

Present a series of portfolio tasks and professional reflection on the progress made in the development of personal language for speaking, reading and writing.

Task 1.

The theme was chosen to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the body and the different parts of the body. The target audience for this lesson was a year 1 class learning second language Welsh in an English medium school. The children have not been exposed to many simple sentences in Welsh but have shown enthusiasm and ability to remember simple sentence patterns and how to answer the simple sentences. The activities that were produced were to enable the children to use the body parts within everyday situations and within their writing.

During this session the children were played a video of the song 'Pen, Ysgwyddau, Coesau, Traed' and then they had the opportunity to sing the song and replicate the actions. This linked to the foundation phase framework through the oracy aspect of the Welsh language development section: eg.

'Range: joining in with simple rhymes and stories, simple rhymes, nursery rhymes, songs, stories and poetry. And Skills: view and listen carefully to a variety of visual and audio-visual stimuli and adopt a role, making a conscious use of movement, gesture and speech, using language appropriate to a role or situation' (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/foundation-phase-framework-revised-2015.pdf>).

The body parts theme was chosen to develop the children's knowledge further and it linked well with the Little Red Riding Hood theme that was being taught at the time. As the children learnt the different body parts they could then progress with their learning and learn a simple sentence 'Mae gen I ... tost' and 'Mae gan Mamgu ... tost'. This links with the Foundation phase framework in developing the children's sentence pattern and responding to simple instructions and being able to respond to simple sentence patterns. (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/foundation-phase-framework-revised-2015.pdf>). During the lesson there were other Welsh sentences that were introduced to the children incidentally to further develop the children's understanding of the Welsh language. These sentences were said in Welsh and then in English in order for the children to understand what was

being said. Ellis (1989) suggests that a second language is learnt best through language acquisition which is also suggested by O'Malley, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) as being one of the most effective ways for a second language to be learnt. Bloomfield (1933) suggests that language acquisition misleads the learner in two ways as firstly, it teaches the direct translation but not the reasons why grammatical changes happen and when you teach the grammatical differences between the two languages the language acquisition is lost as the learners are not using the language and therefore not developing the language skills needed to speak the language.

Task 2.

<https://youtu.be/7s9NiDQmZZM>

Task 3.

The first method used in the introduction to the teaching was a direct method as described by Richards, J.C. & Rodgers, T.S. (2014), they believe there are many ways to teach a second language however they concluded that the direct approach where the learner is exposed to the language that is wanted to be learnt is used within the situation as frequent as possible in order for the learner to acquire the language. During the introduction more incidental and implicit language could have been used. It would have been beneficial for the children to have more of the instructions in Welsh and more sentences said in Welsh and the English to reinforce the learning. Praise was used to encourage the children to participate and try to answer the questions. The children were all willing to take part and try to answer the question. It is important that they feel that they can speak some of the language and are confident to try. (Richards & Renandya 2002). Positive praise could have been used more to encourage the children within the lesson.

There was another method used which was the natural method where some of the language spoken was not translated but gestures and body movements were used to explain what was being said (Richards and Rodgers, 2014). The children interacted with the song and continued to sing the song at playtimes and around the school for days after the lessons were completed. This approach has some limitations as Sweet (1899) suggests that there are some methodologies within language that have to be learnt if the language is to be written and read. Sweet explains that these methodologies cannot be taught through acquisition. The spoken

language can be acquired however when asking the learner to read the subject language then certain rules and methods needs to be understood before the learner can decode the written language.

