QTalking for SCOTLAND

Continuing Professional Development materials

with video and supporting print text

for the development of

Talking and Listening

in English and Modern Languages

Q**Talking**
for**SCOTLAND**

www.hmie.gov.uk

Users of this material might also like to refer to the HMIE website where updates and the most recent reports can be consulted. For example, a Modern Languages report "Progress in addressing the recommendations of Citizens of a Multilingual World" is available from spring, 2005.

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

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ON SCREEN COUNTER

Within the notes that follow, there are numerical references to quotations and sections of the video programme. To locate the relevant section of the video, please use the on-screen counter.

QTalking forSCOTLAND

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TALKING FOR SCOTLAND : VIDEO OUTLINE CONTENT

Children are born with an impressive ability to learn language, therefore the educational process is able to build on a dynamic that is already present. The principles that apply to the development of English language are equally applicable to all language learning.
Good nursery education provides a microcosm of effective language development.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT : THE PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

There is a set of principles that can guide the structured development of talking and listening.

- The interest of pupils must be engaged - often through their being involved in real and meaningful activities.
- A wide range of opportunities for talking and listening should be provided.
- Literature provides an invaluable context for talking and listening, but so also do many opportunities outside of formal classroom work.
- It is important to ensure that young people are made aware of the skills associated with effective talking and listening. Those skills can be developed and applied in a variety of contexts that should include formal presentation and group discussion.
- Teachers should model good practice in talking and listening. In foreign language learning, those models should, where possible, include native speakers.
- Appropriate forms of support should be provided in order to scaffold pupils' oral language development.
- Teachers should ensure that there is a planned progression in the range of language tasks and activities presented to pupils.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT : CHALLENGES OF LISTENING

The challenges of listening should never be under-estimated and it is helpful to remain conscious of certain important characteristics of listening.

- Listeners tend to vary the amount of concentration given to a speaker.
- Hearing is not the equivalent of understanding.
- There are different levels of listening including selective listening, deep listening and critical listening.
- The skills of listening need to be taught: the direct teaching of those skills should not be confused with giving listening practice.
- Talkers should learn to communicate in a way that facilitates effective listening.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING

Talking and listening provide important assessment evidence. That evidence can be collected in a variety of ways, including dialogue with pupils. Assessment criteria should be made explicit for pupils.
The assessment of talking and listening should be carefully planned.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT : LANGUAGE AND THE MIND

Language development is fundamental to clarifying thinking. To foster both language development and thinking, pupils benefit from being put into challenging situations in which they explore ideas and solve problems. However, when pupils are using oral language to investigate ideas, it should be recognised that they are engaged in a process which may be linguistically unrefined. We may interpret this as evidence of the process of exploration and growth.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT : SUPPORT FOR READING AND WRITING

Talking is an important aspect of preparation for writing. Not only does it clarify thinking that may, later, be expressed in writing, but talking can also motivate and stimulate ideas.

Iain Morris, Producer - Talking for Scotland
Kharis Productions Limited

video: outline content

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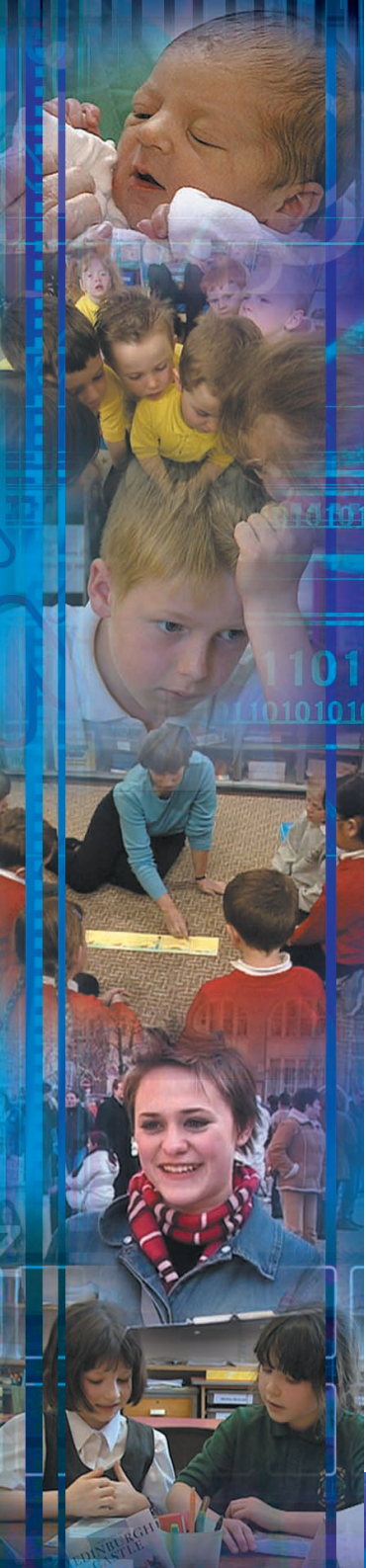
TEACHERS' NOTES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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1. ENGAGING INTEREST

