

ESRC Seminar Series: Complementary Schools: Research, Policy and Practice Goldsmiths and King's College London

Seminar 4 (April 20 2010): Goldsmiths

Social inclusion and links with mainstream education

Focusing on: how to raise awareness of teachers in mainstream schools of the existence and practices of complementary schools; effects of complementary schooling on children's learning and development in mainstream schools; how mainstream school teachers can support children's bilingual learning; the future of complementary schooling in the context of social inclusion; whether and how complementary classes can be included in the 'extended day' provision now required of all UK schools.

This report covers sessions on:

Developing bilingual learning through partnerships between complementary and mainstream teachers Mahera Ruby and Charmian Kenner, Goldsmiths

How the project has contributed to policy and practice in Tower Hamlets

Jamal Uddin, Head of Languages Service, Tower Hamlets LEA

Promoting success through bilingual learning: some issues from a Saturday class in Bradford

Saiqa Riasat, BLTA, and Jean Conteh, University of Leeds

Magda and Albana becoming biliterate with dual language books and Shpresa

Raymonde Sneddon, University of East London and Luljeta Nuzi, Shpresa Albanian Programme

Teacher education: making connections between complementary and mainstream schools

Gee Macrory, Manchester Metropolitan University

Immigrant families' involvement in their children's education in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country Nahia Intxausti, University of the Basque Country

Creativity in the community languages classroom

Jim Anderson and Yu-Chiao Chung, Goldsmiths

Developing bilingual learning through partnerships between complementary and mainstream teachers Mahera Ruby and Charmian Kenner, Goldsmiths (see also powerpoint on website)

Project website: www.gold.ac.uk/clcl/multilingual-learning/cmp/

Action research project funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Tower Hamlets Children's Services. Brings together primary teachers and complementary teachers to visit each other's settings and jointly plan topic-based lessons that can be adapted to each setting. Successful project that shows how teachers can benefit from understanding each other's contexts and each bringing their strengths to the partnership.

Tower Hamlets classrooms now majority second and third generation British Bangladeshi children, plus some with other languages such as Somali, Arabic, Russian. Though many teaching assistants bilingual in Sylheti/Bengali, English is often the only language used in class. Meanwhile, complementary classes just down the road, but no interaction with mainstream. Bilingual approach needed in both settings: in mainstream, so children can build on all their language resources, and in complementary schools, bilingual teaching helps because children's stronger language is English.

Example of mainstream teacher learning strategies from complementary colleague, eg how children can take the role of teacher, and offering strategies, eg learning through drama. Two-way exchange. Example of 'grandparents' topic: complementary teacher enriched theme by creating family tree, and children wrote messages to grandparents in Somalia, developing language to communicate with elders. Taken up by primary school through 'Grandparents Afternoon' where grandparents invited

and celebrated, and families created own tree with words for grandparents in different languages. Example of 'Rag Trade' topic: resources developed by complementary teacher based on own experience in London rag trade, then primary deputy head visited night school in Bangladesh and took questions for children, answers used to develop roleplay in mainstream and comp classes.

Other collaborative activities between mainstream/comp schools: international languages celebration, bilingualism advice panel for parents, dual language book making.

Impact on children, teachers and schools

- Mainstream teachers gained understanding of pupils' competences and life outside school
- Topic work made links between learning in mainstream and complementary school
- Built a curriculum that drew on children's cultural knowledge and language skills
- Strengthened links with parents and grandparents
- Supported community cohesion through intercultural learning

How the project has contributed to policy and practice in Tower Hamlets

Jamal Uddin, Head of Languages Service, Tower Hamlets LEA (see also ppt on website)

Tower Hamlets Languages Policy includes children developing mother tongue and 'foreign languages' (MFL) as well as English as an additional language. Primary schools encouraged to consult with parents and consider community language (Bengali) as MFL, as well as French/ Spanish (can offer more than one language). Expertise available eg via Bengali-speaking teaching assistants.

Tower Hamlets Languages Service oversees MFL and mother tongue. Supports many mother tongue classes through grants for premises, teachers. Recommends that mainstream schools link with comp schools to deliver Extended Schools and community cohesion agendas: share premises and resources, invite comp teachers to parents' evenings and relevant INSET days. Languages Service provides support via training, resources website, annual Languages Celebration (MFL and mother tongue). Aiming for clusters of mainstream/comp schools, joint training. Ongoing research partnership with Goldsmiths feeds into these activities.

Discussion on teacher partnership project and Tower Hamlets policy

TH policy linking community langs / MFL / EAL is very positive – elsewhere there is a very compartmentalised view of language. Need to embed this approach in teacher education. Importance of offering wider variety of languages as MFL: make case to parents - all children can use Bengali, Somali etc directly in communities around them. Non-Bengali parents in primary school teaching Bengali have reacted positively. Arabic already taught in some TH schools as well as independent faith-based schools and mosques.

