# Appendix

# Table 1 Characteristics of 74 empirical studies

Note: L=learner; Ls=learners; T=teacher; Ts=teachers; Ps =parents

| Authors | Purpose / Research questions | Research design | Context | Participants and contexts | Instruments | Main findings |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ahn & West (2018) | What beliefs, attitudes, and attributes underly identity representations of the good native English-speaking teacher in South Korea? | Social semiotic, multimodal narrative approach | Private English language institute in South Korea | 577 Ls (K-6th grade); 104 kindergarteners | Narratives and drawings | Ls’ representations of the good language teacher reflect two dimensions: emotional/abstract and a teaching-related dimensions. Ls are aware of teacher roles and gender; they co-construct T identity with the notion of L identity. |
| Albaladejo Albaladejo et al. (2018) | How do Ls benefit from learning stories, songs, and combination of both? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-, delayed post-test  | State kindergarten in Spain | 17 Ls (age 2-3) | Receptive vocabulary test of 15 nouns; video recordings of Ls’ engagement | Ls learnt most words by listening to the story, but they were mostly cognates. |
| Alexiou (2009) | Which qualities indicate & predict FLL success in Ls? | Quasi-experimental: Cognitive tests used twice, the second time with EFL vocab test to check correlations. | Public and private nursery schools, private EFL schools in Greece  | 191 Ls (age 5-9) in Greece | Game-format tasks measuring short-term memory for pics, associative short-term memory for pics, semantic integration, inductive learning ability task, visual perception task, reasoning ability task, spatial ability task. Phonetic repetition task.  | Significant correlations between scores on cognitive tasks and receptive and productive vocabulary.Phonological memory is important for FL word learning. |
| Alexiou (2015) | Are children successful in acquiring EFL vocabulary only through TV exposure? What kind of EFL words are easier to recall? Are there any gender or age differences in the acquisition of EFL vocabulary through TV exposure? | Quantitative cross-sectional | State nursery school in Thessaloniki, Greece | 30 preschoolers (aged 4-6) | 4 episodes of the English version of Peppa Pig; word recognition test; test of receptive vocab.  | Ls remembered about half of the target vocabulary in each episode and about a third of the total 21 target words without explicit instruction.They tended to recall cognates, concrete and imageable words, mostly nouns and adjectives. Boys outperformed girls. |
| Alexiou & Vitoulis (2014) | Does preschool instruction through interactive websites affect receptive and productive vocabulary performance?Do Ls’ age & gender affect receptive & productive vocabulary performance? | Experimental including a control group | State preschool in Greece | 44 Greek EFL preschoolers | A test of 15 words taught through an interactive educational website (experimental group) and in a traditional way (control group) | Experimental group outperformed controls in receptive vocab (borderline significance) and in productive vocab (high significance). Girls under experimental conditions better than boys in productive vocab. Younger Ls (4-5 years) in experimental group better at productive vocab. |
| Alstad & Tkachenko (2018) | What do Ts’ practices reveal about their beliefs as they implement a new EFL program?  | Ethnography  | Children in 31 kindergartens in Norway | About 1,000 Ls (ages 1 to 6) and their Ts over 3 years | Observations, interviews, narratives  | Practices varied due to Ts’ freedom to implement the program. Mostly good practice was observed. |
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| Andúgar & Cortina-Pérez (2018) | Which motivating strategies do EFL Ts consider most relevant when teaching Ls? Do theory and praxis match? Do Ts’ responses match the motivating strategies found in literature review? | Qualitative  | Spain | 32 EFL teachers | Semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis  | Ts resort to adapting and scaffolding students in their learning process, creating a stress-free and risk-taking friendly atmosphere in class.Theory and praxis seem to adjust in terms of motivating strategies. |