"Personally, I would know if I was engaging that child - if they showed an interest, that they could communicate with me, that they were willing to develop what I was talking about or what they were talking about.
That is my guide."
[ANNE GRANT, NURSERY TEACHER.
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 10.18-10.30]

The video shows numerous examples of pupils deriving a great deal of pleasure from listening and talking.

From your own practice, reflect on two or three lessons or learning sequences which included listening and talking and which pupils seemed particularly to enjoy. Try to identify the factors that contributed to the pupils' enjoyment.

Motivating pupils and securing their engagement is a complex business. In the video we see pupils talking and listening in diverse situations: about a topic they have chosen and researched themselves; on a topic picked out of a hat; about personal issues and feelings; about abstract themes. Sometimes the interaction is with a small group of their peers; at other times, to an audience of pupils - on occasions from another class.

Teachers and researchers have identified the following factors as important in securing engagement:

* the task is challenging but its outcome is clear and achievable
* the participants have a say in formulating both topic and task

* the participants feel that the activity is purposeful and they have something to gain from talking and listening
* there is scope for creative thinking
* the other participants share their engagement
* the classroom culture is supportive

Carefully consider what each one might mean in your situation. Suggest any other factors that you have found to be important in determining the level of pupils' engagement in listening and talking activities.
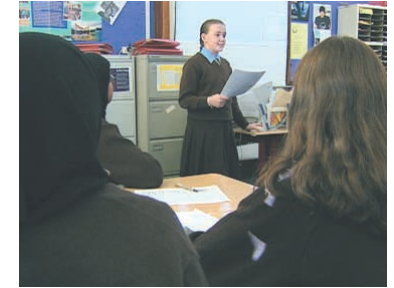
"But talking is not a joy-filled experience for everyone - as some are prepared to explain."
[NARRATOR. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 07.14- 08.11]

engaging interest

Several young people appearing on the video attribute their reluctance to speak to shyness. It is a matter of debate as to whether the real cause of difficulty is shyness or lack of confidence in their own fluency **or** low self- esteem (which makes them feel they have nothing worthwhile to say) **or** cultural influences that are in conflict with the kinds of talking and listening the school wishes to develop. Whatever the reason, we need to remember the importance of the affective dimension of talking and listening.

Finding a way of helping reluctant pupils involves attempting to diagnose causes which, in some cases, relate to contextual factors.[1]

As a means of supporting reluctant talkers, consider, in your situation, the extent to which you may be able to give pupils time to think and plan what they are going to say and allow them to negotiate the topic, task and interlocutor / audience.

"Some children come in and they're very confident speakers. Then we get other children that come in that are very reserved, they're very shy... and it's our job to help the children, to give the facilities to increase their language, to increase their talking, but also to listen."
[ANNE GRANT, NURSERY TEACHER. 03.05-03.29]

Attempting to engage pupils' interest in oral activities by giving them time to think, plan and negotiate might help to build up their confidence and

[1] *For practical suggestions on remedying contextual factors, see the LTS staff development package* **Assessment in the Classroom: Listening and Talking**

trust. However, in some cases, these pupils will need extra support if they are to learn effectively in subsequent years.

Consider which of the following might be possible to support such children.

