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Abstract in English Against the backdrop of language policy and the increasing demand for English courses in kindergartens, this thesis aims at contributing to the quality of early foreign language teaching (EFLT). Principles for teaching English to young learners (TEYL) are formulated based on literature research and expert interviews. Furthermore, this thesis offers background information on the teaching context, the target group of learners and the process of course design in order to offer a tool-kit for those planning to teach English at kindergarten. Insights from English Language Teaching (ELT), developmental psychology, elementary pedagogy and the practical expertise of three teachers to young learners are drawn together in order to arrive at cornerstones for designing a quality English course for a kindergarten setting in Vienna. The results of this investigation show that due to young learners' characteristics, teaching a foreign language effectively to preschool learners requires different approaches and techniques.

Abstract auf Deutsch Vor dem Hintergrund der Sprachenpolitik und des zunehmenden Bedarfs an Englischkursen im Kindergarten ist das Ziel dieser Diplomarbeit, zur Qualität von frühem Fremdsprachenunterricht beizutragen. Basierend auf Recherche einschlägiger Literatur und Experteninterviews werden Prinzipien für das frühe Fremdsprachenlehren formuliert. Des Weiteren fasst diese Diplomarbeit relevante Hintergrundinformation über den Unterrichtskontext, die Zielgruppe und den Prozess der Kursentwicklung zusammen. Diese Informationen sollen als Werkzeug für die Entwicklung von hochwertigen Sprachkursen im Kindergarten dienen. Erkenntnisse aus der Fremdsprachenvermittlung, der Entwicklungspsychologie, der Elementarpädagogik und der Expertise dreier Lehrerinnen bilden das Fundament dieser Arbeit. Das Ergebnis zeigt, dass es für einen effektiven Fremdsprachenunterricht im Kindergarten nötig ist, bekannte Vermittlungstechniken und Methoden an die Bedürfnisse der jungen Zielgruppe anzupassen.

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Abbreviations

BAKIP	Bildungsanstalt für Kindergartenpädagogik
BRP	Bundesländerübergreifender BildungsRahmenPlan für elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Österreich
CBI	Charlotte Bühler Institut
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CPH	Critical Period Hypothesis
EC	European Commission
EFL Course	Early Foreign Language Course
EFLL	Early Foreign Language Learning
EFLT	Early Foreign Language Teaching
ELL	Early Language Learning
ELT	English Language Teaching
EU	European Union
FLL	Foreign Language Learning
L1	First Language
L2	Second or other Language
MFL	Modern Foreign Language
TBL	Task-Based Learning
TEYL	Teaching English to Young Learners
TPR	Total Physical Response
WKTHG	Wiener Kindertagesheimgesetz

1. Introduction

Early foreign language teaching is an increasingly important component of applied linguistics. Phenomena such as globalisation and multiculturalism accelerate the starting point of learning foreign languages. World-wide the number of child learners of English is expanding (Cameron 2003: 105). Private individuals, stakeholder groups and political organisations have deemed multiple language competence an asset for economic and social success.

For example, one such political organisation, the European Commission (EC), states that every EU citizen should be able to communicate in three languages. To reach this goal, the EC has proposed that language learning should start earlier (European Commission 2002). These political initiatives as well as research data from immersion programs "have heightened the awareness that the pre-school years of children constitute an ideal time for language experience and growth" (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth 2009: 137). The trend of lowering the age at which children start learning a foreign language has been widely observed (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 1).

Parents have encouraged the development of the early learning sector by increasingly demanding foreign language classes in kindergarten. To give their children an advantage over others at school, a growing number of parents are willing to pay for additional foreign language classes. Entrepreneurs, more flexible and quick to launch an enterprise, have created business opportunities by teaching children at their own discretion (Edelenbos, Kubanek & Johnstone 2006: 92). At the same time, wide-ranging structural changes in the educational system lag behind. Without comprehensively managing the supply of English courses for preschool learners or developing any quality criteria, the quality of these courses cannot be assured. Consequently, the issue of how to develop quality English courses for young learners and how to train teachers in the field cannot be ignored any longer.

To increase the quality of foreign language courses for preschool learners, it is first necessary to theorise about teaching very young learners. In order to ensure that teachers in the field remain and become professional, a foundation of theoretical knowledge about child learners and early foreign language learning is needed (Cameron 2001: xif). The fact that preschool learners have different psychological, linguistic and developmental needs than adolescent and adult learners, needs to be integrated into the methodology (ibid.: 1), complying with learner- and

learning-centred approaches (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27; Cameron 2001: 1).

Responding to the evolving need for teacher qualification, this thesis aims at contributing to the formulation of quality criteria and define relevant theory for young learners' language teachers. Hence, the central question in this work seeks to discover the cornerstones of a quality English course in a kindergarten setting in Vienna. Additionally, background knowledge about developing a course and about children's development between ages 3 and 6 will be provided.

This thesis aims at providing a tool-kit for those engaging in teaching a foreign language to children in kindergarten. More precisely, language experts who ask how to start planning and implementing a language course in a preschool setting for very young learners will find information about the kindergarten as an educational setting, very young learners' characteristics and about course development. Since it would go beyond the scope of this work, this thesis will not be a teacher handbook or manual. Nevertheless, it will serve a starting point for planning an English course for preschool learners.

The "course model" is the instructional model that will be particularly addressed in this work. Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth (2009: 138f) describe this model as

based on mini-lessons of various length distributed over the week. They [mini-lessons] are either integrated into the daily routines of a kindergarten, if preschool teachers are available to take over the task, or offered by a growing number of private and commercial language schools, often staffed with native speakers catering to parents who can afford to pay for this special service.

The research methods applied for this study include literature research and expert interviews. In order to identify cornerstones of a quality English course for kindergarten children, literature on teaching languages to young learners will be summarised. Since teaching English as a foreign language is of greater interest in non-Anglophone countries, a reasonable number of sources are published in German. Moreover, reports published by the European Commission and literature from the fields of developmental psychology, elementary teacher education and course design will be considered. Additionally, expert interviews will be conducted to supplement findings derived from literature.

The overall structure of the thesis will comprise ten chapters, including this introductory chapter and the conclusion. After some key terms are defined in chapter two, chapters three to five will highlight underlying motives for teaching

languages to children. More specifically, chapter three will be concerned with the political aspect of early foreign language teaching, chapter four will concisely summarise linguistic research and psychological insights on children as language learners and chapter five will introduce a possible approach towards early language teaching methodology. Furthermore, chapter four will summarise preschool children's developmental milestones and learner characteristics that will serve as background knowledge for the process of course design.

Chapter six will outline the framework of course design and explain each step of the development process. Since defining the context and assessing learners' needs will be identified as cardinal components of course development, background information on the child as learner and the kindergarten as teaching contexts will be offered in chapters four and seven.

The eighth chapter will report on the empirical research done for this study. After the expert interview as research method is explained, the chapter focuses on the research outcome. Initial conclusions about teaching English to kindergarten children will be derived from the expert interviews.

Chapter nine, the final content chapter, will draw upon the information and insights from previous chapters. Cornerstones of a quality English course are derived based on the steps of course design, by considering principles of general kindergarten pedagogy and integrating insights from psycholinguistics and the expert interviews.

Finally, the conclusion will offer a check list of features of a quality English course and will call for more research and comprehensive action in the field of early language learning.

2. Clarifying Terminology

This thesis deals with a comparatively recent albeit increasingly important topic in applied linguistics. New fields of research require new terms to communicate effectively. As both interest for and research in early language learning and teaching is still growing in intensity, concepts have changed over time. At first, early language teaching concentrated on teaching foreign languages at primary level. Then the trend of starting learning languages early shifted further and the idea of very early language learning was discussed. The following chapter aims at clarifying related terms and new acronyms and intends to define the context of this work.

In general this text contributes to the field of English language teaching (ELT), also to the field of early language learning (ELL) and to be precise to early foreign language learning (EFL) and -teaching (EFLT). The main concern is on how to teach English as a foreign language to preschool children. Despite this focus on teaching English to young learners (TEYL), the gained insights may be transferred to teaching other languages as foreign or second language to children. This leads to defining the target group of learners.

"It is hard to fit 'childhood' into fixed age brackets" (Pinter 2011: 2), mainly for the reason that it is not only biologically determined but also a cultural construct. The definition of 'child' and also when children enter school varies according to different cultural backgrounds. Main sources consulted for this thesis employ terms like *child* and *young learners* in different ways and focus on various teaching contexts and age groups. To Cameron (2001: xi), for example, young learners are children aged five to twelve, to Pinter (2006) they are five to fourteen. Moreover, these five-year-olds already attend primary school. Nikolov & Djigunovic (2006: 96) point out that "[t]he particular age range considered *young* varies to a great extent". In a European context it was agreed that *very young learners* are those aged three to six and *young learners* are pupils of seven to twelve years of age (ibid.: 96).

This thesis is set against the background and within the context of the Austrian school system. In Austria children enter school after they have turned six years old. Before that they attend a kindergarten, playgroup or preschool class for a minimum of one year. This work focusses on teaching English as a foreign language to preschool children, more precisely, on teaching children from their fourth to their sixth year of life. Hence, whenever the terms *young learners* or

children are mentioned, they refer to the age group of four- to six-year-olds, including those a few months below and above. Moreover, the focus is on how to develop a course for a kindergarten context. The kindergarten as teaching context is defined in more detail in chapter 7, *The Kindergarten as Teaching Context* on page 48.

As already mentioned, this work is mainly concerned with teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

The central characteristics of *foreign language learning* lie in the *amount and type of exposure* to the language: there will be very little experience of the language outside the classroom [...]

and limited time of exposure in lessons (Cameron 2001: 11). Nevertheless, Cameron (ibid.) argues that "[i]n the case of a global language like English", children will encounter the language through media. Leidner (2007) holds a similar position, arguing for teaching English at kindergarten. Due to these teaching circumstances, the teacher's function as provider of language input is important (Cameron 2001: 12). Therefore, this thesis will also focus on the teacher's role as course designer and also his/her qualification as language teacher to young learners.

3. Language Policy and Early Foreign Language Learning

Decisions on language teaching, especially those on which languages are taught and how much time and money is spent on teaching and learning them, are almost always politically influenced. Clearly, language policy is an integral part of policy making. Hence, the field of early foreign language teaching is also influenced by political powers. Not only parents want their children to learn a foreign language as early as possible, but also higher political levels have put early foreign language learning (EFLL) on the agenda. In this respect, Cameron observes that

[t]he social, cultural and political issues around policies of teaching foreign languages early are complex and influence teaching and learning at classroom level (2001: 16f).

As there is clearly a demand for teaching English in kindergarten, this chapter briefly summarises motives, objectives and propositions related to EFLL. Those socio-economic reasons forwarded by parents and the European Commission (EC) offer background information on the topic. More scientifically based arguments will be found in chapter 4.1, *Age as Key Factor in Language Learning* on page 12.

3.1. Policy Declarations by the European Commission

Before the European Commission's viewpoints, on language learning in general and Early Foreign Language Learning (EFLL) in particular, are reported, a quote by the European Commission (EC) is given that illustrates its range of influence and explains its function.

The European Commission represents the general interest of the EU and is the driving force in proposing legislation (to Parliament and the Council), administering and implementing EU policies, enforcing EU law (jointly with the Court of Justice) and negotiating in the international arena (http://ec.europa.eu/about_en.htm, 31 August 2012).

In fulfilling its functions, the EC publishes papers and reports that communicate the EU's attitudes, political plans and progress of projects. Since 2001, the European Year of Languages, the advancement of multilingualism, enhance-

ment of language skills and changes in the educational systems, including the acceleration of the starting point for foreign language teaching and learning, are reoccurring topics in working papers and reports (European Commission 2003, 2005).

First in 2002, in the aftermath of the European Year of Languages, the Barcelona Council formulated objectives of retaining and expanding linguistic diversity and Lifelong Learning. Conscious of Europe's multicultural and multilingual history and contemporary situation, actions to maintain linguistic diversity and at the same time establish social cohesion and solidarity were proposed. One suggestion to reach these goals is that every EU citizen should be able to communicate in his or her mother tongue and two additional languages (European Commission 2002, 2003). It is believed that enhanced language knowledge will lead to overcome the limitations of a single lingua franca and to achieve the EU's social and economic ambitions.

The EC argues that by enhanced language knowledge the community members will have more possibilities to communicate with each other and thereby the diversity of the communities will be retained. At the same time social cohesion and solidarity can increase as a result of improved communication and understanding. (European Commission 2002)

To achieve the competence of speaking one's mother tongue and two additional languages (L1+2), starting foreign language learning early is regarded advantageous, thus suggested. For one thing the EC promotes early foreign language learning within the context of the Lifelong Learning project, for the other thing it should give children "a head start with languages" and result in "greater proficiency and accuracy in speaking, reading, writing and understanding" (ibid.: 8). Furthermore, the EC propounded that meta-linguistic skills and awareness of language variations form "the foundations for easier language learning in later life" (ibid.: 8). Motivation and interest in learning in general should be fostered and maintained. Moreover, by introducing foreign languages at pre-primary level more curricular space could be established (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Dittfurth 2009: 16). Consequently, there would be more time for a second or even third language to be taught at school.

In order to reach the objective of L1+2 and implement EFLL, the EC recognises the need to provide language education in an organised and coordinated way "so that, as each learner progresses from pre-primary to adult education, what [s/]he learns at each step builds upon the language skills acquired at the previous one"

(European Commission 2002: 7). Moreover, the EC is aware that a coherent part of realising these visions is the qualification of teachers for young learners (European Commission 2011) and that the advantages of EFLL "only accrue where there is a sufficiently high level of investment in teacher training, where class sizes are small enough for language learning to be effective, and where enough curriculum time is devoted to languages" (European Commission 2002: 8).

In 2006 a study on practice examples of EFLL was published by Edelenbos, Kubanek & Johnstone on behalf of the EC. Key points of *The main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners* will be integrated in chapter 9, *Design Features of a Quality English Course* on page 73.

The reports on the action plan *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity* from 2007 and 2008 reveal limited progress on the implementation of EFLL and reemphasise the necessity of teacher training. At the same time the Country Report on Austria's Language- and Language teaching policy was compiled. The report indicated that there is no coherent early language learning program implemented in Austria. Moreover, the demand for further development in teacher training was mentioned.

Still based on the objectives stated in 2002, the commission staff working paper published in 2011 titled *Language learning at pre-primary school level: making it efficient and sustainable* (European Commission 2011) explicitly focusses on implementation. This publication shows that over the years ideas on EFLL became more concrete and based on empirical insights. Vague ideas about a multilingual European society developed further into practical suggestions and leading principles for implementing EFLL programs. The suggested pedagogical processes will be reflected in chapter 9, *Design Features of a Quality English Course* on page 73.

For the purpose of giving background information on the EC as stakeholder in TEYL the main points have been covered. Another driving force in demanding EFLT, also recognised as such by the EC (European Commission 2003: 7), is the parents' personal wishes for their own children's education. The following subsection highlights parents' influence in the field of TEYL.

3.2. Parents' Wish for Early Foreign Language Teaching

The decisive factor for introducing a foreign language in kindergarten is in most cases the parents' wish (European Commission 2003: 7; Jantscher 2005; European Commission 2007: 33, 2008: 35). As mentioned in papers and reports published by the European Commission, parents get more conscious of their children's language development. It becomes a wide spread belief that the ability to communicate in more than one language is an asset in a globalised world.

Consequently, parents want to give their children the chance to develop also linguistic qualifications and competences as early as possible. Assuming that language learning is easier during childhood, the trend moves towards teaching languages earlier and demand for access to language courses for children increases. Institutions and head teachers aim at accommodating demands and organise language classes. The private sector has long recognised business opportunities, whereas comprehensive nation-wide teacher training lags behind.

The current educational situation regarding the introduction of foreign languages at kindergarten level was also described in the report on Austria's language education policy on behalf of the Council of Europe. According to this report parents mainly wish their children to learn English as first foreign language.

Other modern foreign languages (MFLs) offered are mostly those chosen by children's parents, i. e. mainly English, and a small proportion of French; those foreign languages that are spoken at kindergartens themselves (due to the high number of migrants), e. g. Turkish, or Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, are very rarely provided (European Commission 2007: 33).

To compare, it can be observed that the report's German version uses the term "wünschen".

An weiteren FS werden zumeist jene Sprachen angeboten, die sich die Eltern wünschen, also hauptsächlich Englisch und zu einem kleinen Anteil auch Französisch [...] (European Commission 2008: 35).

This statement was verified in a small scale field study conducted by the author of this thesis. Indeed, parents participating in the study wish that an additional language is taught in kindergarten. Parents want their children to be prepared for demands in school and as a result, have an advantage over others in their future educational and vocational career. The majority of parents named English as their first choice, because it is regarded as the "world language" (Kreuz 2009). This fact is also supported by Brewster & Ellis (2004: 1), who additionally list

parents' motivations when they say that

[p]ressure to introduce early English learning has often come from parents who strongly believe that having English as a tool will benefit their children greatly by giving them more opportunities to gain economic, cultural and educational advantages.

Another argument, repeatedly forwarded by policy makers and parents, is that language learning during childhood is easier. Whether scientific insights support this argument is summarised in chapter 4.1, *Age as Key Factor in Language Learning* on page 12. But prior the last subsection of this chapter summarises arguments in favour of English as first foreign language to be taught at kindergarten.

3.3. English as the First Choice in EFLL

The small scale field study in a Viennese kindergarten that was addressed above additionally pursued the aim of getting a general impression of parents' language attitude, their "Sprachenwünsche" and to collect arguments and motives for choosing English in the first place. Mainly two arguments were forwarded for English as the first choice. First, parents are convinced that their children will need English in their future life and therefore they want to give their children a head start for learning English at school. Second, the status as world language, "Weltsprache", was often given as reason.

These reasons stated by the surveyed parents coincide with Schotte-Grebenstein's analysis. A language is chosen based on its prestige, proximity to countries where the language is spoken and its political influence (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 41). In the case of English its status as lingua franca is an additional asset.

More arguments favouring English as first choice for TEYL are given by Leidner (2007: 57), who also calls English "Weltsprache". Because people can communicate beyond their language area, Leidner states that it is extremely valuable to learn English (ibid.: 57). Moreover, its simple grammar, the absence of case endings and articles, and similarities to German vocabulary are accounted as advantages of English (ibid.: 58). In Leidner's opinion English is part of children's daily life (ibid.: 57). Through information technology and television children already know English phrases and therefore, so Leidner, they are interested to learn more English (ibid.: 58). Enabling children to hold simple conversations in English and letting them discover that via English they are able to communicate

with children speaking other languages, is in Leidner's view a valuable experience of intercultural communication. He states: "Abwechselnde Gespräche über die verschiedenen Familiensprachen der Kinder und ihre Herkunftskulturen können dies meiner Einschätzung nach nicht in gleicher Weise leisten" (ibid.: 58). That English is also useful because it is dominant in the educational and economic system is regarded merely a positive side effect of teaching English to young children (ibid.: 59).

Despite initiatives promoting multilingualism and the support of minority languages and the suggestion to consider English beyond language hierarchies (Seidlhofer 2005), English is in a powerful position on the educational sector, consequently, also on the early learning sector.

4. Preschool Children as Foreign Language Learners

The following chapter has two aims. First, in order to supplement the arguments advanced for EFLT from a political perspective, it will briefly summarise insights from research investigating the age factor in foreign and second language learning. Whether an early start is beneficial and in what respect children have an advantage over adults in language learning is elucidated. Second, the sections on child development and how children learn are intended to serve as background information for developing a suitable language course for children. More precisely, insights from this chapter are the base for the task of needs analysis that is part of developing a course and for methodological choices.

With regard to the first main topic in this chapter, the assumption that children learn effortlessly and are generally better language learners is critically observed. Adults who sometimes spend a lot of money and effort to learn languages envy children their gift of learning languages. However, the belief of "younger = better in all circumstances over any timescale" is criticised by Singleton as "folk wisdom" and too simple an interpretation of the Critical Period Hypothesis (Singleton 1995: 4).

Following a discussion on the Critical Period Hypothesis, children's advantages in language learning are recited. It is pointed out that children's advantages in language learning exceed age as learner characteristic. Also physiological and psychological factors are considered to influence language learning during childhood positively.

4.1. Age as Key Factor in Language Learning

An argument used to support an early start in L2 learning is that language learning becomes increasingly harder with advancing age. This argument is based on the Critical Period Hypothesis and further on the assumption of the existence of sensitive phases. The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) is nowadays mostly ascribed to Eric Lenneberg. According to the CPH it is after a certain age, when entering puberty, that acquiring a first language is hardly possible any more and only with great effort a second language can be learned up to native-like competence.

Lenneberg (1967: 376) hypothesises that the state of "language-readiness is of limited duration".

It begins around two and declines with cerebral maturation in the early teens. At this time, apparently a steady state is reached, and the cognitive processes are firmly structured, the capacity for primary language synthesis is lost, and cerebral reorganization of functions is no longer possible (ibid.: 376ff).

Concerning second language learning Lenneberg (ibid.: 176) explains that it is due to

termination of a state of organizational plasticity linked with lateralization of function [... causing that ...] automatic acquisition from mere exposure to a given language seems to disappear after this age [puberty], and foreign languages have to be taught and learned through a conscious and laboured effort (ibid.: 176).

The hypothesis was reassessed in numerous studies comparing children, adolescent and adult learners under various learning conditions according to speed and efficiency in learning a language and final proficiency, for example: Bialystock (1997); Johnson & Newport (1989); Patkowski (1980).

The outcomes indicate that language-readiness for L1 does not end abruptly, and regarding L2 learning the hypothesis was negated by the fact that there are adults who reach very high competence when learning a foreign language. Moreover, the collected evidence indicates that young children are more likely to attain native-like proficiency in a second language, than are teenagers or adults. Nevertheless, adults often learn parts of a language system more quickly, particularly morphology and syntax (Gass & Selinker 2008: 407; Singleton & Ryan 2004).

This is further supported by Paradis, according to whom the CPH "applies to implicit linguistic competence" (Paradis (2004: 59) in Nikolov & Djigunovic (2006: 235)). Up to the age of five procedural memory and implicit learning is dominant. According to Paradis the decline of procedural memory with older learners is compensated by explicit learning and consequently superseded by conscious declarative memory (ibid.: 235).

The results point to a general tendency of "younger = better in the long run" (Singleton 1995: 4). Adults who learn consciously, explicit and faster in the beginning might not reach high proficiency in all language areas, whereas children learn implicitly and slower. Although, children are inefficient learners, they may

gain higher proficiency in the long run (Gass & Selinker 2008: 412). Nevertheless, Singleton (1995: 4) points out that an early start is neither a necessity "nor a universally sufficient condition for the attainment of native-like proficiency".

[T]he age at which one first encounters a second language is only one of the determinants of the ultimate level of proficiency attained in that language (Singleton & Lengyel 1995: 4).

Consequently, the CPH on its own is not sufficient to prove that children are more successful language learners than adults. However, it can still be assumed that children are sensitive to language learning to a greater extent. While the CPH states that there is a sudden loss of language learning abilities it is substituted by the term *sensitive period*, entailing the connotation of being a more gradual change (Hoff 2009: 61; Gass & Selinker 2008: 406). Moreover, the new term focusses more on the aptitude for learning languages before puberty than on the loss of this faculty after childhood. Especially for the acquisition of the phonological system the assumption of the sensitive period is deemed to be secured (Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf 1998: 1).

Additional support for children's mastery in language learning is given by Schumacher (2006), who describes language learning during childhood as *privileged learning*.

Privilegiertes Lernen liegt dann vor, wenn durch biologische Entwicklungsprogramme festgelegt ist, durch welche Umweltbedingungen bestimmte Lernprozesse ausgelöst werden und auf welche Weise diese Lernprozesse anschließend ablaufen (ibid.: 19).

Nevertheless, biological age is not the only decisive factor determining success in language learning and it is observed that research in EFL and EFLT has moved "beyond the-earlier-the-better standpoint" (Nikolov & Djigunovic 2006: 96). It has been acknowledged that "an early start is not, in itself, automatically an advantage" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 21). "[C]ontextual factors, such as the quality of teaching [, teacher training] and provision of adequate time for learning" (ibid.: 21), influence early L2 learning profoundly. Moreover, it is individual learner's characteristics, motivation, aptitude as well as learning situations that influence rate and eventual success in learning (Lightbown & Spada 1993). For this reason the following section describes learner characteristics that are particularly ascribed to children. Additional information on the child as learner is provided in chapter 4 and, for example, by Pinter (2011) or Cameron (2001).

