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## 5th International Conference on Advanced and Systematic Research

takes place on

November 10 – 12, 2011  
in Zagreb, Croatia

and announces the following

### *Specialized Research Symposium* Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching (EFLLAT-2011)

Research into Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching: Experience and Perspectives

to be held on **November 11, 2011**

### Plenary Sessions

Professor Milica Gačić: *European Documents on Early Language Learning and Teaching, and on Young Learners*

Professor Jelena Mihaljević Djigunović: *Early Language Learning Today: High Expectations Facing Reality*

Professor Marianne Nikolov: *Research on Young Learners Classrooms: a Shift towards Mixed Methods Approaches*

### Joint Research Symposium Chairs:

**Dr Milica Gačić, Full Professor**

Chair of the English Teaching Department,  
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb.

10000 Zagreb, Savska cesta 77, Croatia.

Tel: +385 1 6327-346; Mob: + 385 91 506 86 69

e-pošta: [milica.gacic@ufzg.hr](mailto:milica.gacic@ufzg.hr)



**Dr Renata Šamo, Assistant Professor**

*English Teaching Department  
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb  
Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb  
Phone: + 385 1 6327 354 ; Mob :+ 385 91 729 36 07  
e-mail: [renata.samo@ufzg.hr](mailto:renata.samo@ufzg.hr)*

**Invited lecturers:**

**Dr Marta Medved Krajnović, Associate Professor**

**Dr Gloria Vickov, Assistant Professor**

**Dr Renata Šamo, Assistant Professor**

**Information on the 5th International Conference on Advanced and Systematic Research (€CNSI-2011)**

**Conference Venue and Dates**

- Conference dates: November 10 – 12, 2011
- **Symposium date: November 11, 2011**
- Venue: Hotel “Four Points by Sheraton Panorama Zagreb”, Trg Krešimira Čosića 9, 10000 Zagreb (<http://www.hotel-fourpointspanorama.com/>).
- The International Conference includes several symposia (research symposia).

**Conference Chairperson:**



**Dr Vladimir Šimović, Full Professor**

*Dean, Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe & Director “ECNSI” – European Center for Advanced and Systematic Research, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe  
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e-mail: [vladimir.simovic@zg.t-com.hr](mailto:vladimir.simovic@zg.t-com.hr) or [vladimir.simovic@ufzg.hr](mailto:vladimir.simovic@ufzg.hr)*

## **Information on the Symposium *Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching (EFLLAT-2011)***

### **Purpose and aim of the symposium**

For the past four years the International Conference on Advanced and Systematic Research included the joint research symposia on early learning of Croatian as a mother tongue and on early foreign languages learning. This year, for the first time, we have decided to organize a symposium entitled *Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching (EFLLAT-2011)*. Although planned as a certain continuation of the previous tradition concentrating on the process of learning and teaching both languages (L1 & L2) at an early age, this symposium focuses on the concept of a foreign language. Our main idea is to bring together scholars and practitioners who study the process of learning and teaching foreign languages at kindergartens and primary schools so that they can share their experience through the presentations of theoretical notions and research perspectives covering the above-stated issues.

All the papers presented at the Symposium will be published in the *Conference Proceedings*, based on the evaluations of two independent reviewers.

### **Current Situation in the field of early foreign language learning and teaching**

The idea to organize a symposium on early language development has been successfully accepted due to the positive situation in the field of early foreign language learning in Croatia. First encouraged by the pilot research project carried out in some primary schools in Zagreb in the 1970s, this idea was further developed two decades later and by means of another pilot project English, German, French and Italian languages have been introduced into Croatian primary schools from the first grade. Such a practice is in compliance with the accepted EU goal of developing a communicative competence in one or more foreign languages. Naturally, this depends on the level of Croatian speakers' linguistic competence in these languages. The first decade of this century has also recorded considerable contribution of Croatian researchers to linguistic studies conducted mainly for the purposes of analyzing developmental factors and FL learning/teaching strategies. Therefore, we expect that presentations delivered and meetings of scholars and practitioners will contribute to building a clearer picture of how important recent research results and findings are, and how to implement them in the teaching practice.

