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Title of presentation: Overlooked language learners: Developing research-based teaching methods for children learning German (and other foreign language)

Abstract

This honours thesis examines theories and research about second language acquisition and foreign language teaching to determine the best methods for teaching young children. Although there is much scholarship on integrating research findings into materials for teaching adults, little attention has been given to the instructional needs of young language learners. This project reviews the literature on second language teaching methods to develop an appropriate and practical lesson plan for children. Children learn differently from adults and need active, varied, and engaging activities to learn a foreign language (Cameron, 2001, p.1). These hands-on activities are necessary to build concrete learning experiences since children generally do not have sufficient cognitive abilities to profit from explicit grammar teaching (Cameron, 2001, p.1). The sample lesson plan I developed for young learners modifies methods from Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach as well as Asher's (1972) Total Physical Response.