

# Valeria Agostini

*Developmental Researcher & Language Educator · Bilingualism, Second Language Learning & Child Development*

valeria.agostini4@gmail.com | [www.valeriaagostini.com](http://www.valeriaagostini.com)

---

I'm a developmental researcher and language educator working at the intersection of bilingualism, second language learning, and child development. My doctoral research (PhD, University of Birmingham) examined how learning a second language shapes children's thinking, from creativity to perspective-taking, through longitudinal, school-based studies using standardised cognitive and language assessments. Alongside this research career, I've spent over twenty years teaching in primary schools in the UK, Italy and Germany, and I currently teach Italian and lead CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) provision at St. John's CE Primary School in London. Working across both research and the classroom means I care as much about what the evidence shows as about what genuinely works with young learners day to day. I share my data and materials openly through the Open Science Framework and contribute to FORRT.

## Education & Qualifications

---

**PhD in Psychology** — *University of Birmingham, UK, 2021*

Thesis: Socio-cognitive advantages in early second language learners and young bilinguals. Supervisors: Prof. Andrea Krott and Prof. Ian Apperly.

**Higher Education Futures Institute (HEFi) Horizon Award** — *University of Birmingham*

**Qualified Teacher Status** — *Ministry of Education, Italy, 1999*

**BA (Hons. equiv.) Foreign Languages & Literatures — English & German** — *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy, 1995*

Laurea in Lingue e Letterature Straniere Moderne, English and German. Grade: 106/110.

**GCE Advanced Level equiv., Diploma in Education** — *Istituto Magistrale Lena Perpentì, Sondrio, Italy, 1997*

Diploma di Maturità Magistrale.

**GCE Advanced Level equiv., Diploma in Science** — *Liceo Scientifico Carlo Donegani, Sondrio, Italy, 1986*

Diploma di Maturità Scientifica.

## Professional Development

---

**Open Research Summer School** — *King's College London, 2026*

## Research Experience

---

**PhD Researcher** — *School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, 2017–2021*

- Designed and implemented longitudinal research examining socio-cognitive development in early second language learners in primary schools in England.
- Recruited schools and participants independently: approached headteachers, obtained ethical approval from the University of Birmingham Ethics Committee, prepared and distributed participant information sheets and consent forms in compliance with safeguarding requirements.
- Coordinated and conducted data collection across multiple schools and time points, individually administering standardised cognitive and language tests, behavioural assessments, and questionnaires to children in school settings.
- Maintained participant databases across time points.
- Analysed quantitative data using R and SPSS.

- Produced accessible summaries of findings for academic and non-academic audiences.

I continue this research independently, sharing data and materials openly via the Open Science Framework.

## Teaching Experience

---

### Higher Education Teaching

**Teaching Assistant** — *School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, 2020*

- Taught workshops for Introduction to Developmental Psychology. Facilitated student discussions on how to approach and successfully complete the coursework assignment. Marked students' essays and gave feedback on how to improve them.
- Taught workshops for Assessing Caregiver Sensitivity – the Leiden Infant Simulator Sensitivity Assessment (LISSA). Facilitated student discussions on the validity, reliability and possible applications of LISSA.

**Teaching Assistant** — *School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, 2019*

- Taught workshops on Infants' number cognition. Facilitated student discussions and guided the development of their ideas on how to test infants' number cognition.

### Primary Education Teaching

**Italian Teacher** — *Italian Consulate, London, UK, 2007–present*

- 2021–present: Devise and deliver the Italian Language and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) curriculum at St. John's CofE Primary School for EYFS and Key Stage 1 pupils, including designing and teaching CLIL science units for Year 1 and Year 2 that integrate language learning directly into the science curriculum. Working closely alongside class teachers has given me a detailed, practitioner's knowledge of the EYFS framework and the National Curriculum for KS1.
- 2021–present: Website curator for the Education Department of the Italian Consulate.
- 2009–2016: Devised schemes of work and delivered classes in UK Primary schools.
- 2013–2016: Teachers' coordinator for the school years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. Fostered communication and Continuing Professional Development among teachers appointed by the Italian Foreign Office to the Consulate General in London.
- 2007–2009: Taught Italian in Primary Schools in Hannover and Osnabrück, Germany. Planned with German class teachers and delivered lessons with CLIL methodology.

