. A further six[3] European countries begin foreign language learning at the age of 6 years, when starting compulsory education. This is equivalent to just over a third of the European community officially implementing second or foreign language teaching to children of 6 years and under. Yet, very little published research exists to support teachers, teacher educators and policymakers.

The main reason for our edited volume is to fill this void, by bringing together research into theory and practice in the field of language education with very young children, that is, children under the age of 6 years old.

Early years education and second language learning

The title of this volume is *Early Years Second Language Education*. 'Early years' is a well-used term referring to educational programmes offered to children below the age of formal entry into compulsory education, usually 6 years old.[4] 'Pre-primary education' is also used by contributors to this volume, but refers more specifically to educational programmes intended for children from age 3 to the start of primary education. These are designations we feel clarify the age group we are discussing and bring them in line with general education policies – we prefer them to the more widely used terms prevalent in English language teaching such as 'very young learners' or 'young learners' (see also Ellis, 2014).

Other terms we have opted to employ throughout the volume are 'first language' as opposed to 'mother tongue' or 'native language', subsequently abbreviated to L1, and 'second language', abbreviated to L2. The latter refers to both foreign, second, third or fourth language learning contexts. Where appropriate, authors have identified whether their chapter refers specifically to foreign, second, bilingual or multilingual situations. We are aware of the academic discussions around our choice (see, for example, Hall and Cook, 2012), but feel these continue to be acceptable terms and recognized by all in the areas of language education, learning and acquisition studies.

Early years education corresponds to ISCED level 0 programmes (Unesco, 2012), which are typically designed with a holistic approach to support children's early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and to introduce instruction outside the family context. These programmes are characterized by a learning environment that is visually stimulating and language-rich, fostering self-expression, language use for meaningful communication and

the development of logical and reasoning skills. Children are also introduced to alphabetical and mathematical concepts, and encouraged to explore the world around them. Gross motor skills and play-based activities are used as learning opportunities to promote social interactions with peers and to develop skills, autonomy, and school readiness (ibid.). There is no mention, as such, of the learning of another language apart from the development of the language of schooling, which may or may not be the child's L1.

Nevertheless, at a European level, reports stress the importance of 'teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age' (European Commission, 2003, p. 7), making this one of the main objectives of the European Union language education policy. The introduction of an L2, particularly in a foreign language context, is regarded as an enriching experience that brings considerable benefits in terms of a child's personal and academic development. It enhances competences such as comprehension, expression, communication and problem-solving, enabling children to interact successfully with peers and adults, as well as fostering understanding and respect towards other languages and cultures by raising awareness of diversity and of cultural variety. These are often pointed out as the main reasons underlying the introduction of languages in the early years (Beacco *et al.*, 2010; Edelenbos *et al.*, 2006; European Commission, 2011a).

In an attempt to rectify the lack of documentation to support language learning at pre-primary school level, a Working Paper was produced that attempted to 'draw attention to the conditions for success – and potential pitfalls – of early language learning by furthering the debate and proposing tried and tested solutions' (European Commission, 2011a, p. 4). These guidelines recommend that early language learning 'should not foster languages as a specific subject but rather as a communication tool to be used in other activities', and that 'it should be integrated into contexts in which language is meaningful and useful' (ibid., p. 14). A review of member state practices provided 'little evidence of agreed processes, uniformity of approach or established indicators of achievement' (ibid.) – the accompanying good practice documentation is evidence of this, but it is pleasing to see that a number of different languages are being introduced (European Commission, 2011b).

According to Edelenbos *et al.* (2006) a variety of language learning models are found in pre-primary education. These include the formal teaching of an L2, usually English, often taking place just once a week; a more flexible approach, relating the L2 to other aspects of the curriculum, e.g. science and geography, but with limited time provision (Content and Language Integrated Learning – CLIL); a language awareness model, not dealing with one additional language alone but instead giving access to a number of languages and cultures, in order to develop underlying skills such as metalinguistic awareness and intercultural sensitivity; and provision of increased time and intensity in the form of a bilingual or partial immersion education model. Consequently, as in primary education, children are receiving language learning experiences of

varying types, in quantity and in quality (Rixon, 2013) and many of these experiences are not in accordance with the suggested guidelines (European Commission, 2011a).