4.2. Children's Advantages in Language Learning

Besides age related sensitivity towards language, literature and proponents of early language learning in particular identify additional physiological and psychological characteristics that positively influence language learning. The following section lists cognitive, emotional and behavioural characteristics that are particularly ascribed to young learners.

First, children's brain physiology is thought to provide an advantage. According to Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf the first years of human life are most influential and imprinting.

Zweifellos zählen die ersten Lebensjahre des Kindes zu den wichtigsten, da das Wachstum, die Sensitivität und Plastizität des Zentralnervensystems während dieser Zeit besonders groß sind (Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf 1998: 1).

The brain's high plasticity is very often mentioned as an argument in favour of an early exposure to an additional language. Also Peltzer-Karpf (1994: 25f) stresses the brain's plasticity and the child's flexibility in reacting to input from the environment as ideal precondition for language learning.

From a neurobiological perspective Gerald Hüther (2006) argues the point for children's desire to learn. He explains that children feel tension when searching for an insight or attempt to solve a problem. This tension is dissolved and replaced by feelings of contentment and satisfaction when the problem is solved and something new is learned. Hüther concludes that children love learning because discovering something new, gives children a feeling of pleasure that he compares with the feeling adults experience during drug influence (ibid.: 75f).

More advantages younger learners may have over older learners are their "intuitive grasp of language and their ability to be more attuned to the phonological system of the new language" (Pinter 2006: 29). Apparently, children have an extraordinary ability in discriminating speech sounds. Hoff (2009: 178) reports that babies are open and able to differentiate virtually all existing speech sounds. This ability decreases rapidly during the first years of life, until the child is only able to reproduce and differentiate the sounds of its learned language(s) (ibid.: 178). This is supported by Bongaerts, Planken & Schils (1995: 34), who, by comparing studies, attest language learners to attain a native accent only if language learning starts before the age of six.

Between the age 6 and puberty the chances of learning to speak

another language without a foreign accent appear to become progressively smaller (Bongaerts, Planken & Schils 1995: 34f).

An interesting additional detail concerning the acquisition of sounds is that the sequence of acquisition and correct production of individual speech sounds depends on the frequency of sounds occurring in language input and their importance for marking "distinctions in the target language" (Hoff 2009: 178).

Another cognitive advantage of children is their memory that, as collaborating physiological and psychological processes, plays an important role in language learning. Due to maturation children's brains work different than those of adults. "It has been widely assumed that young children rely more on memory-based processes, whereas adults are more characterized by rule-based learning" (Nikolov & Djigunovic 2006: 234f).

Although it could be assumed that adults are more efficient language learners because of their memory capacity and cognitive abilities there are arguments claiming the opposite. Studies summarised by Gass & Selinker (2008: 413) state that children are better in learning languages because they remember less and lack cognitive abilities adults use for language learning. According to Gass & Selinker (ibid.: 413), children may rely more on a language acquisition device (LAD). Moreover, Hoff (2009: 69) refers to Newport (1991) who "has argued that it is easier to figure out the structure of language if you analyze small chunks than if you analyze larger stretches of speech". In contrast to adults, who can store longer sequences of speech in their short-term memory, children extract smaller chunks from input and store it in their memory (Hoff 2009: 69).

Besides physiological learner characteristics accounted above, there are psychological factors as well. According to Hoff (ibid.: 325) "personality variables have a large effect on the success of second language learning". Hence, a great advantage children have in learning languages lies in themselves, in their being, their natural constitution and temper. Doubtlessly, children already show individual characteristics. Still it can be generalised that healthy children with an unshaken sense of trust possess untamed curiosity and constantly seek knowledge. "Kinder sind so neugierig, so begeisterungsfähig und so offen für alles, was es in der Welt zu erleben gibt, wie nie wieder im späteren Leben" (Hüther 2006: 73). In their debonaire approach towards their environment children extrapolate knowledge, also language knowledge. Curiosity, besides the urge to play and explore, is children's key strategy to acquire language (Kühne 2003: 41).

In contrast to adults, who are often unwilling "to give up the sense of identity

their accent provides" and "to surrender their ego to the extent required to adopt a new language [...]" (Gass & Selinker 2008: 413), children's personal- and language identities are still evolving and unstable. Thus, it is easier for children "to switch cultural identities and language" (Hoff 2009: 68).

Moreover, children's motivation is not yet repressed by their ego and the fear of making mistakes. As a result, motivation as learner characteristic is regarded as high in children aged four to six. In fact, children are overoptimistic concerning their skills. Hasselhorn (2005: 83) describes children's unrealistic attitude that results in high motivation and commitment. In a child's point of view only effort counts, they follow the maxim: "Es gibt nichts, das ein anderer kann, das ich nicht auch könnte, wenn ich mich nur genügend anstrengende" (ibid.: 83).

In the light of all these insights, it becomes more and more apparent that age is by far not the only variable influencing language learning. After reviewing numerous studies on age related differences in language learning Griffiths (2008) concludes that

[i]n addition to maturational, socio-affective, cognitive, and situational explanations for age-related differences in language learning, there is a potentially almost infinite number of individual variables which might conceivably affect student's ability to learn language (ibid.: 40f).

To conclude, age is only one of many determining factors in language learning. Hence, the common assumption of "younger is better" does not meet the complexity of language learning in childhood. Indeed, it is the interplay of age as a biological as well as a psychological factor influencing the diverse learner characteristics. These learner characteristics of the target group determine the design of a language course. In order to offer background information to the course designer of a language course in a kindergarten setting, the following subsections will describe children's development and how they learn.

4.3. Children's Development

Insights from developmental psychology and knowledge of various theories, for example those of Piaget, Vygotsky or Bruner, will facilitate the process of making decisions for teaching the age group. Key points of those theories are summarised by Cameron (2001: Chapter 1) and Pinter (2006: Chapter 1). What Brewster & Ellis (2004) express should also be considered when designing a language course,

namely, that

[i]f we want to focus on learning-centred teaching it is vital that we are well-informed about the physical, emotional, conceptual and educational characteristics of children and how theory has shaped our view on how children learn (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27).

To serve as a starting point for designing a language course for preschool children, the following subsections give a concise overview of children's development and capabilities at the age of four to six. Having in mind a holistic approach to teaching, all developmental areas are briefly touched upon without particularly focussing on language development. No doubt,

[t]here are important parallels between children's first language and second language development and TEYL teachers can benefit from being familiar with first language processes (Pinter 2006: 24).

However, to gain an insight into how children learn and at the same time not to exceed the scope of this thesis, language development is not explicitly elaborated on. Hence, the following subsections summarise developmental milestones of about three- to six-year-olds in their physical, cognitive and socio-emotional development. Thereafter, the phenomenon of children's play and how children learn is concisely explained.

4.3.1. Physical Development

The following section describes how children develop physically when they are three to six years of age. By the time children are three years old they have mastered incredible progress in their physical development (Rossmann 1996: 91). The speed of growth slows down then and while children get taller, head to body ratio develops to that of adult appearance (ibid.: 92). Children become increasingly adept and coordinated in their fine- and gross motor skills. Commonly, physical development occurs "in a proximodistal direction, from the center of the body out towards the extremities" (Levine & Munsch 2011: 202). As a result, gross motor skills are learned before fine motor skills. This can be observed by comparing three-year-olds' to six-year-olds' fine- and gross-motor competence.

Although three-year-olds can run, ride a tricycle, walk on tip toe and learn to take one foot for each step when climbing stairs, they appear clumsy compared to six-year-olds who are competent climbers, who can run faster and are able to quickly change direction when running and may also learn to ride a bike

without support wheels. As with their sense of balance children continuously gain fine-motor skills. While younger children tend to scribble, children before school entrance can hold a pencil in a proper way, learn to write their first name and can use scissors purposefully.

Being physically active and thereby practising, is a precondition for gaining fine- and gross motor skills. Kasten (2005: 40) goes as far as to say:

Bewegung ist für Kinder lebenswichtig und die meisten Entwicklungspsychologen gehen davon aus, dass der kindliche Bewegungsdrang angeboren und für eine gesunde Entwicklung von Geist und Körper unverzichtbar ist.

There is evidence that playful motor skill training has positive effects not only on physical performance and well-being but also on cognitive, social and emotional development on the whole (ibid.: 40). Levine & Munsch (2011: 207) also support the importance of physical activity stating that "[...]physical activity is related not just to optimal functioning of your muscles but also to optimal functioning of your brain".

Compared to adults, children's thoughts, emotions and actions are much more an entity; whether they communicate in every day situation, or show emotion, or tell a story, physical movement and language are equally important tools for expression. Children have a natural drive to move and will do so as long they are allowed to and given the space. In teaching situations this urge to move has to be respected and can be channelled in purposeful teaching activities. Hence, physical activity needs to be a component in a language course for young learners.

4.3.2. Cognitive Development

Based on the assumption that humans develop cognition as a result of the interplay of endowment and environmental influences, the following section describes three- to six-year-olds cognitive development. During childhood, cognition is just evolving. With increasing mobility, step by step, children gain experiences and knowledge of the world. Based on this world knowledge children develop their world view and theories about how things work. To recognise this different perception and knowing about children's average cognitive abilities is a precondition for designing suitable learning conditions for very young learners.

Important personalities to be mentioned with regard to children's cognitive

development are Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Lew Vygotsky (1896-1934), Jerome Bruner (*1915) and Howard Gardner (*1943). As mentioned before, Cameron (2001: Chapter 1) and Pinter (2006: Chapter 1) summarise key points of their theories that have significant influence on approaches towards teaching. Although increasingly challenged by new research insights, particularly Piaget's description of children's development is still the basis for textbook content. Consequently, many approaches towards elementary- and primary pedagogy are still based on Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Sodian 2005: 25).

According to Piaget's theory, children aged two to seven are at the preoperational stage characterised by egocentric thinking and lack of logical thinking (see Levine & Munsch 2011: 47f; Rossmann 1996: 93f). This becomes apparent in the fact that children are not capable of taking on different perspectives and mentally reversing actions that they have observed (see Rossmann 1996: 94; Levine & Munsch 2011: 48). Still, children become increasingly independent from direct observation, developing the ability to imagine and using mental representation. As a result they become able to talk and refer to things that are not immediately present and use models. For example, a child, knowing the concept *car* and having reached representative thinking can express the concept by using the word, imagining it, by miming to steer a wheel, by using a model of a car or using another object which is said to be a car (Rossmann 1996: 94).

Moreover, children tend to assign experiences emotional connotation. Whatever a child encounters is ascribed to be good or bad (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 160). This strong relation of emotion and cognition will become more apparent with regard to children's memory.

Knowledge about concepts like space, time and quantities expands during the preschool years. At first the child uses categories like *much* and *little* to describe quantities (ibid.: 142). Three-year-olds are familiar with pairs; four-year-olds can already comprehend a quantity of three simultaneously. If presented like dots on a dice five- to six-year olds comprehend quantities of four to five entities instantly, without counting (ibid.: 142).

How far the concept of time is developed, can be observed in children's use of past tense or the terms *yesterday*, *today* and *tomorrow*. However, language use is not always a reliable indicator of a child's knowledge. Schenk-Danzinger (ibid.: 144) points out that five-to-six-year-olds are able to perceive and differentiate nuances of colours, shapes, quantities and other characteristics objects may have, however children might lack the vocabulary to verbalise these differences.

Children's Memory The child's cognitive maturation correlates with its memory capacity and performance. Compared to adults, children are better at recognising than in remembering. The reason for this was found in how children memorise. Like in the domain of learning, it is differentiated between explicit and implicit memory. Explicit memory is the visualisation and verbalisation of past events. Images of past events are actively retrieved and reproduced from memory (Kasten 2005: 54). Implicit memory, however, is only recognising something that has been perceived before (ibid.: 53). Children are significantly better in recognizing than in remembering (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 147), because explicit memory parallels with cognitive maturation and becomes increasingly accessible with children's ability to control spontaneous impulses (Kasten 2005: 53), meaning to regulate and control their behaviour. When playing the game *Simon says*, for example, children practice to master these impulses. Children's predominant use of implicit memory is also reflected by the fact that children nearly exclusively remember things in context (Padoan 2004: 26). Children are unlikely to directly translate when asked by their parents "*Was heißt Katze auf Englisch?*". But they will burst out "*Cat!*" when they are shown a picture of a cat during an English lesson.

With cognitive maturation children increasingly use strategies to memorise. The first strategies applied by children are rehearsing by repeating, meaning children repeatedly speak out what they want to remember (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 147), and selective attention, when children try to focus on one specific thing to fulfil a task (Kasten 2005: 65). Kasten (ibid.: 67) reports that it has been discovered that children are more likely to apply memory strategies if they are given tasks. Additionally, they are encouraged to use strategies if they experience a sense of achievement, receive positive response, or feel that it is worth the effort (Kasten 2005: 62; Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 147).

Further on, memory capacity is positively effected by increasing knowledge. The more children know, the easier it becomes to integrate new perceptions. Consequently, knowledge is retrieved more effectively, as more diverse stimuli trigger recall of knowledge from the internal storage (Kasten 2005: 68f). In children the interplay of memory and knowledge is particularly noticeable concerning procedural and emotional knowledge.

Children's long-term memory is based on their knowledge of everyday procedures. Daily routines, like getting up, eating breakfast, getting dressed, going to kindergarten and other regularly reoccurring events, are remembered as internalised scripts (ibid.: 72). These scripts can be imagined like stage directions of a

play applied for every day situations helping children to establish a repertoire of action strategies (Levine & Munsch 2011: 255). In knowing scripts children also gain security. "Since the concept of time is abstract, routines can give that day's events and activities a point of reference" (Wilburn 2000: 56).

Another particularity of children's memory is that it favours emotion. Children remember emotions they have during an event to a greater extent than what actually happened. The emotional experience remains in memory while the cause of the emotion is forgotten. Unfortunately it may occur that children reconnect emotions with a part of the memory that is not necessarily responsible for the emotion. Strong conditionings may happen and falsely attributed stimuli may cause also negative emotional reactions (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 146). Schenk-Danzinger (ibid.: 146) illustrates the story of a two-year-old girl that had to undergo surgery undertaken by a white-bearded doctor. Later on in her life she showed fear and strong avoidance towards white-bearded man.

Language Development Language development goes hand in hand with increasing knowledge of the world and Schenk-Danzinger (ibid.: 148) calls language development "einen wesentlichen Schwerpunkt der kindlichen Entwicklung". Between three and six years of age children remarkably extend their vocabulary and produce progressively complex utterances. Particularly from the first half of the fourth year of age children's language enhances in quantity and quality (ibid.: 150). "Das fünfjährige Kind kann schon fast wie ein Erwachsener Wünsche äußern, etwas vorschlagen, Fragen stellen und beantworten und Begründungen für sein Verhalten geben (Rossmann 1996: 95). Only pronunciation of some sounds remains difficult. However, with increasing metacognitive knowledge children become conscious about their utterances and may start correcting themselves (Kasten 2005: 74).

Whether language acquisition is based on nature or nurture was extensively discussed in the past. This work holds the view that language acquisition processes are a result of the interplay between natural endowment and extrinsic influences. Language input and the use of language in communication definitely plays a crucial role in a child's linguistic development (Bruner 2002: 101). Moreover, the quality and quantity of input has an effect on children's language competence. Levine & Munsch (2011: 313) report on studies showing that "[c]hildren from more educated families began producing complex sentences earlier and used them more frequently".

Children intuitively apply strategies in language acquisition. It has been observed that children remember words they hear and hypothesise about their meanings. Children then falsify or verify their hypotheses on the word meaning by using the word in communication and concluding from their partner's reaction whether the word was suitably used (Rossmann 1996: 96). Moreover, children show a tendency to assume that new words more likely describe objects than actions (ibid.: 96).

Another strategy to acquire language and expand knowledge is asking questions. Children are immensely curious (Hüther 2006: 73) and investigate the world. While at first they are mainly interested in what the things are, at some point in their life the purpose of things becomes more interesting, resulting in increasingly asking "Why?" (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 154). Schenk-Danzinger (ibid.: 154) assigns three functions to this enhancement in language activity. First, children establish social contact, second, extend knowledge and conceptualise and third, derive information about the purpose of things and actions.

Finally, it has to be pointed out, that language acquisition is not only a cognitive process by the child, it is to the same extent a social process (Cameron 2001). During first language acquisition, but particularly in the foreign language classroom, children always try to make sense of what they hear. Children construct meaning by relating the information to their prior world knowledge and experiences which mainly origin in social interaction (ibid.: 39). However, until the age of ten, children's communication skills are limited, because they "lack awareness of how to cater for other participants in discourse, and are not very skilful in planning their talk" (ibid.: 52). Moreover, they "are not very good at taking other discourse participants into account and shaping what they say to fit the needs of others" (ibid.: 52). That is due to their stage of social-emotional development described further in the following section.

4.3.3. Socio-Emotional Development

So far an overview has been given as to what children aged three to six are physically and cognitively able to do. The following section reports on children's socio-emotional development.

A key task during the preschool years is to manage to cooperate and engage in social relationships outside the family. A precondition of prosocial behaviour is, according to Kasten (2005: 189f), the ability to perceive and understand others'

mental and emotional state and external condition, which is subsumed under the term role taking. However, children aged three to six only start to enhance their repertoire of social behaviours and because of their cognitive abilities they just discover that others also feel, think and wish.

Reflexive Rollenübernahmeprozesse tauchen erst relativ spät in der kindlichen Entwicklung auf; beständig und sicher wohl erst im Verlaufe der Grundschuljahre, in vorläufiger und unbeständiger Form aber wahrscheinlich schon im Laufe des vierten Lebensjahres. (Kasten 2005: 195)

Therefore, children are not always able to act in a socially accepted and cooperative way. First, Levine & Munsch (2011: 437) say, "[c]hildren must learn to control their own impulses and understand other's intentions". The better they become in realising and accepting others' feelings and intentions, hence, in role taking, the more adapted and integrated they are in a group (Kasten 2005: 189f). As a result, there are dynamic social and group forming processes going on in a kindergarten group. "As children develop special friendships it becomes more likely that some children will feel left out" (Levine & Munsch 2011: 436).

Moreover, dealing sensibly with children's behaviour and emotion is an important topic in teaching. Children seek attachment to others in order to learn about themselves and the world. According to Hütter (2011: 125), learning requires trustful social relationships. In this respect, healthy development and learning can only take place in an emotionally secure social relationship and environment. This is established by offering personal positive attention (Wilburn 2000: 12f). From time to time children test the persistence of relationships. In this case, it has to be stressed, positive attention and encouragement is far more effective than reacting to negative behaviour and telling children off.

Those who engage with children are responsible for their wellbeing, including emotional wellbeing. Schenk-Danzinger (2006: 161) states that children growing up in a tension free, serene, cheerful atmosphere are more vital and joyful in later life. Therefore it is also teachers' responsibility to make children feel comfortable and secure in all situations. This can be achieved by conveying positive feelings, appealing to children's self-esteem and establishing routines. Children feel secure and gain a feeling of control when knowing what they can expect next. Routines are comforting (Wilburn 2000: 56f), as already mentioned with regard to children's memory. Moreover, children need to feel loved to develop positive attitudes and a positive self-image.

According to Levine & Munsch (2011: 285f) preschoolers identify themselves with what they can do and gain their self-concept and self-esteem from that. Here again the importance of attention and feedback comes in. If they can be satisfied with what they can do depends on the feedback they receive by adults. Therefore, children need patient guides who praise them for what they achieve. However, Wilburn (2000: 15) points out, it should be done in a way that is perceived as sincere by the child and not overdone. Hence, praise should be specific, contingent and credible and can be expressed via face, body, voice or eye contact (ibid.: 17). Consequently, praise contributes to a child's internal motivation (ibid.: 17).

Internal motivation is assumed to be very high with children. Although motivation is mostly associated with cognitive processes, motivation in childhood adopts more emotional aspects. Wilburn (ibid.: 13) highlights:

Motivation is a concept filled with emotion that begins on the inside of a person, and thrusts that person into a continues, sustained action.

Hence, motivation is embedded in socio-emotional processes. Believing what neurophysiologists point out, the emotionality of learning has to be realised in order to establish potentially successful learning situations (Caspary 2006; Hütther 2011). Appealing to children's emotion is part of engaging with them and, thereby, establishes a channel for learning.

To conclude, children acquire and practice social competences by engaging with their environment. For children the natural way to interact with their surrounding is through play. Because play is regarded as a key strategy in children's development, the phenomenology, functions and forms of play are elaborated in the next section.

4.4. Children's Play

Play is the dominant activity and key form of engagement with the environment during childhood (Niederle 1995b: 16). Schenk-Danzinger (2006: 163) generalises: "Spielen ist eine jungen Lebewesen gemäße Form der Aktivität". By playing, children gain experiences and enhance their repertoire of behaviours, hence they learn. Relating to childhood, Niederle (1995b: 16) points out that "Spielen und lernen stehen in keinem Gegensatz zueinander".

Schenk-Danzinger (2006: 163f) defines and characterises play. She accounts of

play as free of heteronomy. Accordingly, it is a spontaneous, intrinsically motivated, self-determined action and reaction to the environment (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 163). Moreover, play is a means by itself, even if it is assigned important functions, it is determined by subjective engagement - it is the child's decision when to start and to end playing (ibid.: 163f). Further on, play is characterised as sensual, exciting and joyful, but at the same time demanding the individual to adapt and assimilate to its environment and real-life situation (ibid.: 164). Similarly, Wilburn (2000: 95), referring to Berg (1994), describes play as "[b]ehaviors that are creative, voluntary, flexible, pleasurable, self-motivated, concerned more with means than ends".

Children's ways to play change according to their development. Depending on the child's age and stage of development he/she shows changing preference for various kinds of play. While two-year-olds gain first experiences with material and its purposes, five year olds increasingly engage with peers in imaginative role-play. The preferred form of play corresponds to the individual child's developmental challenges and stage (Schenk-Danzinger 2006: 164f). Moreover, the different kinds of play serve different purposes, "such as letting off physical energy or actively exploring a concept" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 32). Schenk-Danzinger (2006: 164) accounts of role-play, functional play and productive play to be in the foreground at preschool age.

Role play, also fiction- or illusion play, is characterised by imitation of familiar actions, pretending and simulating, anthropomorphism, taking on fictional roles and arbitrary use of symbols by giving objects a new interpretation (ibid.: 165). Focussing on physical movement, children follow physical impulses and experiment with objects in functional play (ibid.: 167). Beyond experimenting children engage creatively with material in productive play. In all kinds of play the extent of complexity depends on children's development and available time and space for experiences (ibid.: 168ff).

From age five children also increasingly gain interest in rule based and competitive games. However, children only gradually learn to cope with loosing and seven-year-olds may still grudge when loosing, or simply not winning, a game (ibid.: 174).

Indeed, "[a]ll types of play are immensely beneficial to the child" (Wilburn 2000: 95) and have in common that by playing the child engages with its environment. Schenk-Danzinger (2006: 166) calls particularly role play "*eine Brücke zur Wirklichkeit*" (italics as in the original). Even though play has an end in itself, it

contributes fundamentally to children's healthy development. In the following play's important functions are elucidated.

Playing contributes to progression and learning in all developmental areas.

It helps the child to develop emotionally and socially [and ...] helps develop the intellect in terms of thinking, communicating, and problem solving, to name only a few components of the developmental process (Wilburn 2000: 100).

As pointed out in the introduction of this section, playing to children means learning, acquiring behaviour that is the base for learning and interacting with the environment in later life. First of all, children learn about the properties and qualities of materials and objects. Additionally they experience laws of nature. Children learn for example that building blocks tend to fall down and never up. Of course these observations are not consciously formed, however, Wilburn (ibid.: 87) reckons that "this background knowledge is stored for later use and understanding".

Moreover, play functions as training ground for social interaction. Wilburn (ibid.: 96) cites Stone (1996: 104) who says: "As children play, they learn social skills such as how to negotiate, resolve conflicts, take turns, and share". Besides these communicative skills children also develop friendships and experience empowerment, which consequently contributes to the development of the self (Wilburn 2000: 96). Furthermore, through play children establish coping mechanisms, meaning they learn to master fears, self-regulate, alleviate stress and gain self-confidence (ibid.: 97). Hence, play has a strong psychological and emotional component.

Consequently, play to children is the developmentally appropriate means to express themselves (ibid.: 95). In more detail, it is the child's personal experiences that it seeks to reinterpret and expand by playing and slipping into various roles and contexts (ibid.: 95). By observing what and how children play "adults may gain some insight into what might be causing pleasure or pain in a youngster's life" (ibid.: 97).

Children's gift of imagination, fantasy and creative thinking assists the phenomenon of play. However, children can only imagine and fantasise what they know. Hence, the more varied children's experiences are, the more varied is their play. "[... V]aried experiences provide the background from which youngsters imagine and create their play situations" (ibid.: 97).

