

Gantefort, Christoph

Academic and everyday language proficiency among educationally disadvantaged pupils

Tertium comparationis 18 (2012) 2, S. 174-189



Quellenangabe/ Reference:

Gantefort, Christoph: Academic and everyday language proficiency among educationally disadvantaged pupils - In: *Tertium comparationis* 18 (2012) 2, S. 174-189 - URN: urn:nbn:de:0111-pedocs-244992 - DOI: 10.25656/01:24499

<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0111-pedocs-244992>

<https://doi.org/10.25656/01:24499>

in Kooperation mit / in cooperation with:



WAXMANN
www.waxmann.com

<http://www.waxmann.com>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Gewährt wird ein nicht exklusives, nicht übertragbares, persönliches und beschränktes Recht auf Nutzung dieses Dokuments. Dieses Dokument ist ausschließlich für den persönlichen, nicht-kommerziellen Gebrauch bestimmt. Die Nutzung stellt keine Übertragung des Eigentumsrechts an diesem Dokument dar und gilt vorbehaltlich der folgenden Einschränkungen: Auf sämtlichen Kopien dieses Dokuments müssen alle Urheberrechtshinweise und sonstigen Hinweise auf gesetzlichen Schutz beibehalten werden. Sie dürfen dieses Dokument nicht in irgendeiner Weise abändern, noch dürfen Sie dieses Dokument für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, aufführen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Mit der Verwendung dieses Dokuments erkennen Sie die Nutzungsbedingungen an.

Terms of use

We grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, individual and limited right to using this document.

This document is solely intended for your personal, non-commercial use. Use of this document does not include any transfer of property rights and it is conditional to the following limitations: All of the copies of this documents must retain all copyright information and other information regarding legal protection. You are not allowed to alter this document in any way, to copy it for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the document in public, to perform, distribute or otherwise use the document in public.

By using this particular document, you accept the above-stated conditions of use.

Kontakt / Contact:

peDOCS
DIPF | Leibniz-Institut für Bildungsforschung und Bildungsinformation
Informationszentrum (IZ) Bildung
E-Mail: pedocs@dipf.de
Internet: www.pedocs.de

Mitglied der


Leibniz-Gemeinschaft



Academic and everyday language proficiency among educationally disadvantaged pupils

Christoph Gantefort

University of Cologne

Abstract

The article presents a study on the influence of second language acquisition and familial background on language proficiency in a school-based register. Based on a sample of ninth-graders attending a German *Hauptschule*¹, the relationship of academic and everyday vocabulary in written language is examined by means of t-tests and regression analyses. Results indicate a considerable impact of both home-literacy environment and second language acquisition on the use of academic vocabulary. However, no influence of these factors on the use of everyday vocabulary in writing was found. This suggests the expansion of the concept of ‘concealed language difficulties’ (Knapp, 1999) of pupils acquiring the language of instruction as a second language, since an imbalance of everyday and academic language proficiency can affect monolingual pupils as well. Implications for practice concern language assessment and support, as a need for specific promotion of the academic register is not solely tied to second language acquisition.

1. Introduction

Recent discussions within German educational sciences concern origin- and language-related effects on educational success (Baumert, Stanat & Watermann, 2006) as well as assessment and support of academic language proficiency, in particular with regard to pupils learning German as a second language (Gogolin et al., 2011; Redder et al., 2011). Research on the structure of (bilingual) language proficiency, on the one hand, and the language demands of school, on the other, is tied to the aforementioned issues, as support of academic language proficiency is intended to contribute to equal opportunities in education. These issues are taken up in the following sections by reference to the concept of ‘concealed language difficulties’. This term was originally introduced by Knapp (1999) in order to call attention to

specific problems of pupils acquiring the language of instruction as a second language. The concept assumes that these pupils admittedly show a fluent competence in oral communication, but lack competence in more complex aspects of vocabulary and grammar. According to Knapp, children use certain avoidance strategies in order to conceal their language difficulties. Thus, teachers often fail to make a suitable language assessment as a basis for an adequate language support. The present study is designed to examine the notion of concealed language difficulties in secondary education and in written language by investigating a possible imbalance between everyday and academic language proficiency. The hypothesis of concealed language difficulties is tested not only with regard to second language acquisition but also taking into account pupils' home-literacy environment.

For this purpose, the present status of research with respect to academic language and academic language proficiency, as well as to social origin-related disparities in the German education system will be discussed before the research questions are stated and results presented and discussed.

2. Academic language and academic language proficiency

Academic language has to be distinguished into features of the linguistic register and features of individual language proficiency (Snow & Uccelli, 2008). Linguistics can be seen as the discipline, which describes the register or the language demands of school. The (psychometric) reconstruction of academic language proficiency, however, is of special interest also in the pedagogical context whenever both individual analyses of pupils and support in language development are concerned.