| [Bekleyen](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Bekleyen%2C%2BNilufer) (2011) | How do pre-service English Ts benefit from teaching two sessions at a kindergarten? | Case study using interviews and Ts’ reflection notes | Kindergarten affiliated to university in Turkey | 82 pre-service Ts | Interviews before and after teachingTs’ reflective notes | Although many Ts gained self-confidence, only ten would accept a job with very young learners. |
| Björk-Willén (2008) | How do interactional routines in multilingual preschools promote language learning? | Descriptive qualitative | Trilingual preschool in a Swedish town | 24 children (age: 3-5 years) | Observations and analysis of recorded interactions  | Ls expect T to assess their correct responses in positive terms. They have enough interactional skill to follow Ts’ modifications of recurring activities, if they are made clear. |
| Boyson et al. (2013) | How do YLs starting Spanish in kindergarten compare to later beginners starting in Grade 5? | Longitudinal.Comparison of K–8 program with Grade 5–8 program | Connecticut, US | 100+ Ls 5th & 8th graders from short-sequence (grade 5-8) & long-sequence Spanish programs (K-8) | SOPA (speaking performance, including oral fluency, grammar (speaking), and vocabulary (speaking and listening comprehension) | In the long run, younger beginners attain higher proficiency levels than those who begin later. |
| Brumen (2011) | How are Ls motivated to learn English and German? | Case study  | 7 kindergartens in Slovenia | 120 Ls, 11 Ts at 7 kindergartens | Semi-structured interviews of 15 questions | Ls liked playful activities and had mostly positive attitudes. |
| Carida (2011) | What are the results of the six programs of transition from kindergarten to primary school? | Mixed methods | Greece  | 12 in-service kindergarten Ts and 12 in-service primary school Ts | Questionnaires, interviews, discussions | Both kindergarten and primary school Ts believed the program contributed mainly to the development of Ls’ social-communicative skills rather than their cognitive skills, promoted innovative ideas in everyday school practice, contributed to successful management of inconsistencies and discontinuities between two educational levels. |
| Caporal-Ebersold & Young (2016) | How is ECEC language policy implemented in the city of Strasbourg? | Ethnographic case study | Bilingual English/French crèche in Strasbourg, France | 8 professionals working in the crèche, 27 Ps, 18 Ls | Participant observation, interviews, audio-recorded activities with Ls, field-notes, photos. | Conceptualization of language policy was influenced by top-down language policies and pervading language ideologies. Strict OPOL policy revealed monolingual ideology. |
| Chen et al. (2020) | How does early English learning experience impact first and third grade Ls’ English learning, Chinese learning, and attitudes toward English learning? | Quantitative, cross-sectional  | Public elementary schools in China | 892 Ls (7-9 years) & their Ps | Tests of EFL and Chinese L1, Ps’ questionnaire, Ls’ attitudes questionnaire | Early EFL learning contributed to English and Chinese L1 achievement and to positive attitudes to learning English. |
| Cortina-Pérez & Andúgar (2021) | Does EFL specialist Ts’ view about FL methodology for preschool education differ from that of the preschool practitioners’ views?  | Descriptive, quantitative | Spain | 29 EFL specialist Ts & 27 preschool practitioners | Likert-type questionnaire | Similar opinions: TPR is most appropriate; start as soon as possible; family contribution important; ‘English-only teaching context’; realia and classroom resources better than textbooks. Specialist EFL Ts: preferred communication-oriented strategies, language-centered pedagogy.Preschool Ts: preferred child-oriented strategies, against phonics and early FL literacy, coordination between Ts. |
| Coyle & Gomez Garcia (2014) | How do Ls benefit from learning a song in 3 x 30 mins? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-, delayed post-test | Semi-private kindergarten in Spain | 25 Ls (age 5) | Receptive and productive vocab test on 5 nouns | Most of 25 Ls learnt nothing, four learnt a few words. |
| Dagarin Fojkar & Skubic (2017) | What are pre-service preschool Ts’ beliefs about FLL, teaching, and proficiency required? Are the beliefs about FLL different between first-, second- and third-year students? What are preschool Ts’ opinions regarding the most important attributes in teaching FLs to children? | Quantitative study | Slovenia | 90 pre-service preschool Ts (1st & 3rd year)  | 19-item questionnaire | Future preschool Ts are aware of the importance of FLL; their awareness increases with the year of study. It would be beneficial to include early FL methodology in education of preschool Ts.  |