### **EFLLAT – 2011 symposium topics**

- **Symposium framework topic:**

#### **Research into Early Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: Experience and Perspectives**

Since the 1960s, when Chomsky first presented his Language Acquisition Device (LAD), the search for the mysterious contents of 'the black box' has become increasingly tempting and demanding. His ideas, which were strongly opposed to structuralism and behaviourism prevailing at the time, have initiated new approaches to language and to the process of its acquisition, first in the

context of L1, and then L2. He stated that children would not be able to acquire their mother tongue without possessing the innate linguistic ability (innate principles of the universal grammar - UG), while the language they can hear in their environment is needed only to support this language acquisition device, which is innate.

Applied linguists who support this idea about the innate ability due to which humans can acquire natural language belong to the advocates of the formal (nativist) approaches to the research in the field of FL learning. They are mainly concerned with the following issues: whether LAD and UG are still present and active or not; if they are, whether these are dependent on the learner's age or not and how they act. As FL learners reach different levels of linguistic competence, it is clear that the processes of L1 acquisition and FL learning are not the same. However, the differences between these processes are differently interpreted by the supporters of Chomsky's philosophy. These differences mainly refer to the status of UG in the mental frameworks of FL learners.

The other group includes applied linguists who support functional theories (empiricist approaches), stating that language is dependent on other cognitive abilities. They also believe that linguistic knowledge is based on the background knowledge and experience gained through communication. Rejecting the idea about the innate universal grammar, functionalists believe that both linguistic and conceptual input play important roles in the development of a child's language system. Although there are many functional theories today, cognitive grammar and constructionist grammar are the most influential ones. Functionalists generally do not draw a sharp dividing line between linguistic performance and linguistic competence. They view communication as the main linguistic purpose in their FL research and believe that using language in communication contributes to the development of knowledge of both L1 and L2. In addition, they study discourse and extralinguistic forms of communication and include learners' metalanguage in their studies, as well as the psychological and social factors (e.g. information processing ability, motivation, willingness to communicate, etc.). In this way, they make research into the FL learning process closer to psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic frameworks.

It is a well-known fact that language is a system humans use to communicate, yet everyone uses language in his/her own way, making language in that way a social as well as an individual construct. The process of L1 acquisition is more or less similar for each individual. The same applies to the process of FL learning provided that it starts in the early childhood (ages 3 - 5). In other words, the process and its final outcomes can be predicted in both cases if the acquisition starts before a child is five (some authors say before puberty). The situation changes drastically if the process starts following puberty, especially in the FL context, where individual differences between learners (motivation, learning styles or strategies, personality traits, age, etc.) are very important.

Age is the factor of a particular interest. It is usually present in discussions on the critical and sensitive period hypotheses. As it is rather reliable to say that an earlier start in language learning possibly implies higher levels of linguistic and communicative competences, there are still doubts about the existence of a neurologically conditioned critical period after which language acquisition becomes impossible or considerably more difficult. The critical period hypothesis regarding L1 acquisition has been supported by the studies of children who had grown up isolated in socially isolated conditions as well as by the studies into the acquisition of American Sign Language. Their results have led to the conclusion that there is a critical period important for normal L1 acquisition and particularly for its morphosyntactic level. But how important is it in FL acquisition? Research in Croatia and abroad has shown that the age factor interacts with a number of other factors (contextual and individual), having an influence on the final outcomes of the FL learning process. Instead of speaking about critical period, we speak about sensitive period during which the FL acquisition is easier. However, there are authors who disagree with these statements.

Due to this rejection of the sensitive period idea, the relation between a learner's age and his/her success achieved in FL learning has been increasingly investigated over the last thirty years. Moreover, increased attention has been paid to non-linguistic factors.

To sum, an early FLL start - primarily in formal education conditions and as a result of conscious effort – is a high priority issue in the research of the FL acquisition processes. Therefore, we expect that the EFLLAT-2011 symposium will offer some interesting views regarding early foreign language learning, and widen scholarly, research, and teaching dimensions of the field.

