



PDM 2

EAL principles, pedagogy and practice: first language as a tool for learning

Aims

- To introduce the key principles and pedagogy of EAL
- To begin to explore practical strategies based on the pedagogy for supporting EAL learners
- To focus on the use of first language as a key strategy for additional language development and access to the curriculum

Key messages

- Bilingual children learn across the curriculum through the medium of an additional language and learn the additional language through the medium of the curriculum – language development goes hand in hand with cognitive and academic development.
- There is an important distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive and academic language proficiency (CALP).
- Bilingualism is an asset and the first language has an important role in learning.
- It is crucial to keep cognitive challenge appropriately high by providing a supportive context for learning.

Overview of a suggested professional development programme

Learning and teaching: assessment for learning

PDM 1

Establishing layered curriculum targets as a context for language development

PDM 6

Day-to-day assessment

Learning and teaching: language development and curriculum access

PDM 2

EAL principles, pedagogy and practice: first language as a tool for learning

PDM 3

Integrated planning for language development and curriculum content

PDM 4

Supportive contexts: scaffolding language and learning

PDM 5

Speaking and listening: guided sessions for language development

Conditions for learning

PDM 7

Culture and identity: ethos, environment and curriculum

Partnerships beyond the classroom

PDM 8

Developing learning partnerships with parents, carers, families and communities



Suggested activities

Review and reflect on progress since the last meeting.

- What have you done?
- What was the impact?
- What have you learned?
- Share curriculum targets for this half-term.

Note: An exemplar scripted version of this PDM is available on the accompanying CD-ROM



- Partner talk activities to reflect on experience to date.
- Experiential learning:
 - listening to a story extract in an unfamiliar language;
 - reflecting on the 'meaning making' strategies employed;
 - 'unpacking' the learning.
- A similar experiential learning activity using mathematics as the context.
- Collaborative reading activity using text marking as a strategy to pick out key information (see CD-ROM for a suitable text *Being bilingual* and a grid to organise the key information collected in terms of BICS and CALP).
- Review and discuss guidance on the effective use of bilingual adults (see the handout on the accompanying CD-ROM).
- Review and discuss some frequently asked questions about the use of bilingual strategies (available on the accompanying CD-ROM).

Next steps

Finding out about children's other languages

School Census information on children's language tells us whether or not a child speaks English at home. The information comes from parents, carers and families.

Unfortunately some parents and carers, believing that schools would prefer to hear that children speak English, may not tell us about their children's other languages. Some parents and carers put English when actually, at that stage, English may not be their child's strongest language.

- Research children's other language skills and involve parents and carers in the discussion. A good way to do this is to explain to parents and carers that the school is very proud of the fact that many of the children can speak other languages as well as English.

It is important to have as much information as possible about children's language use in order to target resources effectively in school.

Note: Some children may feel their home language has no role in school and they may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about using it.



- Research children's attitudes to using their 'home' languages in school:
 - Observe and note activities in the classroom where children are or could be using their first language.
 - Interview a group of children:
 - Do they feel comfortable using their first languages in school?
 - Do they think they can use their first language to learn?
 - What do they think teachers' attitudes to their first languages are?*Note: Bilingual staff may get a different response to this question than other staff.*
- Read pages 14–17 (Bilingual strategies) in Unit 2 along with one of the school case studies from the National Literacy Strategy publication, *Supporting pupils learning English as an additional language* (DfES 0239/2000) available on the accompanying CD-ROM. Begin to think about how to implement bilingual strategies in the school context.

Notes

Specific

- Prepare visual support for the story or other experiential learning session.

General

- Arrangements should be made to facilitate participation by part-time staff, EMAG-funded staff and teaching assistants.
- Ensure that key messages are secure and that participants leave with a clear understanding of where they need to focus over the coming half-term.
- Staff who are confident in this area should support other colleagues.
- The activities above are intended as examples. Choose from, and adapt, the suggested activities to fit in with the current priorities for the school as identified in the half-termly whole-school curriculum targets.



Resources

See the CD-ROM which accompanies these materials for:

- a fully scripted example of this PDM;
- extract from *The Hungry Caterpillar* by E. Carle, translated and transcribed into romanised Mirpuri Punjabi, together with a question to provide a listening focus;
- task and feedback sheet for participants;
- observer's sheet;
- handout 'Being bilingual', an extract from *Learning to learn in a second language*, by P. Gibbons (1996) PETA* (together with a grid to extract and organise information about BICS and CALP);
- two case studies from *Supporting pupils learning English as an additional language* (revised edition, DfES 0239/2000): Regents Park Primary School and Northgate Primary School;
- example of a language attitude survey;
- frequently asked questions about the use of bilingual strategies;
- handout 'The role of bilingual adults in supporting learning and teaching'.

**This extract uses Australian terminology*

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years:

- Unit 1, pages 8–13, EAL pedagogy and the continuing and significant role of the bilingual child's first language
- Unit 2, pages 14–17, Bilingual strategies
- Unit 3, pages 23–25 Finding out about children's other languages
- 'First language for learning' (flier included in these materials)