| Davis & Fan (2016) | How many words can Ls learn through songs and choral repetition in 7 weeks? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-test  | Two private kindergartens in Beijing | 64 Ls (age 4-5) | Productive vocabulary test of 15 items | Most Ls learnt 1-2 words in songs and drills, no difference was found between conditions. |
| Dikilitas & Mumford (2020) | What evidence is there for Ts’ new competencies, and changes in beliefs underlying these, gained from bilingual teaching?How do Ts’ new competencies interact with each other, and with aspects of the local culture to influence their Ls and their teaching? | Longitudinal design, qualitative | Private preschool in Turkey for children aged 5 to 6 | 3 preschool EFL Ts and 3 homeroom Ts | T logs, written interviews, observation notes | Ts developed awareness of how they could support children’s bilingual development by experiencing simultaneous co-teaching with the Turkish Ts, and how they can sustain their new roles by using English for ‘teaching’ and for meaningful classroom interaction.  |
| Ferjan Ramírez, Sheth, & Kuhl (2021) | What is the potential of a new research-based method using interactive online tool: SparkLing? | Experimental study | Madrid, Spain public infant education center in low SES areas | 168 intervention infants +72 current practice comparison infants (CPC) (ages 0-3); Ps and 240 children (age 9 to 33 months) | LENA technology | Intervention children exhibited rapid growth in English comprehension and production, outperforming the CPC group. Spanish comprehension grew equally in both groups, indicating that it was not affected by intervention.  |
| Giannakopoulou (2021) | How does a distance learning strategy work in a preschool setting during pandemics? | Action research; descriptive | Munich, Germany | Children (4-6 years old) | Audio messages, photos, interactive meetings | Ls remained active. Some goals were accomplished. Ps became partners. Relationships with peers and Ts were sustained. |
| Gohar (2017) | What are the English language skills necessary for kindergarten Ls to master? What are the standards of instructional design required for designing a proposed interactive e-book? What are the instructional design and impact of the e-book for developing the English language skills of kindergarten children?  | Quasi experimental design | A language school in Egypt | 30 YLs (5-6 years) | Check lists; EFL tests | Experimental group outperformed controls in listening, print and phonological awareness, but not in word meaning. |
| Griva & Sivropoulou (2009) | How can Ts develop positive attitudes and motivation to learn oral English? | Mixed research design: small-scale study using tests and other instruments | 2 state kindergartens in Greece | 32 Ls (age 4-6) and 4 Ts | Tests on receptive and productive vocabulary; observations, interviews | Ls were motivated and learnt some words and expressions. |
| Güngör (2018) | What is the educational impact of using English talking toy as a teaching material on preschoolers’ English receptive and productive vocabulary learning? | Quasi-experimental design: Experimental grp: instruction using English talking toys; control: flash cards | Public preschool in Ankara, Turkey | 38 Ls (age 5) | Talking toys, vocabulary checklist test | Experimental group outperformed controls on receptive and productive vocabulary; no gender differences. |
| Hillyard (2015) | How do rhythmic patterns in stories enhance word order production (oral production of adjective and noun word order)? | Action research; mixed methods | Private school in Buenos Aires, Argentina | 25 EFL children (age 4) | Video recording, field notes, assessment tool (observation sheet) | Children were able to grasp given structures and use the framework provided in the story. |
| Ioannou-Georgiou (2015) | How does a new preschool English program work? | Mixed research design: large-scale survey and other instruments | 12 preschools in rural and urban Cyprus | 550 Ls (age 4-5:6), 15 Ts | Ts: questionnaire and interview. Ls: interviews | Overall positive findings, but every fourth L faced difficulties. |
