Assessment for ALL

A presentation to stimulate discussion on the assessment of languages in the primary school

This presentation has been created in 2016-17 by the ALL Primary Steering Group to stimulate professional discussion.

It is based on the paper **Assessment in Foreign Languages in Key Stage 2** published by ESAG in 2015.
ESAG is one of the Expert Subject Advisory Groups originally brought together by the Teaching Agency in 2012 and formed of primary school teachers and headteachers, teacher educators, leaders of professional associations, and university academics (more information here:
The full original paper authored by Daryl Bailey, Emma Marsden, and Sally Maynard can be found here:
http://expertsubjectgroups.co.uk/docs/ESAGMFLGroupAssessmentStatement.pdf

This Presentation uses quotations from the document to encourage professional discussion.

National Curriculum

- **Purpose of study**
- *Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.*

This offers a welcome opportunity for Primary and Secondary school colleagues to take a fresh look together at what language learning is for.

The Programme of Study can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-progammes-of-study

What is the role of language learning in the primary school?

Views will vary between professionals on the detail of focus points, but they are likely to include
- Enjoyment
- Developing positive attitudes towards other people and cultures
- Developing general language awareness, spotting connections and differences between literacies
- Expanding experience of texts
- Making connections
- Communication and self-efficacy
- Developing the language skills of speaking with a good accent, pronunciation and intonation, and recognizing familiar spoken language
- Focussing at appropriate developmental points on the skills of reading for different purposes and of writing in another language

- How are these experiences and skills developed in the Secondary phase? See next screen

•What characterizes language learning in the secondary school?

Within the new curriculum (and in the GCSE) students will be building on primary experiences in Literacy and Language learning:

- developing their understanding of grammar and how to manipulate it

- developing confidence in more authentic communication, in relation to oral and written skills, and particularly with a focus on spontaneous speaking, writing at greater length and maintaining accuracy

- exploring culture, including through authentic texts of different sorts and literature

- honing skills of translating in both directions

ESAG:

- Effective assessment practice in language learning should foster motivation, enjoyment and progress in learners.

This is a quotation from the ESAG document

Language learners at all ages and of all abilities need to feel a sense that they are making progress, that they can at certain points do something more than, or do it better than, they could do previously; this sense is intimately connected with the motivation to continue learning. They also need to feel that progress is acknowledged. Of course, secondary students now need more than ever to

be resilient over the 5 years of study for GCSE.

•What can a primary teacher look for if they are to assess languages effectively?

Primary teachers are experienced in assessing across the curriculum, and the skills involved are the same, so they already have considerable expertise.
The teacher would be looking for increasing confidence in speaking and listening, and a growing willingness to explore new language in reading and writing when appropriate.

In the primary context this sense of progress and achievement may be exemplified through pupils' involvement:
- in group or individual performance (e.g. teachers observe: pronunciation, recall, response to familiar classroom language)
- in a display of work (e.g. teachers observe accuracy and recall in written work)
- in the work of older or younger pupils in whole school assemblies (e.g. teachers observe children understanding and

joining in with language in a different context)
as well as in more formal contexts if these are in use in schools
such as a vocabulary test, dictation, listening exercises.

•What could the teacher's evidence be?

Evidence could encompass:
- display
- video
- audio recording
- exercise books
- photos
- learning journal

If the evidence is to provide a clear and reliable picture of children's progress, it will be necessary to give a commentary to clarify the examples given above (with indication of the context and support given e.g. in a piece of written work - were children given a writing frame? or was it independent writing? In speaking was it prepared or spontaneous speaking?

Sharing views on assessment procedures is an important aspect of professional development.

ESAG

- Assessment should be embedded in the language learning process, respecting that language development includes making mistakes, whilst also establishing high expectations for individuals.

This is a quotation from the ESAG document

What do you understand by 'embedded in the language learning process'. It could perhaps best be interpreted as ensuring that the teacher is making a note of progress/lack of progress while teaching. So in many instances there is no need for a separate assessment task; the assessment emerges from observation of the activities designed in the lesson. For example, were most children on the whole able to join in? Was there anybody during 'Show me' activities who needed to look at what their neighbour was showing before they could join in? Which children were getting restless because they were ready for more of a challenge?

•What is it important to be accurate with, in the different years of KS2?

We are asking children to take risks and have a go with the foreign language; so we have to be careful about not undermining their motivation through correction.
As in an Early Years context teachers may model correct usage rather than just 'correct'.
At some point correction of inaccuracies and errors will be necessary – especially if these are shared by a number of pupils in the class – however excessive correction is highly demotivating.

Primary Teachers may wish to discuss the following

with Secondary colleagues:
- What are the common misunderstandings or confusions for learners of specific languages?
- What aspects will, in any case, be further refined in later years / in secondary?
This may help define which 'mistakes' need to be addressed by the primary teacher.

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- All learners should be able to describe their own progress in ways that can be fully understood by themselves, their parents/guardians and other stakeholders in primary and secondary schools.

For this to happen, teachers need to be clear about the steps children need to take to progress in speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. These may be specific to different school contexts.
Pupil and stakeholders then need to see these steps expressed in comprehensible terms. (See next screen)

Can you identify in general terms (understandable to children and families) how your scheme of work progresses through the aims of the National Curriculum?

- **Aims**
- The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:
- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

In pupil language this might be expressed as:

- Listening to other people, and what they say about their lives, and later reading about this
- Listening to, watching and reading enjoyable things
- Talking and later writing about our lives and things that interest us
- Finding out about other people, places and ways of life
- Investigating how people do things in different places, and thinking about our own customs
- Comparing English and the new language, and thinking about how we learn

See next screen for a suggestion of how Progression might be described.