Concluding this section on children's play it is essential to point out that children's play should on no account be confused with activities initiated by adults. In educational circumstances and therapy the child's affinity to playing is recognised and availed to pursue specific objectives. Flitner (2002) insists that games with any intention do not belong to the core of the phenomenon called playing. "Spielen ist – jedenfalls in seinem Kernbereich – durch Freiheit, Spontaneität und Zwecklosigkeit bestimmt" (ibid.: 133). In that sense, structured play planned by an adult with the intention to give specific language input would not conform to play as autonomous action, engagement and self directed learning by the child. Therefore, the fundamental difference of a child's free play and adult's invitations to games has to be acknowledged. Moreover, the child's inherent drive to play has to be recognised and respected when planning and implementing educational intervention.

As a consequence, those with the intention to encourage certain skills in children, like foreign language skills, have to respect the individual child's motivation and impulses to play. Targeted pedagogical intervention can avail of children's learning potential by adapting teaching techniques to conform to the learner's characteristics, hence the learner's needs and drive to play.

4.5. Children's Learner Characteristics

So far this chapter has portrayed three- to six-year-olds' developmental characteristics. Thereby, the reader should have gained an impression of what children at that age can do and how they behave. This last section summarises children's characteristics with respect to how they learn and arrives at conclusions with regard to how to teach a foreign language to very young learners.

Learning is the process of changing behaviour on the basis of experience (Niederle 1995b: 29). The ultimate goal of this constant change and growth of behavioural repertoire is to arrive at a stage of self-determination and obtaining self-competence, social competence, expertise and identity (CBI 2009). Learning in childhood occurs in situations that allow the child to be active, to learn by doing (Niederle 1995b: 33) and that refer to the child's former experience and everyday reality (ibid.: 30). However, children's sphere of action is often limited in real life situations. As a result, children make the adult world obtainable by transferring it onto the level of play (ibid.: 31). Play, as pointed out earlier, is the appropriate way of learning for children (ibid.: 31). More information about play as mode for learning is offered by Hauser (2005).

Besides playing, children engage in other self-directed, creative behaviours like exploring, investigating, creating and working (Niederle 1995b: 31). Niederle (ibid.: 30) stresses that engagement and acquisition go beyond mere cognitive aspects and processes. Children learn holistically, involving emotional, physical and social aspects. "Das ganzheitliche Lernen ist ein Grundmerkmal des früh-kindlichen Lernens" (ibid.: 30). Thus, children's whole body and personality is involved when engaging with their environment and learning (ibid.: 30).

From all this knowledge about children, learner characteristics of young children can be derived. First, "children [...] have a lot more physical energy and often need to be physically active (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27). Moreover, they "get bored easily" (ibid.: 27), they are easily distracted and "less able to give selective and prolonged attention" to one thing (Cameron 2001: 15). However, if children are very interested and enthusiastic about something, they can concentrate for a surprisingly long time (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 28). To present something that is new to children is rather easy, since their knowledge of the world is limited (Pinter 2006: 2) and they are still developing conceptually (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27). Moreover, children at preschool age are not able to read and write yet (Pinter 2006: 2).

More cognitive characteristics are that children learn rather slowly and tend to forget quickly (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27). Additionally, "[t]hey have lower levels of awareness about themselves as language learners as well as about processes of learning" (Pinter 2006: 2).

Regarding their personality, children "have a wide range of emotional needs" and "are emotionally excitable" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27). Moreover, they are "more concerned about themselves than others" (Pinter 2006: 2) and in their "self-orientation" they are "preoccupied with their own world" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27). Finally, it has to be mentioned that children enjoy fantasy and imagination (Pinter 2006: 2) and "are excellent mimics" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 27).

For teachers of young learners these insights have to lead to certain practices in teaching. Orlovský (2010) summarises in her thesis teaching techniques that are particularly appropriate to teach foreign languages to young learners. The work in hand concentrates more on the level of designing a course for young learners. Still, the accounted learner characteristics will have to influence features of a language course.

5. Towards a Methodology for Teaching Languages to Young Learners

Teaching is, additionally to other insights, based on personal assumptions and attitudes, probably influenced by generally accepted approaches and trends. Because the target group of readers might not be familiar with language pedagogy, the following chapter aims at giving a concise overview of core concepts.

It has to be stressed that there are no general solutions and recipes in teaching. Each teaching situation demands its specific solution (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditzfurth 2009: 13). Particularly in this considerably new field of teaching languages to preschool learners, new strategies need to be developed. The cornerstones of designing a course for a kindergarten setting that will be provided towards the end of this thesis, as well as the philosophical framework offered in this chapter, are intended to serve as methodological starting point. Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditzfurth (*ibid.*: 13) suggest to adopt an approach of professional development based on classroom-based action research. Theories from outside the classroom should be integrated into teaching. Then again teaching needs to be evaluated to gain new insights.

5.1. From Method to Postmethod

The following passage will define the terms method, methodology, approach and technique in a teaching context. Brown (2007: 17) defines technique as "[a]ny of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or tasks used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives". He also points out that the terms are used interchangeably to describe classroom procedures, like tasks, activities or exercises (*ibid.*: 17).

The term method refers to a set of techniques and principles. In Brown's words, method is "[a] generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives" (*ibid.*: 17). This set of specifications includes a definition of student and teacher roles and behaviours. Moreover, objectives, materials and sequences are predetermined and assumed to be "broadly applicable to a variety of audiences in a variety of contexts" (*ibid.*: 17).

With the aim of finding the best way to teach, a succession of methods was developed between 1880 and 1990 (Brown 2002: 10). Each method claimed to be

most effective and being based on new scientific insights. Teachers, however, even when believing in the method and acting according to its rules, unconsciously modified the procedures guided by individual assumptions and intuitions about teaching. The concept of method was eventually found to be too rigid. In 1991 Nunan, as one critic of many, recommended to "overcome the pendulum effect in language teaching", refuse to submit to "fads and fashions" and instead adopt an "empirically-based approach to language teaching methodology" (Nunan 1991: 1).

The concept of methodology assigns teachers a more active role in the process of teaching. Methodology refers to practices, "the activities, tasks, and learning experiences selected by the teacher in order to achieve learning, and how these are used within the teaching/learning processes" (Richards 1990: 11). Moreover, it includes the teachers' considerations, related research and underlying theories (Brown 2007: 17). In contrast to predetermined methods developed by theorists, methodology "evolves out of the dynamics of the teaching process itself" (Richards 1990: 11).

In this respect, the teacher's role has changed from a performer of a certain method to that of an investigator (ibid.: 48). It is the teacher's individual and context-based approach, his/her "[t]heoretically well-informed position and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings" (Brown 2007: 17) that leads to procedures in practice. Keywords in this respect are "enlightened" (Brown 2002: 11) and "eclectic" (Brown 2007: 41). At this point it has to be emphasised that teaching approaches are regarded as being dynamic. Teaching experiences and new insights will form the individual approach, which is definitely not "set in stone" (ibid.: 43). The following quote by Shakouri Masouleh gives additional emphasis to this.

An approach of language pedagogy is not just a set of static principles set in a fixed framework. It is dynamic. And a significant feature of this dynamicity is change. Change involve [sic!] innovation, and innovation involves being free to employ one's plausibility in maximizing the process of learning (Masouleh 2012: 66).

More information on and critical reviews of the development of pedagogical trends in language teaching is offered by Brown (2002, 2007); Masouleh (2012); Sowden (2007) and Waters (2009a,b, 2012).

A concept that continues to be used today is that of postmethod pedagogy

(Brown 2007: 40). The following quote by Brown reflects the essence of this approach:

"So perhaps the profession has attained a modicum of maturity where we recognize that the diversity of language learners in multiple world-wide contexts demands an eclectic blend of tasks, each tailored for a specific group of learners studying for particular purposes in geographic, social, and political contexts" (ibid.: 41).

5.2. Methodological Choices and TEYL

Teaching approaches that might offer useful suggestions for teaching English at preschool level are for example task-based learning (TBL), learner-centred approach, total physical response (TPR), content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and communicative language teaching (CLT). In order not to exceed the frame of this thesis, these methods and approaches that are accounted in Larsen-Freeman (2000) are only referred to. Moreover, descriptions of the named approaches tend to focus on traditional mainstream teaching contexts and learner groups. In this respect Blondin et al. (1998: 43) point out that

[i]nnovation in respect of teaching a foreign language should not be reduced to simply lowering the age at which children begin. A measure of this sort does not of itself constitute a pedagogical solution. It is of great importance to develop appropriate methodologies that are in tune with the needs of each age-group.

Considered as appropriate methodological starting point is postmethod pedagogy. Focussing on the basic constituents of learning and teaching situations and by not assuming anything as given it can contribute to approach new teaching situations. The indefinite framework of postmethod pedagogy allows to be applied as underlying philosophy to teaching very young learners in a kindergarten context.

However, theorising on teaching young learners within the framework of a post-method pedagogy cannot and does not need to be the only starting point for teaching. Shakouri Masouleh argues that novice teachers cannot be expected to find their alternative method (Masouleh 2012: 65). Graves adds to this that "[n]o teacher wants to reinvent the wheel, and if there is a procedure to follow, she wants to know what it is" (Graves 1996: 5). Both point to existing methods, guidelines, models and principles. "[F]ollowing a method or a blend of methods seems to be useful for novice teachers [...]" (Masouleh 2012: 72). Also in Graves' view these "can help a teacher make sense of her situation, mobilize her resources,

and organize her progress [...] (Graves 1996: 5). However, she warns to view these guidelines as recipes that guarantee success, "because each teacher and each teacher's situation is different" (ibid.: 5).

Consequently, this thesis seeks to offer a certain extent of background knowledge, examples from practice and a set of principles that, as a tool-kit, will hopefully assist teachers entering the field of teaching young learners. In doing so it follows Masouleh's recommendation (2012: 72) of presenting a package of principles for a start, and Brown's principled approach, as well as an "informed eclecticism" (Brown (2002, 2007) and Sowden (2007: 304)).

As a core component of the tool-kit, the following chapter presents and illustrates a framework for designing courses. Graves' (2008) framework of course design shares important qualities with the components of postmethod pedagogy and is therefore regarded suitable.

So far this thesis has been concerned with the contextual forces that influence TEYL in general. Political arguments, scientific insights and psychological considerations have been summarised. The following chapter will offer a structure to approach and lead through the process of developing a course.

6. Principles of Course Design

The following chapter gives insight into the processes of course design. In the Austrian kindergarten system learning and teaching is organised differently from primary and secondary schools. While school organisation follows national laws, curricula and organisation patterns, kindergarten laws are a matter of the individual Austrian provinces. Except for the *Bundesländerübergreifender BildungsRahmenPlan für elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Österreich* (CBI 2009), there is no nationwide binding document guiding teaching and learning in Austrian kindergartens. Hence, those who want to offer additional courses in a kindergarten are confronted with the task of designing a course on their own. This task, commonly referred to as course design, is the process of making decisions in order to create a teaching framework for a period of time.

Once a teacher is confronted with a new teaching situation numerous questions arise. Who am I going to teach? What shall I teach? Where shall I start planning? These and many more questions that need to be considered when planning for a teaching situation are covered by the framework of course design. Also, it helps with organising all gathered information and establishes clarity.

The areas of information involve the social- as well as physical context of the teaching situation, the learners as persons, the teacher's beliefs, possible constraints and resources. Moreover, they include the students' expectations of learning outcome and reason for doing the course. It is necessary to gather information on these domains to design a tailor-made and effective course.

As broached in the previous chapter, teaching always involves decision making, planning and choosing from the existing or creating anew. These decisions may concern different levels of educational planning and range from formulating objectives for the national curriculum to planning a specific learning activity. Somewhere in between these extreme lines, imagining these levels of planning, lies the task of designing a course.

This chapter will define course design and contrast it from the creation of curriculum and syllabus. Although they all describe processes of making decisions for teaching situations their scope and level of planning varies in specific situations. After the terms *course* and *course design* are clarified, the steps of course design according to Graves (2008) are elucidated and first hints to their application and adaptation to a kindergarten context are given.

6.1. Definition of Course Design

Before course design can be defined the terms *curriculum*, *syllabus* and *course* need to be clarified. In the literature these terms are often used interchangeably, however, scholars dealing with these concepts strive for clarity (Nunan 1988: 3). The confusion over the terms of *curriculum* and *syllabus* has regional reasons for Nunan (ibid.: 14). He reports that in the United States, curriculum "refer[s] to all aspects of planning, implementation and evaluation of a curriculum" and also to "a particular course of instruction" (ibid.: 14). The term syllabus is specifically used for specifying and ordering content as part of the curriculum and, according to Nunan (ibid.: 14), predominantly used in a British scholarly context.

Dubin & Olshtain (1986) take a similar position concerning syllabus, but they focus more on the relationship between curriculum and syllabus. Moreover, they see curriculum as a documentation of underlying beliefs, philosophies and theories of language learning and teaching.

A curriculum contains a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational-cultural philosophy which applies across subjects together with a theoretical orientation to language and language learning with respect to the subject matter at hand. A curriculum is often reflective of national and political trends as well (ibid.: 34f).

While curriculum "describe[s] the broadest context in which planning for language instruction takes place, either on the national level or for a community's school" (ibid.: 3) a syllabus goes more into detail focussing on a specific group of learners. Moreover, Dubin & Olshtain (ibid.: 3) recognise that syllabus is increasingly used to describe merely the specification of language content and name course outline as a synonym.

A syllabus is a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level (ibid.: 35).

The term *course* describes a level of planning that lies between those of curriculum and syllabus. According to all accounts it describes a specifically planned teaching situation by considering the overall goals of the curriculum. Hutchinson & Waters (1987: 65) define course as "an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge".

Hence, course design happens on a level between curriculum and syllabus development. It is the process that escorts the way from recognising curriculum goals to breaking them down into teachable objectives to deciding on content, material and activities to teaching, evaluating and reteaching the course. Concluding it with Graves' words: "[...]syllabus design is a part of course development, and course is a part of a curriculum" (Graves 1996: 3).

Moreover, Graves (ibid.: 2) says that

[...] course development is a grounded process because it is about a specific course in a given time and place with a given set of people. It is not an orderly sequence of events but rather a complex, unpredictable, and individual process.

In that sense the following section accounts of the steps of course design in an arbitrary sequence, forming a framework that should assist the process of course design for any teaching situation. Additionally, first considerations on how the individual steps will need to be adapted to the target context are indicated. More detailed information in order to fulfil the task of defining the context will then be offered in chapter 7, *The Kindergarten as Teaching Context* on page 48.

6.2. The Steps of Course Design

Having defined what course design is, by contrasting it to curriculum design and syllabus design, the focus shifts now to the process of designing a course and the individual tasks involved. For describing the steps of course design Graves (2008) was consulted as main source. This is for the reason that Graves (ibid.) is the most recent publication and offers the best description to be transferred to the target context. Compared to Dubin & Olshtain (1986), who focus on a more global level of program and curriculum planning, and Yalden (1987), who offers a valuable collection of issues and theories around approaches towards course design, Graves (2008) was most straight forward in describing the steps and concrete tasks of designing a course, hence, most suitable for the purpose of this thesis.

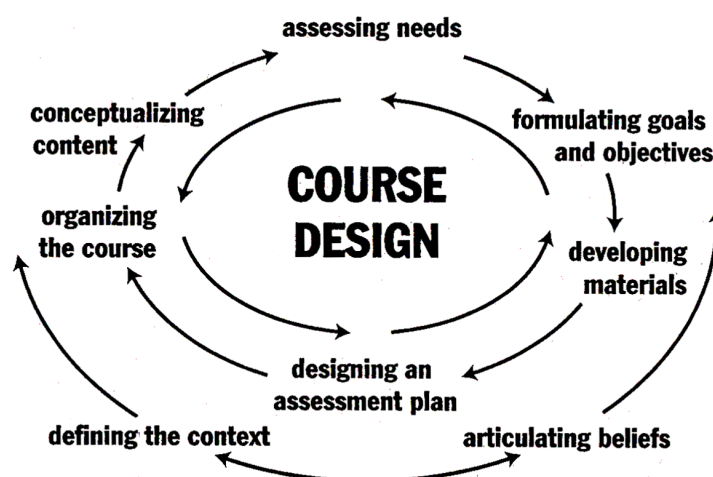
As mentioned before, numerous questions come into a teacher's mind when s/he is asked to teach in a new teaching situation and a reasonable amount of information needs to be gathered to develop an effective course suiting the target group. The course design framework assists this information gathering process, helps to structure the gained knowledge and to extrapolate decisions. There is

no designated starting point or end to this grounded process (Graves 1996: 2). Moreover, Graves (2008) describes course design as system "in the sense that planning for one component will contribute to others; changes to one component will influence all others" (ibid.: 4). Results of this process are always re-evaluated and open for adaptation, hence, course design is also a cyclical process.

The following sections will each describe one step of course design. Readers should gain insight into global considerations on teaching leading towards detailed tasks of planning. Graves (ibid.: 3) considers the steps of defining the context and the course designer formulating beliefs as the foundations for all other steps to be taken. Hence, these steps are described first. The remaining steps are presented in an arbitrary, intuitive sequence.

To gain an overview of the steps within the process of course design Graves' flowchart is presented in figure 1.

Figure 1 *Framework of Course Design* (ibid.: 3)



6.2.1. Articulating Beliefs

It is the teacher's beliefs on language, society, learning, the learners and her own role as a teacher that influence all decisions taken in the process of course design (ibid.: 27-30). Graves addresses the course designer saying: "Your beliefs play a role at each stage of course design. They may not always be present in your thinking, but they underlie the decisions you make" (ibid.: 33). Therefore, articulating one's own beliefs and reflecting their origin, usually individual history

and experiences, is a basic task ideally accomplished at an early stage during the process of developing a course.

Clarifying how one perceives pupils and reflecting one's own role and responsibility as teacher has considerable influence on the quality of methodological decisions. Especially when working with very young children it helps to be settled and to act and react consciously. Children, in their continuous search for answers to all their questions about the world, need clarity. This does not mean having to know everything. It means that children need mature and self-reflected personalities to guide them. Teaching without personal principles and articulated visions and beliefs conveys insecurity that may irritate children and at worst leads to challenging behaviour negatively effecting the teaching situation. By contrast, clarity and self-reflection leads to quality pedagogical work. Hence, clearly articulated beliefs pave the way to a successful language course.

6.2.2. Defining the Context

In Graves' terms, defining the context is a "key factor" (Graves 2008: 13). "You need to know as much as possible about the context in order to make decisions about the course" (ibid.: 13). Graves illustratively compares designing a course with an architect planning a house. Long before there are first sketches, the architect specifies features of the site, purpose of the new building and perhaps which building material is locally available. "You need to have a lot of information in order to design a structure that will fit the context" (ibid.: 14). In the case of designing a course, defining the context comprises gathering information on the physical setting, the people involved, nature of course and institution, teaching resources, and time frames.

In more detail, the course designer needs to know where the building is located and about the room conditions, the size of the room, the furniture, light conditions; it could even be an advantage to know about the noise-cancelling ability of walls. Noise that comes from outside can be very disturbing in certain teaching situations, also, lively activities during class may disturb others in neighbouring rooms. Moreover, knowing more about the physical setting will lead to finding out about teaching resources. Which materials are available? Do I have to develop my own materials or are there text books that have to be used? Is there a photocopier that I may use? Knowing whether audio or video equipment is available also helps when planning lessons. For a better overview of all these factors see table 1 on page 39.

Table 1 *Factors to Consider when Defining the Context (Graves 2008: 16)*

<i>People</i>	<i>Physical setting</i>
students how many, age, gender, culture(s), other language(s), purpose(s), education, profession, experience other stakeholders school administrators parents funders community	location of school: convenience, setting classroom: size, furniture, light, noise always same classroom?
<i>Nature of course and institution</i>	<i>Teaching Resources</i>
type/purpose of course mandatory, open enrollment relation to current/previous courses prescribed curriculum or not required tests or not	materials available required text? develop own materials? equipment: cassettes, video, photocopying clerical support
<i>Time</i>	
how many hours total over what span of time how often class meets for how long each time day of week, time of day where fits in schedule of students students' timeliness	

The more the teacher knows about the students, the easier it is to plan effective lessons. Therefore, it is important to know whom one is going to teach. How old are the learners? How many will be there? What is their lingual- and cultural background? What previous experiences and world knowledge do they have? Besides pupils there are other stakeholders that might have an influence on the course such as administrative personnel, head teachers, parents, funders and the community.

Defining the context also comprises knowing the purpose and type of course;

whether it is mandatory or voluntarily attended by students; if it is part of a series of courses; whether there is a prescribed curriculum or a final test required. Finally, the time constraints have to be defined. How many sequences and over what time span should they be taught? How often does the class meet and how long is a meeting? What day of the week and what time of the day? Who or what schedules the lessons?

Graves aims to present a comprehensive list of factors that need to be considered when defining the context. Although Graves' approach is neutral by not referring to any specific teaching situation, it can be observed, that she did not have a group of very young learners in mind. Consequently, when planning to teach in a kindergarten context, Graves' list is helpful, however, needs adaptation.

In a kindergarten there is often a spare room that could be used for English classes. Whether it is the parish room or the room for physical activities will determine other factors like furniture. Concerning stakeholders involved in the course there are the head teacher of the institution, the kindergarten teachers, the parents and their children. Since most kindergartens are subunits of an umbrella organisation, authorities might need to be contacted in the first instance. Nevertheless, usually the first person to contact in a kindergarten is the head teacher. She decides whether there is an English course offered in the individual institution or not. Parents might have expressed their wish to invite somebody teaching English to their children beforehand. Then, depending on how the course is funded, parents may also directly pay the teacher. Hence, parents are customers as well as pupils. Aiming at a good business- or even amicable relationship with the kindergarten teachers may contribute to a relaxed atmosphere. On teaching level it is clearly the children, their development and their knowledge, determining what is planned. The pupils age and developmental stage is the crucial factor for further decisions.

How many lessons the course comprises, when and how often they take place are decisions taken by the teaching expert, but also have to be adapted to the institution and therefore be arranged with the head teacher and the kindergarten teachers. Duration of lessons will depend on the teacher's plan and on learners. In how far the resources of the institution may be used by the English teacher has to be agreed on with the head teacher and the kindergarten teachers.

These guidelines are necessarily vague, because it is hardly possible to design a course for an undefined context. Graves goes so far as to say that

[...] when you design a course, you design it for a specific group of

people, in a specific setting, for a specific amount of time; in short, for a specific context (Graves 2008: 15).

Therefore, it is difficult to make general statements on how to organise a course in kindergarten. Once there is a plan and a teaching framework, it could be applied to more than one teaching situation of a similar kind; however, it will always need adaptation to the specific context. Each kindergarten is differently organised, has different room conditions and the people involved have their individual way of interacting. Graves points out that it is particularly important to recognise these differences, because "[b]y defining your context and the challenges it presents, you put yourself in a position to take advantage of the resources of the context and your own internal resources of common sense and creativity" (ibid.: 23).

More background information on the kindergarten as teaching context is given in chapter 7, *The Kindergarten as Teaching Context* on page 48.

6.2.3. Formulating Goals and Objectives

Formulating goals and objectives is the basis for purposeful teaching. The priorities, the *what* and the *how* should be taught, need to be identified in order to keep the focus throughout the course. Formulated goals and objectives help to establish a golden thread to follow during a course.

Before formulating goals and objectives, it should be clear what is meant by these terms. Graves (ibid.: 75) explains goals as "way of putting into words the main purposes and intended outcomes of your course" and objectives as "statements about how the goals will be achieved". There is a strong interrelation between goals and objectives. Graves (ibid.: 76) explains this in the following way: "Through objectives, a goal is broken down into learnable and teachable units. By achieving the objectives, the goal will be reached". While goals in a general way express what students should have learned or be able to do after the course, objectives are more specific, defining the steps leading towards the goals. Graves summarises the benefits of defining goals and objectives in the following way:

Formulating goals and objectives helps to build a clear vision of what you will teach. Because a goal is something toward which you will explicitly teach, stating goals helps to define priorities and to make choices. Clear goals help to make teaching purposeful because what you do in class is related to your overall purpose. Goals and Objectives provide a basis for making choices about what to teach

and how (Graves 2008: 79).

In a kindergarten setting formulating goals and objectives is equally important. The course has to be effective, needs a clear direction and students should benefit from it. The questions that arise in this respect are what kindergarten children can actually be expected to learn; What can reasonably be taught? Considering children's needs and developmental stage, will significantly influence the formulation of goals and objectives. What scholars suggest as goals and objectives for TEYL is summarised in section 9.1, *Clear Goals and Objectives* on page 73.