| Jin et al. (2016)  | What are Ps’ and Ls’ attitudes like towards learning English? How do Ls perceive learning English? How do findings compare in 3 contexts? | Mixed research design: large-scale survey + other instruments  | Kindergartens in 3 large cities and urban areas | 240 Chinese Ls (mean age: 60.80 months) speaking Mandarin | Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, elicited metaphor analysis, narrative analysis | Ps are very motivated; Ls’ answers are varied and difficult to interpret; controversial findings. |
| Kearney & Ahn (2013) | What is development of language awareness like among preschool world language Ls receiving infrequent instruction in a model that did not intentionally take up LA raising as an objective? What evidence is there in classroom interactions that LA could have been developed further? | Ethnographic, discourse-analytic approach | Medium-sized city in US | Ls (age 3-5 years) learning, Chinese, Korean, Spanish; (partnership between a network of 10 Head Start preschools and a local university) | Video recordings, field notes | Language awareness through ‘engagement with language’ (EWL) is possible with this age group.EWL episodes were mostly T-initiated and focused on lexicon and translation were detected. |
| Kearney & Barbour 2015 | Insights into Ls’ awareness of linguistic difference, diversity and language learning. | Ethnography  | 7 preschool classrooms, Buffalo, N.Y. | Ls (age 3-5) learning Chinese, Korean, Spanish | Video recordings of classroom interactions | Some Ls were clearly noting linguistic differences and language diversity; explicitly engaging with that difference in a variety of ways. |
| Keydeniers et al. (2021) | This is a pilot study report on Project MIND (Multilingualism in Daycare). Daycare centers offered English, in addition to Dutch. It aimed to uncover the underlying ideology of the program. | Mixed methods | Daycare centers in the Nether lands | 35 groups of children, and their parents, teachers | Policy documents; teacher and parental questionnaires | Two ideologies emerged: program involved overwhelmingly multilingual families of highly educated parents, whereas policy intended it for Dutch-speaking children. |
| Kiaer et al. (2021) Chapter 6 | How does Ls’ anxiety relate to kindergarten EFL and English immersion programs? What is the relationship between English only and Ls’ anxiety, parental background and Ls’ temperament? | Quantitative, quasi-experimental | South Korea | 14 institutions in the country | Questionnaire for Ps on Ls’ English abilities, temperament, anxiety; family SES; for Ts on L1/L2 use, Ls’ anxiety | The more English Ls were exposed to, the more English only was typical, the more impulsive Ls were, the more anxiety Ls showed. |
| Kiaer et al. (2021) Chapter 7 | How do innovative teaching techniques impact Ls’ anxiety and language enjoyment? Cooking task under two conditions: Ls manipulated objects vs. pictures of objects | Mixed methods explanatory design, pre-, post, and delayed test | Rural kindergarten in South Korea | 50 Ls in two groups (age 3-5) with same T | Vocabulary test on 10 nouns; focus group interview  | Ls in object manipulation knew more words than their peers using pictures. Means, however, were low in all groups. |
| Kokla (2021) | Can Ls acquire formulaic language through exposure to Peppa Pig? Is formulaic language acquisition reinforced through explicit teaching? Is there an age effect on young learners’ formulaic language acquisition? | Quasi-experimental design | Private school in Athens, Greece | 55 Greek Ls (age 3-5) | 4 vocab pre-tests + 12 receptive vocab tests | Mere exposure to cartoons led to statistically significant differences in formulaic language gains. Explicit teaching resulted in higher scores compared to exposure. Older Ls scored higher than younger Ls. |
| Korosidou & Griva (2021) | Can digital storytelling and educational technology have an impact on Ls’ receptive language skills and vocabulary development? What are the opportunities for interaction created in a multimodal, gamified environment? What are the difficulties in such a learning context? | Mixed methods | State kindergarten in an urban area in northern Greece | 26 preschoolers(mean age: 5.5) | Mid-term evaluation and post-test on vocabulary,T’s journal,semi-structured interviews with Ls | Digital stories and educational technology had a positive impact on the learning process. The gamified learning environment enhanced participation and created stimuli for cooperation in groups. Some Ls had difficulties trying to understand oral language. |