## • **Some Key Concepts and Issues to Present and Discuss**

Presentations on a variety of aspects pertaining to the central symposium topic are welcome. Suggested topics for papers are:

- EFL acquisition theories
- Researching FL and foreign language learning /teaching process
- Researching factors relating to EFL learners
- Links between EFL acquisition theories and social practice
- Education of teachers competent to teach FL at an early age
- Language policy and documents relevant to EFL teaching

The final formulation of the presentation topic is proposed by each participant, and approved by the Symposium chairpersons. Researchers taking part in projects covering the early foreign languages learning, scholars from teacher education and training faculties, practitioners from relevant institutions and associations linked to these issues, interested postgraduate and doctoral students are all welcome to take part in the work of the Symposium.

The Symposium is planned to work in plenary sessions and in sections, and final decisions will be made upon receiving registration forms with presentation topics.

## **Official Languages of the Symposium (Research Symposium EFLLAT - 2011)**

Official languages of the symposium are English, other FLs taught at Croatian primary schools and Croatian.

## **Call for Papers**

Papers addressing any of the above mentioned topics are welcome. An abstract of approximately 200 words should be submitted for evaluation. All proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their scholarly quality and originality.

**Abstracts** may be submitted **electronically** (Microsoft Word), by filling in the attached **registration form** (p. 11) **or by mail**, no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011, to the following addresses (note the symposium title:Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching – EFLLAT-2011):



**Dr Kristina Cergol Kovačević, Symposium Secretary**

*Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb,  
Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe*

Phone: + 385 1 6327 319; Mob: +385 95 90 50 296  
e-mail: [kristina.cergol@ufzg.hr](mailto:kristina.cergol@ufzg.hr)

**Please send a copy to:**

**Dr Vladimir Šimović, Full Professor, Dean**

Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe & Director "ECNSI" – European Center for Advanced and Systematic Research, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe  
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**and to:**

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Tel: +385 1 3840-465; Mob: + 385 91 729 36 07  
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## Evaluation / Review Process and Conference Symposia Proceedings:

All papers will be peer-reviewed by the professionals in the area (international and national reviewers). The final (full) papers (a camera ready electronic version, including appendices and bibliographies) should not exceed **15 single-spaced typed pages** (approximately 30,000 characters) and should be prepared according to the *Instructions to Authors* which can be downloaded at the website <http://www.ecnsi.hr/en> or <http://www.ufzg.hr>.

Papers will be published in the *Conference-Symposia Proceedings ELC/MT/FL-4* after the Conference.

## Important Dates

Abstracts for EFLLAT-2011	Sept 15 <sup>th</sup> 2011
Notification of abstract approval	Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2011
<b>Symposium (€CNSI-2011 – EFLLAT-2011)</b>	<b>Nov 11<sup>th</sup> 2011</b>

**Conference fee** (covers the EFLLAT-2011 symposium, symposium materials, and refreshments).

	REGISTRATION DEADLINES	CONFERENCE FEE	VAT	TOTAL
1.	REGISTRATION <b>BEFORE SEPT 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010</b> – ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	€ 60	€ 13.80	€ 73.80
2.	STUDENTS – REGISTRATION <b>BEFORE SEPT 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010</b>	€ 30	€ 6.90	€ 36.90
3.	REGISTRATION <b>AFTER SEPT 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010</b> – ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	€ 75	€ 17.25	€ 92.25

4.	STUDENTS – REGISTRATION <b>AFTER SEPT 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010</b>	€ 45	€ 10.35	€55.35
5.	PARTICIPATION (certificate of attendance included, but not the Conference Proceedings)	€ 30	€ 6.90	€ 36.90
6.	DAY TRIP	€ 50	€ 11.50	€ 61.50
<b>FINAL DEADLINE FOR CONFERENCE FEE PAYMENT IS NOVEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011</b>				

For further information on €CNSI-2011 visit  
<http://www.ecnsi.hr/en> and <http://www.ufzg.hr>  
The special focus symposium is sponsored by  
**ECNSI - THE EUROPEAN ADVANCED AND SYSTEMS RESEARCH CENTER**  
<i. e.> **Europski Centar za Napredna i Sustavna Istraživanja: Zagreb**

## **5th International Conference on Advanced and Systematic Research €CNSI - 2011**

Dear colleagues!