- *Increased one-to-one support - with you, learning support staff, classroom assistants, older pupil 'buddies'.*

- *Preparing advice for parents.*

- *Exposing them to as much oral language as possible.*

- *Giving them plenty of time to think about a topic or situation before you engage them in talk.*

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engaging interest

2. TALKING AND LISTENING FOR LEARNING

"The teacher's a lot more brainy than us, and sometimes I don't understand it. Jamie can pick it up quite easily and she makes it a lot less complicated."
SCIENCE PUPIL 1.
"I've understood it if I can explain it to someone."
SCIENCE PUPIL 2.
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 33.31-33.44]

Promoting pupils' pleasure in classroom activity, though worthwhile, is not an end in itself. By contrast, enhancing their capacity to think is a fundamentally important aim. By creating situations in which pupils have to articulate and develop their own ideas, as well as those of others, the teacher can help pupils to develop the mental processes essential to effective learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The video presents several testimonies to the value of pupil-talk in advancing learning: a group of pupils working on a science problem express their appreciation of the value of collaborative talk; the teacher of the class in which pupils have worked in groups to present on a theme from Macbeth asserts that their talking and listening has had a very positive impact on the quality of their critical evaluation essays.

Think again about the benefits of those occasions when your pupils were particularly engaged. Identify and evaluate the nature of the learning that seemed to be taking place.

TALKING AND LISTENING FOR LEARNING...

...often take place through

• **TEACHER QUESTIONING**
• **GROUP DISCUSSIONS**
• **PUPILS' ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

In looking at some examples of each on the video, we can begin to consider how these activities can all be used even more effectively to help pupils to become more actively involved in their own learning through talking and listening. (It should be noted, of course, that there are many different types of talking and listening opportunities. Therefore, the examples that follow do not represent all those likely to be found in a well balanced curriculum.)

• TEACHER QUESTIONING
HMSCI Donaldson stresses the importance of valuing what each young person says and capitalising on what they have said in order to

talking and listening for learning

take forward their ability to speak. In the video, some of the examples of primary teachers helping individual children to develop their ideas through questioning, within a very supportive environment, illustrate good practice in this respect.

Reflect on the extent to which such practice will allow the teacher to take account of the child's existing experience of language and also build upon it.

The idea of the teacher focusing on one child in order to elicit more sustained talk and developed ideas is in contrast with a great deal of teacher interaction with the whole class. Typically, the latter involves the teacher seeking answers to questions, inviting recall of facts from as many pupils as possible and, in many cases, getting only brief and undeveloped answers from a small number of individuals.

Reflect on whether you could use whole-class teacher-led sessions more effectively to help pupils to give more extended responses - for example, by asking for reasons for statements, or by inviting them to take account of other positions. You may want to consider, for example:

- the nature of the questions you ask

- how the pace of these teacher/pupil exchanges might have to change

- the implications for class management

- how to deal with particularly shy pupils

- the extent to which the culture of the classroom might need to change

Moving towards a situation in which whole-class interactions consist of sustained dialogue might involve several steps in a planned process of development.

Consider whether it would suit your practice to begin such a process by focusing on individuals as they work in small groups or by using parts of the lesson when pupils are reporting on group work to ask more probing questions.

• GROUP DISCUSSION AND REPORT BACK

The video programme presents several examples of group discussion in most of which pupils are required to report back.

Example 1

In one extract from the video, primary pupils have to choose one of four poems for inclusion in a class anthology. In devising the task, the teacher hoped that the pupils would read the poems critically, express their insights, justify their preferences and arrive at a consensus.
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 14.46-15.03]

talking and listening for learning

From the evidence of the video extract, which of her aims seem to be realised?

How important is it that all three poems were genuine contenders?

How important do you consider it to be to have a pupil in each group who is a more able reader and/or communicator than the other participants?

No apparent roles have been assigned to the pupils in this group. Some teachers, however, have found it useful to assign a role to each participant in group discussions.

Reflect on your own experience in this area.

What do pupils need to know about listening in order to make a discussion of this kind effective?

To what extent might the kind of extended teacher questioning referred to in the section above have acted as a scaffold for these pupils' independent efforts at justifying their statements?

After the discussion, one pupil from each group reported to the class.

In the reporting-back session following a group discussion of this kind, might there be a place for 'the dissenting voice' who cannot agree with the others?

How important do you consider it to be that reports were followed by pupil questioning and/or teacher questioning? What would be the purpose of such questioning?

This task presents obvious opportunities for pupils to make personal responses essential to engagement with literature.

Consider which features of the task might transfer well to other curricular areas.

The focus of the teacher's feedback to these pupils might have been on their insights into the poems or on their talking and listening skills or on both.

Consider the basis on which you, as a teacher, would decide on whether content or talking and listening behaviour will be your focus.

