



INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

4.12.2025

1. Invitation to participate in research

We invite your child to participate in a research project called IDEAL – Individual differences in early foreign language learning where we study the teaching and learning of early English. We are interested in how the pupils' English skill and affective factors (self-concept, language attitudes and self-efficacy regarding language learning) develop from the 1st grade to the 3rd grade and what factors are connected to that development.

This information sheet describes the research and what participating in it means for you and your child. The processing of personal data is detailed in the Privacy notice.

We invite your child to join the research because his/her English teacher is participating in the research. We contacted class teachers, subject teachers and special teachers who teach English in the 1st grade to participate in the research.

In the first phase of the longitudinal study, there will be approximately 120 pupils in grade 1 from about 15 classes. The pupils have been selected via teacher recommendation. We asked teachers to choose all multilingual pupils from the class as well as 5 pupils whose early stages of literacy are important to monitor closely. If there are not enough such students, the teacher was asked to select other students to fill the quota of five students.

This is a follow-up study. You will be contacted again the next time data are collected for this study if you or your child does not withdraw consent to participate. Chapter 3 describes the research process in more detail.

2. Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You and your child can refuse to participate in the study, withdraw from the study or withdraw your consent at any time, without stating a reason. This will have no negative consequences for you.

If you decide to stop participating in the study or withdraw your consent, any personal data, samples or other information collected to that point may still be used in the research if needed to ensure reliable results.

3. Progress of the study

The study examines early English education (referred to as A1 English in Finland) as well as the development of English language skills and concepts related to language learning from grade 1 to grade 3. Your child will participate to the study in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade. The researcher will visit your child's school once a year for 1-2 days and meet your child during the school day both with the entire class as well as individually for approximate duration of a lesson at a time.

The researcher observes English lessons and your child's actions during lessons. The researcher writes an observation memo from the made observations. The lessons are not photographed, filmed or audio recorded.

In addition, we will do exercises with your child to assess your child's English skills as well as Finnish language skills, reading ability and other background factors influencing these abilities. In addition, we will interview your child age-appropriately regarding his/her views and experiences about learning English and his/her thoughts about being a language learner. The visit by the researcher will be structured to fit within a school day with sufficient pauses.

In addition, your child will create visualisations of their experiences of learning English by drawing, painting or doing arts and crafts. This task will be done either with the class or only with participating pupils according to the wishes of the teacher.

In addition, we ask you guardians to respond to a few questions about background information to English language learning electronically. It takes around 15 minutes to respond to the electronic questionnaire.

The research project also collects data from the teacher and guardians of the child. Data and classroom observations collected from the child can be connected to the interviews and questionnaire responses from the guardians and teacher if deemed relevant. This enables a wider examination of factors influencing the child's English language learning.

4. Possible benefits from the study

The research helps develop methods for early language education. The participants of the study have an opportunity to express their views and experiences regarding early language education once a year. Early language education began in all schools from 2020 onwards and developing methods for it is important from a societal point of view.

5. Possible risks, harm, and inconvenience caused by the study as well as preparing for these

Participating in the research is expected to yield no risks, harm or discomfort for the participants. However, we do ask your child about his/her personal experiences about language education, which may arouse a strong emotional response. The researcher ensures that participating in the research does not burden the participants excessively.

6. Insurance coverage for research participants

The University of Jyväskylä has insurance for its activities and research participants. The participants are covered for accidents, damages and injuries inflicted due to an external cause.

7. Compensation for participation and reimbursement of study-related costs

Your child will receive a small gift for participating in the study.

8. Funding of the study

The research is funded by external funding from the University of Jyväskylä. The research is funded by academic research funding by the Emil Aaltonen foundation.

The funders have not been involved in the design of the study, nor do they have any influence over data collection and analysis, publication decisions, or manuscript preparation.

9. Conflicts of Interests

The study and the researchers have no conflicts of interest that could affect the study's independence.

10. Informing about research results and research outcomes

The research results will be presented in scientific conferences and seminars as well as published in research reports, theses and in scientific and professional journals and magazines aimed at a wider audience. The results are also used in the pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

The research participants cannot be identified from the publications or the published results. Data excerpts shown in presentations and publications are chosen so that individual participants cannot be identified from them. The audio recordings are never presented. The data are stored securely and used only for research purposes.

You can follow the progress of the research project on our website <http://r.jyu.fi/IDEAL>.

11. The use of research data after the study is finished

After the study is finished, the research data will be anonymised, which means that any information enabling personal identification is deleted. The Privacy notice includes further information. The anonymised research data will remain in the research team's possession and can be used for other scientific purposes.

12. Contact person for further information

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