Need for mainstream and comp teachers to share approaches, importance of dialogue. Primary school in research project received positive Ofsted report, mentioning value of the work. Points relevant to Ofsted: understanding of local context, community cohesion, enhancement of curriculum. Note that TH's longitudinal analysis shows children attending comp classes half a term ahead compared with others in general achievement.

Promoting success through bilingual learning: some issues from a Saturday class in Bradford
Saiqa Riasat, Bilingual Learning and Teaching Association, Bradford; Jean Conteh, Leeds University (see also ppt on website)

Saiqa: community language teacher, also qualified as primary teacher in Bradford (course previously run by Jean). Bilingual Learning and Teaching Association (BLTA): idea from Saiqa and colleagues, has been running for 7 years. Jean is chair.

History of Bradford: textile mills, centre of world in Victorian times, long history of immigration including from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Most multicultural city in UK after London. 40% ethnic minority children: Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali.

BLTA began because language and identity not being recognised by mainstream education. BLTA teachers have developed a 'bilingual approach', so students can draw on their languages for learning. £60,000 funding from local network. Children from primary schools invited to Saturday classes, different language backgrounds not all shared by teachers. Belief that way you teach is what matters, valuing and welcoming children's langs.

Example of family tree: compare words in different languages for kinship terms, eg maternal/paternal relatives different terms in S. Asian langs, not in English. Explore lang and culture, eg use of different forms of address to show respect to elderly. Bingo with numbers in diff langs, learn how S. Asians count 15 on each hand instead of 5. Children share langs, raise self-esteem. Example of neighbourhood walk: students identify uses of langs, at mosque or in shops. Emphasise social and economic benefits of learning langs.

Encourage parents to use home lang in activities with children. Cooking workshop with parents: use mathematical terms such as 'weigh'. 'BLTA City' project with parents and children: plan roads, name buildings, give directions. Partners in Innovation - new project with Lottery Funding. At 2 schools, 5-week course for parents on strategies for literacy in home lang, children join parents for part of time. Emphasise benefits of home lang for learning, and that culture may be lost if lack of stories in home lang.

Tracking 4 children in mainstream classes, invite teachers to observe how children linking comp and primary learning eg counting in Punjabi in their head and in English to teacher. Link EAL, MFL, MT.

Issues for future: changing communities, new migration to UK esp Czech Republic and Slovakia (Roma background), Poland. Polish children doing well but Roma children experienced racism in countries of origin, sent to special schools. How support these children?

Magda and Albana becoming biliterate with dual language books and Shpresa

Raymonde Sneddon, University of East London and Luljeta Nuzi, Shpresa Albanian Programme (see also ppt on website)

Raymonde's research on how reading dual language books contributes to literacy development in mother tongue and English – see her Dual Language Books page on UEL website and new book: *Bilingual Books – Biliterate Children* (Trentham). Research with children reading dual lang books in Albanian, Urdu, Gujarati, Turkish, French – some alone, some with peers, some with parents. Children cracking a puzzle – working at edge of their skills, eg in order to translate Albanian word had to find new one in English ('ordeal'). Kept diaries during holidays and made own dual language book. Became proud of abilities. Improved literacy in both languages (top end of class in English), plus mothers' English improved and now training/working as classroom assistants.

At same time as dual language work, children participating in Shpresa project on primary school premises: Albanian dance and poetry performances. Supports bilingual and bicultural identities. Shpresa has pro-active approach to setting up comp classes in partnership with mainstream: parents talk to Head first, then Shpresa comes in. Offer 3-month project including Albanian lang classes, dance, drama, women's support group, parenting support group, cultural events. Schools benefit through cultural awareness, raised attainment, better attendance, links with parents. Children demand activities and help organise programme. 'I'm improving my life and my Albanian' – want to achieve

in mainstream and be on School Council. Children now running own campaigns for Albanian GCSE and end of detention for asylum seeker children.

Discussion: reps from Somali and Chinese schools comment on effectiveness of Shpresa approach, consider how could adapt to own context. Could help attract third generation students and parents.

Can children's understanding of own lang and community widen to respect for other communities?
Luljeta: first have to be proud of who you are – young people see selves as Albanian *and* British.
Raymonde: when interviewed children they spontaneously mentioned their friends and their langs.
Shpresa runs sessions for parents on living in multicultural city, challenging racism, at same time as encouraging parents (esp women) to become leaders in their own community.