Encompassing descriptions of linguistic features of school-based registers have been conducted mainly for the English language, in particular by supporters of the systemic functional grammar approach (Schleppegrell, 2001, 2004; Halliday & Martin, 1993; see also Bailey, 2007). With respect to German, a need of further research can be noted as the relationship between educational success, second language acquisition, familial background, and academic language proficiency has only been uncovered recently through data of large-scale assessments initiated by the first PISA-Study. Only a few studies so far characterise school-specific linguistic features of institutional communication in the German language (Gogolin et al., 2011; Gogolin, Neumann & Roth, 2007; Gogolin & Roth, 2007; Ortner, 2009; Becker-Mrotzek & Vogt, 2009). The current state of research with respect to features of school-based registers in German has been recently summarised by Gantefort (in press), who identifies three main characteristics:

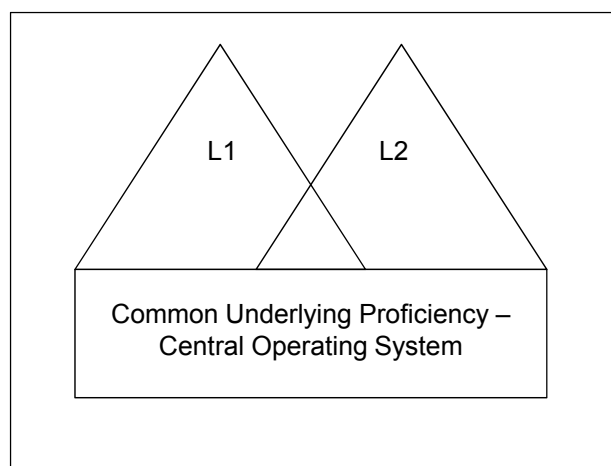
- 1) Academic language refers to complex facts and circumstances as subject matter in schooling (Portmann-Tseikas & Schmölzer-Eibinger, 2008).
- 2) The occurrence of complex grammatical and lexical means corresponds to content-related complexity. These means comprise, e.g., passive voice, subjunctive, compound nouns and complex nominal phrases.
- 3) The situational context of communication influences both the choice of lexical items and grammatical structures as well as the organisational structure of written or oral language use. Thus, with regard to vocabulary, the choice of words is characterised by technical terms as well as genre-specific or generally elaborated expressions. The organisational structure of school-based language use is characterized by typical text types or discourse structures occurring in classroom communication such as narration, report, argumentation, or instruction. Each of these text types reveals a specific structure corresponding to a particular communicative purpose (Schleppegrell, 2001).

Performance in school-specific communication depends on subject-related knowledge and individual language proficiency. Cummins (1980) introduced the distinction between ‘basic interactive communicative skills’ (BICS) and ‘cognitive academic language proficiency’ (CALP), the latter being relevant in decontextualised and cognitively demanding contexts of language use. Correspondingly, he designed a multilingual model of language proficiency (‘double iceberg’; Cummins, 1980, p. 87), which emphasises his assumption of a ‘common underlying proficiency’ commanding performance in academic language use in bilingual pupils’ languages. Following Cummins, components of academic language proficiency, which are part of the common underlying proficiency, can be transferred to performance in second language insofar as acquisition in first language has occurred. This model of language competence has been modified by Francis (2000). He proposes a modular approach on language proficiency and therefore a more selective distinction between being proficient in a certain language and having command over ‘higher order skills’, as emphasised in the following quotation:

We could compare the abilities of two bilingual high school students in a hypothetical tenth grade dual language immersion class, both of whom arrived from their native country three years ago, but from very different kinds of educational system. Student A demonstrates exceptionally high levels of mastery in tasks related to academic-type discourse ability. For example, in his second language (L2) he can produce, coherently and skillfully, a complex narrative with multiple characters and embedded story lines; but at the sentence level it is evident that his knowledge of the L2 grammar is rudimentary. Comparing this same ability in Student B’s first language (L1), exactly the converse profile is apparent: flawless grammar and rudimentary mastery of narrative ability (Francis, 2008, p. 106–107).

Francis' model of bilingual language proficiency (figure 1; Francis, 2000, p. 176; see also Francis, 2005, p. 783) shows the skills in both languages, which are 'linguistically' (in the narrow sense: grammar, lexicon, phonetics and orthography) represented by the two triangles, while 'non-linguistic' higher order skills such as "core discourse competencies, text comprehension proficiencies, formal schemata, and organizational skills" (Francis, 2000, p. 177), which are part of the common underlying proficiency, are represented by the box.