The registration fee for the Conference-Symposium can be paid in Euros, bank cheques, traveller's cheques or by international money orders. All cheques must be computer coded. **Payment by credit card is not accepted!**

The conference fee can be paid in Euros directly to the account number of the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb at: **Zagrebačka banka d. d. (ZABA) in Zagreb, Croatia.**

Payment in kuna

**Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Učiteljski fakultet  
Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb  
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GIRO ACCOUNT: 2360000-1101394272**

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Authorization

**ECNSI - 2011 Conference  
C/o Dr Vladimir Šimović – ECNSI**

**IMPORTANT: Payments must not include additional charges for the bank and should contain the name of the person for whom the fee is paid.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

Best regards,  
**Dr Vladimir Šimović, Full Professor**  
**Conference Chairman**

**c/o Učiteljski Fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu (UFZG)**  
**& Europski Centar za Napredna i Sustavna Istraživanja (ECNSI)**  
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Information on the account of the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb for payments made in Croatian kuna where the Conference fee can be deposited from the Republic of Croatia:

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UČITELJSKI FAKULTET SVEUČILIŠTA U ZAGREBU  
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SAVSKA 77,  
10000 ZAGREB

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BROJ: 2360000-1101394272

Yours sincerely,

Dr Vladimir Šimović, Full Professor



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Dr Vladimir Simovic,  
*Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Education of the University of Zagreb, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe & Director of the "ECNSI" - The European Center for Advanced and Systematic Research, Savska cesta 77, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, Europe*  
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**5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADVANCED  
AND SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH**

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4<sup>th</sup> Signature

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**THE 5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADVANCED  
AND SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH**

November 10 -11, 2011, Zagreb, Croatia

**REGISTRATION FORM FOR SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANTS**

I am an (please tick):

Author  Session Organizer

Presenter  Participant

To be completed by the authors of accepted papers:

Paper Reference Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Pages: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Conference Fees:**

**INSURANCE:** The Conference organizers accept any liability for personal injuries, loss or damage to property belonging to Conference participants, either during or as a result of the Conference. The participants should check the validity of their personal insurance.

**Method of Payment:** Payment may be made by International Money Order or Cheque payable to ECNSI-2011

Please tick: cheque  money order

Registration is confirmed upon receipt of payment.

Payments are non-refundable. Substitutes are allowed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Calculation of Total Payment**

**Conference Fee:**

Before September 30, 2011 (Euros € 60) \_\_\_\_\_

After September 30, 2011 (Euros € 75) \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Fees:**

Extra page fee \_\_\_\_\_

above 15 pages (€50.00/page) \_\_\_\_\_

Extra Proceedings (€50.00 each) \_\_\_\_\_

(discounted cost of conference proceedings applies only during registration)

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

All registration materials and fees must arrive before November 1, 2011 at the following address:

**ECNSI 2011 Conference**

C/O Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb and European Center for Advanced and Systematic Research

Savska cesta 77, Zagreb HR-10000, Croatia, Europe

ATTN: Prof. Vladimir Simovic

**5. međunarodna konferencija o naprednim i sustavnim istraživanjima –  
5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Advanced and Systematic Research  
(€CNSI-2011)**

Zagreb, Croatia

*The Specialized Research Symposium*

**Early Foreign Languages Learning and Teaching (EFLLAT-2011)**

November 11, 2011

**REGISTRATION**

(see deadlines)

Please send your registration to the following e-mail addresses: [kristina.cergol@ufzg.hr](mailto:kristina.cergol@ufzg.hr);  
[renata.samo@ufzg.hr](mailto:renata.samo@ufzg.hr); [vladimir.simovic@ufzg.hr](mailto:vladimir.simovic@ufzg.hr)

Name and Surname:	
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Participation:	participant - presenter
Required equipment:	
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