6.2.4. Assessing Needs

Needs assessment, also referred to as needs analysis, is predominantly used in ESP, academic and adult education and is another important part of effective course design. It involves investigating students' needs in order to make choices and decisions on teaching. The assessment of needs can take place while planning the course as well as parallel to teaching the course to adapt and fine tune activities and materials. Graves (ibid.: 100) regards needs assessment as a cyclical process of deciding what information should be gathered, deciding where, when and how this information is gathered, gathering the information, interpreting it, acting on the information and evaluating the effects on the action. Hence, decisions on the course are made based on the interpretations of the information gathered on students' preferences and needs.

The underlying assumption is that teaching is a dialogue between students and teachers. Assessing needs means finding out about students' present state and what they need or want to learn. Information to be gathered on the present state comprises information on the person, including age, gender, educational and language background, profession and nationality, his or her competences, interests, learning preferences and attitudes. Knowledge on the students' goals and objectives and the desired skills they will need to master these, adds pieces to the course on the whole.

The methods of doing needs assessment listed and explained by Graves (ibid.: 111-121), like questionnaires, interviews, grids, charts or lists, writing activities, group discussions, ranking activities, regular feedback sessions and dialogue journals, learning logs and diaries, portfolios and participatory processes, are not explained in detail at this point, because they are not suitable for being applied in a

kindergarten context.

For applying needs assessment in a kindergarten, different strategies need to be found. Due to children's developmental stage they are unlikely to express by themselves which language skills they would like to improve during the course and which learning strategies work for them. Insights from the field of developmental psychology, talking to parents and kindergarten teachers, as well as observing children will turn out as useful resources to find out about young learners' needs.

What is taught and how it is taught has to match the target group of preschool learners. As a result an English course for young learners will not only focus on language skills but on general competences as listed in the Bildungsrahmenplan (BRP) (CBI 2009). Particularly the fact that students cannot read and write yet, influences the design and organisation of the course, just as much children's urge to be physically active.

To conclude, information gathered during the process of assessing needs informs most other decisions that need to be made when designing a course, e.g. decisions on formulating goals and objectives, the content, the materials and organisation of lessons. For this reason basic information on the target group was offered in this thesis in chapter 4, *Preschool Children as Foreign Language Learners* on page 12.

6.2.5. Conceptualising Content

When conceptualising the content of the course it helps to recall one's own beliefs, the purpose of the course and what is known about the learners so far. Based on these thoughts, decisions on the content, the focus and what to omit will emerge. The result of this process can be named a syllabus and the process of conceptualising content equals that of syllabus design.

A syllabus can be organised in various ways, in any case Graves (2008: 37-38) recommends organising course content in a way that allows the teacher "to see the relationships among various elements so that you can make decisions about objectives, materials, sequence and evaluation". Each teacher has his/her own way of bringing the planned content onto paper, whether as detailed list or rough mind map. In most teaching situations existing syllabuses or course books are prepared. In these cases Graves (ibid.: 38) still advises "to go through the process of conceptualizing content" in order to familiarise oneself with the given material and adapting it towards one's own beliefs and priorities as well as to the students'

needs.

Categories for conceptualising content can be those focussing on language, the learner and learning or the social context. Language-focused categories are, for example, linguistic skills, topics, themes, situations, competences, content, tasks, genre, speaking, reading, communicative functions, listening and writing (Graves 2008: 43). In terms of learning and learner, Graves' categories are learning strategies, affective goals and interpersonal skills. Concerning the social context the focus can be on sociocultural skills, sociolinguistic skills and socio-political skills (ibid.: 43).

Transferring the step of conceptualising content to a kindergarten context, the questions that arise are: What can be regarded as suitable content for young learners? What is it that children need to know of a language? What is useful and meaningful to them? Which language items can be taught to children? Which topics and genres are of interest to five-year-olds and which competences can be taught through these? These questions can be answered once the teacher knows more about children as learners (see chapter 4). Based on this knowledge it is attempted to answer these questions in chapter 9, *Design Features of a Quality English Course* on page 73.

6.2.6. Developing Materials

According to Graves (ibid.: 150) the process of developing materials involves choosing or adapting, creating and organising materials and activities in order to enable students to achieve the objectives that will consequently help them to reach the course's goals. Being an integral part of the framework of course design, the process of developing is inspired by the teacher's beliefs and experience, the set goals and objectives, the content decided for the course and the learners' needs (ibid.: 166).

Graves (ibid.: 156) offers a list of considerations for developing materials. According to her, materials should be relevant and appealing to the learners' needs, including their affective needs. Moreover, materials should stimulate learning by engaging learners in problem solving or analytical activities, e.g. to develop specific skills. The language stimulated and offered through such material should be target-relevant and productive, also receptive skills should be integrated. Moreover, the material should relate to the social context and provide opportunities for cultural learning. Likewise, materials should be varied, also in the

sense of addressing all senses. Finally, the authenticity of materials has to be considered.

Authenticity of teaching material is a wildly debated issue. Graves (ibid.: 156) uses the following definition by Hadley (1993), stating that "[a]uthentic material refers to spoken and written texts that are used by native speakers in the 'real world'" (Graves 2008: 156). She adds that "[a]uthentic tasks are those that native speakers engage in in [sic!] the 'real world'".

Opposed to authentic materials and activities, are constructed materials and activities intended to be used in pedagogical settings. The two poles of authentic and didactic mark a continuum in which most materials and activities can be located. While there are, no doubt, more voices on the topic of authenticity of materials, this is not the focus of this thesis and it is left to the course developers' expertise to choose material suitable to the target group and target context.

In a kindergarten context the procedure of developing material needs to be seen in a much broader range. In average language classes it is probably printed materials, like books and handouts, that are predominantly used, complemented by CDs and DVDs. For teaching in a kindergarten this narrow concept of material has to be abandoned in order to meet the needs of the target group. This is also true for the notion of a teaching activity. An English course in a kindergarten has to be organised completely different to a standard school lesson. From what has been learned in chapter 4 and will be described in chapter 8, more concrete suggestions concerning teaching material are made in section 9.4, *Suitable and Effective Material* on page 85.

6.2.7. Organising the Course

The course as a whole needs a structure that is divided into units or modules, which are then divided into lessons. Each lesson needs to be structured as well, which is already the level of lesson planning and beyond course design (ibid.: 123ff). When it comes to fulfil the task of organising the course, the outcomes of the previous steps, i.e. conceptualising content, assessing needs, formulating goals and objectives, defining the context, and additionally personal experiences and methods are brought together and need to be given a shape and structure.

Graves (ibid.: 125) identifies four overlapping steps that organising a course involves. First, a determining organising principle needs to be chosen; whether the course is organised by themes, tasks, topics or genres. Second, based on these

organising principles, units, modules or strands are identified. Then units are sequenced and assigned language and skills content. Finally, content is organised within each unit (Graves 2008: 125).

For structuring and sequencing the course Graves (ibid.: 136) appeals to "the common sense principle of building". What is taught should follow a logical succession in grade of difficulty, control and required pre-knowledge. Another principle of sequencing is spiralling or recycling, meaning "that something learned is reintroduced in connection with something else, so that it is both "reused" and learned in more depth" (ibid.: 138).

In a kindergarten context the surface level of organising the course, when and how often lessons take place, has to be arranged with the kindergarten staff. All other aspects remain choices to be made by the teacher, who plans the course. Considering the principles of organising the course, Graves' suggestions could be applied one to one for designing a course for kindergarten. As will be seen in chapter 9 a topic based organisation is suggested by most experts in the field of TEYL. Moreover, the organising principle of recycling will be highlighted later in the referred chapter.

6.2.8. Assessing the Course

Assessing the course combines evaluating the course and assessing students' learning and can be done while the course is in progress, as well as at the end of the course (ibid.: 208). Graves (ibid.: 212) names three kinds of assessing students that are implemented at different stages of the course. First, diagnostic assessment that aims at finding out what students are able to do and what they cannot do. Second, "[a]ssessing the progress mean[ing] finding out what the learner has learned with respect to what has been taught at different points in the course" (ibid.: 212). And finally, assessing achievement, which entails looking at the overall progress of students. More precisely, their knowledge and skills from beginning of the course are compared to the end with respect to what has been taught.

Graves (ibid.: 208ff) identifies parallels between assessing achievement and evaluating the course. Based on students' achievement conclusions on the course's effectiveness can be drawn. Evaluating the course serves the purpose of making teaching more effective in meeting learners' needs and documenting experiences that will affect the next course(s) to be taught.

In addition it is pointed out that assessment is an ongoing process. It should happen during designing the course, conducting the course, as well as from one course to the other (ibid.: 215). Graves (ibid.: 216ff) accounts of tools for assessment and also suggests involving students in the assessment process. Considering the target learners' developmental stage, these tools appear not to be suitable to be applied in a preschool context.

Nevertheless, assessment and course evaluation are important parts of teaching and therefore, should be definitely applied when teaching preschool children. However, as children's knowledge and skills should not be evaluated at kindergarten level, assessment takes a different role. Results of diagnostic assessment can inform planning and assessing the course. Moreover, observing learners' progress can help the teacher to evaluate her/his methodology.

Observation is an essential tool in working with children not only with regard to planning teaching, but also to being able to report back to parents. Therefore, it is recommended to teachers of young learners to consciously observe learners and ideally keep records of their observations.

To finalise this description of the framework of course design and its steps it has to be pointed out again, that this is not a prescription that has to be followed obediently. Graves (ibid.: 235) encourages the planning teacher while adhering to the framework, to still leave space for flexibility, especially when approaching new and different groups of learners and in this particular a relatively new teaching context. To offer background information about the teaching context, the following chapter gives insights into the organisation and proceedings of kindergartens in Vienna.

7. The Kindergarten as Teaching Context

The aim of this chapter is to offer background information about the kindergarten as teaching context for a language course. The information given is intended to meet the points of defining context as accounted by Graves (2008: 16) in section 6.2.2. As mentioned previously, knowledge about the context puts the course designer in an ideal position to make efficient use of available resources and paves the way towards an effective course.

The following subsections will deal with the kindergarten's legal definition, its macro and micro organisation, daily routines and finally the teachers' functions. But prior to this, the institution's social function is described.

During the last two hundred years the kindergarten has developed from a "Kinderbewahranstalt" to an elementary institution of education (Hartmann 2000 [1995]: 23). Over the centuries educational work has always been influenced by social tenets, philosophical trends and psychological insights. Psychoanalysis, for example, had a great influence on the perception of children's behaviours (Aden-Grossmann 2011: 50ff). Moreover, progressive educational movements following Maria Montessori or Rudolf Steiner also shaped pedagogy in general (ibid.: 118ff). Pedagogical work at present is heavily influenced by the so-called *Situationsansatz* (ibid.: 179) further developed into the *Situationsorientierte Ansatz* (Krenz 1991). Following this approach, pedagogical action is undertaken ensuing from children's biographical reality (ibid.: 16). Consequently, the kindergarten should be a place that supports children's development, allowing holistic experiences and establishment of basic strategies. Based on this approach Krenz (ibid.: 37) defines the kindergarten's educational function as following:

Der Bildungsauftrag des Kindergartens besteht in einer ganzheitlichen Unterstützung der Handlungs-, Bildungs-, Leistungs- und Lernfähigkeit von Kindern unter besonderer Berücksichtigung kultureller Werte und religiöser Erfahrungen. Dieser Bildungsauftrag ist nur einzulösen bei bewußter Ablehnung eines schulvorgezogenen Arbeitens und bei oberster Wertschätzung des Spiels.

Increasing recognition of the early childhood years as fundamental period of developing and learning leads to the kindergarten becoming an inherent part of society and gaining more social importance. However, framework- and working conditions and deficient resources hamper quality educational work. Despite increasing political attention during the last years, scientists and pedagogues urge for comprehensive reforms on the education sector including preschool

institutions and organisation of teacher education¹.

A first step to integrate the kindergarten into the system of formal education was taken in 2009. Attendance at kindergarten became compulsory for children for a minimum of one year before school entrance. Due to success, especially in language education, politicians discuss to raise the compulsory kindergarten attendance to two years. Also in 2009, the first nationwide binding document on preschool education was published. On behalf of the Ministry of Education the Charlotte Bühler Institut (CBI) developed the *Bundesländer übergreifender Bildungsrahmenplan für elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Österreich* (BRP).

7.1. Definition and Organisation of Kindergartens in Vienna

The jurisdiction concerning kindergarten is a matter of the individual Austrian Länder. To limit the scope of this thesis, only the Viennese kindergarten law and organisations are referred. The Viennese law on child day care (Wiener Kindertagesheimgesetz - WKTHG) defines *Kindertagesheim* as a facility where trained personnel cares for and educates children during the day. A kindergarten group describes a subtype attended by children between 3 and 6 years old. Other types of groups care for children under 3 (Kinderkrippe) and children of a greater age range (Familiengruppe, Hort) (*Wiener Kindertagesheimgesetz*).

In everyday language these differentiations are rarely made and the term kindergarten is generalised to refer to institutions attended by children below school age. Naturally, different regulations and requirements apply. Not only age range but also room conditions define the kindergarten.

Children come together in groups, whereby each group has its own room. Law regulates the number of children that come together in a group according to children's age and room size. Commonly, an average kindergarten group contains 20 to 25 children (ibid.). Moreover, a kindergarten has to provide room where children can move. Ideally, each kindergarten has its own garden attached or a playground nearby that is easily accessible.

As with the jurisdiction, also responsibilities for the preschool education sector are split among authorities. While the ministry for education is responsible for teacher training, the ministry of family affairs provides funding and establishment of institutions. Similarly non-uniform is the organisation of institutions.

¹<http://www.plattform-educare.org>, 2013.08.02

There are various organisations maintaining kindergartens in Vienna. Notable umbrella organisations are the municipal organisation MA 10 ([Wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)²) and many more privately maintained organisations like Wiener Kinderfreunde, Kinder in Wien, St. Nikolaus Kindertagesheimstiftung, Österreichische Montessori-Gesellschaft, etc. ([Wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)³).

7.2. Principles of Kindergarten Pedagogy

Times when the kindergarten was merely regarded as place where children are overseen while parents are at work have clearly passed. Nowadays high-quality pedagogical work is required, complementing and sometimes even compensating family education. Responsibilities of the institution kindergarten are declared in *Bundesländerübergreifende Bildungs-Rahmenplan für elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Österreich* (BRP) and in the the Viennese kindergarten law (WK-TGHG). Besides guidance of children's development a main task is to encourage skills and competences the child will need to manage school entrance. The legal text on kindergartens in Vienna says:

Kindertagesheime haben die Aufgabe, in Ergänzung zur Familie nach gesicherten Kenntnissen und Methoden der Pädagogik die Entwicklung der Gesamtpersönlichkeit jedes Kindes und seine Fähigkeit zum Leben in der Gemeinschaft zu fördern und es in der Entwicklung seiner körperlichen, seelischen und geistigen Kräfte zu unterstützen (*Wiener Kindertagesheimgesetz*).

As mentioned before, the second important text informing on kindergarten work is the *Bundesländerübergreifende Bildungsrahmenplan für elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Österreich* (CBI 2009). It was introduced in 2009 as the first nationwide binding document on preschool education. This document reports on general objectives, areas of education and development and principles of pedagogical work respecting the manifold conceptions and freedom of methodology of the individual institutions. Its aim is to ensure quality of kindergarten work and give a framework for planning pedagogical actions. The BRP is the only document addressing the preschool sector that is comparable to a curriculum.

With the aim of guiding educational processes, planning and implementing educational actions, the BRP declares principles. These principles can be viewed as

²<http://www.wien.gv.at/bildung/kindergarten/abteilung/> retrieved on February 5, 2013

³<http://www.wien.gv.at/bildung/kindergarten/privat/index.html> retrieved on February 5, 2013

the backbone of pedagogical processes and should be recognised when planning an English course for a kindergarten setting. By transferring these general pedagogical principles to planning and implementing a language course for preschool children, a major step towards adaptation to learners' needs and context as well as assurance of quality is taken.

Holistic learning with all senses The first principle declares that educational processes follow the child's whole personality and appeal to all senses, his/her socio-emotional-, cognitive- and motor skills.

Individualisation The individual child's preconditions and skills have to be discovered in order to form the basis of the pedagogical work. It is the child's right to be respected in his/her individual personality and capabilities, leading to differentiation in order to achieve individualisation.

Differentiation The Principle of differentiation refers to the teaching and learning activities. These have to address the individual skills, competences and interests of children and be varied.

Empowerment This principle borrows the English term empowerment in the originally German text, stating that adults and children working in the pedagogical field shall be empowered. By considering the individual's strengths and potentials the child learns to make use of her/his scope of action and gains autonomy.

Inclusion Inclusion shall be conceived as basic attitude that goes beyond mere integration. The individual's needs are respected, reacted to and considered.

Lebensweltorientierung - based on individual's reality Pedagogical actions and educational activities should be based on children's every-day experiences. Thereby children are motivated and enabled to bring together their knowledge with new insights, which has a positive effect on the establishment of neurological networks. This principle goes hand in hand with factual accuracy.

Sachrichtigkeit - Factual accuracy Using correct and real content and terms that are presented in a way that is adapted to children's cognitive development and capacity imparts knowledge. This knowledge widens children's vocabulary and scope of action.

Diversity Diversity is considered as a resource for learning experiences. Encountering diversity, by meeting people from different cultural or ethnic background, of different gender and with varied physical abilities, is a precondition for liberal mindedness and a critical observation of prejudices.

Sensitivity towards gender Following this principle the pedagogical aim is to support children in developing and unfolding their potentials independently from their sex.

Participation Elementary educational institutions contribute to the individual's early political education by offering opportunities for contribution and co-creation. Thereby children learn step by step to take over responsibility for themselves. Participation also refers to the influence of families on what is done in the institutions.

Transparency What is done in kindergarten has to be made transparent to families. The complexity of pedagogical work, teachers' intentions and coherences have to be made transparent to parents.

Bildungspartnerschaft - Partnership for education Parents, pedagogues and in some cases additional professionals work together to establish an ideal environment for the child's learning and development. They share the interest in and responsibility for the child.

Besides those pedagogical principles a considerable part of the BRP is devoted to framing a concept of the child, defining the pedagogue's function and accounting of the so-called *Bildungsbereiche*. These areas or fields of pedagogical action can be classified in emotions and social relationships, ethics and society, language and communication, physical education and health, aesthetics and design and nature and technique. However, pedagogical actions usually address more than one area. This overlap results in holistic and interconnected educational work (CBI 2009: 9).

For this work the educational area of language and communication is of greatest interest. The CBI (ibid.: 14) assigns language an important role as the medium for communication between the individual child and her/his environment. Only by being able to articulate emotions and impressions is it possible to create understanding, establish social relationships and participate in society (ibid.: 14). It is concluded that "Sprachkompetenz ist der Schlüssel zu einer erfolgreichen Bildungsbiografie" (ibid.: 14). Nevertheless, the section on language in the BRP does not contain any explicit recommendations for teaching a foreign language in kindergarten. Only with regard to the principles of *Diversity* and *Participation* can it be argued in favour of a foreign language course.

7.3. Organisation

Each kindergarten is organised differently, depending on which umbrella organisation it belongs to and according to head teachers' and group teachers' preferences. Moreover, physical conditions, number and size of group rooms determine the number of children cared for. However, some key features are shared by most kindergartens, grounding on widely accepted insights. The following section aims at giving an impression on daily routines and what can be expected when entering a kindergarten in general. The description is based on the author's personal experience as kindergarten teacher. Additional information can be found in Niederle (1995a).

7.3.1. Daily Routines

To create a suitable timeslot for the English course, it is useful to learn about the daily routines in a kindergarten. Ensuing from children's needs, daily routines in a Kindergarten feature a rhythm of characteristic phases. It can be observed that there is an alternation of searching and lingering, tension and relaxation, individual and group, familiar and new, movement and calmness, noise and silence, indoors and outdoors (Soukup 2000: 59).

Depending on the opening times of the individual kindergarten, it is possible to bring children as early as 6:30 in the morning until 9 a. m.. These first hours in the morning are characterised by arrival, orientation, first social contact and play. Then a phase of recovering follows, when children have their first or a second breakfast. The group teacher decides whether children have their snack all together at the same time or individually, whenever they want during a certain

time slot. This phase of recovery during mid morning is followed by an intense work phase that lasts until lunchtime.

Before lunch children have the opportunity to play in various areas and they may be invited to activities with the teacher. Once during the morning the whole group has an activity together, nevertheless children are never forced to join in or participate if they do not want to.

Time after lunch is a calm time when the younger children might have a nap and the older ones are silently occupied. Then more activities follow, whether indoors or outdoors depends on weather and general conditions.

How long children stay in kindergarten is arranged between parents and head teacher depending on parents' occupation. While some children are picked up just before lunch, some leave after lunch, others stay until mid afternoon or until closing time. Depending on the individual house, kindergarten closes between 17:00 or 18:30. More detailed information on the daily routines in a kindergarten can be found in (Niederle 1995a).

7.3.2. Room Conditions and Material

Basic features of a kindergarten are aesthetic and appealing decoration and furniture in children's height. Chairs, tables, cloakroom furniture and sanitary facilities are in the right size to be used by children. It was Maria Montessori to introduce the idea of facilities of suitable size for children in order to enable them to act autonomously and independently (Aden-Grossmann 2011: 122).

The same applies to toys and playing material. Most toys and materials are easily accessible for children to ensure they can choose autonomously what to do. What is offered depends on the individual group teacher's assumptions and observations what children need and are interested in. In general there are no limits to what children can use to play with and learn. Except, it has to be safe to play with the object.

To cater for various needs and address different competences furniture is arranged to create several separate playing areas. Certain material is provided in those areas such as construction material for the building area, kitchen utensils and dolls in the dolls corner, clothes for role play, paper, pencils and crafting material in the crafting area, just to name the most standard playing areas. Many activities happen simultaneously within the same group room. As a result, noise level is

remarkable.

A kindergarten's conception may be a key criterion for choosing certain material. Whether a kindergarten follows a progressive pedagogical movement or not, does not only influence method but also the choice of material. Aden-Grossmann (ibid.) offers more information on Friedrich Fröbel, Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner and their approach to toys and material for playing and learning.

7.4. Teachers' Role and Training

As observable from the previous section, one of the kindergarten teachers' key task is to prepare the group room to make it an inspiring and appealing environment for children. Teachers establish an environment that children are encouraged to engage with in order to gain and come to terms with experiences. Children should find facilities that respond to their needs, interest and encourage learning.

Another key task is to observe children (CBI 2009: 3). Probably the first to highlight the importance of observation was Nelly Wolffheim (1879-1965) (Aden-Grossmann 2011: 54). The assumption is that children express themselves through play. Therefore, observing children while they play and documenting observations, help to understand the underlying motives of their behaviour and consequently lead to appropriate pedagogical actions.

Moreover, kindergarten teachers guide children through their daily routines, offer emotional and practical support, encourage creative thinking and behaviour, show alternatives to socially unacceptable behaviour and offer space to develop identity and basic competences for coping with life (Krenz 1991: 35). On the one hand daily educational work is well planned ahead, based on observation, analysis and reflection. On the other hand teachers have to react spontaneously within unpredictable social interaction. In these situations teachers are led by their underlying beliefs. To make teachers develop these educational competences, self-reflected and responsible behaviour and adopt this role as a teacher is a component of teacher training. Moreover, teachers are trained to discover irregularities in a child's development and to intervene adequately in due time.

To conclude this chapter on the kindergarten as teaching context it has to be pointed out that group teachers may be valuable partners and resources for external teachers of English. Group teachers know their children and may assist

in challenging situations. Moreover, they know what their children are interested in, what they already know and would love to learn about in English. Hence, group teachers could serve as ideal interview partners during a needs analysis. Hence, aiming at an amicable professional relationship with the kindergarten's personnel may contribute to a successful English course.

8. Researching the Practice of Teaching English to Preschool Children

The following chapter reports on the part of the research process that employed the method of expert interview. Three experts were interviewed with the aim of gaining insights into how practitioners approached the enterprise of designing and teaching an English course for young learners. In the course of the following chapter the expert interview as research method is defined and its concrete adaptation for this research is explained. In the third part of this chapter the research outcome is reported on. The interview data is summarised and the results, the outlines of course designs, are presented.

8.1. The Expert Interview

The expert interview is a research method used in the field of social sciences. Despite the fact that the sources explaining this research method are set in the context of social sciences, the expert interview as research tool is estimated as most suitable for deriving information that contributes to this work focussing on ELT.

