1 Introduction

Growing up with multiple languages has become an omnipresent phenomenon in our modern society of large-scale migration. As a result, children in both international and German early childhood education and care institutions, especially in metropolitan areas, are increasingly diverse both linguistically and culturally. In Germany, currently about 35% of children below the ages of six grow up with a migration background[1], many of whom speak at least one language other than German at home (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2014). This phenomenon will continue to increase in significance in the future, as the number of children entering the educational system speaking a language other than the language of schooling is rising (e.g., Prevoo, Malda, Mesman, & Van IJzendoorn, 2016). For example, because of the ongoing war in Syria, the number of refugees has increased massively—especially in the neighboring countries of Syria, but also in most European states.

While the majority of people worldwide are growing up speaking multiple languages and it is widely accepted that the developing child is perfectly capable of doing so (e.g., Grosjean & Li, 2013), in many countries, such as Germany, given that most schools instruct in German only, speaking a language other than the majority and academic language at home is associated with accentuated educational disadvantages. For example, those children are more likely to start formal schooling later than their monolingual peers (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2010) and have been disproportionately represented among those who display difficulty with literacy, mathematics, and overall educational attainment (for a review, see Stanat, Rauch, & Segeritz, 2010). Furthermore, having a migration background posits a disadvantage through all stages of the educational system, because even when coming from similar socio-

[1] According to the definition of the German Federal Statistical Office, people considered having a migrant background are "those who have immigrated to Germany since 1950, their descendants, and the foreign population" (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2013). This includes all persons born in Germany who have at least one immigrated parent or who were born as a foreigner in Germany, covering first to third generation immigrants. In 2013, roughly 16.5 million people with a migration background resided in Germany, accounting for 20.5% of the German population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2013).

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economic backgrounds, fewer students with migration backgrounds attend higher forms of schooling and higher numbers leave the educational system before graduating (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014). As a result, taken together as a group, they are less likely to engage in secondary and university-level education, but more likely to attend special educational and lower level academic institutions than their monolingual peers (Stanat & Edele, 2011). This is especially true for children and adolescents of Turkish heritage, who are among one of the largest ethnic and linguistic minority groups in Germany[2] (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2013; also see Willard, Agache, Jäkel, Glück, & Leyendecker, 2015).

Despite a positive trend over recent years (for an overview, see Klieme, Jude, Baumert & Prenzel, 2010), these differences are prevalent and especially pronounced in the area of reading. For example, in the 2009 "Programme for International Student Assessment" (PISA) study, children who spoke a different language than German at home reached significantly lower scores than their German-only speaking peers, while controlling for socio-economic status. Similar effects have been shown for children of Turkish heritage in primary school (Kristen & Dollmann, 2010). Comparable situations exist internationally. For example, in the United States, dual language learners of Spanish and English haven been reported to academically lag behind their English monolingual peers (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011).

One reason for these educational disparities is a commonly occurring yet profound difference in linguistic competences in the language of instruction (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien, 2012), also known as the "academic language"[3] (e.g., Peets & Bialystock, 2015; Snow & Uccelli, 2009). To be well equipped for the linguistic requirements in school, children need to previously have acquired some level of print, alphabet, phonological, as well as vocabulary knowledge, and a fundamental interest to engage in literacy activities. Also, the ability to work with increasingly

[2] Families where at least one parent has a Turkish migrant background account for 18% of all families with migrant backgrounds, which makes them the largest family minority group and Turkish one of the main immigrant languages in Germany (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2014).

[3] Another variation of the term is "educational language," which has been used by Gogolin & Lange (2011); for more terms and explications, see Snow & Uccelli, 2009 and Snow, 2010.

complex and decontextualized linguistic information—conveying the distinct from context—is a key component to accessing the academic curriculum and successful classroom participation, which ultimately determines academic achievement (e.g., Dickinson & Porche, 2011; Pearson, 2002).

To adequately support and promote dual language learners' linguistic and academic development, better insights into the specifics of dual language learners' language use including areas which are challenging, but also sources of strength, need to be gained (e.g., Gámez, Lesaux, & Rizzo, 2015; Hammer et al., 2014). It is also crucial to examine successful ways in supporting academic relevant language skills early on, before this growing population enters formal schooling, as many children from non-German speaking backgrounds suffer from a paucitiy of acquisition opportunity for academic-level language skills in German (Paetsch, Wolf, Stanat, & Darsow, 2014).

