

Ensemble Languages Case Study (3)

What can we learn from the other phase to impact positively on our practice and transition?

This project primarily involved Sally Burgess (SB) who teaches Spanish and French to 11-16 year olds Macclesfield Academy and Amanda Murphy (AM) who teaches French to 4-11 year olds at Parkroyal Community School and Chelford CE Primary School.

Summary of observations

AM observing Year 7 Spanish, Year 1 Phonics, Year 6 Literacy

SB observing Year 3/4 and Y5/6 French, Year 2 Phonics at Parkroyal , Year 1 French

What we wanted to learn

Both teachers wanted to learn how English phonics and literacy are taught in the primary context so that secondary practice and foreign language specialist practice can mirror this and build upon the pupils' prior knowledge to raise attainment. The secondary language teacher also wanted to learn more about primary foreign language methodology in order to build upon this in the initial transition phase.

What did we see? What did we learn?

Year 2 Phonics Lesson

SB observed the terminology that children at this age are able to understand and their metalinguistic awareness was much higher than imagined. She also noted the use of actions with words. SB observed the school's agreed consistent practice of using sound buttons, a rainbow symbol for split digraphs and the underlining of digraphs and trigraphs.

The children played games to reinforce their learning for example, each child had a word and had to put themselves in a certain area of the room for the appropriate sound; the teacher put a card in the wrong pile and the children had to identify which one was wrong and explain why.

Year 1 French

SB noticed the class' use of actions to words including the activities involving *active listening* i.e. listening for a specific word/phrase and doing an action when they hear it. SB and AM discussed how this builds learners' confidence- reassuring them that they are not expected to understand every word and that it develops their listening skills.

Year 1 Phonics

The teachers watched the following methodology:

- Teacher holds up cards and children say the sound.
- Children sit in a circle and individuals have to find two or three sound cards that have different letters but the same sound.
- The whole class reads through the flashcards of tricky words and play quiz trade with tricky words.

- The teacher teaches a new sound, the children repeat and she gradually takes the letters away and the children have to recall the spelling.
- The teacher holds a mini whiteboard with a word and the children have spell out words they were introduced to before. (If time the children would write on the whiteboards individually).

Year 6 Literacy

The teachers observed a number of activities:

- Using the iPad to support the children's learning the teacher took photos of their sentences and could show 2 or 3 on the TV at a time as models or points for AfL discussion. She also hid and revealed words and sentences.
- Children discussing a point of grammar to work things out for themselves, discussing their thoughts as a class, and then applying the rules in writing.
- The teacher had an extension task for those who were ready.

Year 7 Spanish

Module maps are used so children know what they will be learning. The children played 'Inside Outside Circle'. During the first round they were allowed to use their books and during the second round they were not. During 'Hands Up Pair Up', the children had to translate their partner's response to them, ensuring that they were listening carefully. As a plenary the children went round the room in pairs describing pictures of animals displayed on the walls. AM shared the idea of making fortune tellers as a revision tool.

How this will impact on my practice in teaching languages

The teachers listed aspects of what they had learned and said how they would use similar strategies in their own language lessons

From Phonics

- Thinking of a word that has a certain grapheme, reading flashcards of tricky words and playing quiz trade with tricky words and small groups taking cards out of a pack and reading the word are all activities that we can embed in our teaching.
- Strategies we can transfer to language teaching, for example holding up a grapheme and the children say the sound, finding different graphemes with the same sound
- Irregular verbs could be taught and practiced as 'tricky words' that they just have to learn.

From Year 1 French

- Matching actions to words needs to be reinforced in secondary and maintained in primary MFL.
- Have consistent actions for things at secondary e.g. stress on a word/accents/ tense etc.

From Year 6 Literacy

- Develop the use of tablets for AfL purposes, similarly to the class teacher.
- Use think, pair, share more when discussing points of grammar before whole class discussion.
- Be consistent with the terminology and not be afraid to use it.

From Year 7 Spanish

- Embed module maps in lessons.
- Embed using Inside Outside Circle in some of her lessons.
- Focus on gender more when presenting new language in the primary setting.