Figure 1: Model of bilingual language proficiency (Francis, 2000, p. 176)



Since the linguistic distance between languages varies, the term 'transfer' concerns the materialisation of first language grammatical structures or lexical items in the second language in a positive or negative manner, as visualised by the intersection of the both triangles. Components of the common underlying proficiency, however, are not transferred but 'accessed' in the medium of either first or second language, possibly limited by rudimentary linguistic skills in the second language.² With regard to the opposition of academic and everyday language proficiency, the approach held here is that both sorts of proficiency rely on the 'linguistic' module as well as the common underlying proficiency: Performance in academic, school-based registers depends on the availability of technical terms and complex grammatical structures as well as higher order skills like a formal schema for narration. Inversely, everyday communication demands particular grammatical structures and lexical items (linguistic module) but also capabilities that are not linguistic in the narrow sense, like being proficient in turn-taking mechanisms (common underlying proficiency). The present study investigates lexical knowledge, hence the linguistic module with respect to academic and everyday language proficiency.

3. Disparities in the German educational system

The German educational system is characterised by a variety of school types. After grade four or grade six, pupils are separated into three main types of secondary education, which are intended to correspond to their cognitive and academic abilities (see Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2010, p. x). The *Hauptschule* constitutes the school type with the lowest demands in opposition to *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, the latter providing access to university education. Depending on federal state laws, the transition from primary education to secondary education is subject to parents' will or a recommendation provided by the primary school (Füssel, Gresch, Baumert & Maaz, 2010). Pupils with special needs are – for the larger part – segregated from their peers and instructed in special institutions of education. In the course of the current debate about inclusion in Germany, there is nonetheless a clear trend towards an increased integration of pupils with special needs into mainstream education.

As recent general statistics, studies on the transition after grade four, and large-scale assessments of school-based competencies have shown, disparities in education can mainly be reconstructed alongside two main axes of diversity: Language and familial background. Thus, pupils acquiring German as a second language as well as pupils with a low socioeconomic status are overrepresented in the lower school types (*Hauptschule* and schools for special education, see Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2010, pp. 65–66). Recent studies have shed light on the question whether these inequalities are based on pupils' school achievement (primary effects) or can be reconstructed as a manifestation of divergent parental aspirations, or even as a consequence of institutional discrimination (secondary effects; see Boudon, 1974). Following these studies, participation of immigrant pupils in one school type mainly depends on their school achievements and therefore constitutes a negative primary effect, whereas pupils' social background reveals both a negative primary and a negative secondary effect on the transition to secondary education (Dollmann, 2010; Gresch & Becker, 2010; Maaz & Nagy, 2010).

The acquisition of school-based competencies is mostly investigated on the basis of reading proficiency, which is a relevant aspect of academic language proficiency. Stanat, Rauch and Segeritz (2010) have shown that immigrant status (and hence second language acquisition), a low socioeconomic status, low cultural resources and a low level of German language use at home bear significant negative effects on reading proficiency of ninth-graders as measured in the current PISA-study. Writing, however, is rarely focused on in empirical educational research. Particularly, proficiency in written language is not analysed as a distinct dependent variable with respect to the influence of second language acquisition and familial

background but rather as component of aggregate scores measuring proficiency in the subject ‘German’ (Lehmann, Gänsfuß & Husfeldt, 2011; Hesse, Göbel & Hartig, 2008; Rolff, Leucht & Rösner, 2008). Nevertheless these studies confirm the influence of second language acquisition and familial background variables on German proficiency as well. This can be shown to be also true for the subgroup of pupils attending a *Hauptschule* on the basis of the DESI-Data (Hesse, Göbel & Hartig, 2008, p. 213).

To sum up, there is evidence that both pupils’ acquisition of school-based linguistic skills and, linked with it, their educational participation are influenced by type of language acquisition and familial context variables which comprise socioeconomic status and literacy-related cultural resources. However, the idea of concealed language difficulties was brought into discussion only with regard to pupils acquiring the language of instruction as a second language (Knapp, 1999). Studies investigating the influence of second language acquisition *and* familial background on performance in both everyday- *and* school-based registers are rare (Eckhardt, 2008). Thus, the present study addresses the following research questions:

- Is it possible to identify features of ‘concealed language difficulties’ for immigrant pupils based on the collected data? If this assumption is true, the data will show significant differences in academic language proficiency between pupils acquiring German as a second language and those who acquire German as a first language. However, ideally there should be no differences between the groups with respect to everyday language proficiency.
- Is the notion of ‘concealed language difficulties’ true also for pupils with a low level of ‘home literacy’? As variables measuring familial background factors such as home literacy environment or socioeconomic status show a consistent influence on the acquisition of school based competencies in earlier research, an occurrence of ‘concealed language difficulties’ related to familial background can be expected. The imbalance of academic and everyday vocabulary in writing should be measurable even after controlling for type of language acquisition.

