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Position: Researcher at Ruhr University Bochum

Research interests: German as a second language and second language acquisition, special needs of students in psychosocially stressful situations with regard to language learning, impact of traumatization on second and foreign language learning and teaching in heterogeneous classes

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Position: Professor for Second Language Acquisition at Ruhr University, Bochum

Research interests: content and language integrated learning, development and implementation of a German as a second language module in all teacher education programmes at Ruhr University, including a curriculum for the special needs of students with a refugee background



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**„Making refugee students fit for school success: linking language learning with academic tasks“**

With the large influx of refugees to Germany in 2015 and 2016, new topics have gained importance in the academic discussion on German as a Second/Foreign Language: First, a focus is on specific needs of learners of German coping with a particularly stressful psychosocial situation, and thus trauma-sensitive learning environments; second, a large number of refugees that arrive with no or low levels of competences in German are at the age for secondary education where both linguistic and subject-specific requirements are rather specific. Since they have to be integrated into regular school education as quickly as possible, approaches are needed that prepare them for the specific requirements of school-related German for Academic Purposes right from the start. The discourse on German as a Second/Foreign Language therefore needs to be more strongly linked with perspectives from trauma psychology, literacy studies, and the requirements of the individual subject pedagogies.

In our contribution, we start by providing a summary of trauma psychology research with a particular focus on language learning. We then link these insights with a discussion of language acquisition theories and present a teaching unit for refugee students that is in line with these theoretical assumptions and illustrates how school-relevant language learning can be promoted already at early stages of language acquisition. On this basis we argue that we need

a stronger empirical basis for pedagogical recommendations that rest on primarily descriptive research, and that the temporary attention on refugees can be an entry point for a practical shift in educational settings towards approaches that embrace heterogeneity and inclusive teaching in more general terms.

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