Progression in Speaking

- The Notes to this screen are purely illustrative; the actual progression would depend on the scheme of work

In steps of progression for Speaking, this might be exemplified in pupil language as:

I can repeat a word I hear my teacher say with good pronunciation
I can repeat a word I hear from a song / video with good pronunciation
I can remember a familiar word quickly
I can use a familiar word properly with good pronunciation

I can repeat a phrase / sentence / question I hear my teacher say with good pronunciation
I can repeat a phrase / sentence / question I hear from a song / video with good pronunciation
I can remember a familiar phrase / sentence / question quickly
I can use a familiar phrase / sentence / question properly with good pronunciation

I can read a written word (and later phrase / sentence) and say it with good pronunciation

In Y 3 I can   give a greeting with help
In Y 4 I can   give a greeting without help
*   ask a question with help*

ask for help
In Y 5 I can give a greeting without help
ask a question without help
express an opinion with help, etc.

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- Monitoring and describing progress in language learning should be consistent across Key Stage 2

This is a quotation from the ESAG document

. Effective practice in monitoring other aspects of the curriculum will certainly be valuable to the Language coordinator as it can inform how they monitor related areas:
- development of grammatical language / knowledge as in Literacy,
- cultural awareness and SMSC aspects of the curriculum as in PSHE,
ALL published in 2016 a Language Coordinator's Handbook with advice on these and other matters.
https://allconnectblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/all-connect-ks2-languages-coordinator-handbook1.pdf

Local meetings to share views, experiences and strategies are important professional development opportunities for all teachers; for primary Language coordinators such meetings may be hosted by a local institution, or by an ALL Primary Hub:

www.all-

languages.org.uk/community/branches_and_networks/about_all_local_ and_regional_groups/about_primary_hubs

ESAG

- Language learning at Key Stage 3 should build on the transferable skills and knowledge which primary school learners will bring to their Secondary foreign language learning, even if the language studied may be different. Assessment should motivate learners at this point to recognize their strengths in meeting a new challenge.

This is a quotation from the ESAG document

•How can pupils be prepared to describe their language learning experience when they get to their new school?

If pupils are enabled by the assessment procedures to describe not only their achievements and experiences but also the skills and strategies they have developed at the primary phase, they will be in a position to inform discussion at the point of transfer. Children need to be used to talking about their language learning experience and describing their individual strengths and areas for improvement in terms that are clear and helpful to their new teachers e.g. going beyond topic lists.
'I enjoy …. doing drama, singing songs, reading, meeting people …'
' I am good at … listening to the teacher, talking in the foreign language, working out what I am reading about, answering questions, remembering words, spelling ….'
'I can use … a dictionary, a verb table …'

'I have travelled to …'
' From English lessons I know about … (grammatical content cf SPAG / GPS)

ALL Connect, a national CPD programme coordinated by ALL published in 2016 a Transition Toolkit with advice on these and other matters.
https://allconnectblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/all-connect-transition-toolkit.pdf

ESAG

- Primary and Secondary colleagues together should consider how best to share information about language learning in the primary phase, and how to develop and build on this.

This is a quotation from the ESAG document

•If it were possible to set up such a meeting between primary and secondary colleagues, what would be on the agenda?

The Primary language learning experience is of course valuable in its own right, and includes elements of progression towards KS3 experience.

See ESAG Appendices C and D for suggestions

•What other sources of advice are there?

The following documents can be found in the Appendices of ESAG document and could provide a useful springboard for discussion by colleagues from both phases.

Checklist for Assessing Primary Languages.

Secondary-ready in foreign languages / 'beginning to use verbs'

How can my language learning in Primary School help me at Secondary School?

ALL Primary Steering Group recommends the following **resources and guidance** on assessment in language learning as additional starting points to support teachers and schools:
DfE *Assessment Principles*: generic policy information for all schools on developing effective assessment systems
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/assessment-- principles-- school--curriculum

The *Association for Language Learning (ALL)* hosts free pages of **resources, advice and guidance for language teachers, language coordinators and head teachers. It provides a gateway to further free online support from a wide range of websites including cultural institutes, educational institutions, local authorities, blogs and publishers:** http://www.all--languages.org.uk/teaching/guidance/
Some items on assessment are here:

http://www.all-languages.org.uk/?s=assessment

Scottish CiLT hosts a Junior European Language Portfolio *SCILT's Junior European Language Porfolio*
http://www.scilt.org.uk/News/NewsView/tabid/1311/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/3436/SCILTs-Junior-European-Language-Portfolio-available-for-download-now.aspx

•What other sources of advice are there?

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR)*: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* is a framework of reference used in Europe, designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp

DCSF *Key Stage 2 framework for languages* offers non--statutory guidelines and guidance for assessing language learning at KS2, including examples of expected outcomes from Year 3 to Year 6: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110511211850/http:/nationalstrategies .sta ndards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/85274

DfE/CfBT *Languages Support Programme Projects Overview* outlines action research into good practice in 94 language projects from 33 Teaching Schools Alliances (TSA): http://www.camteach.org.uk/78/dfecfbt--languages--support--programme This includes the Westdene TSA's project on the *Assessment of Languages in the Primary Classroom http://www.thelifecloud.net/schools/WTSA/spaces/LanguageSupportProgramme/*

Language Coordinators may be interested to explore and discuss:
https://pdcinmfl.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/assessment-framework-for-mfl-april-13.pdf

•What other sources of advice are there?

THE LANGUAGE MAGICIAN is an Erasmus+project in development until 2018; it has a focus on assessing Primary children's language competence through an online game:
https://www.thelanguagemagician.net/

Sharing Languages is a wiki aiming to collate ideas and suggestions from Primary and Secondary Language teachers on key issues, including Assessment.
https://sharingprimarylanguages.wikispaces.com/