| Letica Krevelj & Mihaljević Djigunović (2021) | Do Ls’ different pre-primary EFL experiences lead to differences in their EFL motivation, attitudes, EFL self-concept, and EFL strategic awareness at the primary level? | Qualitative study | Croatia | 25 Ls of EFL (age 6.5 to 8) and their parents | Ls’ interviews, motivational graphs, parents’ questionnaire | Differences in pre-primary experiences were indeed reflected in Ls’ attitudes, motivation, self-concept, and strategic awareness at the primary level. |
| Lockiewicz et al. (2018) | What are the early predictors of English learning in preschool Ls? | Quantitative cross-sectional | 2 preschools in Poland teaching English | 30 Polish Ls (age 3:5 to 5: 10) | Test of nonverbal intelligence, letter naming test in Polish, repetition and comprehension of nursery rhyme | Ls’ age and non-verbal IQ correlated moderately with English test scores. Large differences were found in English scores. |
| Lourenco & Andrade (2013) | What are the benefits of awareness of languages and phonemic awareness activities? | Interpretive qualitative approach | Public school in Portugal | 21 Portuguese Ls (age 3-6; mean 4:9) | Video recordings of classes interactions; battery of phonological ability tests | Children developed positive attitudes, cultural understanding of diversity. |
| Lucas et al. (2020) | What are the effects of a specific pedagogical approach based on CLIL principles on early literacy development in EFL? | Participatory action research (qualitative) | Semi-private early years institution in Portugal | 15 preschool Portuguese children (age 3-5 years) | Field notes, research diary, recordings, learners’ portfolios, | Children showed willingness to write contextualized words, were aware of spoken-written words connection and of conventions of print. Preschool EFL contributed to children’s emergent literacy in L1 and English. |
| Lugossy (2012) | What do Ls’ comments say about meaning making? How do Ts respond to comments? What do their responses reveal about their beliefs? | Ethnography using content and discourse analysis | Classrooms and private tuition situations where picture books were used for teaching English | Hungarian Ls between age 5-12 | Observation, Ts’ diaries, informal discussions with Ts and Ls  | Discourse analysis applied to Ls’ comments in L1 and L2 offered insights into their meaning making. Ts integrated, ignored, or prevented comments. |
| Lugossy (2018) | How do Ls and Ts use L1 and L2? What are Ts’ beliefs about meaning making? How do they benefit from reflections? | Ethnography using discourse analysis | Two private kindergartens in Hungary | 30 L1 Hungarian and 6 bilingual Ls and 4 Ts | Participant and non-participant observations, field notes, teaching journal | Ts’ practices and beliefs vary; what they know and do are not always in harmony. |
| Martí & Portolés (2022) | How do pragma linguistic forms realizing procedural and disciplinary directives affect teacher politeness styles and rapport-building in the EYL classroom?  | Discourse analysis | Two state-run schools in Spain  | Two female teachers and two classes of 4-5-year-olds, Catalan or Spanish or speakers  | Six audio-recorded sessions | Analysis of almost 3,000 regulative directives showed that both teachers used bare directives rather than complicated polite forms, although they had different politeness styles. |
| Martinez, Coyle & De Larios (2015) | What are the effects of explicit instruction on Spanish children’s pronunciation of sibilant phonemes in English? How does it impact Ls’ attention and motivation? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-test | Infant school in rural Spain | 32 Ls (age 4-5) of EFL | Pre- and post-intervention tests, video recordings of teaching sessions, researcher’s notes | No significant differences between groups on post-test but significant differences within-group differences in both groups. Experimental group scored significantly higher on attention and motivation measures. |
| McElwee (2015) | Are English Ls of French able to narrate stories in French? | Mixed methods | One region of England | 84 English Ls of French (age 4-6) | Big book eliciting children’s stories. Audio and video recordings of produced stories. | Nuclear sentences and phrases predominated. Most Ls included main story elements. No significant differences by gender or SES. |