Teacher education: making connections between complementary and mainstream schools

Gee Macrory, Manchester Metropolitan University (see also ppt on website)

Teachers from comp schools, and initial teacher trainees, both involved in COLT project (Community and Lesser Taught Languages), Routes into Languages North West. Comp teachers: workshops at university and visits to mainstream. Teacher trainees: workshops at university and visits to comp schools. Plus 'training the trainers' at university. Langs: Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu.

Comp teachers visiting mainstream schools (university drew on existing partnerships to arrange): opportunity to see in practice and gain insight into British education system. Pitfalls: conflicting models of pedagogy (MFL v 'bilingual' approaches) BUT conflict / tensions can be valuable in developing understanding. Comp school teachers may feel not relevant because they don't have resources (incl ICT resources) of mainstream school.

Training the trainers - 2 full day workshops covering: characteristics of a good teacher, developing subject knowledge, role of target language, teaching strategies, assessment, lesson observation. Points raised about content above:

- Should include introduction to bilingualism
- Re. target lang – important to consider different approaches
- Teachers often want strategies and resources, but underlying pedagogy is also important / Good if they can go away with something to try out – to stimulate development of reflective process
- Assessment issue esp. for langs with no GCSE or Asset Languages qualification. Schools could think about creating their own qualification.

Both comp teachers and ITE trainees positive about strategies learnt from programme and visits to other setting. Work with trainers highlighted differences in FL and CL pedagogy, need to focus on learner perspectives, and importance of validating what teachers already know even if they are unqualified. Certificate of attendance awarded (20 CAT points). High interest in QTS. HEFCE funded project. Should be replicated in institutions in other parts of country, but funding issue.

Immigrant families' involvement in their children's education in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country Nahia Intxausti, University of the Basque Country (see also ppt on website)

Autonomous Community is in Northern Spain, Spanish and Basque are official langs. Bilingual education in schools: 3 teaching models (not every model offered in each school)

Model A: in Spanish, with Basque as a subject

Model B: in Spanish and Basque

Model D: (NB no letter 'C' in Basque!) in Basque, Spanish as a subject

Mixed immigration to Basque Country (mostly Latin American, also Romanian, Moroccan, Portuguese and others). Many immigrant children are in Model A: why? Questionnaire with over 300 families, interviews with 22, about educational choices and views/strategies re lang of origin. Showed proximity to schools main factor, plus advice from others, social networks (attendance by other families of their community). Often school only offered one model, so no choice of langs! Some wanted to avoid problems with Basque lang (esp if Spanish is mother tongue), but more families positively wanted children to learn Basque.

Re lang of origin, almost all speak it at home but far fewer on the street (and only if Spanish their mother tongue). If mother tongue was a majority lang in their home country (eg Spanish), almost all continue it. But if was a minority lang in home country, only two-thirds continue. Issues of lang and power! Literacy less kept up with children than spoken lang – only one-third of ‘majority lang’ families, only 10% of ‘minority lang’ families. Very few comp classes set up, only for Arabic. Yet families have high expectations that children will keep up mother tongue – though families with Spanish more positive than others. But will this be the case?

Immigrants are not *causing* linguistic and educational problems – rather, may be getting messages from wider society that Basque is still not normalised even in Autonomous Community. Need to support cultural diversity and respect new communities, encourage them positively to learn Basque.

Creativity in the community languages classroom

Jim Anderson and Yu-Chiao Chung, Goldsmiths (see also ppt on website)

Project website: www.gold.ac.uk/clcl/multilingual-learning/creativity/

Funded by Nuffield Foundation, 2-year project: research / teacher development in community langs, building on Curriculum Guides for different langs previously developed at Goldsmiths. ‘Post-communicative language teaching’, ie more cognitively challenging tasks, using creativity as a spur, since it involves personal investment and self-expression. Parallel developments in Australia and US regarding new pedagogies for CLs. Does cross-curricular work lead to greater engagement and deeper learning? When students do own research (internet, local library), do they learn better and remember longer? For bilingual learners in particular, can involve identity development, empowerment.

Participants are CL teachers, some in mainstream, some in comp schools. Creative projects, some involving families. Ethnographic data including audio and videorecordings, fieldnotes. Analysed with regard to lang and literacy, cognition, intercultural understanding, personal and social development, pedagogy and professional development. To show how each of these developed, examples given from art projects in Arabic class, language/dance project in Tamil class, family homework on seasons in Chinese class. ‘Dynamic interaction with heritage.’ Boosts student confidence, engagement, understanding of lang and culture, research skills. Shifts learner-teacher roles and encourages home-school links. Needs to be taken on board by mainstream system as well as comp schools, to enrich learning for bilingual children.

Reflections on the day

Has highlighted funds of knowledge in communities and comp schools and value of links with mainstream. Need to take this message to union conferences, headteachers conferences and policymakers, emphasising that research shows the cognitive value of such learning as well as the need for children to engage on an emotional level.