

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Many educationalists suggest that children in Germany should start learning English in the first year of primary school.

Write a letter to the editor giving your opinion of this idea.

<p>Der Leserbrief beginnt mit Datum, Anrede, Bezug auf den zu kommentierenden Artikel, dessen Quelle, sowie der Formulierung der angesprochenen Thematik.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25 June 2008</p> <p>Sir or Madam – I refer to your article on language learning in last week’s edition of your magazine. As a long-time reader and occasional contributor of letters I was greatly distressed to read the author’s suggestion that German pupils should start learning English very early at the age of seven or even younger.</p>
<p>Es folgt die Klarstellung der eigenen Position</p>	<p>I am completely opposed to this idea.</p>
<p>Als Überleitung zum Hauptteil kann – sehr allgemein – an den kommentierten Artikel angeknüpft werden.</p>	<p>I am certainly aware of the importance of learning foreign languages in our day and age and some things you can never start too early.</p>
<p>Der Hauptteil besteht aus klar voneinander abgegrenzten, gut begründeten und gestützten Argumenten.</p>	<p><u>One should not forget</u>, however, that six-or-seven-year-olds are more than busy learning to spell their mother tongue. Why confuse them with the orthographic subtleties of a language like English which are not even easy to master for an adult? <u>Another aspect is</u> that a basic knowledge of grammar and sentence structure is a vital precondition to acquiring a foreign language. To my mind, filling their heads with a lot of theory doesn't fit the developmental stage primary school children are in. <u>My third argument</u> will be well-known to many teachers of English: mistakes that children have acquired at a very young age are virtually impossible to eradicate later on, a fact that might cause a lot of long-term problems in the young learners’ school careers.</p>
<p>Den Schluss bildet eine nochmalige Bekräftigung der eigenen Position, gestützt durch einen Lösungsvorschlag, einen Appell an Betroffene, einen Ausblick auf die Zukunft, allerdings keinesfalls durch die Wiederholung eines Arguments aus dem Hauptteil. Der Brief endet ohne Grußformel mit Vor- und Nachnamen gefolgt von Nennung des Wohnortes.</p>	<p>I am sure many parents will agree with me when I demand that children not be deprived of their childhood by increasing school pressure at such an age and I seriously hope that ‘educationalists’ will think twice before introducing such a dubious scheme into our school system.</p> <p>Peter Braun, München</p>