| Mourão (2015) | How do children respond to repeated reading of picture books in English? | Interpretive qualitative | Public preschool in Portugal | 18 Portugese Ls (age 5 to 5:9) of low SES | Unstructured filmed observations over 5 months, field notes, diary entries | Most responses were in L1 and analytical on story meaning and pictures.  |
| Mourão & Robinson (2016) | How do two Ts collaborate to offer Ls opportunities to learn English? | Case study using observation  | A preschool in Portugal | 1pre-primary T and 1 English language specialist, 23 Ls (age 4-5) | Observations, field notes, informal discussions | The two Ts built on one another’s practice and established an English learning area. |
| Ng (2015) | What difficulties do native and local EFL Ts face in team teaching? How do they collaborate?  | Case study using observation | Private kindergarten in Hong Kong   | 3 local EFL Ts, 1 native English speaker  | Classroom observations, videos, field notes, and semi-structured interviews | No collaboration was found due to pedagogical, logistical, and interpersonal reasons. |
| Padial-Ruz et al. (2019) | How many words do children learn over 10 hours in 5 weeks by using body language? | Quasi-experimental study; pretest–posttest design | 3 public schools in Honduras | 88 Ls of low SES (age 4-7) | Smiley questionnaire on motivation, oral vocab test of 22 items on Spanish – English meanings | Statistically significant results in learning words through combined methodology of gestures and motor activity, compared to control group. |
| Portiková (2015) | What is the language teaching situation in kindergartens? What are stakeholders’ views? | Mixed research design: large-scale survey and other instruments | State, private and church preschools in Slovakia | 175 school principals, 73 Ts at 535 preschools | Questionnaires, observations | T education lagged way behind needs; half of Ts were not qualified. |
| PortólesFalomir (2015) | How do Ls differentiate across their 3 languages? What level of pragmatic awareness and attitudes do they show towards the 3 languages? | Mixed methods | 10 public and private schools in Catalonia, Spain | Catalan-Spanish bilingual Ls of English: 206 (age 4-5) + 196 (age 8-9)  | Pragmatic comprehension test, “matched-guise” technique with smiley faces, short interviews  | Ls showed highest awareness of and most favorable attitudes towards Spanish, second Catalan, and third English. Older Ls were more aware than preschool Ls, but their attitudes to the 3 languages differed. |
| Prošić-Santovac & Navratil, 2019) | How does a puppet show engage Ls in assessment? Does a puppet theatre provide an anxiety-free intrinsically motivating environment? | Case study | Serbia | 5 boys, 2 girls, aged 4 to 5 | Observations, videotapes assessments, and interviews | Children were highly motivated, relaxed, and willing to participate in task. |
| Prošić-Santovac & Radović (2018a) | How do teachers, parents and preschoolers exercise their agencies in the ‘English only’ teaching context? | Mixed research design: small-scale study  | Private English-Serbian bilingual kindergarten | 2 Ts; 18Ps, 20 Ss (mean age 6.48) | Interviews, questionnaires, observations, receptive and productive vocabulary tests | EFL teachers’ and parents’ autonomy was reduced, learners kept using L1.  |
| Prošić-Santovac & Radović (2018b) | What are the roles of L1 and L2 in “English only”; stakeholders’ agency | Mixed research design: small-scale study  | Private English-Serbian bilingual kindergarten | 2 Ts; 18Ps, 20 Ss (mean age 6.48) | Interviews, questionnaires, observations, receptive and productive vocabulary tests | Despite English only rule, Ls used L1. |
| Reynolds et al. (2021) | Study aimed to document changes in participants’ beliefs about teaching very young learners over a semester-long course. | Case study | University in Macau | 60 pre-service teachers  | Reflection reports 3 times over semester on teaching EFL to kindergarteners.  | Major changes were found in beliefs: teachers’ examples became more specific; they kept in mind Ls’ developmental needs and age-appropriacy. |
| Robinson, Mourão, & Kang (2015) | How effective are English learning areas? | Mixed research design: action research | Two kindergartens in Portugal and South Korea | 3 Ts and 16 Ls (age 5-6) in Portugal | Observations, anecdotal feedback | Ls enjoyed activities in English learning areas, some initiated activities voluntarily. |