The research method's definition is comprised in its name and becomes evident in its purpose. Experts are interviewed with the intention of deriving detailed, comprehensive and practical knowledge, based on the interviewee's experience and expertise about a certain field of practice (Pfadenhauer 2009: 99).

The expert interview can be classified as a qualitative research method belonging to the guided interviews (Eichler & Merkens 2006: 309). Flick (2006) names three characteristics of expert interviews. First, interviewees belong to a specific target group of experts; second, questions during the interview focus on content rather than on the person; third, assuming that experts are under time pressure the process of interviewing is approached pragmatically (ibid.: 218).

What remains undefined so far is the term expert. Who is a designated expert depends on the research interest, say Bogner & Menz (2009: 73) as expert is a "relationaler Status" (Eichler & Merkens 2006: 309). According to what is researched, any person involved in the studied processes or area can function as an expert. An expert is a person that possesses specific knowledge gained from experience (Flick 2006: 219).

In the case of this study the criteria for being regarded as an expert was being experienced in teaching English to young learners. Persons who taught English to preschool children and were involved in the process of designing the specific course were considered suitable interviewees.

8.2. Research Design

As recommended in Flick (2006: 219), an interview guide is used. The interview guide is compiled to assure that sufficient information on aspects of designing and teaching a course are collected and to guarantee a certain grade of comparability. Moreover, the intention is to gather a reasonable amount of information in order to be able to describe the courses comprehensively and ideally derive teaching principles.

In order to achieve this aim, the content of the interview guide has to cover the cornerstones of a course. To identify these Larsen-Freeman (2000) is consulted, who offers descriptions of various teaching methods. Additionally, questions and issues that arouse while the author of this thesis developed an English course for a kindergarten setting are integrated in the interview guide.

Concerning structure and wording of the interview guide, Dörnyei's recommendations are implemented (see Dörnyei 2007: 136ff). The sequence of questions should lead from surface level into detail, from general information on the course to concrete methodological suggestions and cover philosophical and theoretical background as well as practical examples. Consequently, the first question on the teacher's personal motives for teaching English at kindergarten is asked to lead the interviewee into the topic. Then more general questions about the organisation and structure follow. Continuously questions lead into more detail and deal with concrete issues of teaching preschool learners. Towards the end of the interview, experts are asked about their underlying beliefs, a question that might have overwhelmed them at the beginning. Finally, they are given the opportunity to add what might not have been covered sufficiently in the course of the interview. The interview guide can be found in the appendix.

When analysing the data a detailed transcription is not regarded as necessary. As Meuser & Nagel (2009: 56) suggest, passages relating in content are fused and summarised. The result is a description of the individual courses, structured according to features and cornerstones of a language course.

8.3. Research Outcome

Via personal networking the author of this thesis managed to establish contact to three women who were or still are teaching English to young learners. Catherine, Diana and Sabrina⁴ have spent several years in the field of teaching English to kindergarten children.

The following section summarises the interview data. Each subsection is dedicated to one course as described by the expert, who is also the course designer and teacher. It is intended to cover the cornerstones of the individual language courses, namely aims and objectives, the target group of learners, preferred teaching conditions, language content, choice of material, teaching methodology and underlying theories. Moreover, the interviewees were asked to describe a typical lesson and to account for the qualifications a language teacher working with kindergarten children should ideally have.

8.3.1. Catherine: Course A

Catherine is a native speaker of English and has taught adults for many years. At the time when she taught English to primary school children at the school her older son attended, her younger son wanted her to teach in his kindergarten as well. At first believing that it could not be much different from teaching adults or at primary school, she discovered later that teaching kindergarten children is an entirely new challenge.

Spurred by her ambition to teach successfully in a kindergarten, Catherine started researching. She could not find any material or handbooks, merely the *Helen Doron* teacher courses which she could not afford at that time. Eventually, she started to develop her own course. With the aid of kindergarten teachers she published a course package comprising a resource book, flashcards, a workbook and CDs.

Brief Description *Course A* is a comprehensive package that aims to enable kindergarten teachers to teach English "without expending effort". Catherine describes it as a "one stop shop", as the package contains everything needed to offer English in a playful, effective and sustainable way. A collection of songs, rhymes and games applicable in the daily routine of the kindergarten offers the

⁴The experts' names are pseudonyms

opportunity to teach children English "in the same way as they acquire their mother tongue".

Theoretical Background The course's design is based on Catherine's personal teaching experience, her own research and knowledge that she acquired during her studies of educational sciences. Asked for theories that she based her work on, Catherine mentioned Penny Ur, Alfred Tomatis and Maria Montessori to have influenced her teaching approach. Additionally, Catherine considered established methods, like *Musikgarten* ⁵, and primary school material. On the whole *Course A* is organised in consideration of young children's short concentration span and strong urge to move. Moreover, Catherine is convinced that children learn individually, depending on their development and age, and by touching, singing and playing, as well as driven by their wish to communicate and engage with their environment.

Goals and Objectives The main goal of *Course A* is to establish a solid basis for foreign language learning. Three main components should aid to reach that goal. First, children should have the opportunity to hear and absorb the speech melody unconsciously, without focusing on literal understanding too much. Second, children should gain self confidence by knowing and being able to reproduce basic vocabulary, either by speaking or acting. Finally, learning English should be associated with having fun, exploring and discovering. The assumption is that having constructed this firm foundation for language learning, children will be motivated to continue learning at school and develop a positive and self confident approach to learning a foreign language.

Teacher Qualification Ideally, Catherine opines, native speakers of English should teach young children, as the authenticity of pronunciation and prosody is very important. However, she admits, native speakers cannot be found at every street corner. Therefore, working with *Course A*, especially by using the CDs, non natives can embark on teaching English to kindergarten children.

Target Group *Course A* is specially designed to be applied in an Austrian kindergarten setting, hence for children between three and six years old. Optionally, the material could also be used for teaching older learners up to lower sec-

⁵a concept of elementary musical education. more information at: <http://www.ifem.info/musikgarten/Info/index.html> and <http://www.musikgarten.org>

ondary pupils with learning difficulties. Primarily, kindergarten teachers should be enabled to integrate English into their daily routines. But also native speakers who lack pedagogical experience could use *Course A* as resource for teaching techniques and -suggestions.

Setting For implementing the course in kindergarten, it is necessary to have a room with enough space for children to move around freely. Moreover, the opportunity to play music, or a musical instrument to accompany children singing the songs, are preferable. Catherine suggests a group size from eight to a maximum of twelve children. Depending on the arrangement with the kindergarten every week or every fortnight a lesson can be taught in the morning or afternoon. *Course A* comprises forty thoroughly planned lessons suggested to be divided into ten lessons per term. Depending on the progress, lessons last thirty to sixty minutes.

Language Content Considering the course's objectives, the skills of comprehension, listening and partly speaking are clearly in the foreground. To work on these skills, Catherine chose topics, phrases and vocabulary based on children's interests, every day routine and in relation to what they learn first in their mother tongue. Hence, main topics are animals, colours, counting, family, clothes, body and toys. These topics conform with what is usually covered in kindergarten and should encourage kindergarten teachers to integrate English at suitable opportunities.

Various grammatical patterns are deliberately presented through songs, games, chants or teacher language in order to let children perceive those unconsciously. Catherine particularly mentioned question structures and conditionals that occur in songs and games.

Finally, it should be pointed out, that the collection includes a lot of songs, rhymes and games with anglophone origin. These are texts that English native children would learn at about the same age. The intention is to create a process of learning English that is as similar as possible to acquiring the mother tongue.

Material For teaching, Catherine uses a range of material like picture books, flashcards, a mirror, a hand puppet, a "surprise box", a guitar as well as various soft toys and every-day items. Additionally, the CDs accompanying the book have to be mentioned.

When the CDs were produced, Catherine paid special attention to the pronunciation of the speakers and singers. In order to effectively assist non native English teachers, the recorded voices had to be those of native speakers serving as pronunciation models.

Catherine recommends to use a great variety of material to suit the holistic approach and to address and support pupils' different learning styles. Moreover, if the course is held directly in kindergarten, she encourages to use objects from the group rooms that children will know and recognise.

Methodological Considerations Catherine uses teaching techniques resembling those of general kindergarten practice. Moreover, she uses elements that appeal to children's curiosity, like creating suspense and competitive elements.

Another methodological characteristic of the course is the use of rituals. Recurrent routines allow children to become active participants, venture to experiment with language and enjoy themselves. Because songs are repeated every lesson children know them and have the chance to display their knowledge.

The intention is to establish an English-only environment. However, children should not be scared. Therefore, Catherine recognises that a little German might be necessary to assure children that they are understood and to prevent communication break down and confusion. There are phrases that are difficult to guess from context. As an example, Catherine mentioned the phrase "to point at". Children tend to look at what she is pointing at and not what she is doing.

If the group teacher does the English sequences, a clear signal helps to mark the transition from one language to the other. For example, the teacher could wear a hat, or let a finger puppet speak. A ritual, like a fantasy travel or song could also mark the change of language.

Another important issue in that respect is the fact that a lot of children in Austrian kindergartens do not speak German as their first language. Catherine reports that these children are sometimes excluded from English lessons because it is said they should learn German first. Nevertheless, Catherine observed that these children are often very quick in understanding and learning English, because they exercise their skills of interpreting and predicting meaning in language every day.

When designing the course Catherine paid special attention to variation. By variation of activities and materials different learner styles are addressed. A holistic

approach and the integration of all senses is a principle of *Course A*. Moreover, the alternation of phases during lessons supports children in maintaining their concentration and involvement.

Although lessons are preplanned, following a fixed structure, Catherine sees enough space for spontaneity. Novice teachers might prefer to adhere to the lessons plans, experienced teachers might choose from the repertoire according to children's preferences.

The teacher's role is that of a presenter of English, the language source and that of a moderator of games. The teacher offers activities and children join in and have fun. Catherine emphasises that it is very important to respect the children's personality and never force a child to talk. Some children attend their first English lessons sitting quietly, merely watching. However, from her experience, Catherine knows that children will soon join in when they have observed that they cannot do anything wrong and will feel secure enough to join in. Therefore, it is essential to always praise children when they participate.

Children should get positive feedback whenever possible, no matter if they talk or not. Ideally, Catherine recommends, each child has a sense of achievement per lesson. According to this, the teacher should never point out a mistake explicitly. Errors are ignored and responded to with corrective feedback and recasts meaning repeating it correctly.

Parental involvement is regarded as important by Catherine. Parents should be motivated to purchase the workbook and the CDs to repeat the learned songs and vocabulary at home.

A Typical Lesson As mentioned before, *Course A* offers forty lesson plans. Those lessons follow a relatively fixed, carefully planned structure. During the interview Catherine described the most important building blocks of a lesson.

At the beginning of each lesson the children are given the opportunity to arrive and focus. Every child is given a warm welcome by a song or a ritualised game for the purpose of letting children lose their inhibitions and experience themselves as being part of the group. Still part of the introductory phase is a song that relives every previous lesson, with a verse added each time. In that way there is repetition, giving children the opportunity to show their knowledge, but at the same time children will not lose interest, because there is a new element every lesson.

During the main part of the lesson a topic and a group of words are introduced. A box, the "surprise box", with unknown content is presented. Suspense is created and children are invited to guess what there might be in the box. The content is usually an object already resembling a word belonging to the lesson's core vocabulary. Additional vocabulary is presented to children with more objects or flashcards. After hearing all the words, a game or song containing the new lexical items follows, with the intention to repeat newly learned items.

Following this intensive phase of learning a game that does not necessarily belong to the topic is played. Children should have the opportunity to release tension and dissipate excess energy.

Then another phase of concentration follows. A story is told either by using a picture book or other additional visual materials accompanying the spoken language. Catherine chose books originating from Anglophone countries initially intended for younger children. Listening to the story, children can calm down and absorb the language. Still, it is recommended to include interactive elements. For example something to feel, to uncover, or reoccurring phrases the children can join in.

Finally, the lesson comes to an end with another ritual. A song may be sung and every child is said good bye individually.

8.3.2. Diana: Course B

Diana is a native speaker of German and gained her English language competence during years of working experience abroad. She is also a trained kindergarten teacher. When her daughter was born, she wanted an occupation that allowed her to draw on her qualifications and experiences but still render the possibility to spend time with her daughter. Additionally, the love for learning and speaking other languages and the fascination for language development in children motivated her to develop her own English course for young learners.

Brief Description *Course B* is a course that offers preschool children to discover the joy of learning languages. English is taught by appealing to all senses, following widely accepted teaching principles. The main objective is to let children experience learning languages and learning in general as rewarding and joyful.

Theoretical Background The underlying concepts of *Course B* are insights of general kindergarten pedagogy and principles of Maria Montessori. According to her view children learn by experiencing, sensing and imitation. To a greater extent the course was developed while teaching it by constantly adapting the course design to children's learner characteristics and needs. On the whole, a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning is adopted.

Goals and Objectives The main goal is to maintain children's love for learning. Shyness and suspicion about the foreign or the unknown should be dispelled and at the same time offering positive experiences should be the basis for mastering new learning situations. With *Course B* children should become acquainted with English. Pronouncing first words, forming first simple sentences and understanding 300 to 400 words is aimed at. Being able to introduce oneself and name every day objects should awake love and motivation for learning languages.

Teacher Qualification Diana regards qualification in language and pedagogy as equally necessary. Ideally, trainers of *Course B* finished the vocational school for kindergarten teachers and spent a reasonable amount of time in an English speaking country and on studying English. Language competence should imply theoretical knowledge on language as well as pronunciation. Moreover, the teacher should not be culturally biased.

Target Group Diana has intended the program to be suitable for children from four to ten. In practice she and her colleague mainly teach at kindergartens, hence children aged four to six or seven. Before the actual teaching and learning processes begin, Diana is aware that parents and head teachers have to be interested in the program and convinced of its benefits first.

Setting Diana describes the ideal setting for the lessons to be a separate room in the kindergarten which offers enough space for children to move around freely. Preferably, there are twelve children forming a group. However, demand is high and usually there are 15-17 children in one group. Diana adapts teaching time to the particular kindergarten's organisation. Depending on the kindergartens schedule, lessons take place in the morning or afternoon and last 45 to 50 minutes. *Course B* is split into four consecutive parts lasting one semester each. During one semester twelve to thirteen lessons are taught.

Language Content Teaching listening and speaking is clearly in the foreground. Diana chose topics that reflect children's concerns of every day life and those usually addressed in kindergarten. For example colours, animals, clothes, the four seasons and food. Moreover, there are classes dedicated to annual festivals that are mostly celebrated in kindergarten and other genres like circus or zoo.

Material A very characteristic element of *Course B* are the materials used. A hand puppet is the gimmick of the program. The puppet resembling a donkey introduces every lesson and is used as the motivator. Everything that is needed for the lesson is taken out of a backpack. It is every time the same, very unique looking backpack and at the beginning of the lesson the hand puppet pulls out the requisites. Balls, objects suiting the topic, toys and sometimes food. Diana collected suitable boxes comprising flashcards that belong to specific lesson topics. Additionally, there are colourful scarves and cloths that have pictures resembling the lesson's content printed on them. Diana and her colleague recorded CDs that are played while children move and sing. Another reoccurring element of the course is a workbook. Teachers hand out and collect those every lesson. When finishing the workbook activity, usually at the end of the lesson, children are handed out stickers that suit the lessons' topic. Moreover, Dextrose candies handed out to children are also an established part of lesson. By using this variety of material, Diana intends to address all senses.

Methodological Considerations As already mentioned, a key principle is that children are holistically activated, meaning all senses are appealed to. Moreover, Diana considered children's characteristic way of learning when developing the course. Hence, language is presented in a very playful way. Diana explains that by addressing children's magical thinking and imagination, language is made accessible to them and they become creatively engaged. A leading principle in developing the course was also responding to children's needs, their restlessness and physical impulses.

When developing the course, Diana acknowledged young learners' short attention span of a maximum of ten minutes. Moreover, she followed the assumption that children need to move before they can sit down and concentrate on a game. As a result, lesson structure features short alternating phases of low and high activity, of calmness and movement.

Diana describes the teacher's role as that of a presenter, a motivator on the

one hand, but at the same time being also involved in playing, guessing and exploring language together with children. At the same time the teacher is a model, gives indirect corrective feedback and praises. Diana summarises that, as a team, learners and teacher explore and discover language together.

Diana includes competitive elements, in form of quiz games, in her teaching to make children guess and activate knowledge. Children are given time to remember and finally they are given a prize, a candy. Errors and mistakes are not explicitly emphasised but the correct forms are simply repeated. Children are always praised for their engagement.

Through ongoing repetition and revision of words children's progression can be observed. Diana brings materials from past lessons to establish occasions to revise. By looking in detail at the boxes, cloths and scarves that are full of pictures knowledge of words that are not part of the actual lesson's topic are recalled.

A Typical Lesson A typical lesson of *Course B* starts with the hand puppet welcoming the children. They are activated by a song they already know. In the next part of the lesson the hand puppet introduces the topic and first words. In dialogic interaction with the children the hand puppet presents objects taken out of the backpack. On this occasion children can guess what is in the backpack, one at a time without seeing, only by feeling. Thereby, suspension is created and by communicating with the hand puppet the children become more relaxed.

Pictures resembling new words are then presented on flashcards that come out of a box. Children are invited to seek the cards matching the words. After this phase of concentration it is time for movement. By a game or a role play children get the opportunity to move.

Having expelled physical energy it is time to delve more into the topic. A suitable book, or any other combination of pictures and words, is presented. After a final game, the lesson is closed by a colouring activity. Children are handed out their books and given a task that should be completed. Once they are finished they get a sticker and are wished goodbye.

8.3.3. Sabrina: Course C

Sabrina is a native speaker of English, was a dancer and has lived for several years in Austria. She has always enjoyed working with children teaching Ballet. When she heard of *Course C* she became curious and completed a Course C teacher training. Although Sabrina teaches according to the Course C method and uses the corresponding material packages, her teaching is also influenced by her own assumptions on teaching and education. The following paragraphs summarise what Sabrina expressed on the topic of TEYL.

Brief Description Course C is organised as a franchising system and is based on children's natural faculty to learn language by listening. Positive reinforcement and recursive input are main principles for teaching English. Four to eight students learn in an enjoyable environment. The company behind Course C trains their own teaching personnel and runs hundreds of local groups around the globe.

Theoretical Background The *Course C* program is based on the conviction that with the right method children can learn anything as they possess great aptitude to learn. According to Sabrina, the founder of the program worked together with Glenn Doman who developed a method to teach infants reading and counting. Moreover, the *Course C* method is based on research outcomes from the fields of neurobiology and psycholinguistics. Sabrina herself acts according to her philosophy that children need space for creativity and have to be offered opportunities to enjoy themselves. Moreover, she is inspired by Sir Ken Robinson's assumptions on society and learning ⁶.

Goals and Objectives According to Sabrina the main objective is that children "feel at home" in the English language. Children should enjoy learning and speaking English and acquire a neutral English without a mother tongue accent. Moreover, a good understanding of basic vocabulary and being able to hold simple conversations, like telling their name, age and about their hobbies, likes, and dislikes, is the objective.

⁶http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html
http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_bring_on_the_revolution.html
http://www.ted.com/playlists/124/ken_robinson_10_talks_on_educ.html

Teacher Qualification Sabrina explains that teachers of *Course C* have to be in full command of the English language and pass the *Course C* teacher training program. Additionally, to retain their concession as *Course C* teachers, they have to attend a teacher training course every year. Beside language competence it is mainly personal qualification and capability to work with children that are necessary to be accredited as a teacher of the *Course C* program. Sabrina adds that creativity, serenity, and humour are personal characteristics a teacher should have. Probably most important: "You have to love kids to work with them".

Target Group Course C is directed at all age groups from a couple of months onwards. As every teacher runs her own business the target groups vary. Sabrina offers her English courses mainly in kindergartens in Vienna. Her pupils are three to six years old.

Setting For teaching lessons Sabrina chooses a separate room where children can move around freely. She teaches up to eight children either in the morning or in the afternoon, depending on the schedules of the individual kindergartens. According to children's stage, lessons last from thirty to sixty minutes. The material provides for a minimum of 32 lessons taught per year.

Language Content The language taught parallels the language pupils usually learn in their mother tongue at the same age. Hence, language content is adjusted to children's developmental stage and interests. It is mainly vocabulary that is taught according to topics children are interested in and naturally concerned with, like weather, colours, counting and moods. Sabrina explains that topics are kept neutral and do not necessarily fit the time of the year. Grammar is not explicitly taught at that age, but implicitly through songs, games, jokes and other texts from anglophone countries. Thereby children learn the language and about the socio-cultural origin of the language. According to Sabrina, children have the opportunity to learn 1000-2000 words and 50-60 songs throughout the course.

Material On one hand *Course C* offers material packages and on the other hand teachers create their own teaching aids. Various material packages are offered according to age groups. Certified *Course C* teachers order the respective packages for their learners. Parents purchase the books and CDs when booking the English course for their children. On the whole there are about twelve

sets of which four are intended for children aged four to six. Each set offers material for eight lessons. For teachers some flashcards are provided but most materials have to be crafted and collected by the teacher herself. Sabrina itemises that possible materials are for example picture books, pictures, soft toys, hand puppets, differently coloured scarves, etc.. More or less everything could be used as teaching material. Finally, a CD-Player is essential in every lesson.

Methodological Considerations The key principle is that children enjoy themselves during lessons. The teacher creates a positive and encouraging atmosphere. Sabrina points out that she never focusses on errors and mistakes, instead she constantly praises children for engagement. Hence, she either ignores errors and mistakes or gives corrective feedback by repeating the utterance in correct language.

Moreover, Sabrina insists that children should come to lessons on a voluntary basis, because they want to enjoy themselves. Hence, she never expects children to perform. During class time children should feel relaxed and at ease, then, it is assumed, they will learn automatically.

Concerning class language, only English is spoken by the teacher. The sole exception is to handle exceptionally difficult situations. If it is essential for understanding, a word might be "sandwiched", meaning that the German word is put between saying the English word twice. If children name something in German the teacher immediately repeats and answers in English.

Course content and teaching techniques are chosen according to children's developmental stage. To ensure children enjoy lessons, they sing, dance, make jokes and mostly play. Appealing to children's curiosity and preference for wonder, puzzles, competitions and memory games are played to create suspense and enjoyment. Moreover, content is presented in a way that addresses all senses.

Finally, a main element of the *Course C* program is the audio material. Parents are strongly recommended to let children listen to the CDs every day. Sabrina spoke from personal experience, that children who do not listen to the CDs regularly, can soon be identified. Those children then do not know the songs and rhymes, as a consequence they loose track and do not enjoy lessons any more. In these cases Sabrina reminds parents to play the CDs to their children more often.

A Typical Lesson *Course C* teachers do not have to develop the course and lessons themselves. Lesson content and rough structure are already prepared to match the songs and texts in pupils' books and on the CDs. Teachers then choose and prepare additional teaching material and the particular songs and games children of a particular group prefer most.

Sabrina could not describe a lesson in detail during the interview, because this would violate the contract she signed with the company that developed *Course C*. However, she explained what she adds to the prepared course.

First, she aims at doing everything in a positive way to create a relaxed atmosphere in every lesson. She ensures that there is no negative word or mood. Second, she pays attention to never presenting things in completely the same way. Finally, she introduced a ritual to start lessons. Her lessons start with a long journey, usually to England, but sometimes also to other English speaking countries. In using their imagination the group imagines and mimes boarding the plane, fastening their seatbelts and off they go. Once they are in the other country, they experience adventures and try only to speak English.

8.4. Conclusions about the Design of Preschool English Courses

Analysing the collected data, learner's age can be identified as the key factor influencing both decisions on and implementation of the steps of course design. All interviewed teachers adapted their choices regarding material, content, teaching technique, goals and objectives and settings in order to suit their learners' needs and characteristics. As a result, movement and physical activities are essential building blocks of English courses for young learners. Moreover children's short attention span and preference for multi-sensory presentation is reflected in lesson structures and presentation techniques.

All courses formulate children finding joy in learning languages and establishing a sound basis for language learning as main goals. Texts that children from anglophone cultures would be confronted with at the same age were chosen as teaching content and material. Concerning material, the usage of objects and flashcards is a feature shared by all three courses.

Diana, Catherine and Sabrina emphasise the importance of the teacher's language competence for young learners. Children need a competent language model, free

of any foreign accent. Additionally, all three mention the use of audio material complementing the teachers' language.

Regarding the setting of the courses, all agree that the course should be held in a room where children can move. Noticeable is the preferred group size. Catherine and Sabrina prefer to teach comparatively small groups of eight to twelve children, whereas Diana teaches up to seventeen children at a time.

