

Factsheet Press Release July 25, 2013

Empirical Study – Results

Time Frame: February to June 2013

Participants: 51 children of the “Kinderhaus,” (Children’s House) grades 2 and 4; their teachers; 32 parents

Aims:

1. Evaluation of the linguistic development in the English language as well as possible interdependencies connected to the language of instruction English and German.
2. Evaluation of children’s strategies in bilingual learning.
3. Transfer of the findings for optimization and areas where action needs to be taken

Results:

1. Results of all language tests

Overall, the results of the tests examining language competency were above average.

- Children in the “Kinderhaus” are very competent users of English as well as German. The main focus of testing was on phonological awareness, which resulted in a clear indication of a high degree of cognitive potential.

In the “Kinderhaus” didactically relevant principles of very early language learning are employed; thus, linguistic success is also to be considered a success of the “Kinderhaus” team. The holistic approach, didactically sound selection of texts and other materials, as well as purposeful support of linguistic self-confidence can be seen as very positive.

- Students in the second grade of elementary school have in some cases already reached a level comparable to the level required of 4th-grade students at state schools; some students in the 4th grade have already mastered competencies required toward the middle or end of grade 5. Several relevant linguistic competencies were examined.

The potential for further developing reading and writing skills in grade 4 is being dealt with very well and by employing a differentiated approach.

The ability to speak freely as well as listening comprehension skills are extraordinarily well developed in both participating classes.

2. Interviews with elementary school students

- More than half the children have no preference toward German or English as language of instruction. This lack of preference shows that both languages are being used naturally in the classroom.
- Learning strategies are being built up in a willful and professional manner, geared towards effecting progress. This is an indication for an impressive cognitive development.
- The children quickly become very well aware of the fact that they are capable of more than their peers who are growing up in a largely monolingual context.

3. Interviews with parents

- The main motives for choosing “Kinderhaus” are: raising children bilingually (93.7%), full-day care (71.9%), system based on two teachers (68.7).
- 86.7% of parents are of the opinion that children who are taught at Jan Amos Comenius institutions are much further advanced in English than children of other institutions.
- 96.6% of parents state that their children are very happy or rather happy at “Kinderhaus” or the elementary school, respectively.
- Overall 53.3% of the parents interviewed are very satisfied, 43.8% rather satisfied.