| Roh & Lee (2018) | How does T interact with Ls? How does the teacher use repetition?  | Conversation analysis | Two kindergartens in South Korea  | Native speaker T of English and 20 Ls (age 5-6) | Audio recording of classroom discourse | Repetitions served 3 functions: elicit English responses from Ls; make Ls recognize and practice a target language item and elicit particular answers. |
| Rokita (2007) | What is the rate of lexical development? What types of words do children remember? How do instructed and family context of Ls compare? | Longitudinal case study over 18 months; mixed methods | 23 +54 Ls and 2 case studies at private Helen Doron School of English, + 2 case studies of bilingual children in Crakow, Poland | Ls (age 1-4 and their Ps) | Vocabulary checklist of 550 words for parents to check, interviews with Ps, picture vocab test of receptive and productive vocabulary (35; 19 items), observations | Best Ls learnt 200 words in school, bilingual children learnt twice that many. All Ls were at single word level, and all learnt the same types of vocab: concrete nouns. Large variations were found in Ls’ development. |
| Rokita-Jaśkow (2013) | What are parents’ aspirations for their children? How do head teachers and FL Ts meet expectations? | Mixed methods: survey & qualitative interviews | Public and private kindergartens in Poland | 335 parents, 337 Ls, 73 headmasters, 90 Ts of FLs | Survey questionnaires, qualitative interviews | Complex picture of parental aspirations, differences between public and private preschools; Ts’ beliefs, skills, headmasters’ views. Different opportunities from very early age. |
| Rokita-Jaśkow (2015) | What are parental visions about their children’s future FL identity? | Exploratory qualitative | Kindergarten in Poland | 15 parents with varying SES of preschool EFL Ls | Semi-structured interviews | Parental aspirations impact when Ls start English. Successful FL learner parents are less keen on early start than unsuccessful parents. |
| Savić & Prošić-Santovac (2018) | How do English only and one person one language policies work? What are teachers’, parents’, children’s agency like? | Parallel mixed-method design | Private kindergarten in Serbia | 2 teachers, 18 parents, 20 children | Observations, interviews, English vocabulary tests | Children resisted English only and used Serbian freely. Teacher insisted on English and found ways to communicate with Ls. |
| Scheffler & Domińska (2018) | How do Ts and Ls use their L1 and L2? | Case study using interviews | State kindergarten and private language school in Poland | 20 Ts of Ls between 2-6 | Semi-structured interviews | Ts accommodate to Ls’ needs by using L1 for various purposes; more so in state school than in private school. |
| Shi et al. (2022) | What is the role of teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and language awareness in practice? | Case study | Private kindergartens in China | 2 novice teachers: one trained in TEFL, other one in early childhood education | Videotaped classroom observations, stimulated recall | A three-dimensional construct emerged comprising knowledge of curriculum, of learners, and of teaching strategies and multiple representations. |
| Song & Lee (2018) | How do codeswitching and English only impact vocabulary acquisition and attitudes in storytelling activities? | Mixed-method quasi-experimental design, pre-, post-, delayed post-test | Private preschool in South Korea | 72 Ls age 5-6 in English only and codeswitching groups | Questionnaire, classroom observation, vocabulary test | Brief switch to L1 was more beneficial and liked than English only. |
| Sun, de Bot & Steinkrauss (2015) | How does Ls’ temperament impact their behavior and English development? | Case studies | Private English school in China | 4 Ls of English (age 3) | Video recorded observations, questionnaire for Ps | Over 5 months a lot of variation was observed; children comprehended a few words. More adaptive, active Ls with positive mood developed more. |
| Sun, Steinkrauss, Tendeiro & de Bot (2015)  | How do internal and external factors impact Ls’ English development? | Mixed research design: quantitative study using tests + other instruments | Private English school in China | 71 Chinese children (age 2-5) | Aptitude: short-term memory, analytical reasoning ability, parental questionnaire, English tests: receptive/productive vocabulary, receptive grammar | Quantity and quality of school and home input were significant predictors of English scores. Children who started later were better. |