Parental involvement is required to different degrees. While with *Course C* parents should not interfere too much in order not to pass on their accents, but should present the CDs regularly to children, Catherine regards parents revising lesson content with their children as valuable. In the case of all three courses it depends on parents' and institutions' interest whether the course is conducted.

These insights gained from the expert interviews, together with findings from literature research, will lead to identify the cornerstones of a quality English course for preschool learners presented in the next chapter.

9. Design Features of a Quality English Course

The aim of this final chapter is to draw on all the information offered throughout this thesis and derive principles for designing a quality English course for a kindergarten setting in Vienna. Hence, the research question will be answered in the course of this chapter. From global considerations to more detailed suggestions, the steps of course design are transferred to the particular teaching context and adapted to the needs and characteristics of the target group of learners.

9.1. Clear Goals and Objectives

Formulating goals and objectives is a step of course design as described before in section 6.2.3, *Formulating Goals and Objectives* on page 41. Moreover, clear and transparent goals and objectives are quality criteria of an English course for young learners. To make teaching purposeful and assessable, pedagogical plans are goal orientated (Doyé 2009: 49). Only if it is clear which competences children should develop during a course, the course can be evaluated regarding its success and in respect of transitions to following teaching levels (ibid.: 49). This also corresponds to Graves' (2008: 79) reasoning for clear goals and objectives.

The inevitable questions that arise are: What can be expected of young learners? What are realistic goals for an English course in a kindergarten setting where children learn by playing and formal teaching is inadequate for the age of learners? Furthermore, Pinter (2006: 56) reminds that "[c]hildren are not necessarily competent communicators in their mother tongue [...]" and Cameron (2001: 28) indicates that "goals that result in learning need to be tailored to particular learners".

Suggested as overall aim of early foreign language courses is awareness raising, including to develop awareness of the mother tongue, of languages in general, of other cultures, of how learning works and of how communication works (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 7f). Children should gain a feeling for their own and the foreign language, regarding rhythm, sounds, prosody and intonation (Fröhlich-Ward 2003: 201). Moreover, insights into and awareness of other cultures should lead to open-mindedness, tolerance and understanding (ibid.: 201).

Pinter (2006) links awareness raising with "learning to learn", meaning "rais[ing] children's awareness of the various factors that influence their language learning" (ibid.: 99). In her opinion "Learning to learn" is one of the most important

objectives for all learning/teaching contexts for all ages" (Pinter 2006: 99), hence it is an objective of EFLL.

As stated before, children are naturally curious and eager to learn. Another objective for teaching young learners is therefore, maintaining and fostering their interest and "appetite to learn" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 5). Cusack's (2004: 10) main aims are "Wissbegierde, Neugier und Offenheit gegenüber einer anderen Sprache und Kultur(en) zu wecken bzw. zu fördern". Brewster & Ellis (ibid.: 6) conclude that first foreign language experience should be positive and motivate children for further learning. To motivate for further learning is also a goal declared by the interviewed teachers. Sabrina explicitly highlights enjoyment as main goal for her course. If children enjoy English classes they will continue attending them.

Goals and objectives that respond to young learners' needs have to address psychological and social factors of learning. Children need to build confidence and self-esteem to maintain motivation for learning. For this reason the interviewed teachers add contributing to children's self-confidence and dismantling of fears to their course objectives. As language is merely the means of communication in play dominated English lessons the various activities address all other aspects of children's development. Hence, a language course on preschool level contributes to a child's whole development and personality (Fröhlich-Ward 2003: 198).

Authors are obviously cautious not to establish unrealistic objectives of a TEYL course and address general competences rather than concrete language goals. Orlovský (2010: 28) states that "[g]elungene fremdsprachliche Kommunikation ist ein sehr komplexes Lernziel und kann nur auf lange Sicht erreicht werden". Hence, this long term goal is too ambitious for a language course in a kindergarten setting. Still, the interviewed teachers declare knowledge of simple vocabulary and phrases and ability to hold simple conversations as their course objectives. Besides the affective goals mentioned before, Fröhlich-Ward (2003: 201) only very carefully states as language specific goals: "gewisse Strukturen und Regeln in der fremden Sprache durch Wiederholung in spielerischen Aktivitäten einüben" and to develop a feeling for the language's prosody, rhythm and intonation.

On the whole, aims and objectives also have to be made transparent to parents, headteachers and administrators. As these groups of adults decide on enrolling their children or implementing an English course "[t]he general aims of early foreign language learning should appear attractive" to them and at the same time be "workable for children, while avoiding being over-ambitious and unrealistic"

(Brewster & Ellis 2004: 5). Cameron recommends to be careful not to demand too much.

Too many demands early on will make them [children] anxious and fearful of the foreign language: too few demands will make language learning seem boring (Cameron 2001: 29).

She advises teachers to be aware of the function of goals and objectives because "[i]n setting clear specific language learning goals, teachers are *scaffolding* the task for children" (ibid.: 28).

Schotte-Grebenstein (2006) concludes that no specified language goals can be formulated for EFLL. Only broad objectives for establishing a fundamental basis for multilingualism in later life and motivation and strategies for life long learning can be pursued (ibid.: 174). In more detail Schotte-Grebenstein (ibid.: 177) declares language awareness, sensibility for languages and fun in learning languages as objectives for TEYL. These objectives are set with the intention that children develop interest and tolerance for other cultures and their languages (ibid.: 177).

So far course designers formulate their goals and objectives individually. In order to make TEYL sustainable and by aiming at quality in teaching, goals and objectives should be documented in a comprehensive curriculum. Particularly with regard to establishing continuity in language learning and teaching, goals and objectives need to be formulated in a coordinated way across educational levels.

9.2. Organisation According to the Context and Learner's Needs

Organising the course is, as explained before in chapter 6, the process of sequencing and separating all collected information, language content and material. In a kindergarten setting additional points need to be considered in order to fit the concept and routines of the institution (Kühne 2003: 116). Not only decisions on the organisation of the course itself, but also on conditions around the course, need to be made. These conditions determining further planning for the course are accounted for in the part called macro organisation. This is then followed by suggestions concerning the organisation of content.

9.2.1. Macro Organisation

Kühne (2003: 116) recommends to embed a language course into the general concept of the institution. Earlier, in chapter 7, *The Kindergarten as Teaching Context* on page 48, the routines and processes of the institution were described. An English course offered in a kindergarten has to fit into the individual institution's routines to be a valuable addition. Because English courses at preschool level are not coherently organised, the individual course planner has to contact the headteacher on the level of macro organisation. Together with the head teacher modalities regarding time, place, information, communication, expectations and payment have to be arranged.

The room for teaching the course has to be big enough for the agreed number of children to move around freely. This is a precondition pointed out as necessary by all three interviewees and goes hand in hand with the insight that young learners need to move in order to learn. Consequently, it is a room without furniture or furniture that can be moved. If the teacher plans longer colouring or crafting activities, tables or the option to use another room with tables would be convenient. Ideally, the room is well lit and not too warm, because children are physically active. For the occasions children sit down on the floor a carpet or cushions should be provided. Moreover, a power connection to use a CD-player seems necessary. As a result the noise factor has to be considered when choosing a room and arranging a time slot.

Concerning the frequency of lessons taught by an external person, Leidner (2007: 65) recommends to provide lessons at least once a week. If lessons are less often, children will easily forget what they have learned (ibid.: 65). Blondin et. al. highlight the beneficial effect on continuity and "time for learning" (Blondin et al. 1998). Hence, frequent confrontation with the foreign language should be aimed at (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 175).

In order to keep organisational effort low, agreeing on a weekday and timeslot for English lessons that is maintained for a longer period, like a term or year is straightforward. Thereby, regularity is established that helps children to orientate. Hence, it is recommendable to teach lessons on the same day and at the same time every week. Whether lessons are in the morning or afternoon has to be agreed on an individual basis. Neither the interviewed teachers, nor literature on the topic indicates clear advantages for a certain time of the day.

Duration of lessons will change according to learners' progression in development.

In the beginning short teaching sequences are useful to get to know children without overwhelming them. The more children become acquainted with the teacher and the routines of the English lessons, the longer lessons may become. This is congruent with the interviewed teachers' statements on lesson length and with what Leidner (2007: 65) stated. He says children's ability to concentrate amounts to 15-45 minutes, and concludes that a lesson lasts ideally 30 minutes. Sabrina, Catherine and Diana, however, teach lessons lasting up to 60 minutes.

Another point that is discussed more controversially is group size. In contrast to the time factor in teaching a foreign language, group size does not have a significant influence on learners' progress (Blondin et al. 1998: 23, 29f). How many children participate in lessons is on the one hand up to teachers' preference, and, on the other hand, depends on the number of children registered by their parents. Considering the interview outcome, the group size stated is rather small compared to a school setting. Sabrina teaches 8 children, Diana up to 16, depending on how many register. It is the individual teacher's decision how many children s/he can cope with and teach successfully. Too few children could result in unmotivated lessons, while too many pupils in a group could develop a stressful atmosphere. The individual teacher has to decide on the number of learners according to her own estimation. In any case the tasks of observing and recognising children's needs and paying one's best attention to the individual child and group dynamics have to be fulfilled.

Once all the discussed points, as well as payment is arranged, the course needs to be advertised. By displaying a letter, poster or leaflet on the information board parents are informed about the English course. Additionally, it might be offered or even wished that the English teacher introduces herself and advertises the course on parents' evening. This would be an ideal occasion to communicate course objectives and align expectations.

According to whether the English course is intended for all children or just for those interested, a registration modality needs to be planned. Parents could register their children by signing in on a list or handing in a slip of paper that was attached to the information letter.

9.2.2. Micro Organisation

Having dealt with all the organisational matters around the English course for a kindergarten setting, the focus shifts now to the organisation of the course

itself. Graves (2008) describes organising the course as giving the course a structure. The collected material is arranged into modules, strands or individual lessons. *What* is taught and *when* is specified. Before briefly touching upon lesson planning, some general principles for organising an English course for young learners are given.

Scholars concerned with the field of teaching English at primary level, suggest a cross-curricular approach towards teaching (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 129f). However, there is no curriculum or individual subjects taught in a kindergarten. Still, research indicates that the integration of language and content has potential for teaching at elementary level (Huang 2003) and a content-, theme-, or topic-based organisation of the course is recommended.

Williams (1991) regards the content-based approach as suitable framework for teaching young learners because it combines ELT knowledge with what is known about children's learning, motivation and conceptual development. By theme- or topic based teaching the organising tool becomes not language content, that is, form, function, or method, but the topic or content matter (ibid.: 208). In this way teaching activities

are linked together by their content; the theme or topic runs through everything that happens in the classroom and acts as a connecting thread for pupils and teacher (Cameron 2001: 180).

Moreover,

[i]n a content-based approach, the purpose is learning other things (other than language), exploring the world, finding out information, recording it or participating in activities for sheer enjoyment (Williams 1991: 206).

Thereby, content- or topic-based teaching has a key function in accomplishing the objectives of TEYL.

As already mentioned, there is no curriculum in kindergarten and teaching topics can be chosen freely. Still, there are indirect recommendations on teaching topics for young learners. By the principle of *Lebensweltorientierung* as stated in the BRP it is indicated which topics are suitable for young children. Moreover, decisions should be made according to children's interest (ibid.: 207) and what is regarded as motivating.

Even if course organisation is not based on language content but on topics, a progression of language competence can be aimed at. To ensure learning,

presented language has to reoccur more often as the course progresses. Cameron states that "[r]ecycling makes recall more probable" (Cameron 2001: 84). Hence, recycling can be planned when organising content. In the case of vocabulary learning, for example, she explains that

[v]ocabulary needs to be met and recycled at intervals, in different activities, with new knowledge and new connections developed each time the same words are met again (ibid.: 84).

Consequently, content needs to reoccur more often, "so that each time something new is learnt or remembered" (ibid.: 84). Diana implements recycling by bringing familiar material. Children recognise the pictures on the boxes and cloths and by describing what they see, recycle vocabulary. On this occasion Diana also observes what children already, or still, know and can assess her teaching methodology. In *Course A* recycling occurs, for example, on the instance of a song that is sung and added a verse every lesson. To conclude, recycling is an aspect that needs to be paid attention to in organising a course for young learners.

The example of the reoccurring song in *Course A* is not only an occasion for recycling but also a routine. Routines are generally acknowledged to be important for children (Wilburn 2000: 56f) and suggested by Brewster & Ellis (2004: 219) to establish discipline in primary classrooms. Also what is known from developmental psychology about children's ability to remember scripts indicates that routines should be part of a learning environment designed for children. In kindergarten daily routines are maintained to establish conditions that children perceive as secure and that enable them to act autonomously. From the interviewed teachers it was learned that all three courses contain ritualised elements. If children know what they can expect during a lesson, they will enjoy taking part. Similarly, Cameron (2001: 10) describes that routines "provide opportunities for language development". In a familiar context, because of "the familiarity of the event" (ibid.: 11) children will understand varying and progressively complex language. According to Cameron the child is allowed "to actively make sense of new language from familiar experience [...]" (ibid.: 11). To conclude, additional to repetition of language, reoccurring activities and teaching routines support young learners and should therefore be features of course organisation.

The general principles of organising a course for young learners, namely to be based on content and topics, to recycle and to establish routines are further reflected in the smaller units of the course.

Regarding the researched courses, all three follow a structure that is characterised

by short sequences and an alternation of lively and calm phases. Sabrina explains that in her experience children's attention is easily gained but also easily lost again. Reacting to this learner characteristic, Köstenbauer (2004: 62) suggests to "[d]o different activities in very short bursts of five to maximum ten minutes keeping the same teaching objectives". Additionally, these short sequences should alternate in their mode (Cusack 2004: 10). Catherine and Diana report that they let children move before and after an activity where sitting and concentrating is in the foreground.

Before closing this section on organising the course, the role of the individual kindergarten teacher in this respect is addressed. Aiming at integrating the language course into kindergarten work, the group teachers are valuable resources and contact persons. Kindergarten teachers plan and decide on the topics themselves. Their plans are based on their observations and assumptions about what their learners need, what interests and motivates them. Hence, group teachers know their children very well and might share their knowledge and teaching choices with the English teacher. Moreover, group teachers can be a great support during the first weeks of the English course in helping with children's names, sending them to English classes, preparing them mentally so that they are not frightened but look forward to English classes. Finally, group teachers are familiar with and in charge of the facilities and materials in the kindergarten. If there is a well established collaboration, material for language classes could be borrowed from the kindergarten.

Consequently, the success of the English course is to a certain degree dependent on the group teachers' attitude towards TEYL and their goodwill. Good collaboration of group teachers and language teachers can be very fruitful with regard to children's language competences and general development. Therefore, it is suggested to strive for a positive and professional relationship.

9.3. Relevant Content

Closely interrelated with organising the course on a micro level is the step of conceptualising content, defined in chapter 6. The result of this process is a syllabus (Graves 2008). This section is concerned with the question of suitable content for preschool learners.

The following quote illustrates the main difference of teaching content in a preschool teaching context:

Younger children, in particular, are not ready for or interested in thinking about the language system or manipulating the language as to separate items out of structures. They are interested in the meaning and function of language more holistically, in order to play a game, sing a song, or act out a story (Pinter 2006: 84).

As a result, the content of an English course in a kindergarten setting is not arranged around specific language items. As already pointed out in the previous section, literature concerned with teaching a foreign language in a primary context often proposes the cross-curricular approach to language teaching (Prochazka 2004: 105). As there are no separate subjects and no curriculum in kindergarten the term cannot be transferred directly. However, the idea of integrating developmental and educational domains can be implemented in a kindergarten context as well. Therefore, by planning activities and games around a common topic, additional domains beyond language are addressed.

Communicative situations, teaching activities and games, respectively, are in the foreground while language becomes the means. Learning language items is in a way a side effect of engaging in enjoyable activities. To be enjoyable, content and topics need to be accessible by children, hence, they have to relate to children's experience, knowledge of the world and interest. Language development is interrelated with conceptual development, which is still progressing in children's first language development (Cameron 2001: 72). Consequently, what is taught, the topics addressed in a foreign language need to be adapted to children's knowledge.

In more detail, Brewster & Ellis (2004) state that five- to six-year-olds chose the topics wild animals, money, pirates, dinosaurs, food and diet and teddies. In contrast, teachers for that age group chose family, toys and animals (ibid.: 86). Schotte-Grebenstein (2006: 26, 178) additionally suggests colours, numbers, bodyparts, animals, fruits, food, clothes, family, friends, sports, weather, seasons and shopping as possible teaching topics and furthermore proposes to choose language and topics children have already learned in their mother tongue (ibid.: 26). The interviewed teachers Catherine and Diana equally choose topics they assume children are interested in and that are usually dealt with in kindergarten. Moreover, seasons and festivals around the year are integrated as teaching topics. In contrast, Sabrina states that Course C materials are seasonally neutral. In order to really meet children's interests, asking their teachers, their parents or themselves is probably the best way to find out about their preferences.

Even though concrete language items are not the decisive elements of syllabus

organisation, the task is still to design a language course. Therefore, it has to be theorised what language is suitable to be taught in kindergarten. First, as preschool children usually cannot read and write, the division of four skills in language learning becomes obsolete. Cameron (2001: 18) highlights the orality of the young learners classroom:

For young learners, spoken language is the medium through which the new language is encountered, understood, practised and learnt. Rather than oral skills being simply one aspect of learning language, the spoken form in the young learner classroom acts as the prime source and site of language learning. New language is largely introduced orally, understood orally and aurally, practised and automatised orally.

Second, vocabulary teaching is at the centre of TEYL (Knapp, Diemut & Gasteiger-Klicpera 2010: 22). Equally, Cameron (2001: 72) regards learning useful vocabulary as "central to the learning of a foreign language". Which words are taught is determined by the chosen topics that relate to children's knowledge and contribute to their conceptual development. More specifically, Cameron (ibid.: 81) suggests to teach "[b]asic level words", because preschool learners "need very concrete vocabulary that connects with objects they can handle or see" (ibid.: 81). Additionally, Brewster & Ellis (2004: 81) list seven factors determining whether a word is learned: (1) difficulty of demonstrating its meaning - concrete words are easier to demonstrate than abstract words; (2) similarity of L2 and L1; (3) word length; (4) regularity of forms - e.g. plural apple/apples; (5) low learning load - part of the word is known e.g. bed, room, bedroom; (6) relevance to child's immediate situation; (7) relevance and interest to the child (ibid.: 81f).

Moreover, Brewster & Ellis (ibid.: 81) define that in the case of young learners *knowing a word* comprises knowing how to pronounce it, knowing what it means and how to use it. How many words children learn depends on "learning conditions, time available and learnability of words" (ibid.: 81).

Third, teaching grammar to young learners should not be neglected, even though

[i]t could be argued that grammar has no place in a young learners classroom, that it is too difficult for children or is not relevant to their learning (Cameron 2001: 96).

However, "grammar is necessary to express precise meanings in discourse" and is closely related to vocabulary learning (ibid.: 98). For this reason, Pinter (2006: 83) suggests to teach vocabulary and grammar together. "When teaching vocabulary,

teachers may need to consider grammatical choices and environments for the words [...]" (ibid.: 83f). Even if formal teaching of grammar is definitely not part of a language course for preschool children, "grammar can be taught without technical labels" (Cameron 2001: 98). In this respect Brewster & Ellis (2004: 93f) suggest to use teaching techniques that focus on form and to choose meaningful and interesting contexts that involve children. This, they note, can contribute to children's understanding of grammar. Additionally, Cameron (2001: 98) declares "talking about something meaningful" as "way to introduce new grammar" and that "grammar learning can evolve from the learning of chunks of language".

Prefabricated language, stretches of formulaic speech, are widely assumed to contribute to a reasonably fast development of communicative competence. Therefore, Köstenbauer (2004: 60f) advises to use "Gestalt language", meaning

prefabricated routines or patterns which are memorized as whole utterances without necessarily understanding single words

when teaching young learners at an early stage. For these patterns or phrases of prefabricated language the term chunks is also common in language teaching. Although "[t]he potential benefits of using and learning chunks are not fully understood yet [...]" (Cameron 2001: 50), Pinter (2006: 56) also suggests "to focus on simple but purposeful and meaningful pattern[s]" in the beginning. In Köstenbauer's (2004: 60) point of view "[c]hildren do not have any problems memorizing long utterances" and that knowledge of phrases allowing children to hold simple conversations boosts children's motivation. Further she suggests

to create as many natural situations as possible in the classroom so that a child can be confronted with as many prefabricated chunks as possible (Köstenbauer 2004: 61).

Nevertheless, besides the production of prefabricated language patterns children should have the opportunity to use language creatively and "[e]xperiment with language in meaningful communication scenarios" (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditzfurth 2009: 28).

Forth, the role of input in successful EFLL has to be highlighted. Because language is acquired in interaction with the environment, language input influences the acquisition process significantly (Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf 1998: 3). For this reason, Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf (ibid.: 50) declare high quality language input as prior. They claim that manipulated input can accelerate language learning and offer a list of priorities for language input (ibid.: 3):

- wichtig vor weniger wichtig
- einfach und kurz vor lang und komplex
- auffällig vor weniger auffällig
- wenig vor viel
- konkret vor abstrakt
- einzelne Elemente vor Kombinationen
- regelmäßige vor unregelmäßigen Formen
- Formen mit großer Anwendungsmöglichkeit vor Formen mit eingeschränkter Anwendungsradius

Regarding input, Köstenbauer (2004: 60) recommends to speak slower and simplified to let children figure out meaning: "[...] limit your language to clear, relatively short sentences in accordance with the level of understanding of a student" (ibid.: 60). However, teacher language should still resemble natural language. By using gestures and visual material and planning predictable teaching routines children will be able to understand and learn.

Finally, cultural content of EFL courses is addressed. Learning about and gaining interest in other cultures is an objective of TEYL. However, for some children it is difficult to understand the concept of a foreign language and culture at first, because they are not aware about their own culture yet. Nevertheless, children in Viennese kindergartens have various cultural backgrounds, some have already been on holiday abroad at least once, others have families abroad because their parents emigrated. By drawing on these experiences, children will manage to imagine the foreign country where they speak English.

The increasing use of English as a lingua franca, however, makes it more and more difficult to talk about *the* English speaking countries. Still, authors on TEYL suggest to use authentic, cultural texts from anglophone countries. Cusack (2004: 10) names rhymes, songs, stories, fairy-tales and games as cultural texts. Also Catherine and Diana collected those texts for developing their courses. Regarding the use of authentic texts in teaching a foreign language to children Cameron (2001) suggests

choosing activities and content that are *appropriate* for the child's age and socio-cultural experience, and language that will *grow with* the children, in that, although some vocabulary will no longer be

needed, most of the language will provide a useful base for more grown-up purposes (ibid.: 30f).

Brewster & Ellis (2004: 148) offer the ideal words for bringing the issue of cultural learning to the point:

Provided it is motivating and not too abstract, early FLL has a good chance to encouraging children to take an interest and develop a positive attitude towards foreign countries and their culture.

9.4. Suitable and Effective Material

Material supports the processes of teaching and learning. Chapter 6.2.6 lists general considerations about choosing and developing material and offers a definition of what is meant by authentic. As mentioned before, a feature of teaching material for preschool children, who are not yet literate, is that it has to work without using script. What can be regarded as suitable and effective teaching material in the context of a language course in a kindergarten is specified now.

Teaching material for TEYL has to be in compliance with principles of kindergarten pedagogy and those of language teaching. From a pedagogical point of view, material has to have stimulative nature, meaning that children are motivated and interested to work, hence, play with it (Niederle 1995b: 9). Moreover, what is presented has to be correct, based on facts and regarded as suitable for children (CBI 2009; Niederle 1995b: 9). In order to be suitable for language teaching, material has to contextualise and clarify language that is presented by the teacher (Leidner 2007: 89) and may also convey cultural content. In this respect, Leidner (ibid.: 89) warns not to circulate stereotypes. Some concrete examples of teaching material suitable for EFLL are presented in the following.

Roughly, visual- and audio material can be differentiated. Furthermore, what can be seen could also be felt, smelled and tasted. Material plays a key role in implementing multi-sensory learning. Diana reports that she also brings food for the children to smell and taste. Cusack (2004: 11f) emphasises that by deploying various, well chosen material, knowledge is anchored. The learned language is connected to emotions and sensual impressions gained during its presentation and is thereby stored more sustainably in the brain. Nevertheless, visual material that cannot be smelled or tasted is also valuable for teaching English to children.

