

*Andrea G. Eckhardt*

## **Barriers to Reaching Proficiency in School-Related Language Among Second Language Learners**

### **Summary**

Despite the assumption that less knowledge of German contributes greatly to the differences in school performance between children with, and without, a migrant background, information about the barriers preventing acquisition of German as a second language is limited. Specifically, little is known about the aspects of language that create particular difficulties for children with a non-German language background when learning school language. Everyday- and school-related types of communication appear to place differential demands on language competencies. Theoretical assumptions for such a differentiation were formulated; however, there is a lack of empirical studies validating these assumptions.

This study aims in establishing that everyday-related language is indeed easier than school-related language. Furthermore, the influence of selected aspects of language in the field of vocabulary and grammar as well as a contextualization of language on the comprehension of children with German and non-German language background was examined. The results establish that children with a non-German language background do not perform as well as those with a German language background, but an additional performance disadvantage in the examined aspects of the German language was not confirmed. The results indicate the need for integrated promotion of German language competencies.