**English Teacher** — *Department of Education, Sondrio, Italy, 2001–2007*

- Permanent specialist English teacher in Primary Schools.
- Project coordinator for English as Foreign Language in Early Years (pupils aged 3–5).

**English and German Teacher** — *Department of Education, Sondrio, Italy, 1995–2001*

- Temporary contract teacher of English and German in Primary and Secondary Schools.

## Publications

---

Agostini, V., Apperly, I. A., & Krott, A. (under review). Perspective Taking in Bilingual Children: Investigating the Roles of Inhibitory Control and Social Understanding.

Agostini, V., Apperly, I. A., & Krott, A. (2025). Greater sensitivity to communication partners' perspectives in children learning a second language at school. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 28(5), 1304–1318. doi.org/10.1017/S1366728925000069

Agostini, V., Apperly, I. A., & Krott, A. (2024). Bilingual education enhances creative fluency and flexibility over the first year of primary school. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 28(3), 728–739. doi.org/10.1017/S1366728924000579

Röseler, L., Kaiser, L., Doetsch, C., Klett, N., Seida, C., Schütz, A., ... Zhang, Y. (2024). The Replication Database: Documenting the Replicability of Psychological Science. *Journal of Open Psychology Data*, 12(1), 8. doi.org/10.5334/jopd.101

Parsons, S., Azevedo, F., Elsherif, M. M., Guay, S., Shahim, O. N., Govaart, G. H., Norris, E., O'Mahony, A., Parker, A. J., Todorovic, A., Pennington, C. R., Garcia-Pelegrin, E., Lazić, A., Robertson, O., Middleton, S. L., Valentini, B., McCuaig, J., Baker, B. J., Collins, E., ... Aczel, B. (2022). A community-sourced glossary of open scholarship terms. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6(3), 312–318. doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01269-4

---

## Peer Review

Peer reviewer, *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* (Cambridge University Press).

---

## Academic Conferences

- 2022 — Poster at 4th International Symposium on Bilingual and L2 Processing in Adults and Children (ISBPAC2022), UiT The Arctic University of Norway. Inhibitory control or social skills? Exploring two accounts for young multilinguals' perspective-taking advantage in referential communication.
- 2021 — Talk at International Association for the Study of Child Language (IASCL 2021), Philadelphia, USA. Socio-cognitive advantages of learning a second language in early years of school.
- 2021 — Talk at International Symposium on Bilingualism (ISB13), University of Warsaw, Poland. Early Second Language Learning at School Can Boost Creativity.
- 2021 — Talk at Conference on Multilingualism (COM2021), Universität Konstanz, Germany. Early Second Language Learning at School Can Boost Creativity.
- 2021 — Talk at 3rd International Symposium on Bilingual and L2 Processing in Adults and Children (ISBPAC2021), Nijmegen, Netherlands. Socio-cognitive advantages of learning a second language in early years of school.
- 2020 — Talk at Conference on Multilingualism (COM2020), University of Reading, UK.
- 2019 — Poster at the International Conference on Multilingual and Multicultural Learning (MMLPP19), Prague, Czech Republic.
- 2019 — Poster at the Lancaster Conference on Infant and Early Child Development (LCIDC19), University of Lancaster, UK.
- 2019 — Poster at the Child Language Symposium (CLShelf19), University of Sheffield, UK.
- 2019 — Poster at the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE2019), Moscow, Russia.

---

## Other Conferences

- 2024 — Speaker on behalf of the Consulate General of Italy in London at Italian Teachers Day, Francis Holland School, London, UK.
- 2024 — Speaker at the Linguists Collective Conference and Celebration of International Mother Language Day (LCIMLD) 2024, London, UK.
- 2016 — Workshop designer and presenter at MFL Conference: The way forward for languages: CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), University of Westminster, London, UK.
- 2015 — Workshop designer and presenter at Italian FLA (Foreign Language Assistants) induction meeting, British Council, London, UK.
- 2015 — Presenter at European Pack for Complementary Training for PGCE students and Foreign Language Assistants, London, UK.

---

## Volunteering

- Advisory Panel Member, Museum of London's Supplementary Schools Outreach Programme, 2016–2019 — helped deliver sessions in community schools and at family events.

---

*Holds current enhanced DBS clearance; well versed in safeguarding, ethics and GDPR requirements when working with children.*