In all, very little concrete evidence is available about language learning in the early years – Will the experience of learning two or more languages during early childhood provide the child with cognitive benefits? Which methodologies and approaches can be used and are being used successfully to teach children languages? What are the benefits and potential pitfalls of these approaches? What are the ideal qualifications of early years L2 teachers? How can we support parents to teach other languages to their children? Answers to these questions and others are addressed in this edited volume.

The chapters

Drawing on a synthesis of theory, research and practice, the collection of chapters in this book make an innovative contribution to the literature concerning L2 learning in the early years. It explores language learning in a wide range of geographical contexts, with contributions from 15 different countries – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Portugal, Republic of Cyprus, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. Many of the contributors are sharing their doctoral research in this area; much of this is empirical work and evidence that, finally, early years language learning is garnering interest in the academic world. Other contributors are providing reports on research they have undertaken through European funding or related to personal or national interests. Their chapters discuss teacher education, policymaking, country case studies, school and home based projects, code switching and language use, as well as a variety of methodologies and approaches. They cover a wide range of contexts, including second and foreign language learning, immersion and bilingual education, and plurilingualism, all with children under 6 years old.

The book is divided into three sections, each with five chapters focusing on three different perspectives related to early years language learning: 'Focus on the child', 'Focus on classroom approaches' and 'Focus on teachers and parents'.

Part 1, 'Focus on the child', brings children's voices into the research that is reported, with results and recommendations highlighting, above all, the child language learner. This section begins with a chapter by Belma Haznedar who provides a critical review of the 'Cognitive and linguistic aspects of learning a second language in the early years'. Drawing on examples from research conducted with bilingual Turkish–English children learning the L2 in a pre-primary context, Haznedar discusses key characteristics of L2 learning, focusing on acquisition stages and pervasive error types, highlighting potential implications for language teaching. Haznedar concludes that, in a similar manner to young bilinguals learning an L2 in naturalistic settings, children learning an L2 in a classroom setting may not learn new linguistic forms instantaneously

in the first two or three months of exposure. Children need exposure to the L2 before language acquisition can take place, which raises the question of quantity and quality of input in early L2 learning.

Chapter 2, written by Kristin Kersten, complements much of what the previous chapter has outlined. Her chapter, entitled 'Bilingual preschools: language acquisition, intercultural encounters and environmental learning', shares some of the results from a Comenius project involving learning English as an L2 in pre-primary schools in Belgium, England, Germany and Sweden, and in a bilingual Zoo-Preschool. Kersten's discussion supports the notion that L2 learning depends, among other things, on L2 contact time, intensity, and educators' teaching principles. Of particular interest are her examples showing how being in an L2 context might help young children develop successful intercultural competence strategies and environmental awareness.

Following the assumption that approximately half of the children in Europe grow up in bi/multilingual and bi/multi-literate environments, in Chapter 3, Nayr Ibrahim shares the results of a study that investigates how two 5-year-old twins appropriate and display their multilingual identities across multiple educational contexts. Her chapter, entitled 'Perceptions of identity in trilingual 5-year-old twins in diverse pre-primary educational contexts', uses a multi-method approach collecting data from an out-of-school English literacy course, a mainstream French classroom, and a Korean heritage language programme. Her results suggest that children mediate their identity construction through real people, tangible places, and lived experiences that have value for them. Her conclusions point to the importance of all those involved in the children's lives playing a role in nurturing the children's multiple literacies and identities, in order to help them become competent and confident multilinguals.

Remaining with a focus on children's voices, in this case their reactions to literature, in Chapter 4, Sandie Mourão shares research showing that pre-primary children's literary response to L2 picturebooks enables language development. In her chapter, 'Response to picturebooks: a case for valuing children's linguistic repertoires during repeated read alouds', she suggests that the multimodality of picturebooks is overlooked when using these for L2 learning, and argues that illustrations in particular support children's spontaneous response, which can be in both Portuguese (L1) and English (L2). Using excerpts from children's talk during repeated read alouds, she highlights how the children's linguistic repertoires contribute to their literary and L2 development. The chapter concludes with implications for selecting and mediating L2 picturebooks, advising teachers to recognize how different responses contribute to individual interpretations.