Flashcards are essential visual material, in particular if the aim is to teach without translating from one language to the other. As kindergarten children

cannot read and write, flashcards are made by using pictures, the words can accompany the pictures but should not be in the foreground. Brewster & Ellis (2004: 161) suggest to cut out pictures from magazines or catalogues and enlarge them on a photocopier. By now the easiest way to find pictures is via search engines on the internet. Still, when creating flashcards it is relevant to ask oneself whether the pictures are large enough and if they convey the intended meaning clearly (ibid.: 161).

More than pictures and drawings, real objects enrich language teaching. From the researched courses it is learned that objects felt and then pulled out from under a cloth can create suspense and motivate children. Also mentioned by Diana and Catherine is the use of a hand puppet. Via the puppet the teacher can establish communicative situations, present a dialogue and thereby give language input (Leidner 2007: 90). Moreover, shy children can be supported by letting the hand puppet talk for them (Cusack 2004: 15). Furthermore, the puppet could serve as a signal or be part of a routine as seen in *Course B*. However, it is for the individual teacher to use a hand puppet. Playing a puppet is a demanding task that needs to be practised and in order to be perceived natural the teacher should feel comfortable with it.

Regarding audio material, its supportive character has to be stressed. All three interviewed teachers refer to CDs accomplishing their teaching. Especially *Course C*'s success depends on children regularly listening to the CDs. Catherine insisted on native speakers to be recorded for the *Course A* CDs. Like Kühne (2003: 116) and Brewster & Ellis (2004: 162f), she explains that high quality CDs could compensate teacher's non-nativeness.

Another criterion for choosing material is authenticity. Using texts that children who grow up in English speaking countries would learn at preschool age, is a main feature of *Course A*, *Course B* and *Course C*. Brewster & Ellis (ibid.: 162) acknowledge that "[c]arefully selected, songs, rhymes and chants can offer a rich source of authentic input". Pinter (2006: 120f) indicates that authentic material might need to be adapted to young learners. Authentic texts, e.g. Nursery Rhymes, are often complex and necessarily need to be contextualised. Using various visual material, gestures and fitting texts to lesson topics will allow children to make sense and ensure learning.

Picture books take a special position among the load of possible teaching material. The interplay of written text and pictures addresses two audiences: the adult reader and the child observer. A picture book can serve as springboard

for many communicative situations, topics, teaching activities and learning experiences. Detailed information on the genre of picture book is offered by Evens 2009; Nikolajeva & Scott 2001; Hunt 2006; additionally Perry Nodelman, Sylvia Pantaleo and Jens Thiele have researched into the genre of picture book.

Rather for recycling than for introducing new language, worksheets can serve as teaching material. Keeping in mind that children cannot read and write yet, worksheets may contain pictures to color in, matching or counting activities. Older preschool children who already look forward to start school, love worksheets. They feel proud when accomplishing such advanced tasks, compared to kindergarten activities. The sense of achievement is intensified, if children receive a stamp or sticker for finishing their work as observed with *Course B*.

Concerning other printed material, there are course books for teaching English at primary school, because teaching English at this level is part of the curriculum. Although there is no course book, there is a growing supply of resource material for teaching English at kindergarten. In any case, there needs to be supplementary material, even if there was a course book. Unavoidably, a lot will have to be created by the teacher herself (Kühne 2003: 113). Especially with topic-based planning or cross-curricular teaching, materials and activities might need to be self-developed (Pinter 2006: 124f). Even if it is "a difficult and time-consuming process", producing original materials will be necessary to some extent when teaching in kindergarten (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 152). Nevertheless, those materials can be reused and will fit the individual teaching preferences.

As it is the case with teaching content, material has to be "linked directly and explicitly to the child's present knowledge" and connect "the unfamiliar with the familiar and the known" (Köstenbauer 2004: 60). An additional, valuable hint is to prepare all material that is needed during a lesson in advance and keep these at hand. Once children have to wait they lose interest and it is hard to motivate them again (ibid.: 62).

To conclude, material has to contextualise and clarify language and meaning in order to complement a quality English course in a kindergarten. Potentially, everything could serve as teaching material, however, what is chosen has to fulfil the criterion of didactic suitability. In Doyé's terms: "Es gibt eine Fülle von Medien [...], e]inzige Bedingung für ihren Einsatz: ihre didaktische Angemessenheit" (Doyé 2009: 78).

9.5. Methodology Adapted to the Age Group

The following section aims at clarifying what could be regarded as suitable methodology for teaching preschool learners. The intention is to offer a basis and background knowledge for developing methodology.

Methodology comprises the process of making choices for teaching situations based on articulated beliefs and knowledge about teaching, learning, languages in general and about the learners in particular.

A legitimate and recommended way to arrive at methodology is to consider generally accepted approaches, methodologies and teaching suggestions. These suggestions are often formulated as principles for teaching. Moreover, specific techniques are defined and regarded as effective in teaching.

As explained earlier it is the formulated goals and objectives that allow to evaluate a course. Hence, methodology can be regarded as suitable and successful if it contributes to attaining the goals and objectives. Moreover, re-evaluation and further development of methodology with regard to effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the goals and objectives could also be a criterion for quality.

With regard to the specific context, quality methodology is expected to take the specific age group and the teaching context, as well as goal orientation into account. A methodology for TEYL should therefore follow widely accepted principles and techniques of elementary pedagogy and combine these with insights from language teaching pedagogy. Hence, the first section of this chapter will outline those principles of kindergarten pedagogy that are also viewed relevant for teaching languages in this setting together with principles suggested by language teaching experts. The second section will then outline techniques that are regarded suitable for teaching languages to young learners surveyed by Orlovský (2010). It has to be stressed that although this account is not intended to work as a manual, it nevertheless means to highlight particularities in working with children.

Beforehand three underlying principles that need to be applied to all pre- and while teaching decisions are stated: first, the child has to feel comfortable; second, the child's way to learn and work and its autonomy is respected and third, variation is ensured (Chighini & Kirsch 2009: 96).

9.5.1. Principles for Teaching English to Preschoolers

The principles to be applied when planning and teaching a language course to children are a combination of principles of general kindergarten pedagogy, as outlined in the *BRP* and in this work on page 50, and those added by experts in the field of foreign language teaching. Principles from the BRP relevant to EFLT are namely *Ganzheitlichkeit*, *Lebensweltorientierung*, *Sachrichtigkeit* and *Diversität*. Holism is also widely suggested in language teaching, additionally, *variation*, *recycling*, *routine*, *contextualisation* and *scaffolding* complement the selection of principles regarded as essential in TEYL.

Holism is regarded as one of the key principle in pedagogical work (Gerdes 2000: 46; Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 27) and is therefore regarded as essential in EFLT.

Dies bedeutet, dass die Kindergartenkinder die fremde Sprache mit Kopf, Hand und darüber hinaus mit Augen und Ohren aufnehmen sollen, d.h., dass sie mit verschiedenen Sinnen die Sprache begreifen können (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 27).

As a result of the interaction and inclusion of the whole body and all senses, development of the learner's whole personality is aimed at (Gerdes 2000: 46). Moreover, transferring the concept of holism to teaching content, cultural and intercultural aspects become part of language learning (ibid.: 46).

Another term that can be associated with holistic learning, but roots in neuro-linguistic programming, is *anchoring* (Orlovský 2010: 78). Cusack (2004: 11f) reports that she evokes surprise, presents new words in connection with sensual impressions and emotions to establish an anchor in children's memory. To the same extent, the researched English courses viewed addressing all senses and appealing to the child's whole personality as principle.

Besides appealing to the whole person and following the main goal of making children enjoy English lessons, focus on language should be maintained (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 152). It is widely agreed, also by the interviewed teachers, that English should be the main language used for communication during English lessons (Cameron 2001: 86, 199f). However, there are some exceptions. To ensure that children feel comfortable at all times, they should feel understood and know that they can express their needs at any time in their language. Also when explaining games or complex activities, frustration can be avoided by simply using children's first language (Blondin et al. 1998: 23). Sabrina suggests to

sandwich words or phrases, if it is essential that children understand this basic language item (see 8.3.3).

Nevertheless, the suggestion to use children's L1 has to be critically commented. There is high probability that learners in a kindergarten in Vienna might not be speakers of a shared L1. A useful suggestion to handle this situation is offered by Cameron (2001: 209) who recommends to "use as much of the target language as possible" and to "ensure that use of first language supports the children's language learning". In a Viennese kindergarten German most likely functions as a *lingua franca*.

To support children's language learning, new language needs to be contextualised. Language content has to be embedded in situations and in real communicative contexts (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth 2009: 52) that make language use purposeful and that contribute to understanding (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 26; Köstenbauer 2004: 60). Thereby, communication and interaction, where language acquisition factually happens, is encouraged (Knapp, Diemut & Gasteiger-Klicpera 2010: 11). To establish meaningful contexts is hence a principle for TEYL. The teacher has to provide contextual support by choosing relevant topics and using visuals, body language, gestures and facial expressions (Köstenbauer 2004: 60; Pinter 2006: 46).

Additionally, the principle of contextualisation collaborates with that of holism and *Lebensweltorientierung*. Language presented to children has to relate to their experience and present knowledge (Köstenbauer 2004: 60). It should be something children already know in their L1 but presented in a new way. Schotte-Grebenstein (2006: 26) states that language has to relate to an experience in order to be reproduced, imitated and learned by playing.

Whatever content, language and context is presented, it has to be correct and supported by facts. Then the principle of *Sachrichtigkeit* applies (CBI 2009). However, children's language production is not required to be correct.

The very fact that children start using the new language has to be appreciated and equally the mistakes that unavoidably are made. Errors and mistakes are viewed as positive because they indicate learning (Zangl & Peltzer-Karpf 1998: 4) and allow to draw conclusions on children's competences (Cusack 2004: 15f). Consequently, children's mistakes are not highlighted during teaching. All interviewed teachers explain that they do not explicitly react to mistakes but ignore them. Sabrina says that she praises children for any engagement and contribution to the lesson. Diana and Catherine also explain that they simply

repeat the correct language and praise the child. To emphasise on what children can do, instead of pointing at mistakes, fosters children's self-esteem. Therefore, "[t]eachers should provide positive reinforcement, and use plenty of praise when commenting on children's work and performance in English" (Pinter 2006: 101).

By scaffolding learners are lead towards positive learning experiences. It is a term introduced by Jerome Bruner describing the parents' help adapted and directed to the child's development (Cameron 2001: 8). In a language acquisition context scaffolding is

[a]n instructional strategy whereby the more knowledgeable partner (often parent or teacher) offers carefully adjusted support to help the child carry out a task so that the child can finally take over control of the task (Pinter 2006: 168)

A principle in teaching a language to young learners is to balance provision of support and challenge (see Brewster & Ellis 2004: 40; Cameron 2001: 28f). Children need to experience achievement, but should not be overwhelmed.

Additionally to contextualisation and scaffolding, recycling, variation and routine support children's language learning. Recycling counteracts children's tendency to forget rapidly. Moreover, meeting language items over and over again in various contexts increases what children know about the meaning of the language item and "makes recall more probable" (Cameron 2001: 81, 84). Pinter says that "[r]ecycling is key in both vocabulary and grammar teaching for all children" (Pinter 2006: 95).

Closely related to recycling is variation. Since simple repetition will bore children, the way language is presented and contextualised has to be varied. Also because young learners are "more physically restless than older children [they] require activities which are short, varied and which occasionally allow them to burn off energy" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 28). In this sense it is recommended that teachers "anticipate the effects on their pupils of different kinds of activities" (ibid.: 224). Brewster and Ellis point here to activities' potential to be deliberately employed in order to establish a certain atmosphere in the classroom.

Besides variation and recycling, routines should not be missed out. To establish rituals on the one hand and to constantly vary and recycle activities and content on the other hand may appear to contradict each other. In fact they complement each other. Routines as well as variation and recycling on the one hand encourage learning and on the other contribute to children's wellbeing during lessons, which is, as pointed out earlier, regarded as key aim.

Finally, to be addressed as principle of TEYL, is that of establishing an encouraging learning environment. This is achieved by never forcing children, respecting their idiosyncrasy and always aiming at their wellbeing. Concretely, children need to be given time to develop and should never be pushed to talk. The interviewed teachers as well as Cusack (2004: 15) observed

kleine Kinder bevorzugen es erst zu beobachten, nachzumachen, zu wiederholen und sogar zu flüstern, bevor sie zur kommunikativen Produktion bereit sind.

Children will absorb the language and guess meaning from context (Pinter 2006: 46), forcing them to talk will hinder their language development (Cusack 2004: 15).

Learners are motivated to learn language in "classroom atmosphere which promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem so that they can learn more effectively and enjoyably" (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 218f). A key component in an encouraging learning environment is the teacher. A study conducted by Nikolov (2000: 36) shows that it is most important to young learners that classes are fun and that they like the teacher and teaching context.

The teacher can be an important role model, displaying positive, cheerful behaviour and friendliness at all times (Pinter 2006: 46).

Moreover,

[a]t this initial familiarization stage it seems crucial to introduce a foreign language in an enjoyable way (ibid.: 38).

Not only at kindergarten level, also later on during their educational career, children and young people are motivated to learn if they are supported and encouraged in a positive way.

At first the novelty factor may be enough to carry children's learning forward. But feelings of enjoyment, challenge or success will need to continue for many years if the difficult task of learning a language is to be achieved (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 218).

Choosing suitable techniques and approaches will contribute greatly to successful and enjoyable language teaching. An outline of these techniques that make learning fun to children is given in the following section.

9.5.2. Teaching Techniques Suitable for Children

An English course for young learners needs to employ suitable techniques. Children's pre-literate state, their development and the fact that they do not merely learn language better but, above all, differently, has to have consequences for the way they are confronted with a foreign language in a teaching context. Starting from teaching techniques generally applied in kindergarten and primary school, combined with insights from developmental psychology and language learning methods, Orlovský (2010) developed a detailed description of teaching techniques for teaching foreign languages to kindergarten children. Based on her results, insights from the expert interviews and research of relevant literature, the following chapter briefly outlines these techniques. In order not to lose scope of this work, this is done without going into great detail. Only an impression of how teaching young children proceeds can be given.

Teaching techniques regarded as suitable for TEYL are physical games, musical techniques, nursery rhymes, finger plays, narrative techniques, dramatisation, non-simulation games and creative techniques.

Physical Games Physical games conform to children's urge to move and do not only encourage physical- but also cognitive- and emotional competences, since

[v]on der Bewegung gehen entscheidende Impulse für alle kindlichen Wachstumsprozesse aus (Hartmann 2000 [1995]: 115).

Hence, teaching activities that involve movement follow the principle of holism and contribute to children's wellbeing.

All three courses researched for this work integrate physical games in teaching. It is acknowledged that children cannot sit still for long and that they need to be given opportunity to move. Not only gross-motor- but also fine-motor movements are valuable. Concrete suggestions are running- and chasing games as well as circle games, finger play and miming.

A language teaching method regarded as suitable for children and corresponding to the field of movement games is Total Physical Response (TPR). James Asher

reasoned that the fastest, least stressful way to achieve understanding of any target language is to follow directions uttered by the instructor

(without native language translation) (Larsen-Freeman 2000: 108).

The features of not to force pupils to speak but giving them time to listen, and thereby reduce stress, movements connected to language and focus on listening comprehension makes TPR a method that can be integrated into a methodology for TEYL. A detailed description of TPR is given by Larsen-Freeman (ibid.: 107ff).

Since movement is such a key element in teaching young learners, it is also integrated with the other teaching techniques suitable for the age group. Musical techniques, for example, also feature physical activity.

Music Music has a stimulating and activating character. Humans are emotionally, cognitively and physically touched by music. This applies even more to children who are more emotional and tend to follow their spontaneous inner impulses. Confrontation with music leads to sensitisation to sounds and is in this respect contributing to language learning. Musical techniques are songs and their dramatisation, games that integrate songs, ring-a-ring-of-roses and dances.

For choosing songs (Große-Jäger 1999) defines three key criteria, which could also be applied for deciding on other musical activities. Those criteria are:

1. song's content and topic should correspond to the child's real life and experience
2. the melody should be attractive and appealing to the child's moods
3. the opportunity to play should be inherent (ibid.: 15)

These criteria also reflect what is regarded to qualify language items to be valuable teaching content. A song accompanied by movements may assist children in understanding and remembering language, and Brewster & Ellis (2004: 162) expresses: "Children love songs, rhymes and chants and their repetitive nature and rhythm make them an ideal vehicle for language learning".

A method that may enrich language courses for young learners is *Rhythmisch-musikalische Erziehung* also referred to as *Rhythmik*. Very briefly defined it is

spielerisches Lernen mit den Mitteln Musik, Bewegung, Sprache, Materialien und spricht die Kinder in elementarer ganzheitlicher Weise an (Witoszynskyj, Schneider & Schindler 2000).

More information on how rhythmical-musical education can contribute to early foreign language teaching and learning can be found in Saribekyan (2013).

More techniques that feature language use, movement and music are finger plays, nursery rhymes and riddles. Rhymes and other rhythmic texts or poems, may turn "[r]epetitions which would be boring otherwise, [...] into an enjoyable event, if done in the framework of an appealing song" for example (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth 2009: 79). Moreover, "[r]esearch shows that in addition to rhyme, mime, and repetition, rhythm also aids vocabulary learning for children" (Pinter 2006: 88).

Those finger plays, nursery rhymes, songs and poems ideally come from the target culture. The interview partners stressed that they use authentic texts for teaching children and texts that native children would learn at the same stage. Thereby, cultural learning is integrated in language learning.

Narrative Techniques More cultural texts that belong to narrative techniques are tales and stories. Because children are usually familiar with traditional texts and the formulaic language of tales, Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth (2009: 76) regard short tales as useful texts for language teaching and learning. Beyond that

[s]tories play an important role in children's language-learning, not only because of children's natural interest in stories, nor in the undoubted appeal to their imagination, but also because stories embody a narrative structure of discourse which can be useful for learning more generally (Edelenbos, Kubanek & Johnstone 2006: 149).

In order to integrate stories and tales successfully, children need a certain level of pre-knowledge and sufficient support. Moreover, choice and adaptation of text as well as the activities accompanying the story or tale are decisive factors for effectively using literary texts for language teaching. If those factors are considered "[s]tories offer a whole imaginary world, created by language, that children can enter and enjoy, learning language as they go" (Cameron 2001: 159).

Regarding the use of picture books, Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth (2009: 78) call attention to the possible discrepancy between children's language ability and intellectual maturity. When choosing a book it should be made accessible language wise and be appropriate to children's knowledge of the world, not boring them or over-challenging them.

Moreover, it is encouraged to combine stories with techniques of movement games and music. For example, a story may be dramatised and staged together. Following principles of TPR an action story may develop (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth 2009: 77). Generally, a story offers a starting point for organising topic based teaching sequences and allows to plan manifold activities around it.

All in all, storytelling is a sophisticated teaching technique necessitating a skilful storyteller and it would lead too far to go into detail at this point. Cameron (2001: Chapter 7), Brewster & Ellis (2004: Chapter 14), Knapp, Diemut & Gasteiger-Klicpera (2010: 40f) and Weber (2004) offer more detailed information on how children learn through stories, what to consider when choosing texts and on the technique of telling stories.

It has already be touched upon the technique of dramatising in the context of musical techniques and story telling. Regarding TEYL three aspects of dramatising contribute to language learning: the whole body is involved and thereby holistic learning occurs; content is perceived multi-sensory; through dramatising room for practising communication is established (Tselikas 1999: 60ff in Orlovský 2010: 81).

Apart from creative activities involving the whole body, creative activities focussing on fine-motor skills and usage of material are techniques of language learning. Drawing, painting, crafting, creating in general, belong to children's forms of learning (Niederle 1995b: 39). Creating with material is a tool for children to express themselves. Within the context of TEYL the process of creating and the product may offer occasions for communication (Orlovský 2010: 90). In contrast to most other activities in TEYL creative tasks will feature the social format of individual work.

Playing Games Finally, a technique that is combinable with most other techniques, hence embraces teaching techniques suitable for young learners, is that of playing games. Most importantly, playing games appeals to children's natural way to learn. In a TEYL context games can be defined as "any fun activity which gives young learners the opportunity to practice the foreign language in a relaxed and enjoyable way" (Martin 1995: 1 in Brewster & Ellis 2004: 172).

Games can be classified according to social parameters into competitive and cooperative games (ibid.: 173, 177) and into didactic games. Didactic games are characterised by the absence of movement as core component (Orlovský 2010:

94), for example *Memory* or *Snakes and Ladders*. Competitive and cooperative games may well feature movement. Cooperative games tend to be preferred with young learners as preschool children find it hard to lose.

In a language teaching situation games need to be well-selected to fulfil a language learning purpose. By playing games language can be introduced as well as presented and recycled in various ways. Well prepared games aid memorising language by offering occasion to repeat language and by linking it to various sensual experiences (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 173f).

In terms of language learning, teachers need to be aware of the range of language items and skills work different games can promote and the most fruitful kinds of games to use for different purposes (ibid.: 172).

Further, Brewster & Ellis (ibid.: 177f) suggests to think about the effect a game has, which language it contains and which resources are needed to play the game. Moreover, games can be adapted to suit the current topic (ibid.: 181).

To conclude, games in the language classroom are motivating and "provide excellent practice for improving pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and the four language skills" (ibid.: 172). To meet the principles of TEYL games should be fun and contribute to variation and children's urge to move, except for didactic games. Particular games can be chosen to settle or stir a group, to practice language, being more demanding, relaxing or enjoyable (ibid.: 177).

The application of principles and techniques will result in concrete teaching activities that children should enjoy and have fun when participating (Kühne 2003: 114). In this respect Brewster & Ellis (2004: 152) who address a primary school teaching context, critically remark that

[t]here is sometimes a tendency when working with young learners to use activities for their own sake, because they are enjoyable or because they 'work' as activities, without due regard to their values as language learning exercises. The things our pupils do in class should be interesting and enjoyable, but they should also be carefully examined in terms of their language teaching and learning potential and how they relate to what has previously been learned and what is to be learned.

For a preschool teaching context, however, activities for enjoyment's sake could be justified. Nevertheless, the language focus should not be lost. Consequently, a quality criterion for a language course taught in a kindergarten is the fusion of language learning- and general early learning goals with that of motivating

children, awaking their interest in languages and encouraging them to continue language learning throughout their life.

A final comment needs to be made on communicative language teaching (CLT) and young learners. Even though it is acknowledged that language learning happens in interaction and that there need to be situations, hence teaching activities, encouraging communication (Knapp, Diemut & Gasteiger-Klicpera 2010: 11), there are doubts of the suitability of CLT in EFLT. As mentioned before, children need time to develop and should not be forced to talk (Cusack 2004: 15). Moreover, children's stage of socio-emotional development might make it difficult for them to fulfil communicative tasks. Activities such as repeating in a chorus, singing and miming (ibid.: 15) are more suitable to give children the opportunity to express their knowledge instead of having to perform individually without group support.

To close this section on teaching principles and techniques for teaching young learners, it is again stressed that any action undertaken in order to teach language to children needs to aim at the individual child's enjoyment of learning and wellbeing. Whichever technique is applied and planned in consideration of the named principles, an English course in a kindergarten setting has to offer positive experiences with the foreign language in order to reach the formulated goals and objectives.

9.6. Ensuring Quality via Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of a quality English course. By assessing a course, quality is established and maintained throughout the circle of course design. Moreover, as explained in chapter 6, *Principles of Course Design* on page 34, there are different kinds of assessment that deal with the individual components of a course. While for Graves (2008) assessing the course means mainly to assess students at different stages during the course, in a kindergarten context it can be argued that teachers should self-assess their work to a greater extent. The following subsection describes assessment of learners, teachers and the course, as tool for quality assurance within the context of an English course in a kindergarten setting.

In general, assessment is the process of collecting and analysing information on the progress and achievement of the course; it is evaluated whether goals and objectives are met (Pinter 2006: 131). Moreover, "assessment should contribute to

the learning process" of the individual learner, the class (Cameron 2001: 219) and to that of the teacher. Consequently, "[a]ssessment is more than testing" (ibid.: 220) and particularly with young learners "traditional assessment methods can be problematic" (Pinter 2006: 131).

For teaching situations that are mostly based on playful activities, as it is the case in a kindergarten context, observation is the most useful and suitable tool for assessment (Cameron 2001: 231). By observing, not only children's linguistic performance and learning progress can be assessed, but also their engagement, motivation and interest, which are core objectives in TEYL (Pinter 2006: 134). According to Cameron (2001: 231), "[s]kilful teachers are probably constantly observing their pupils" and sensitive to pupil's moods, feelings (Cusack 2004: 11) and non-verbal feedback. Such feedback would be "questioning glances, lack of interest, a loss of concentration or a blank look" (Köstenbauer 2004: 60).