Tasks of this kind which require pupils to make decisions can lead them to think creatively. (Another striking example on the video is illustrated by the pupils who chose to dramatise Macbeth themes in the format of a television show. [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 36.47-37.50])

Try to identify aspects of the curriculum within your teaching responsibility that would allow pupils to make genuine decisions after group discussion.

- **GROUP DISCUSSION AND REPORT BACK : Example 2**

[SEE VIDEO EXTRACTS 15.04-15.19; 18.01-19.54; 23.12-23.20] The learning sequence for the oral activity on The Merchant of Venice was as follows:

- teacher-led discussion on 'what makes a good group discussion'; criteria written on blackboard
- each group given different task remit, with 10 minutes to decide how they will carry it out
- groups told they have 20 minutes to develop their ideas

talking and listening for learning

- at the end of this time, groups given a further five minutes to help the reporter prepare an oral summary of their conclusions
- reporters present their conclusions and are questioned by the class
- pupils reconvene in groups and consider how well they met the group discussion criteria

Identify those aspects of the learning sequence that might have contributed to the high level of engagement in group discussions.

Effective group discussion depends on pupils being 'aware of others' (one of the main differentiating factors between levels of performance in <u>English Language 5-14</u>) and listening to them.

In the video, a girl and boy from this class express their insights into what is involved in being a good listener. [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 24.59-25.21]

Consider which of the following might have helped them to acquire these insights:

- *self-assessment*
- *peer assessment*
- *use of criteria*
- *assessment of others*
- *seeing themselves on video*
- *direct teaching*
- *drama*

The focus for this lesson was group discussion. However, the reporting-back section in which pupils had to deliver extended talk provided a high level of challenge. The teacher built in support for this as follows:

- content reflected current discussion
- group had five minutes to help speaker to prepare
- bullet point notes as prompts

Often, reports on group discussion are written and read aloud.
Consider whether you might be able to adopt similar supports in order to use reporting-back time more effectively to develop pupils' talking - and thinking. Consider, too, whether your pupils would benefit from direct teaching about specific linguistic forms that help listeners follow the sequence of ideas more easily.

Pupils were engaged in two different kinds of oral communication - exploratory discussion in groups and making - and listening to - more formal presentations.

From the evidence in the video, how well did pupils recognise the differences? Consider how important it is to make pupils aware that different activities involve different uses of language.
We see on the video pupils being taught techniques to make presentations more appealing to the listener.
How might you guard against such support leading to conformity and limiting creativity?

These pupils will take part in several learning sequences of this kind before they ever have to write anything about The Merchant of Venice.

Identify the benefits this might have on their understanding and appreciation of the play. Consider, too, the prejudices and difficulties that the teacher might have to face and how these might be overcome.

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• **PUPILS' ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

In order to be effective in presentation, pupils regularly need to be reminded that there are important communication skills to be developed and practised.

"Children come into school. They talk, they listen, and in the process they learn about other things as well, but in order for them to learn about these other things, they really have to learn the skills within talking and listening."
[JUNE STEWART, HEADTEACHER. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 03.36-03.50]

"There's a (misplaced) feeling that we all talk and so we all know what we're doing..."
[FIONA NORRIS, ENGLISH ADVISER. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 16.47-17.16]

Contributors to the video make it clear that pupils have to be taught the skills of talking and listening - including those involved in addressing an audience. [For examples of techniques being taught to secondary pupils, SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 16.21-17.22]

Consider if your pupils might benefit from a teaching focus on any of the following:
• *making an impact at the start*
• *rounding off on a high note*
• *helping the listener identify stages in the presentation or talk*
• *using eye contact, voice modulation, expression and body language to good effect*
• *selecting appropriate examples*
• *using humour*
• *training in technology eg the use of powerpoint*

In this example, class members were addressing their peers on a variety of topics. [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 11.42-12.10] Addressing an audience on an abstract topic represents a high-level challenge that the teacher of

this S2 class rightly judged appropriate for pupils who have previously demonstrated their ability to talk about more personal and familiar topics.

Consider the effects of choice and the use of technology on pupils' motivation.

The kind of support built in by the teacher is different from that for The Merchant of Venice talks. As follows:

• pupils researched content
• long preparation time
• use of powerpoint as prompt

Presentations of this kind are appropriate to many curricular areas.

Consider which aspects might benefit from teacher demonstration or modelling in order to develop pupils' confidence and competence.