The Present Work

From an educational and clinical viewpoint, based on the current research literature, the present work will propose that fictional oral narratives reflect these demands of academic language use, as they build on the use of decontextualized language in conveying made-up events (see section 2.2). However, while there is a well-established literature base on the narrative development of monolingual children (e.g., Becker, 2011; Berman & Slobin, 1994; Peterson & McCabe, 1983), the knowledge base on the successful acquisition of fiction oral narrative skills of preschool-aged children growing up with multiple languages is limited, especially on those coming from language and cultural backgrounds other than Spanish and English speakers growing up in the United States (e.g., Hammer et al., 2014; also see sections 3.4 and 3.5). Furthermore, it will be argued that narratives can serve not only as an effective teaching context that provides the opportunity to acquire decontextualized language skills for young children, but also that peers may be successful agents in preschool-based intervention to support emerging fictional narrative skills (see sections 7.2 and 7.3).

To follow up on these arguments, the current work presents two studies, which had two overarching research aims. The first was to identify and examine specific components of emerging skills in the realm of German fictional narrative production

of preschool-age children growing up speaking Turkish and German. This aim will be established on the notion that explicating the discourse-level and utterance-level oral construction details of extended discourse in a meaningful context reflects the demands of academic language use and can serve as an indicator of a child's strengths and weaknesses in current and future language performance (see chapters 2 and 3). The second aim was to explore a culturally-sensitive way of supporting children's emerging fictional narrative skills through a peer tutoring intervention approach (see chapter 7). Drawing on both theoretical explications conceptualizing peers as developmentally and emotionally attuned linguistic interaction partners as well as current research evidence highlighting the role of peers in preschool dual language acquisition, it will be argued that peers may be well-suited for mediating each other's advancement in the area of fictional narrative production (see sections 7.1 through 7.3).

Before further discussing the theoretical and empirical background of the proposed research, it is imperative to clarify central terms which will be used throughout the current work, among which are *dual language learner(s)*, *preschool-age* as well as *early childhood education and care*. Due to their central importance for the current work, theoretical considerations and definitions concerning *narrative, fictional narratives*, *peers*, *peer-assisted learning*, and *peer tutoring* will be discussed in organized sections in chapters 1 and 7, respectively.

Clarification of Central Terms

Children growing up with more than one language and/or coming from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds form a heterogeneous group. Besides typical developmental variations, emerging language and literacy skills vary highly in these children due to inter-individual differences in time of onset of exposure to their languages (i.e. age of acquisition), past and present home and institutional acquisition contexts, level of language mastery, and last but not least social status and prestige of their languages and communities (e.g., Armon-Lotem, de Jong, & Meir, 2015; Auer & Wei, 2009; Bialystok, 2001; Butler & Hakuta, 2004; de Groot, 2011; Kohnert, 2010; Thordardottir,

2011). As a result, the research literature offers various terms with reference to those children, including dual language learners, bilinguals, second language learners, and minority language speakers; most lacking consistent definitions (Hammer et al., 2014). For consistency and in accordance with current research (e.g., Hammer et al., 2014; Hammer, Jia, & Uchikoshi, 2011; Palermo & Mikulski, 2014; Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2011; Peña & Halle, 2011; Restrepo, Morgan, & Thompson, 2013), the current work will adopt a functional definition, where the denomination *dual language learner (DLL)* is defined as a child growing up using (at least) two languages on a regular basis in their everyday life. Therefore, DLL will be used as a collective term in reference to both simultaneous bilingual children exposed to their two languages Turkish and German from infancy on (e.g., De Houwer, 2009) as well as sequentially bilingual children who were (mainly) exposed to Turkish at home and who started learning German as their second language (L2) later on during their preschool-age after having already established a sophisticated basis in their first language (L1) (e.g., Chilla, Rothweiler, & Babur, 2010), regardless of their current L1 and/or L2 skills. In keeping with standard practice, the abbreviation DLL will also be used in reference to the adjective *dual language learning*.

Furthermore, in accordance with Hammer et al. (2014), the terms *infant*/*toddler* will refer to children from birth through 2 years and 11 months of age while the term *preschooler*/*preschool age* will refer to children from 3 through 6 years of age, who are not yet attending first grade.

Finally, following international political and research conventions, the term *early childhood education and care (ECEC)* will refer to regulated arrangements in the area of early childhood education and care from infancy through compulsory primary school age, including center and family daycare, privately and publicly funded provision, as well as preschool and preprimary provision (e.g., Burger, 2014; European Commission, 2014; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), ECEC Network, 2015). The term *early childhood practitioner* will be used in reference to early educators and other employees in ECEC institutions, who work pedagogically with the attending children.

The initial part of this work is organized in two main chapters. The first is invested in offering a contemporary and comprehensive perspective on the role and scope of narrative skills in DLLs over the preschool period, including a special focus on fictional narrative skills. The second chapter is devoted to the collection, analysis, and current state of research concerning the fictional narrative skills of DLLs in order to lay the foundation for the first study presented here, namely exploring the emerging German fictional narrative skills of preschool-age Turkish-German DLLs.