4. Sample

Data was collected during the evaluation³ of a programme, which provided additional courses to pupils of the school type ‘Hauptschule’. These courses aimed at improving academic language proficiency mainly of immigrant pupils from grade five to grade ten and were funded by a German public authority. In order to identify treatment effects, a pre-post control group design was chosen with the attendees’ fellow pupils constituting the control group. Although the present sample consists of the treatment group as well as the control group, treatment effects in the depend-

ent variables can be excluded since the data were collected at the onset of the courses.

For the present study, 71 ninth-graders who had not refused to accomplish the writing task and either learned German as their first language ($N = 42$) or as a second language ($N = 29$) were chosen. Pupils who acquired two languages at the same time in their families were excluded from the sample. Of these 71 adolescents, 42 are female and 29 are male. With respect to immigrant status, 35 participants are natives, 12 belong to second generation and further 18 belong to first generation. The mean socioeconomic status, measured by means of the HISEI-Index (Ganzeboom, Graaf, Treiman & Leeuw, 1992), is 39.12 ($SD = 12.54$), which is considerably different from the representative mean of this measure found in the latest PISA-Study (50.8; see Stanat, Rauch & Segeritz, 2010, p. 210), and confirms social segregation in German secondary education.

5. Materials and method

The participants performed a writing task and filled in a background questionnaire in their classrooms and were instructed and supervised by the staff of the University of Cologne. A period of 90 minutes was provided to finish the writing task and the questionnaire.

The task environment of the writing stimulus was a fictional employment ad of a mobile communications company searching for a trainee. The pupils had to write a letter of application and an instruction for use as a fictive work sample. The latter had to be written on the basis of a series of pictures illustrating how to install a chip card into a mobile phone. The present study is based solely on the instructional texts written by the pupils.

The questionnaire was designed to gather information about the pupils' familial background including language practices and literacy related activities. Furthermore, the pupils' attitudes towards school and learning were inquired.

6. Measures

Based on Francis' model of bilingual language proficiency, academic and everyday language proficiency as dependent variables were operationalised concerning the 'linguistic' module of language proficiency. This was done by an analysis of the vocabulary in the written texts. Nouns, adjectives and verbs were allocated to the following categories:

- Technical vocabulary: All lexemes referring adequately to technical aspects of mobile phones like ‘Gerät’ [device]; ‘Pluspol’ [positive pole] or ‘Kontaktdraht’ [contact wire].
- Text-type-specific vocabulary: All lexemes taking the instructional context of the writing task into account like ‘öffnen’ [to open], ‘einlegen’ [to insert] or ‘schließen’ [to close].
- Elevated vocabulary: All lexemes which were not text-type-specific or technical but indicated an elaborate way of language use such as ‘besitzen’ [to possess] in contrast to ‘haben’ [to have got] or ‘sich befinden’ [to be located] in contrast to ‘sein’ [to be].
- Common vocabulary: All lexemes, which were neither technical, text-type-specific, elevated, nor colloquial such as ‘Deckel’ [lid], ‘Seite’ [side] or ‘Klappe’ [cap].
- Colloquial vocabulary: All lexemes specific of (oral and imprecise) everyday language use such as ‘drauflegen’, ‘draufmachen’ or ‘Handydeckel’.

The measure for academic language proficiency was computed by the addition of the types of all technical, text-type-specific and elevated lexemes. Table 1 shows the measures’ descriptive statistics.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for academic vocabulary ($N = 71$)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>
Academic vocabulary	10.68	4.48	21	3

The measure for everyday language proficiency consists of the sum (types) of all common and colloquial lexemes. Table 2 shows the measures’ descriptive statistics.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for everyday vocabulary ($N = 71$)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>
Everyday vocabulary	10.18	4.19	22	2

Type of language acquisition and home literacy constitute the independent variables in the present study and were both included in the questionnaire.

With respect to language acquisition, the participants were asked whether they learned only German, German and another language or only another language as first language in their families. As mentioned earlier, pupils who learned more than one language as first language were excluded from analysis.