The teacher of this class was also concerned to use these presentations to develop pupils' critical listening. After each presentation, pupils had to ask questions on the content and then, in small groups, evaluate the form and work out a constructive way of reporting their findings to the speaker. Throughout the learning sequence, the teacher emphasised the relationship between talking and listening, reminding pupils, for instance, that in preparing their presentations they had to find ways of making the content easily accessible to the listener. (Other contributors to the video give further examples of this.) Only two or, at most, three presentations were delivered in any one day.

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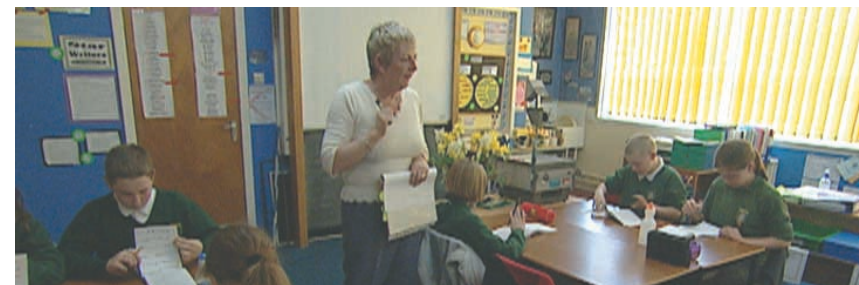
The following protocol provides a level of support appropriate to pupils at this stage:

Before listening, pupils
- review what they already know about the topic
- identify questions they hope the presentation will answer
- put aside any strong feelings they have about the topic
- prepare to learn from the speaker

During listening, pupils
- concentrate and look at the speaker and the headings, consciously linking these to the spoken words
- use body language and expression to show interest and encourage the speaker

For questions, the following openers can be suggested
- 'I was interested in what you said about .... Can you tell me more?'
- 'I would have liked to know more about .... Did you find out anything about that in your research?'
- 'My view about this topic is that .... Can you tell me anything more to help me change my mind?'

In evaluating, the pupils can consider elements such as
- clarity of argument
- use of examples
- choice of vocabulary
- appropriateness and use made of the prompts

Consider to what extent this protocol reflects the insights into listening given by the S2 girl on the video who describes how she processes new information.
"I listen to what they're saying. Then I absorb it. Then I process it a bit like a computer, and then I add my own opinions and see if I disagree with it, or agree with it, or if it's totally irrelevant to what I'm thinking."
[S2 PUPIL. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 18.53-19.06]

Reflect on the extent to which the above protocol would be appropriate for your pupils and for the kind of listening you would like to develop in your curricular area. You might conclude that, for younger pupils, two more basic responses would be sought, for example 'I liked the bit about ....' and 'I liked the way she .....' With older pupils, you might want them to consider questions such as: was the argument logical, how did the examples support it, what ideas or facts should have been included but were not; what was the speaker's stance?

At no stage in this learning sequence did pupils write anything - notes, for example. Neither did they use any of the currently available listening frames.

Consider the pros and cons of this.

The teacher of this class was using her pupils' presentations as a resource for the teaching of critical listening.

Reflect on other classroom activities that you might use as a resource. Identify other resources that might be readily available for the teaching of listening, for example school assemblies, visiting speakers, schools broadcasts, other media programmes.

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talking and listening for learning

3. CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALKING AND LISTENING DEVELOPMENT

"All young people need a wide and rich range of opportunities for discussion, for talking about ideas."
[HMI FRANCES CORCORAN. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 14.06-14.16]

The curriculum as a whole offers many opportunities for pupils to learn by listening and talking for genuine purposes and for the skills involved to be introduced, practised and consolidated.

