



Project leads: Cath Brown (Glebe Primary School and Knowledge Centre) and Carol Taylor (UCL / IOE) Project Title: Principles into Practice

Subject: EAL

Key Stage: 1-3

Grant Awarded: £156,309

Introductory paragraph:

Many teachers in schools find it difficult to access appropriate support and expertise for teaching EAL learners. This lack of expertise and confidence, about first and second language acquisition for example, has implications for them in identifying how to best meet the needs of individual EAL pupils in their classes. Participants in the 'Principles into Practice' programme have been working with an EAL expert to improve their subject knowledge, also with an EAL practitioner expert to explore how to translate that new learning into appropriate practice and an impact coach to help them track impact.

Key Points:

The project is based on the core principle that having a range of EAL teaching strategies is not enough. Rather, by having a deep understanding of EAL principles teachers will have the confidence - both now and in the future beyond the life of the project - to better identify the needs of each individual EAL learner and so ensure appropriate strategies and practices are in place. A baseline audit of subject knowledge identified that the five areas of lowest knowledge and confidence for participating teachers were:

- ▶ strategies to assess EAL language development
- ▶ understanding second language acquisition
- ▶ analysing language demands, needs and opportunities
- ▶ promoting the inclusion of an EAL perspective
- ▶ addressing the academic needs of EAL pupils as future citizens

Teachers have therefore been supported by the EAL subject expert to know and understand the following:

- language development: function, form and meaning;
- second language acquisition (SLA) and how to accelerate SLA through acknowledging and supporting the home language and children as experts; encouraging literacy in both languages and interaction through dialogic talk, using collective, reciprocal, cumulative and supportive strategies
- exploring reflective narratives;
- using case studies to explore different situations that may arise for teachers when working with EAL pupils for example – in relation to newly arrived or advanced EAL learners;
- how to establish an EAL learner language proficiency and how to meet the needs of 'two-step bilingual' learners;
- from oracy to literacy ... the rate and route of development... why does speaking and listening come first? Why do reading and language development go hand in hand?
- reading for meaning making and implications for teaching, sentence building and taking a strategy approach;
- miscue analysis - a testing or diagnostic tool, but also a teaching tool to enable teachers to see how their own scaffolding of the process is effective (or not). How for the learner the changing nature of miscues in reading and writing reflects the changing nature of the learners' language system;
- Directed Activities Related to Texts (or DARTS) and how it can help teachers to be able to analyse texts in school textbooks and how to find some of the key clues which help learners understand the text;
- a range of reading support activities which they can use with their learners in general and their EAL learners in particular;
- have an idea of the place of reading in the lesson sequence and of what they can do to guide learners in their reading both before and after they read;
- how to be aware of the role of vocabulary in reading and of the importance of guessing in the overall reading process;
- looking at non-everyday language and implications for teaching and learning.

Impact on teachers:

The impact on teachers' knowledge and confidence is being tracked using a Subject Knowledge Audit based on the key principles of good EAL practice. This audit was completed at the start of the project and will have been repeated twice further during the life of the project. The data indicates a significant shift in teacher knowledge and confidence. Qualitative data also supports this shift. For example teachers are saying they now know:

- *'About critical language and its role in supporting understanding in different types of writing'*
- *'That the use of phonics does not always accelerate reading for EAL learners'*
- *'The importance of speaking to develop learning'*
- *'That the fluency of EAL pupils in speaking, reading and writing English does not always reflect their cognitive ability'*

What teachers are doing in practice is being tracked using a baseline/ impact narrative tool and they are saying they are 'doing things differently,' for example:

- *'I now model the language rather than correcting the language'*
- *'I use more visual strategies and examples as prompts'*
- *'I am more careful what I say ... EAL learners find homophones, idioms and sarcasm difficult to understand...'*
- *'Pre-learning – it helps confidence, output and participation in class'*
- *'I now always start my lessons by explaining the key vocabulary using visual clues.'*

Impact on Pupils:

We have qualitative data that suggests a significant increase in pupil's confidence as seen by:

Child A WAS: Using very few key words, using signs and pointing to express himself

Child A IS NOW: Talking much more, interacting with other children, writing simple sentences

Child B WAS: The child was very quiet, listened but did not speak unless addressed

Child B IS NOW: Child offers their opinion on all subjects; is eager to speak in whole class situations.

Impact on EAL pupil progress and attainment:

The teachers are recording both qualitative and quantitative data. This is being tracked via the usual school tracking processes. In addition, each teacher has a group of focus pupils on whom they are tracking using a Pupil Profile. Some of the teachers are concerned that the quantitative data does not show the real impact as, whilst progress for some pupils has been significant within the level, it does not always mean that they move up a level. This is why capturing the narrative stories is so important.

Professional development activity

We had intended to run whole day workshops that involved all four participating schools. Because the project started mid-way through a school year this was not possible - schools were already committed to their PD programme for the year. We had to de-construct the plans and create a programme of individual workshops for each school, with each of the schools receiving:

- five workshops – one each half term - led by an EAL subject specialist
- five coaching workshops – one each half term following on from the subject workshop - to support the development of strategies and resources
- additional on-line support when appropriate.

Whilst this restructuring meant that there was no cross school engagement, so limiting the shared learning opportunities, it did mean that the subject and impact coaches were able to develop close working relationships.

Project Delivery:

The project has involved the Glebe Knowledge Centre (GKC) in Harrow supporting four schools in Brent - three primary schools and one secondary school

There are 48 teachers involved across the four schools

These teachers are impacting on their focus pupils (between 1-5 non EU-EAL) and their own whole classes – potentially 120 children directly.

Dissemination – through a project website hosting case studies and resource, a film that will promote the projects works and the Principles into Practice programme will continue to be offered beyond the life of the project.

We are also talking to a primary school in Harrow about working on a similar project using the Glebe KC coaches to support and a London borough is also interested in the model for next year.

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