Continuing with the theme of using literature to research children and language, in Chapter 5, Anna Bylund and Polly Björk-Willén report on an incongruous activity – the reading aloud in Spanish of a picture storybook to bilingual Spanish–Swedish children, by a teacher who does not speak Spanish. In their chapter, 'Multilingual becoming in reading: A picture storybook-

reading-assemblage in early years education', Bylund and Björk-Willén follow the Deleuzian theoretical concept of 'assemblage' to map how a picture storybook reading practice works, and what and who play important roles in it. Bylund and Björk-Willén conclude that their interpretation of a sequence of recorded read aloud events highlights an understanding of language learning as a collective arrangement, where many different elements play important productive roles. They urge us to lessen the emphasis on the role of the competent adult speaker, in favour of the other active parts of the constant (the children and their linguistic repertoires, the book, the school and its language policy) to enable a never-ending multilingual becoming.

Part 2, 'Focus on classroom approaches', shares research that explores the possibilities of diverse methodologies and approaches for L2 learning in the early years. Chapter 6, written by Sophie Ioannou-Georgiou and entitled 'Early language learning in Cyprus: voices from the classroom', documents how an L2 English pilot programme, in pre-primary schools in the Republic of Cyprus, has contributed to the implementation of national policy in relation to the teaching of a foreign language through the use of CLIL. Ioannou-Georgiou investigates the attitudes of teachers and children towards language learning and the pilot project in particular, and concludes that despite a relatively small percentage of school time dedicated to the L2, beneficial results are evident with regard to the development of attitudinal, intercultural and linguistic targets in the children. Her research highlights the importance of providing systematic support and in-service training for teachers throughout the first years of their involvement in teaching an L2 in a pre-primary context.

The Narrative Format method, an approach that has been widely used in Europe since the 1990s, is the focus of Chapter 7, where James McElwee shares research into learning L2 French in England. In his chapter, 'Introducing French to pre-primary children in the North East of England: the Narrative Format approach', McElwee focuses on children's ability to retell stories, or formats, in L2 French. His results highlight the benefits of the Narrative Format approach in supporting early years practitioners with a low level of French, as well as the advantages it brings to children from low socio-economic backgrounds, as well as to boys. He also indicates that providing continuity once starting in the early years is essential to the success of any language learning model.

The possibilities put forward by the awareness to different languages in the early years are the focus of Chapter 8, where Mónica Lourenço and Ana Isabel Andrade look at plurilingual education in their chapter entitled 'Languages and diversity in pre-primary education: towards a broader and integrated approach'. In Lourenço and Andrade's research, pre-primary children took part in awakening to languages sessions aimed at developing phonological awareness (PA) through exposure to and analysis of different languages. Results from their project are used to suggest a possible set of characteristics that can help teachers devise a curriculum for diversity in the early years, these include: meaningful

and integrated learning experiences, the promotion of change, the development of positive attitudes towards others, and flexibility towards curriculum guidelines. Their chapter demonstrates that education for diversity educates children's hearts and minds in a holistic manner, and develops their global and intercultural awareness.

With a view to raising awareness of the role that listening skills play in L2 learning at an early age, Chapter 9 discusses '*Active* listening for second language learning in the early years', and is written by Teresa Fleta. Fleta gives an overview of the importance of teaching aural skills in the L1 and the L2, provides information on awareness-raising practices that promote holistic and learner-centred learning, and shares examples from her practice in Spain with children in L2 English settings. She describes a series of simple, multisensory, multimodal practices and concludes that as children learn an L2 implicitly and subconsciously by listening and by talking, *active* participation through listening is key to developing the L2.

The last chapter in this part discusses some of the challenges facing teachers who wish to include technology tools in early years L2 learning. Chapter 10 is written by Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto, who is based in Japan. In her chapter, 'The role of technology in early years language education', she reviews the little research that exists related to technology, L2 learning and the early years, and presents an online survey conducted with 64 teachers from around the globe. From this, Hoskins Sakamoto was able to compile a set of best practices for early technology integration in L2 teaching, focusing on methods that support language development, which include an emphasis on pedagogy before technology, the use of developmentally and linguistically appropriate technology and the importance of using technology as a tool and a resource.