The Welsh Government reported that children developed their Welsh language skill when a more formal teaching approach was used however modelling the Welsh language when independent learning was introduced proved difficult. Since the introduction of the Foundation Phase framework it has been seen to increase the Welsh language used within the school setting and the use of songs and simple rhymes have helped with the learners understanding and Welsh language. Welsh medium schools have opted for an immersion method of learning the Welsh language and some schools have suggested that as many of the children who attend Welsh medium schools come from non Welsh speaking families, immersion could be proved too difficult to implement (Welsh Government, 2014). However, Hilton (2011) suggests that the immersion method of learning within a school setting can be beneficial and enable the learners to learn the focus language. In the study it shows that there must be an adequate amount of teachers speaking the focus language and at a high enough level to enable the learners to learn the language effectively. When an endangered language was taught in Hawaii through immersion it was not as effective due to the lack of teachers that spoke the language, full immersion could not happen, this is why the immersion method could not be used within English Medium schools in Wales. Being immersed in the Welsh language could happen in Welsh medium schools although as the children who attend Welsh medium schools do not come from Welsh speaking backgrounds the Welsh Government (2014) argue that immersion is not possible. From experience, immersion has been seen to work even though the family may not be Welsh speaking. Children are able to adapt to the two different languages being used and apply them to the situation that faces them at the time. (Bialystok, 1991)

When learning our first language we acquire the language and then as our language and vocabulary, increases we then develop our understanding of grammar and rules to enable us to be proficient in reading and writing the language, however the spoken language comes first. If we are to learn a second language would it not be acceptable to acquire the language and vocabulary to a certain degree prior to the

learning of the grammar and rules associated with the second language (Lightbown & Spada (2006).

The tasks that were prepared for the children in the lower ability were given a worksheet with a child which had boxes at the points of the body that children needed to label. There were word mats given to help with spelling. The children were able to identify the different body parts and label them correctly. Some of the children were able to sound out some of the words and they spelt them correctly. Welsh is a phonetic language which allows the learner to spell and write the language correctly. This can be a disadvantage when identifying learning difficulties such as dyslexia. (Armstrong, Masterton & Potts 2013). Through the use of the worksheet the children were able to identify the different body parts and recall the body parts in Welsh that they learnt during the song in the introduction and using the resource to help them if needed. The Welsh language used during the task could have been more frequent and repetitive to enable the children to develop their Welsh language further. There could have been more actions used to help the children and it would have been beneficial to have sung the song before starting the task to reinforce the learning.

The task for the middle ability children was using a worksheet but they did not have the body parts identified. The children had to identify the different parts of the body and label the child. They had word mats to help them if needed and the amount of Welsh used during the task by the teacher and the children was considerably more than the when working with the lower ability children. The task reinforced the learning from the introduction and throughout the task the children were able to ask questions in Welsh or ask what the question would be in Welsh. As the teacher was speaking Welsh and using gestures to help the children decode the language the children were happy to engage in short sentences with the teacher. This was using the immersion method. This method has been seen to have worked as the children have asked questions and for items that they would not have asked for before. Penfield and Tucker (2011) suggest that this learning is most effective after the acquisition method, children acquire language and are able to use the language in conversation when exposed to the focus language consistently.

The higher ability children were taught outdoors and they were asked to draw around one of them and then use the resources to help them label the body. They were then

asked to label one part of the body that they did not learn in the song in the introduction, this was to develop their knowledge further and determine if they had remembered any body parts that had been mentioned during the lesson. Repetition of the language enables the children to remember and process the information in order for recall to be effective. (Bygate, M, Skehan, & Swain, 2013). The language used in Welsh was translated into English and then back to Welsh in order for the children to have an understanding of what was being said. Gestures and hand signals were also used to allow for the children to decode what is being said. They could interoperate the language being used and with the implied hand gestures. This method of teaching a second language is supported by Gullberg (1998). Although there was an increased amount of Welsh used in the task, there could have been more and a more immersive method could have been adopted to develop the children's learning further.

The tasks were age appropriate and differentiated for the needs of the learner. The learners enjoyed the tasks and learning a new song. Learning a second language through the use of song has proven to be an effective way of learning a new language as supported by (Zaraysky, S 2009). The teacher could have been more enthusiastic and encouraged the children more with their Welsh speaking skills. The tasks were appropriate for the age and ability of the children and enabled the children to further their Welsh language vocabulary. The tasks led well onto the next lesson which was 'Mae gen I ...tost' and 'Mae gan Mamgu ... tost'. Learning the body parts allowed the children to suggest what may be wrong with them and what may be wrong with grandma. Without this input the children would have struggled to share their opinion. Overall the lesson and Welsh language was satisfactory however there are areas that could be developed, and the teacher will learn from this and develop other teaching skills.

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