The more experienced a teacher is, the easier s/he will find to adjust her talk or lesson activities while teaching (Cameron 2001: 231). If "*observe - notice - adjust teaching*" (ibid.: 227) is not possible during the lesson, then it is definitely obligatory on a course level.

Scholars suggest self-assessment as an additional tool with regard to the goals of developing language awareness and learning strategies. Edelenbos, Kubanek & Johnstone (2006: 149) suggest that "[c]hildren at all levels (from kindergarten onwards) benefit from being encouraged to reflect on their learning". As medium for self-assessment a portfolio is regarded suitable for children. Knowing that children derive self-esteem from what they can do, it can be assumed that children would feel proud over their portfolio. They would have something in hand that depicts their competences. By now a reasonable number of publications are available on how to develop a portfolio with young learners without using script (e.g. Bostelmann 2007). Pinter (2006: 133) reports that most insight into children's achievement will be gained by a combination of techniques like portfolio, worksheets and observation.

The focus of attention shifts now from the assessment of learners to the assessment of teachers. Professional teachers strive for constant progress in their teaching skills. Because the qualified teacher is the main source of quality for a language course, assessing the teacher, self-assessment in most cases, is an important aspect of course design and a core component of professional teaching.

Constant self-observation and reflection to integrate experiences into new teaching situations lead to professionalisation and successful teaching. Knapp, Diemut

& Gasteiger-Klicpera (2010: 16) suggests to use video-analysis for researching and evaluating language teaching programs. Additionally, this tool could be useful for self-assessment. Similarly, being observed by a trustful and honest teacher colleague may also contribute to assess one's teaching and the course.

To conclude, the course teacher who is also the course developer is responsible for assessing learners, him-/herself and the course's success. Assessment has to be realised as an essential component of developing, teaching and reteaching the course. Only by assessing the course, quality can be achieved, maintained and enhanced.

Not only to find out about the courses effectiveness assessing learners is useful. Knowing about learner's competences and progress is necessary to give feedback to parents. Collaboration with the kindergarten also includes involving parents, which is the topic of the following section.

9.7. Parental Involvement

Parents are in a powerful position. First, they are a decisive factor for introducing a foreign language early, as exemplified in chapter 3.2.. Second, it should not be forgotten that children are not of legal age and their parents as guardians make decisions for them. In this respect parents are customers and have to be informed about details on the English course. Third, parents' attitude and expectations towards the course and the language influences their children. As a result, a quality English course incorporates parental involvement as a decision field for developing the course.

Once pedagogical principles of kindergarten work are considered, the course designer will discover that parental involvement is one such principle. *Bildungspartnerschaft* describes the collaboration and joint effort of the institution, teachers, external personnel and parents to ensure children's healthy development and learning (CBI 2009). As a result, parents should be included in and informed about decision making and EFLT.

Moreover, because parents are role models for their children, their motivation and attitudes towards the course and learning a foreign language will influence children (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 257). To the same extent parents' expectations will affect children. In order to avoid excessive demand, unrealistic expectations and overwhelming pressure on children, the courses' goals and objectives need

to be made transparent to parents. There are various options to inform parents in advance or during the course.

One option is to present the course at parents' evening that is usually held at the beginning of each school year or term (Leidner 2007: 111). Moreover, it is common to inform parents via letters or posters in kindergarten (ibid.: 111). Exhibitions (Glatz 2004: 85), or presentations during term closing events are an opportunity to present what has been done during term or throughout the year. A portfolio, as it could also be used for assessment and documentation of the learning process, is also of great interest to parents (Leidner 2007: 112). As with all these options it is the case that they have to be arranged with kindergarten staff.

Other ways of involving parents into learning processes is by working material. Catherine, for example, designed material that children can work on at home together with their parents and thereby repeat what they have learned during the course. Parents tend to be interested in children's progression and ask what they have learned that day. Insights from developmental psychology point to the fact that children are better in recognising than remembering, working material may aid children to retrieve knowledge.

On the contrary, Sabrina pointed out that within the *Course C* program parents should not interfere too much into learning the language. Parents should only play the CDs to their children. Moreover, Sabrina expressed criticism against the tendency to let children perform.

From time to time, the English teacher will meet parents in kindergarten. Parents might like to establish contact and probably ask how their children cope with the English group. In that case the professional English teacher can give feedback to parents based on his/her observations.

To conclude, parents' role and function in the teaching and learning processes before and during an English course for preschool children has to be considered. Course developers have to find ways to inform parents on their children's and the course's progress.

9.8. Qualified Teachers

Blondin et al. (1998: 23) report that

empirical studies show a link between the teacher's level of competence in the target language and the competence acquired by their pupils, especially in pronunciation and oral fluency.

Moreover, Goto Butler (2004) found out that teachers' proficiency could influence their confidence, pedagogical skills, their choice of teaching content and in further consequence students' motivation and ultimate success in acquiring the foreign language. From these insights it can be concluded that a language course's success depends on a teacher's qualification (Felberbauer 1998: 77). Also Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditzfurth (2009: 44) highlight the importance of teachers' as models, as young learners "tend to identify with their teacher *and* with the language and culture they present [...]".

The following part of this work summarises main qualifications a foreign language teacher of young children should have. A teacher's qualification on the whole is a combination of personality traits, language competence and professional qualifications. In short, being a qualified teacher for TEYL means to

have the knowledge, skills and sensitivity of a teacher of children and of a teacher of language and to be able to balance and combine the two successfully (Brewster & Ellis 2004: 269).

9.8.1. Personality

First and foremost the love to work with people and an attachment to a certain age group are prerequisites to become a teacher. Furthermore, favourable characteristics are patience, empathy and maturity. The latter probably comes with experience and will lead to an aura of security and warmth helping children to attach and learn from this person. Possessing a sense of humour and conveying a positive attitude and happiness can also be counted as assets of a good teacher, mainly because "[t]he teacher is also the main source of motivation for many young children" (Pinter 2006: 42). Sarter (1997: 150) adds the ability to reflect and dissolve from personal learning experiences constitute a good teacher.

Language teachers ideally have a certain passion for the target language and culture. As language teachers they become advocates and representatives of the respective countries. Therefore, having spent some time there and maintaining contact can be argued as being a prerequisite for a good language teacher. A longer stay in the target language surrounding contributes immensely to a teacher's language competence that is dealt with in the following section.

9.8.2. Language Competence

Research shows that quantity and quality of input has an influence on children's foreign language learning (Peltzer-Karpf & Zangl 1998: 50). As the teacher is the main source for language input, his/her language competence needs to be of high proficiency (ibid.: 26). Peltzer-Karpf & Zangl (ibid.: 50-51) regard phonological impeccability, idiomatic correctness, structured input via intonation, rhythm and pauses that enable students to analyse and recognise patterns and non-verbal support by mimic, gesture and material as characteristics of quality input. Particularly, because sensitivity to language sounds is known to be high with children and first encounters will leave strong impressions (Karbe 1998: 66), language models possessing near native pronunciation are demanded (Ulich 2011: 227; Karbe 1998: 66; Peltzer-Karpf & Zangl 1998).

Regarding these defined criteria of language competence, it could be argued that native speakers of the target language are ideal to teach young learners. Moreover, because the embodied unity of language and culture, as Doyé (2009: 59) highlights, clearly suggest the recruitment of teachers originating from the target language community and culture. As a result, demand for people with these qualifications is higher than their availability.

Not being a native speaker of the target language can also be advantageous. Non-natives may hold a more analytical approach towards the language and metalinguistic knowledge. Sarter (1997: 150f) points out that the younger learners are, the more abstract the teacher's education needs to be. Teachers' knowledge has to go beyond the content they teach.

In Seidlhofer's (2005) point of view teachers need "Bildung, nicht nur training". She differentiates instructor and informant. While the informant possesses knowledge of the language and language competence, the instructor's knowledge and competence goes beyond that. The instructor has knowledge about the language and the nature of language and language learning in various situations (Seidlhofer 2005: 26). Seidlhofer (ibid.) argues that every native speaker is an informant but for becoming an instructor native speakers are not privileged.

In any case the

teacher needs to be absolutely confident in using the target language and s/he needs to be an expert in knowing how to initiate and to support this process to be able to comfortably experiment with the foreign language in spontaneous interaction and to flexibly react to

unpredictable learners' contributions (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth 2009: 31).

To be more precise, language competence comprises a broad range of vocabulary, grammatical structure and awareness of register, phrases of classroom discourse, vocabulary of taught topics (Karbe 1998: 66ff). The teacher's language knowledge needs to go far beyond what is taught to learners. Nevertheless, language competence alone, does not qualify a teacher to teach a foreign language to very young learners.

To ensure that children enjoy their first foreign language experience and derive motivation for further learning from it, methodology needs to be adapted to learners. Consequently, a teacher of young learners needs to be methodologically qualified. Blondin et al. (1998: 23) regard being a trained teacher for the specific age group as favourable.

An argument against native speakers teaching languages is their lack of methodological competence and knowledge on teaching and learning. Teachers competences need to embrace language-, content- and methodological knowledge and have to be embedded in the philosophical framework of the institution (Karbe 1998: 65). Methodological qualification is defined to comprise planning lessons, choosing topics, developing material, presenting language in a way that motivates children to keep on learning languages and the reflection on teaching (ibid.: 70ff). Without going into too much detail, to Doyé (2009: 60ff) methodological qualification consists of knowledge about techniques and methods, as well as general pedagogical qualification.

Pinter (2006: 42) describes it best when she says that "teachers with suitable methodology and a good command of the language are most essential components of success".

10. Conclusion and Outlook

This thesis has investigated what needs to be considered when developing a foreign language course for preschool learners. Based on the framework of course design, important steps and cornerstones for developing a quality English course in a kindergarten setting were identified. These fundamentals and principles emerged through literature research and expert interviews.

Knowledge was combined from various research disciplines to develop initial insights into how preschool children learn and can be taught languages. First, it was learned from linguistic research related to age and language learning that children are not simply better or quicker language learners but, foremost, different language learners compared to adults and adolescents. Second, background knowledge about the child as learner and implications for teaching preschool learners were summarised by combining insights from developmental psychology and elementary pedagogy. As a consequence of these insights, teaching methodology for teaching English to young learners (TEYL) should significantly differ from common English language teaching (ELT) methodology. Third, the framework of course design was adopted as scaffold, rendering assistance in order to keep sight of the numerous tasks in the course development process. Additionally, kindergartens in Vienna were specified as teaching context to limit the number of teaching decisions that need to be made. Forth, information from experts in the field who taught English courses for very young learners was presented.

By summarising all this relevant background knowledge, a modest yet valuable contribution to teacher education and, consequently, an enhancement to the quality of TEYL was made. Hence, the thesis' goal has been fulfilled. As the main objective of this study was to identify the cornerstones of a quality English course in a kindergarten setting, the question posed at the beginning of this thesis can now be answered. After researching and theorising, it is now possible to provide a list of fundamental principles required for a quality kindergarten English course.

A quality English course in a kindergarten setting:

- offers positive experiences that will arouse and maintain children's motivation for general learning and, in particular, language learning.
- fosters children's competence and strategies in communication as well as acquiring knowledge.

- has formulated clear and realistic goals, objectives and aims.
- implements pedagogical decisions based on children's learner characteristics.
- is designed to cater to very young learners' needs; hence, is organised in a way that responds to children's urges to move and responds to their short concentration span.
- is structured around topics instead of specifics about the language.
- involves cultural learning.
- goes beyond mere language teaching by encouraging and contributing to a child's overall development.
- appeals to all senses and allows holistic learning by employing a rich variety of materials and teaching techniques.
- ensures as much quality input in the target language as possible.
- integrates the individual kindergarten's values, objectives and principles.
- is taught by a person who loves working with children and is able to empathise with them.
- requires a teacher who is competent in the language, educational pedagogy and theoretical background knowledge of the language, developmental psychology and learning.
- involves and informs parents about their children's progress
- is guided by a curriculum that is embedded in the national curriculum and part of the educational system.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that very young language learners show different learner characteristics and learn differently; thus, they need to be taught differently compared to adult and adolescent learners. Authors and experts highlight children's holistic way of learning and, as a result, language cannot be fostered without fostering other areas of development. Children's overall development, behaviours, individual strengths and needs have to be considered and require new ways of teaching.

While mere language competence is not a suitable objective for an English course for young learners, teachers' language competence, on the contrary, needs to be

even higher. High language competence, along with pedagogical and creative competence and rich background knowledge on learning and languages, is an ideal quality for the teacher working with very young learners. Moreover, qualified personnel must be willing to evolve and adapt to individual teaching situations, observes circumstances and reflects on teaching. Teaching situations are multifarious and there is not the one way to teach; thus, the needs and characteristics of all the parties involved as well as their context in the learning progress make each teaching situation unique and require teachers to be conscious about the current situation.

The individual course designer or teacher can achieve almost all of the cornerstones named above. However, the last point - the inclusion of early foreign language teaching into the national educational system - requires structural and political preconditions that have not been fully established yet. Even if all of the other recommendations are implemented, early foreign language teaching (EFLT) will only be sustainable if further structural measures are adopted. Such measures, as addressed by scientists, include further research in the field of early foreign language teaching and learning (EFLL), comprehensive language programs embracing all educational levels and the creation of prerequisites such as teacher training.

The first measure calls for more research in EFLL and TEYL: "Currently, very little is known about the actual process of foreign language learning and what children can achieve at what stage (Pinter 2011: 91). Hence, in order to derive appropriate methodology to teach a target group and suitable goals, further research needs to be undertaken in the field.

Second, despite the undoubtedly positive effect of well-organised foreign language classes on preschool level students, irregular exposure and changing teaching approaches (from one educational level to another) affect a learners' progress and motivation (Blondin et al. 1998: 22, 28f). Brewster & Ellis (2004: 10) points out that "[e]arly L2 learning is only justified if what is learned serves as a springboard, however modest, for teaching to come". Hence, like Cameron (2001: 244), Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Dittfurth (2009: 19) and Pinter (2011), Blondin et al. (1998: 39) declare that "[p]edagogical continuity should be ensured across the different sectors of education (pre-primary, primary and secondary) that children experience". Only then positive effects of early foreign language teaching and learning can be maintained.

Third, sufficient teacher education is an equally important prerequisite to ensure

quality and success in early foreign language teaching and learning (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 120). Legutke, Müller-Hartmann & Ditzfurth (2009: 142) find it unacceptable "to promote language education at pre-school level without seriously considering teacher education". For this reason Blondin et al. (1998: 45) recommend

that, before taking decisions concerning the implementation and especially the generalisation of foreign-language teaching in primary or earlier education, decision makers should first of all ascertain that they can provide the minimal conditions which will ensure that the aspirations of those involved in this educationally invaluable enterprise are fulfilled.

Before concluding, attention is paid to possible target languages for early foreign language education. As learned from the small-scale field study conducted by the author of this thesis and *Language Education Policy Profile: Country Report Austria*, parents show a strong preference towards English being the first foreign language their children should learn. Therefore, this thesis focussed on the design of an English course directed to kindergarten children in Vienna. However, the EC and Schotte-Grebenstein (2006: 176) suggest that teachers consider teaching languages that are spoken in a geographical proximity, including neighbouring and minority languages. Seidlhofer (2005) adds to this discussion that "[z]uerst muss die Frage nach der situationsspezifischen Funktion der betreffenden Sprachen gestellt werden" and believes that English should be separated from the hierarchical order of languages and viewed as basic competence (ibid.: 28). To conclude, the principles, teaching strategies and cornerstones presented in this thesis can be applied to teaching any language in a kindergarten setting. Regardless of the language, it is important to realise that teaching children is not child's play.

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Appendix

- Interview Guide
- Deutsche Zusammenfassung
- Curriculum Vitae

Interview Guide

Introduction What were your motives to start teaching English at kindergarten? Why did you develop this course? Please give a short description of your course. What is special about your course?

Macro Organisation Where do you offer your course? What circumstances and conditions should be given?

When do the lessons take place and how long do they last? How many lessons are taught?

Teacher Qualification Who is conducting the course? Which qualifications should the teacher have? What is the role of the teacher? What is the role of the learner? Are parents involved in the learning process?

Goals, Objectives and Content What are the aims of the course? Is there a syllabus? What is taught? What are the underlying criteria for choosing the topics? Which language skills should be fostered via this course? (speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar?)

Micro Organisation and Techniques Please describe a typical lesson to me. How is a typical lesson structured? How do you motivate the children to join in? How do you start a lesson? What is the role of children's mother tongue during lessons? What material do you use? Which criteria do you follow when planning activities? How much do you expect your learners to talk in the target language? How do you motivate them to use the new language? How much space is there for spontaneity? How do you check if children reach the learning objective? How do you react to mistakes and errors?

Theoretical Underpinning What is the underlying learning theory of this course? What do you think are the needs of young learners one has to consider when teaching such a course?

Have I forgotten to ask something about the course you would still like to tell me?

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Die Fähigkeit in mehr als einer Sprache kommunizieren zu können und damit auch das Lernen zusätzlicher Sprachen wird von Privatpersonen wie auch von großen Organisationen als zunehmend wichtiger erachtet. Vor dem Hintergrund der europäischen Sprachenvielfalt und auch aufgrund wirtschaftlicher Bestrebungen empfiehlt die Europäische Kommission (EC) seit 2001, dem Europäischen Jahr der Sprachen, dass jede/r Bürger/-in der EU seine/ihre Muttersprache spricht, sowie in zwei zusätzlichen Sprachen kommunizieren kann. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, schlägt die EC eine Vorverlegung des Fremdsprachenunterrichts vor. Auf diese sprachpolitischen Bewegungen hin ist der Beginn des Fremdsprachenunterrichts in Österreich 2003 in die erste Schulstufe vorverlegt worden. Eltern treiben diese Entwicklung weiter voran und die Nachfrage nach Sprachkursen im Kindergarten steigt. Vor allem Englischkurse werden von Eltern gewünscht, um ihren Kindern einen Vorteil zu verschaffen und sie besser auf die Schule vorzubereiten, da Englisch die Weltsprache ist (European Commission 2008: 35; Kreuz 2009).

Auch aufgrund der weit verbreiteten Überzeugung, dass Sprachenlernen in der Kindheit leichterfällt, organisieren Trägerorganisationen oder Kindergartenleiter/-innen Englischkurse, um den Wünschen der Eltern entgegenzukommen und die Attraktivität der einzelnen Standorte zu steigern. Privatpersonen oder Firmen werden mit der Durchführung von Englischkursen betraut. Mit dem Ziel, die Qualität und Effektivität dieser Angebote zu erhöhen und zu gewährleisten, fragt die Autorin dieser Diplomarbeit nach den Eckpunkten, die bei der Planung und Durchführung eines Englischkurses im Kindergarten berücksichtigt werden sollten.

Die Beantwortung dieser Frage erfordert die Zusammentragung von und die Auseinandersetzung mit Erkenntnissen aus der theoretischen und angewandten Linguistik, der Entwicklungspsychologie und Elementarpädagogik. Aus Erkenntnissen der linguistischen Forschung und der Entwicklungspsychologie ergibt sich, dass Kinder nicht einfach bessere Sprachenlernende sind, sondern in erster Linie anders lernen als Jugendliche und Erwachsene.

So haben Kinder den Vorteil, dass ihr Gehirn eine höhere Plastizität aufweist (Peltzer-Karpf & Zangl 1998), dass sie von Natur aus neugierig (Kühne 2003), lernfähig und lernwillig sind (Hüther 2006), dass sie Sprachlaute besser differenzieren können (Pinter 2006 und Hoff 2009), und, dass sie weniger Angst davor haben, Fehler zu machen und sich zu blamieren (Hoff 2009 und Gass & Selinker

2008).

Diese Vorteile kommen dann zum Tragen, wenn Kinder in einer Art und Weise unterrichtet werden, die ihrem natürlichen Zugang zum Lernen entspricht. Die frühkindlichen Lernformen sind das Spielen, das Arbeiten, das Forschen, das Erfinden und das Gestalten (Niederle 1995b: 29ff). Darüber hinaus lernen Kinder unter Einbeziehung aller Sinne, also ganzheitlich, sowie durch körperliche Betätigung und musikalische Ausdrucksweisen. Des Weiteren erfordert der Umstand, dass Kindergartenkinder noch nicht alphabetisiert sind, die Umformung von bekannten, sowie andere und neue Techniken und Wege in der Fremdsprachenvermittlung.

Da der Schwerpunkt dieser Diplomarbeit vor allem auf der Planung und Entwicklung von Fremdsprachenkursen für den Kindergarten liegt, werden die von Graves (2008) aufgestellten Prinzipien der Kursentwicklung beschrieben und auf den Unterrichtskontext der Kindergärten in Wien, wie auch auf die Zielgruppe hin adaptiert. Als Hintergrundwissen wird die Institution Kindergarten definiert und die Meilensteine in der Entwicklung drei- bis sechsjähriger Kinder erläutert.

Als Ergänzung zur theoretischen Aufarbeitung werden drei Expertinnen auf dem Gebiet befragt. Die Ergebnisse der Interviews und die Skizzierung dreier Modelle von Englischkursen im Kindergarten werden wiederum mit Vorschlägen aus der Theorie abgeglichen. In Folge ergeben sich aus den Prinzipien der Kursentwicklung in Verbindung mit den Prinzipien der elementarpädagogischen Arbeit und den Praxisbeispielen Prinzipien für die Entwicklung und Durchführung eines qualitativen Englischkurses im Kindergarten.

Zusammengefasst zeichnet sich ein hochwertiger Englischkurs im Kindergarten dadurch aus, dass:

- Kinder positive Erfahrungen sammeln, die ihre Motivation für das Lernen erhalten und insbesondere jene für das Sprachenlernen wecken.
- Kompetenzen und Strategien zur Kommunikation und Wissensaneignung gefördert werden.
- klare und realistische Lehr- und Lernziele formuliert werden.
- pädagogische Entscheidungen aufgrund der Eigenheiten der Kinder, die das Lernen betreffen, getroffen werden.
- die Bedürfnisse der Kinder, also auch ihr Bewegungsdrang sowie ihre begren-

zte Konzentrationsfähigkeit bei der Planung und Umsetzung berücksichtigt werden.

- Lerninhalte rund um Themen und weniger um sprachliche Strukturen aufgebaut werden.
- kulturelles Lernen einfließt.
- Unterricht über sprachliche Fähigkeiten hinaus zur gesamten Entwicklung beiträgt.
- durch Einsatz vielfältiger Materialien und Techniken alle Sinne angesprochen werden und ganzheitliches Lernen ermöglicht wird.
- ein Höchstmaß an qualitativ hochwertigem Input in der Zielsprache gewährleistet ist.
- die Werte, Ziele und Prinzipien des jeweiligen Kindergartens berücksichtigt werden.
- die Lehrperson die Arbeit mit Kindern sehr wertschätzt und empathisch ist.
- die Lehrperson sprachlich und pädagogisch kompetent ist, sowie über theoretisches Hintergrundwissen über das Lernen, Sprache und Entwicklungspsychologie verfügt.
- die Eltern der Kinder in Lernprozesse integriert und auch darüber informiert werden.
- anhand eines Lehrplans gearbeitet wird, der Teil des staatlichen Curriculums und im Bildungssystem integriert ist.

Der letzte Punkt kann nicht alleine von der Person oder Organisation erfüllt werden, die einen Englischkurs im Kindergarten entwickelt. Grundlegende Reformen der vorhandenen Strukturen im Bildungsbereich sind notwendig, nicht nur die Institution Kindergarten und die Lehrpläne, sondern auch die Ausbildung der Lehrkräfte betreffend (Schotte-Grebenstein 2006: 120; Legutke; Müller-Hartmann; Dittfurth 2009: 142; Blondin et al. 1998: 45). Letztendlich ist ein Frühbeginn des Fremdsprachenlernens nur dann längerfristig fruchtbringend, wenn eine regelmäßige und kontinuierliche Konfrontation mit der Fremdsprache über alle Bildungsebenen hinweg gewährleistet ist (Blondin et al. 1998: 22, 28f; Brewster; Ellis 2004: 10; Cameron 2001: 244; Legutke; Müller-Hartmann; Ditt-

furth 2009: 19; Pinter 2011: 39).

Abschließend soll festgehalten werden, dass die definierten Prinzipien auf Sprachkurse im Kindergarten ganz allgemein übertragen werden können. Die Wahl der ersten Fremdsprache ist je nach Kontext zu evaluieren. In jedem Fall ist es notwendig zu erkennen, dass die Planung und Umsetzung eines Sprachkurses im Kindergarten kein Kinderspiel ist.

Curriculum Vitae

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Ausbildung

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