Part 3 of our book, 'Focus on teachers and parents', looks at the challenges the international trend to extend early childhood education provision for children under 6 years of age brings to policymakers, providers of teacher education courses and families. The section begins with two country case studies that mirror the situation in many countries around the world and finally bring concrete evidence replacing what until now has been merely anecdotal. In Chapter 11, Monika Černá presents the current situation of early L2 education in the Czech Republic. In her chapter, entitled 'Pre-primary English language learning and teacher education in the Czech Republic', Černá looks in particular at the need for qualified teachers and language teacher education programmes. Her discussion is based around official Czech government documents and reports, and focuses on the issue of who is qualified to teach English at pre-primary level in the Czech Republic, and whether and how educational institutions have responded to the early start trend. Černá's chapter demonstrates how it can be counterproductive to introduce an early start strategy in L2 education when there is a critical lack of qualified teachers of English.

A similar study from the other half of former Czechoslovakia is presented in Chapter 12, where Zuzana Portiková looks at 'Pre-primary second language education in Slovakia and the role of teacher training programmes'. Portiková presents results from a more formal study that looked at the current conditions of pre-primary L2 learning and teaching in the Slovak context. Using a mixed method approach, Portiková surveyed school directors and early years English teachers in a region in Slovakia. Her results reveal a largely non-systematic and often unprofessional approach to introducing an L2 to children. She indicates reasons for this and makes suggestions for teacher training programmes with a view to increasing the number of fully qualified L2 teachers in pre-primary education in her country.

Remaining within the realm of teacher education, Chapter 13 has been written by Ekaterina Sofronieva, in Bulgaria. Her chapter, entitled 'Measuring empathy and teachers' readiness to adopt innovations in second language learning', investigates the extent to which pre-service English pre-primary teachers were prepared to adopt and implement the Narrative Format approach, a method that requires a high degree of empathy and specific teacher behaviours. Through the analysis of video recordings with trainees and children, Sofronieva is able to show that there is a correlation between certain teacher behaviours, empathy and willingness to adopt a method. Her chapter includes a list of successful behaviours that support the development of empathy along with a set of guidelines for language teachers who are beginning to work with younger children.

Moving away from teacher education, the last two chapters in our volume involve projects that support parents in their child's language learning experience in an effort to maximize the home environment. Chapter 14 has been written by a team of contributors: Sabine Pirchio and Traute Taeschner from Italy, Anca Cristina Colibaba and Elza Gheorghiu from Romania, and Zlatica Jursová Zacharová from Slovakia. Their chapter, 'Family involvement in second language learning: the Bilfam project', shares results from a European-funded project 'Bilfam – Let's become a bilingual family!', which involved families in a language learning experience, using the Narrative Format approach. Resorting to both face-to-face and online tutoring tools and collecting data from blog posts and interviews, results from this project identify the positive results parents achieved, not only in their child's L2 development, but also in their own language proficiency. Pirchio and colleagues also highlight the importance of parents needing to be motivated and persistent if they want to be part of their child's L2 education.

To accompany the previous chapter and to finish this volume, Chapter 15 is a report of another European funded project written by Alexander Sokol and Edgar Lasevich from Latvia. In their chapter, 'Supporting parents in building learning activities in another language', Sokol and Lasevich describe the 'Parents As Successful teacherS' (PASS) project, which provides parents with tools for building learning activities that promote language learning,

creativity and thinking skills. Their chapter uses examples of parent–child interaction to demonstrate how the development of language and thinking can be integrated within tasks that have been developed through the project. A number of recommendations are also provided for parents who would like to begin a language learning and development of thinking experience with their child, which include the importance of playing rather than teaching, setting realistic goals and reflecting on the learning experience.

Concluding thoughts

This is the first volume of edited chapters concerned solely with L2 learning in early years education and we are aware it touches only the tip of the iceberg – there are issues that have not been mentioned; examples that stand out for us are those related to play in L2 learning contexts, emergent reading and writing in other languages, the importance of home school links and collaboration between L2 teachers and classroom teachers. Additionally the chapters are heavily European in context.

While preparing this volume we contacted contributors who we knew were actively involved in either working with children in the early years, their teachers or their parents and with a record of research activity. It is a growing area of interest by necessity, with no recognized group of researchers working together in the field, so this was not an easy task. The very nature of early years education presupposes that education departments and associations working with and for the education and care of young children would be interested in all issues related to early years education, but we have found this not to be the case. Early years education departments generally do not have L2 specialists and language departments rarely have early years specialists. Journals related to educating the very young do not receive articles about L2 learning. Associations for professionals working in the early years do not include L2 learning within their remit. We hope that this edited volume will light the spark that will become a flame for all to see the importance of research and dissemination of good practice related to L2 learning with young children.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our contributors for their perseverance during the process of putting this book together. Initial contacts were made in 2011, at that time we had no publisher for our book, but each and every one of the contributors waited patiently as we sent out proposals and anticipated responses. Their forbearance during the editing procedures and their hard work and determination in redrafting chapters according to our feedback has been heart warming and we are eternally grateful to them all for contributing to making this such a rewarding volume to have worked on.