The measure for home literacy is an aggregate score relying on five four-staged items of the questionnaire and indicating process features of cultural resources (McElvany, Becker & Lüdtke, 2009). The total number of books per household was originally taken into account by a 6-staged item which was reduced to the following four stages:

- 1 = 0–10 books
- 2 = 10–50 books
- 3 = 50–100 books
- 4 = 100–1,000 books

Further processual aspects were operationalised with two sets of items. The first set had to be answered by choosing between ‘I agree (4)’, ‘I rather agree (3)’, ‘I rather disagree (2)’ and ‘I disagree’ (1):

- ‘Ich verbringe meine Freizeit gerne mit Lesen.’ [‘I like to spend my leisure time reading.’]
- ‘Lesen ist bei mir zu Hause eine wichtige Aktivität’. [‘Reading is an important activity at my home.’]

The participants could respond to the following second set of items by means of the options ‘everyday or nearly every day’, ‘1–2 times per week’, ‘1–2 times per month’, and ‘never or almost never’ and were asked ‘Wie oft liest Du zu Hause ...’ [‘How often do you read at home ...’].

- ... deutsche Literatur? [... German literature?]
- ... Literatur in anderen Sprachen? [... Literature in other languages?]

The aggregate measure for home literacy environment was computed by arithmetic averaging (table 3). The measure proved as one-dimensional and shows a sufficient amount of reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha = .747).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for ‘home literacy’

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>
Home literacy	1.85	.66	3.60	1.00

7. Results

As a first step, and in order to rule out a possible mismatch between academic and everyday language proficiency, the mean scores of pupils with first and second language acquisition of German and pupils with a high and low level of home literacy

are compared. In a second step, the results of these bivariate analyses are complemented by multiple regressions with the dependent variables.

Table 4 shows the means of academic and everyday vocabulary by type of language acquisition.

Table 4: Academic and everyday language proficiency by type of language acquisition

	Type of language acquisition							
	First language acquisition German				Second language acquisition German			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>
Academic vocabulary	11.60	4.71	21.00	3.00	9.34	3.82	19.00	3.00
Everyday vocabulary	9.83	4.43	22.00	2.00	10.69	3.85	19.00	2.00

Pupils having learned German as their first language reveal a higher score in their mean academic vocabulary than pupils acquiring German as their second language, whereas the differences between the groups are small with respect to everyday vocabulary. In order to test the hypothesis of concealed language difficulties of pupils learning German as a second language, t-tests for independent samples were conducted. The tests reveal a significant effect for academic vocabulary ($t(69) = 2.132$; $p < .05$). However, the measure for everyday language proficiency revealed no significant effects. Effect sizes (Cohen's d) underline the differential pattern with a medium effect between the groups in academic vocabulary ($d = .47$) and a small effect in everyday vocabulary ($d = .03$).

For a comparison between groups as regards home literacy environment, the total sample was divided into two groups of high and low levels of home literacy after the scores' median ($Mdn = 1.6$; table 5).

Table 5: Academic and everyday language proficiency by level of home literacy environment

	Level of home literacy environment							
	Low				High			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>
Academic vocabulary	9.95	4.23	19	3	11.47	4.67	21	4
Everyday vocabulary	9.92	3.94	17	2	10.47	4.49	22	2

Levels of home literacy show a pattern similar to the type of language acquisition: The differences between the groups are more noticeable in academic vocabulary

than in everyday vocabulary. However, t-tests reveal no significant differences in academic and everyday vocabulary between pupils with rich and poor home literacy environments, respectively. Despite the non-significant contrast, effect sizes (academic vocabulary: $d = .26$; everyday vocabulary: $d = .06$) probably indicate that concealed language difficulties concern pupils with a poor home literacy environment as well.

As the factors ‘second language acquisition’ and ‘cultural resources’ proved to be mixed up in earlier research, multiple regression analyses were conducted in order to identify the factors’ separate influence on academic and everyday vocabulary. For this purpose, the type of language acquisition was recoded into two dummy variables. Table 6 shows the summary of a stepwise regression with academic vocabulary as dependent variable.

Table 6: Summary of multiple stepwise regression for measures predicting academic vocabulary

	Step	<i>B</i>	<i>SE(B)</i>	β
1	(Constant)	9.345	.812	
	First language acquisition German	2.250	1.055	.249*
2	(Constant)	5.676	1.717	
	First language acquisition German	2.645	1.034	.292*
	Home literacy	1.853	.772	.274*

$R^2 = .062$, $F(1, 69) = 4.546$, $p < .05$ for step 1;
 $\Delta R^2 = .073$, $F(2, 68) = 5.315$, $p < .01$ for step 2 * $p < .05$.

