

## **KS1/2 English The Multilingual School**

Teachers' TV (2006) KS1/2 English The Multilingual School

<http://www.teachersmedia.co.uk/videos/ks1-ks2-english-the-multilingual-school>

### **Synopsis**

This programme gives an overview of provision for pupils learning EAL at St Stephen's Primary School in Newham. It focuses on developing partnerships with parents and approaches to early reading in KS1. The social and cultural context provides useful pre or post course reading for trainees

<http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-initial-teacher-education/resources/language-curriculum>

### **Relevant sections**

00:00 – 00:25 A pupil describes how he felt when he first arrived in the school, with no English.

00:25-2:59 Senior staff discuss the school's ethos and policies on EAL. The pupil reflects on how the school supports him now. EAL coordinator Jo Mathias describes how school displays reflect community languages in order to encourage pupils and families to feel at home in the school. Headteacher Jane Johnson describes the importance of working closely with parents and community, so that parents can support children's learning at home.

02:59 – 4:00 Displays, bilingual texts and resources support EAL learners, reflecting home cultures, scripts and languages.

04:37 The EAL coordinator explains that every classroom has a home corner where pupils are encouraged to speak and listen both in English and in their home languages using familiar props. As pupils play in the home corner, speaking a mixture of Bengali and English, teachers discuss the importance of oral work in language development and importance of culturally relevant resources.

06:00 – 08:00 Senior staff describe resources library for parents. Parents appreciate the school's weekly Learning Library where they can borrow education games, videos and bilingual books and ask what is suitable for their children. A pupil talks about how her mother reads with her at home.

08:46 Teacher asks a pupil to describe a book in Hindi; senior staff discusses importance of pupils continuing to use and learn in their home languages.

10:00 Teaching assistant talks about how school in the UK might be very different from parents' experiences of school in other countries. Staff discuss the importance of being able to communicate with pupils and parents in their home languages.

12:20 Boy describes his Bangladeshi heritage and the languages he can speak. Senior staff member describes her own language learning experience.

## **Principles of Good Practice**

- Activating pupils' prior knowledge of oral and written language and of curriculum content
- The provision of a rich contextual background to make input comprehensible
- Developing learner independence

## **Teaching Points**

00:00 – 00:25 Focus on the boy's comment 'It feels like you are in a different world.' Ask trainees to consider why this boy compares going to school to 'going from here to Mars'. Trainees are likely to come up with a range of social, cultural and linguistic differences between bilingual pupils' previous experience and the school environment. These will apply to all pupils in different degrees. Ruiz (1984) argued that different languages can be conceptualised as a problem, a right or a resource. One way for trainees to begin to promote equality and inclusion in their teaching is to view difference as a resource, as is the case in this school,

00:25 Ask trainees to make notes on how the school celebrates linguistic and cultural diversity across the learning environment. This includes recognising and valuing multilingualism through the visual environment and learning resources.

Using community languages in the mainstream classroom contains a useful checklist (Blackledge, 1998) which could scaffold the task. The content of the curriculum, language and pedagogic approaches will all affect the degree to which learners feel they can identify with what is being taught and the degree to which they feel 'insiders' or 'outsiders' in the process.

04:25. Draw trainees' attention to how pupils use a variety of languages in their 'home corner play. Ask students to spot an example of the pupils code-switching, or moving between two languages. Explain this is a help not a hindrance to their learning as continued conceptual and linguistic development in the first language helps second language learners in their learning of the second language. Draw attention to Cummins' theory of common underlying proficiency

06:00 – 08:00. Schools need to ensure that all parents feel confident about supporting their children's reading, even when they do not read, write or speak English. Teachers can reinforce the view of diversity as a resource by suggesting parents talk about text in first languages, asking appropriate questions, and building on existing literacy practices. Trainee teachers may encounter a misconception amongst some parents that they can help their child by adopting an 'English only' approach in the home.

10:00 Teachers need to be aware that there are differences between school cultures in different countries and that pedagogic practices which they take for granted can be unfamiliar to some parents and cause stress and anxiety for children. It is also important to recognise that whilst home cultures of minority groups may vary from those of the majority group but there will also be an infinite amount of variation within groups. The social and cultural context provides further information for discussion

## **Why this resource is useful for training on EAL**

- Supports trainees to take account of the range of learners' needs through an inclusive approach
- Supports trainees to begin to learn how to identify the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Provides a starter for a discussion on how teachers can take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in their teaching particularly with reference to developing partnerships with parents and approaches to early reading in KS1.

## **When might this resource best be used?**

The resource is useful for introducing EAL issues to student teachers, particularly where student teachers have had limited previous experience with linguistically diverse learners and settings. Using this resource early on in students' training would stimulate discussion around the inclusion of EAL learners and encourage student teachers to explore the whole-school support that they should look for in their first placement.

## **Resources**

Teachers' TV (2006) KS1/2 English The Multilingual Classroom

<http://www.teachersmedia.co.uk/videos/ks1-ks2-english-the-multilingual-classroom>

Teachers' TV (2006) KS1/2 English The Multilingual School

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## **References and Further Reading**

Blackledge, A. (1998) *Unit 4: Literacy and Bilingual Learners; Introduction to Bilingualism in Education*. University of Birmingham, Educational Materials

Cummins, J. (2001) *An Introductory Reader to the Writings of Jim Cummins*. Clevedon : Multilingual Matters

Gibbons, P. (2002) *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Second Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann

Gregory, E., Long, S. & Volk, D. (Eds.) (2004) *Many pathways to literacy: young children learning with siblings, grandparents, peers and communities*. London : Routledge Falmer

Kenner, C. (2000) *Home Pages: literacy links for bilingual children*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Ruiz, R. (1984). *Orientations in language planning*. National Association for Bilingual Education Journal, 8, 15-34