The main goal of this panel project is the explanation of ethnic differences in the acquisition of cultural and linguistic skills during preschool age in Germany and their impact on later school achievements and educational decisions. Furthermore, the importance of different contexts for the skill development i.e., the family- and preschool environment, is of major interest.

It was the first study on early ethnic educational inequality in Germany and will be the first panel study to comprise the complete period from preschool attendance to the end of primary school including the choice for the secondary school track.

Using the panel data structure by estimating growth curve models, the development of German language skills is assessed for native German children and children from families of Turkish origin. The high initial advantage of German children compared to children from Turkish immigrant families diminishes over time. Although, Turkish children from highly acculturated families show better German language skills than children from low acculturated families, the disadvantage of both groups in regard to German language skills remains up to the age of school entrance.

Concerning cultural knowledge we do not find a disadvantage of Turkish immigrant children compared to native German children at a very young age (36 months). However, children from native families make faster progress than children from families with a Turkish origin. Similarly to the domain of German language skills, Turkish children with highly acculturated parents develop higher skills than children from less well acculturated families. However, until the age of school entrance, significant disadvantages develop for both groups when compared to German native children.

Estimating fixed effects models to analyse the importance of preschool attendance for the development of German language skills, we find a positive effect of a longer duration in preschool for native German and Turkish immigrant children. While preschool quality does not matter for German children, the effect of preschool attendance is largest among children from Turkish families that visit high quality preschools. Therefore, we find a need for high quality preschools especially for children of Turkish immigrant families. Moreover, Turkish immigrant children should start preschool as early as possible.

**Study Characteristics:**
- Panel study (6 Waves)
- Random sample from 30 cities in South-West Germany
- 1280 families with a 3-4 year old child
- ½ native German, ½ Turkish origin


**Source:** Klein, Oliver and Birgit Becker: The Effect of Preschool Attendance for the Language Development of Native German Children and Turkish Immigrant Children, unpublished manuscript.