The regression analysis reveals a significant influence of both variables on academic vocabulary. First language acquisition of German is accompanied – as could be expected from the bivariate analysis – by a higher frequency of academic vocabulary of about half a standard deviation. The second model proves the level of home literacy as a predictor for academic language proficiency as well by bearing a positive effect on the dependent variable. Taking the standardized coefficients and coefficients of determination into account, the impact of home literacy on the use of academic vocabulary in writing is comparable to the impact of the type of language acquisition. Considering the increasing standardized coefficients of ‘first language acquisition German’ from step one to step two, it should be noted that pupils with German as their first language do not differ significantly from pupils acquiring German as their second language with respect to home literacy environment in the

present sample. This ‘non-confoundedness’ can be ascribed to the fact that the sample is biased as it consists solely of pupils attending the lowest school type ‘Hauptschule’. Additional correlation analyses within the two groups of type of language acquisition reveal a differential pattern concerning the relationship between home literacy and the use of academic vocabulary: Whereas the variables are significantly correlated in the group of monolingual German pupils ($r(40) = .334$, $p < .05$), the association is considerably weaker with respect to pupils acquiring German as their second language ($r(27) = .178$, n.s.).

A second regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis of language acquisition and home literacy environment bearing no effect on everyday vocabulary in writing. The result of this regression analysis indicates that the two predictors explain only 1.7 % of the variance. It was found that none of the predictors has a significant influence on the dependent variable.

8. Discussion and conclusion

The results of this study generally confirm earlier findings on disparities within the German educational system: The degree of school-based competencies (use of academic vocabulary in writing) depends on the type of language acquisition and, in particular with regard to monolingual pupils, literacy-related cultural resources. In the present sample of pupils attending the German *Hauptschule*, this interrelation is apparent although the pupils have been ‘pre-selected’ or ‘homogenised’ by the educational system as far as cultural resources and immigrant status are concerned.

The distinction between academic and everyday language proficiency allows further insights and implications: An imbalance of academic and everyday language proficiency (concealed language difficulties) was found for pupils who initially learned another language than German in their families and (monolingual) pupils with a poor home literacy environment. These findings differ from those of Eckhardt (2008). Based on a sample of pupils attending elementary education, she also found a discrepancy between school-based and everyday-based language proficiency in bilingual pupils. However, the imbalance was no longer apparent after controlling for familial background (ibid., p. 208). This contrast may be ascribed to different operationalisation of ‘type of language acquisition’, since Eckhardt contrasted academic and everyday language skills of pupils having learned exclusively German with those having learned another language than German or German and another language simultaneously (ibid., pp. 97–98). Hence, concealed language difficulties related to the type of language acquisition may concern primarily first generation pupils or those having not attended a preschool. Eckhardt argues that a mismatch of competencies among immigrant pupils may manifest itself not yet in

primary education but later in secondary education as language demands in school increase. This is in accordance with the results of the present study.

Implications for practice concern mainly aspects of individual needs analysis and teachers' assessment competence, respectively. Instructing pupils explicitly in school-specific language use is a broadly agreed strategy to reduce disparities and unequal opportunities in the educational system (Gogolin et al., 2011). Individual assessment in (academic) language proficiency can be seen as a necessary prerequisite for the intended institutional mediation of linguistic education as cultural capital, which is typically acquired or transmitted in the familial context (Bourdieu, 1990). Taking account of literacy-related concealed language difficulties of monolingual pupils, language assessment should identify an imbalance between everyday and school-based language proficiency in monolingual pupils as well. Hence, language promotion needs are not solely tied to second language acquisition.

Following Francis' model of bilingual language proficiency (figure 1), the present analyses focused on the 'linguistic module' of academic language proficiency in second language only. With respect to the assessment of components of language proficiency located in the common underlying proficiency, a converse situation of concealed language difficulties is conceivable: Such 'concealed language competencies' concern strategies of language use or higher order skills, respectively, which were acquired in first language and might not be detectable in a second language assessment. In this case, the rudimentary level in second language limits performance in – for example – written or oral narratives. This brings up the question whether the overrepresentation of pupils acquiring German as a second language in 'Hauptschule' and schools for special education might be an effect of a monolingual approach in diagnostics: To the extent that competence in first language is not taken into account, assessments concerning the pupils' future educational path are at risk of being biased. Further research is needed here since sufficient data explaining the mechanisms of the transition to schools for special education are not yet available (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2010, p. 72).

Finally, the influence of home literacy environment on performance in academic language highlights the opportunities of family literacy programmes to contribute to a fairer educational system.

Future research based on larger, representative samples is necessary to further investigate the influence of type of language acquisition and familial background on the relationship between academic and everyday language proficiency.