We hope as readers you enjoy reading the fruits of everyone's hard work.

Sandie Mourão and Mónica Lourenço
Portugal, April 2014

Notes

1 According to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990), a child is defined as 'a human being below the age of 18 years' (p. 4).
2 For a discussion around terms used in English Language Teaching see Ellis, 2014.
3 These include Austria, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Luxemburg and Norway.
4 At the time of writing, 24 countries/communities belonging to the European Union begin compulsory education at the age of 6 years (Eurydice, 2013).

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Appendix 15.1

Table 15.2 PASS Phase 1 tasks

Task name	Explanation	Example
Sorting	The child is asked to sort elements into groups according to colour, e.g. blue cars, green cars and red cars	Cars can be divided into groups into groups. The elements may include toys, books, food items, trees, etc. To change the level of difficulty of the task, the parent can define the number of groups, suggest the criterion for division, ask for certain elements to be in one group, etc.
Odd One Out	The child is asked to exclude one element from the group according to some criterion. To change the level of difficulty of the task, the parent can suggest an element to be excluded, give a criterion to be used as a basis for exclusion or draw the child's attention to various characteristics of the elements to be used for classification	There are four soft toys on the carpet: a monkey, an elephant, a dog and a parrot. The dog is different as it is the only toy that produces a sound
Yes–No	The child is asked to find a solution to the problem by asking the parent yes–no questions. The fewer questions one asks to find a solution, the better it is	There are different food items on the kitchen table. You have chosen one of them without telling your the child. He/she is to ask questions to find out which item you have chosen
System Lift	The child is asked to take a system lift down: parts of the given element. When going down, he/she is expected to find various parts of the given element. When going up: elements where this element is a part, e.g. books on the same shelf or books by the same author	A book, and go up and down to investigate a book such as a cover, pages, illustrations. Going up: elements he/she is expected to find various where this book is a part, e.g. books going up, he/she is expected to find elements, of which a given one is a part

continued . . .

Table 15.2 Continued

Task name	Explanation	Example
Time	The child is asked to drive the time	This particular strawberry was a

Machine machine along the time line of a given seed half a year ago. Half a year element. When going back in time, later it will be part of the he/she finds out what a given element strawberry jam used to be some time ago. When travelling into the future, the child considers what a given element may become in some time

What’s The child is asked to think of possible A spoon. When we are having

Your Job? jobs of a given element in various soup, its job is to transport the contexts and explain which feature of soup from the plate to our mouth. a given element will help it do this job. When we lay the table for the Jobs should be defined as verb+ object party, its job is to make the table look beautiful

Good-Bad The child is expected to see both Eating sweets is good because they positive and negative consequences of are tasty. Eating sweets is bad an action. First a possible consequence because they spoil our is proposed. Then the child is expected teeth/contain too much sugar to see a possible negative consequence of this action, thus contributing to formulating a contradiction of doing this or that

Black- The child is expected to find elements Zebra is both black and white

White that have two opposite features and (combined in space). A flower is discover how these opposites are both beautiful and ugly (combined combined in time). A watchband is flexible and rigid (combined in structure – the whole watch band is flexible but each part is rigid)

Appendix 15.2

Table 15.3 Thinking skills that can be mastered when working with PASS Phase 1 tasks

Task name Skills to be mastered/MY CHILD CAN:

Sorting • notice different features of elements

Odd One Out • group features under parameters

Yes-No • ask strong questions

System Lift • identify parts of elements • find contexts where elements live • see elements as parts of other

elements

Time Machine • see the difference between present, past and future • describe an element as it was in the past • imagine an element as it will be in the future

What’s Your Job? • define jobs of various elements • formulate the job of an element in relation to other elements • see that elements have several jobs

Good-Bad • see consequences of an action • define both pluses and minuses of an action • explain why an action is necessary

Black-White • notice opposite features • find an opposite feature to a given one • combine opposite features