| Sun et al. (2016) | How do nonverbal and verbal learning interact over 20 weeks? | Single case study | Private English school in China | 1 boy age 3 | Observations, vocabulary tests | First nonverbal learning dominated, later verbal learning (repetition and response) also emerged. |
| Sun et al. (2018) | To what extent do children’s receptive and productive vocabulary develop over 7 months? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-test | Private English school in China | 43 Chinese children (age 3;2-6;2) | Receptive and productive vocabulary tests and aptitude tests | Breadth and semantic depth of English vocabulary knowledge increased slightly but significantly. Older Ls benefited more. |
| Toumpaniari et al. (2015) | How do uses of gestures only and gestures and physical activities impact vocabulary learning over 4 weeks? | Quasi-experimental design using two treatment and one control group. | Two kindergartens in Greece | 67 children (age 4) in 3 groups | Test of words recalled | Children liked combination of physical activity and gestures best and this technique was the most conducive to learning. |
| Unsworth et al. (2014) | How much do Ls develop in English over 2 years? How do L-, T-, and teaching-related variables impact their vocabulary? | Experimental between-group design | Preschools in the Netherlands  | 168 Dutch Ls in 17 groups (mean age 4:4)  | PPVT tests of vocabulary, grammar, aptitude, questionnaire | Ls developed in treatment and control groups; best predictor of Ls’ English was their Ts’ proficiency.  |
| Vićević Ivanović et al. (2021) | What language learning strategies do children use? | Mixed methods | Kindergarten in Croatia | 35 Ls in 3 groups learning German, French, Italian (age 5-6) | Videotaped interviews | Ls used memory strategies, repetition, translation and transferred strategies from their L1 use. |
| Waddinton (2021) | Who are ideal preschool English teachers? | Qualitative  | Teacher education college in Spain | 382 pre-service teachers | Pre- and post-intervention questionnaires | Participants had an ideal native speaker model, but their views shifted after a course. |
| Waddington et al. (2018) | What is the link between T-led input during preschool EFL classes and L-centered activities performed in English learning areas? How effective are the learning areas in terms of degree of participation, use of materials, use of language and perception of experience? | Mixed-methods | State pre-school in Spain | 24 preschoolers (aged 4-5)  | Open coding observation grid; video recordings; unstructured interviews  | Input in T-led EFL lessons correlated with L-centered activities during free play in the English learning area. During free play Ls used both L1 and English, freely interacted with T, classmates or played by themselves, and reported positive attitudes to using the EFL learning area. |
| Wu (2003) | How does the classroom learning context influence children’s intrinsic motivation? | Quasi-experimental (experimental & control groups) | Spare-time English school in China | 72 Chinese preschoolers (aged 4-6) | Observation, interviews | Learners’ self-perception of EFL competence and perceived autonomy are antecedents of very young EFL learners’ intrinsic motivation.  |
| Yeung et al. (2016)  | How much English vocabulary do Ls learn from stories in rich, embedded, and incidental approaches? | Quasi-experimental: pre-, post-, delayed post-test in 3 conditions | Private kindergarten in Hong Kong | 30 Cantonese speaking Ls (mean age 5:1) | Observations, vocabulary test, 3 tasks measuring 12 words | Rich approach resulted in more and better learnt words, no difference between embedded and implicit approaches. |
| Yeung et al. (2013) | How do Ls develop in a phonological awareness program in 12 weeks? | Experimental between-group design | 3 kindergartens in Hong Kong | 76 Cantonese speaking Ls (mean age 5.14) | 12 tests e.g., word reading, naming objects, PPVT, syllable deletion, rhyme detection | Controversial findings: best predictor of word reading was phonological awareness in treatment group; in control group it was Ls’ oral skills. |
| Yeung et al. (2020) | How does explicit and implicit vocabulary teaching in stories impact phonological awareness and vocabulary learning over 8 weeks? | Quasi-experimental | Hong Kong  | 157 Cantonese speaking children between 4 and 6 | Yes/no test on 16 new items; Peabody and phonological awareness tests | Test results were significantly higher on all tests in the explicit teaching group. |