Notes

1. *Hauptschule* is a type of school in Germany with the lowest academic demands within lower secondary education (from the 5th to the 9th or 10th grades). While each pupil can attend a *Hauptschule*, relatively good marks are needed to be able to attend a *Gymnasium*.
2. The possibility of different textual structures or discourse traditions in the two languages (Connor, 1999) is not taken into account by the model.
3. The project leadership was held by Hans-Joachim Roth and Lisa Rosen (University of Cologne).

References

- Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung. (2010). *Bildung in Deutschland 2010. Ein indikatoren-gestützter Bericht mit einer Analyse zur Zukunft des Bildungswesens im Kontext der demografischen Entwicklung*. Bielefeld: Bertelsmann.
- Bailey, A.L. (Ed.). (2007). *The language demands of school: Putting academic language to the test*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Baumert, J., Stanat, P. & Watermann, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Herkunftsbedingte Disparitäten im Bildungswesen: Differenzielle Bildungsprozesse und Probleme der Verteilungsgerechtigkeit: Vertiefende Analysen im Rahmen von PISA 2000*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Becker-Mrotzek, M. & Vogt, R. (2009). *Unterrichtskommunikation* (2nd ed.). Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Boudon, R. (1974). *Education, opportunity and social inequality: Changing prospects in Western society*. New York: John Wiley.
- Bourdieu, P. & Kramnitz, G. (1990). *Was heisst sprechen?: Die Ökonomie des sprachlichen Tausches*. Wien: Braumüller.
- Connor, U. (1999). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cummins, J. (1980). The construct of language proficiency in bilingual education. In J.E. Alatis (Ed.), *Current issues in bilingual education* (pp. 81–103). Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Dollmann, J. (2010). *Türkischstämmige Kinder am ersten Bildungsübergang. Primäre und sekundäre Herkunftseffekte*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Eckhardt, A.G. (2008). *Sprache als Barriere für den schulischen Erfolg: Potentielle Schwierigkeiten beim Erwerb schulbezogener Sprache für Kinder mit Migrationshintergrund*. (Empirische Erziehungswissenschaft, Vol. 9). Münster: Waxmann.
- Francis, N. (2000). The shared conceptual system and language processing in bilingual children: Findings from literacy assessment in Spanish and Nahuatl. *Applied Linguistics*, 21 (2), 170–204.
- Francis, N. (2005). Cross-linguistic influence, transfer and other kinds of language interaction: Evidence for modularity from the study of bilingualism. In J. Cohen, K.T. McAlister, K. Rolstad & J. MacSwan (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (pp. 775–786). Somerville: Cascadia Press.
- Francis, N. (2008). Modularity in bilingualism as an opportunity for cross-discipline discussion. In J. Cummins & N.H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education, Vol. 5: Bilingual education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 105–116). New York: Springer.

