



## REGENSBURGER VORTRÄGE ZUM ÖSTLICHEN EUROPA

Mittwoch | 2. Juli 2014 | 18.00 Uhr  
Landshuter Straße 4, 93047 Regensburg  
Raum 017 (EG)

### **„Becoming bilingual in early childhood“**

von

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Moving to another country where one wants to communicate and get integrated creates a linguistic challenge since only people with a decent knowledge of languages can function as fully entitled citizens in the new environment. The evaluation of bilingualism was ambiguous at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Psychologists were afraid that infant bilingualism was an obstacle in the cognitive development of a child, a cognitive and mental burden that slowed down the natural linguistic development and led to a lower level of IQ. They also questioned the possibility of the acquisition of two languages at a time. Recently, it has been clarified that infant bilingualism does not create an extra burden if the acquisition of the languages goes on under natural circumstances and without any protests of the bilingual-to-be. In an ideal situation the person gains from being bilingual both linguistically and mentally. Language learning, management and maintenance skills contribute to 'language awareness' or 'meta-linguistic awareness', which has been identified as one of the cognitive advantages bilinguals develop due to contact with two or more languages and cultures.



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