- Füssel, H.-P., Gresch, C., Baumert, J. & Maaz, K. (2010). Der institutionelle Kontext von Übergangsentscheidungen. Rechtliche Regelungen und die Schulformwahl am Ende der Grundschulzeit. In K. Maaz, J. Baumert, C. Gresch & N. McElvany (Eds.), *Der Übergang von der Grundschule in die weiterführende Schule. Leistungsgerechtigkeit und regionale, soziale und ethnisch-kulturelle Disparitäten* (Bildungsforschung, Vol. 34) (pp. 87–106). Bonn: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung.
- Gantefort, C. (in press). Bildungssprache – Merkmale und Fähigkeiten im sprachtheoretischen Kontext. In I. Gogolin, I. Lange, U. Michel & H.-H. Reich (Eds.), *Herausforderung Bildungssprache*. Münster: Waxmann.
- Ganzeboom, H.B.G., Graaf, P.M. de, Treiman, D.J. & Leeuw, J. de (1992). A standard international socio-economic index of occupational status. *Social Science Research*, 21 (1), 1–56.
- Gogolin, I., Dirim, İ., Klinger, T., Lange, I., Lengyel, D., Michel, U., Neumann, U., Reich, H.-H.; Roth, H.-J. & Schwippert, K. (2011). *Förderung von Kindern und Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund FörMig. Bilanz und Perspektiven eines Modellprogramms* (FörMig Edition, Vol. 7). Münster: Waxmann.
- Gogolin, I., Neumann, U. & Roth, H.-J. (2007). *Bericht 2007: Abschlussbericht über die italienisch-deutschen, portugiesisch-deutschen und spanisch-deutschen Modellklassen*. Retrieved July 30, 2012 from <http://www.epb.uni-hamburg.de/files/Bericht2007.pdf>
- Gogolin, I. & Roth, H.-J. (2007). Bilinguale Grundschule: Ein Beitrag zur Förderung der Mehrsprachigkeit. In T. Anstatt (Ed.), *Mehrsprachigkeit bei Kindern und Erwachsenen. Erwerb, Formen, Förderung* (pp. 31–46). Tübingen: Attempto.
- Gresch, C. & Becker, M. (2010). Sozial- und leistungsbedingte Disparitäten im Übergangsverhalten bei türkischstämmigen Kindern und Kindern aus (Spät-)Aussiedlerfamilien. In K. Maaz, J. Baumert, C. Gresch & N. McElvany (Eds.), *Der Übergang von der Grundschule in die weiterführende Schule. Leistungsgerechtigkeit und regionale, soziale und ethnisch-kulturelle Disparitäten* (Bildungsforschung, Vol. 34) (pp. 181–200). Bonn: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Martin, J.R. (Eds.). (1993). *Writing science: Literacy and discursive power*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Hesse, H.-G., Göbel, K. & Hartig, J. (2008). Sprachliche Kompetenzen von mehrsprachigen Jugendlichen und Jugendlichen nicht-deutscher Erstsprache. In Desi-Konsortium (Ed.), *Unterricht und Kompetenzerwerb in Deutsch und Englisch. Ergebnisse der DESI-Studie* (pp. 208–230). Weinheim: Beltz.
- Knapp, W. (1999). Verdeckte Sprachschwierigkeiten. *Grundschule*, 31 (5), 30–33.
- Lehmann, R.H., Gänsfuß, R. & Husfeldt, V. (2011). LAU 9: Aspekte der Lernausgangslage und der Lernentwicklung – Klassenstufe 9. In Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung (Ed.), *LAU – Aspekte der Lernausgangslage und der Lernentwicklung. Klassenstufen 5, 7 und 9* (pp. 293–457). Münster: Waxmann.
- Maaz, K. & Nagy, G. (2010). Der Übergang von der Grundschule in die weiterführenden Schulen des Sekundarschulsystems. Definition, Spezifikation und Quantifizierung primärer und sekundärer Herkunftseffekte. In K. Maaz, J. Baumert, C. Gresch & N. McElvany (Eds.), *Der Übergang von der Grundschule in die weiterführende Schule. Leistungsgerechtigkeit und regionale, soziale und ethnisch-kulturelle Disparitäten* (Bildungsforschung, Vol. 34.) (pp. 151–180). Bonn: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung.

- McElvany, N., Becker, M. & Lüdtke, O. (2009). Die Bedeutung familiärer Merkmale für Lesekompetenz, Wortschatz, Lesemotivation und Leseverhalten. *Zeitschrift für Entwicklungspsychologie und Pädagogische Psychologie*, 41 (3), 121–131.
- Ortner, H. (2009). Rhetorisch-stilistische Eigenschaften der Bildungssprache. In U. Fix, A. Gardt & J. Knappe (Eds.), *Rhetorik und Stilistik* (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, Vol. 31, 2) (pp. 2227–2240). Berlin: De Gruyter
- Portmann-Tselikas, P. & Schmölzer-Eibinger, S. (2008). Textkompetenz. *Fremdsprache Deutsch*, (39), 5–16.
- Redder, A., Schwippert, K., Hasselhorn, M., Forschner, S., Fickermann, D., Ehlich, K., Becker-Mrotzek, M., Krüger-Potratz, M., Rossbach, H.-G., Stanat, P. & Weinert, S. (2011). *Bilanz und Konzeptualisierung von strukturierter Forschung zu ‚Sprachdiagnostik und Sprachförderung‘* (ZUSE-Berichte, Vol. 2). Hamburg: ZUSE – Zentrum zur Unterstützung der wissenschaftlichen Begleitung und Erforschung schulischer Entwicklungsprozesse.
- Rolff, H.-G., Leucht, M. & Rösner, E. (2008). Sozialer und familialer Hintergrund. In DESI-Konsortium (Ed.), *Unterricht und Kompetenzerwerb in Deutsch und Englisch. Ergebnisse der DESI-Studie* (pp. 283–300). Weinheim: Beltz.
- Schleppegrell, M.J. (2001). Linguistic features of the language of schooling. *Linguistics and Education*, 12 (4), 431–459.
- Schleppegrell, M.J. (2004). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. Mahwah N.J: Erlbaum.
- Snow, C.E. & Uccelli, P. (2008). The challenge of academic language. In D.R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of literacy* (pp. 112–133). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stanat, P., Rauch, D. & Segeritz, M. (2010). Schülerinnen und Schüler mit Migrationshintergrund. In E. Klieme, C. Artelt, J. Hartig, N. Jude, O. Köller, M. Prenzel, W. Schneider & P. Stanat (Eds.), *PISA 2009. Bilanz nach einem Jahrzehnt* (pp. 200–230). Münster: Waxmann.