TALKING AND LISTENING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

"Listening and talking are absolutely fundamental skills for learning and it is absolutely essential that they are developed, not only in the context of English, but across the curriculum."
[HMSCI DONALDSON. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT: 00.04-00.15]
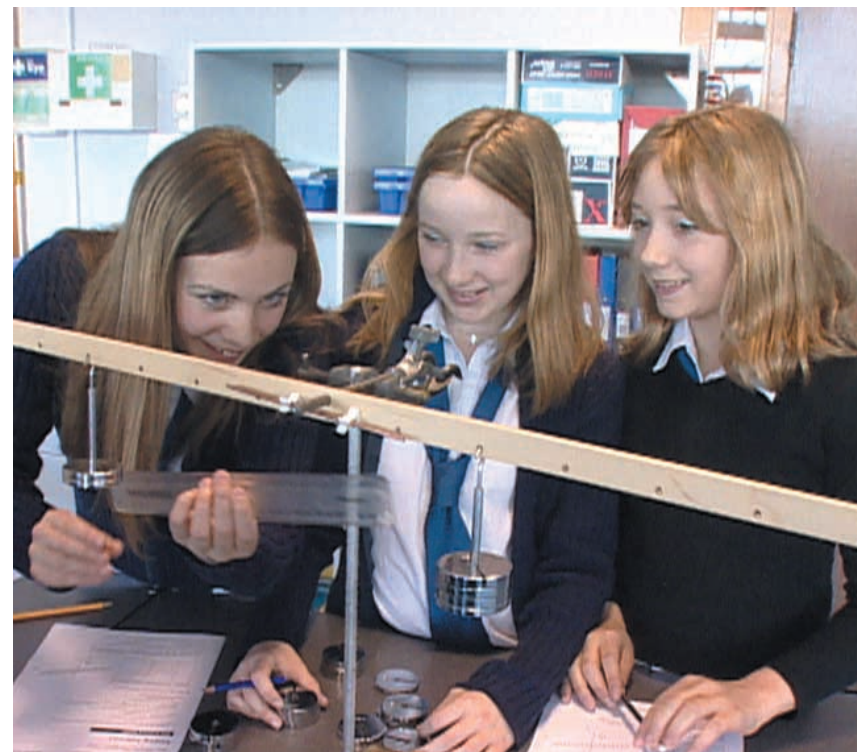
The video shows pupils in a science class talking through a problem and speaking about the support such a strategy offers. [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 33.05-33.44]

Focus on one curricular area in which you see clear opportunities for pupils to be active learners, using talking and listening to develop their own ideas and those of others in a similar way. Devise one or two activities that involve them in making group decisions or in solving a problem collaboratively.

creating opportunities for talking and listening development

In observing pupils participating in these activities, consider the extent to which they match Dr Carolyn Yates's description of the distinctive features of the language pupils use when thinking through problems.

"If the focus on talking is thinking, then hesitancy, wrong answers, sentences that tail off and drift into nothing are all indications that the child is thinking. It's what we do if we're thinking out loud. It isn't a nice pat, tidy, fluent thing. It's a bumpy thing full of pauses."
[DR CAROLYN YATES, COGNITIVE ACCELERATION PROGRAMMES. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 35.12-35.32]

The main purpose for promoting talking and listening, so far addressed in this staff development resource, has been to develop pupils' capacity to learn. As teachers, we need also to be concerned with helping pupils to find their own voice and be able to use it to become effective communicators outside the classroom. We also need to sustain their capacity for lifelong learning. Where schools are committed to developing oral skills, they often attempt to give pupils as many opportunities as possible to have real communicative experience outside their own classrooms, including those that require decision-making and creative thinking.

The video shows three examples of effective communication outside of formal classroom work:

• a group of primary 7 pupils discussing their experience of being reading buddies to younger children
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 12.33-12.52]

• two pupils informing other classes in the school about a competition
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 15.19-15.46]

• pupils discussing issues at a school council meeting
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 15.47-16.17]

Consider whether your school does involve pupils in each of the following and, if not, might it be a worthwhile and practical activity?

• *addressing assemblies*
• *welcoming and guiding visitors*
• *presenting a case on homelessness to the local authority's housing department*
• *showing what they can do with ICT to a group of HMIE*
• *giving a vote of thanks to visitors*
• *attending a community seminar on racism and presenting to councillors*
• *taking part in debating competitions*
• *taking part in a mock trial on youth justice issues*
• *interviewing family and neighbours on specific topics*
• *running a school radio*
• *organising and presenting a school performance for the community*
• *preparing and narrating a storyboard for a school video*

Decide on how you will prepare pupils for these activities, encourage them to reflect on their performance and share their reflections with others.

creating opportunities for talking and listening development

LINKING TALKING AND LISTENING WITH READING AND WRITING

Reading and writing provide many opportunities for talking and listening, but talking and listening in turn can often support the quality of pupils' reading and writing.

"For many children, we're asking them to write about things that really are beyond their experience and an important part of the preparation for writing is to allow children to rehearse their ideas, to explore them."
[CATHRIN HOWELLS, LEARNING & TEACHING SCOTLAND.
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 37.50-38.02]

Within the English language curriculum a great deal of teaching and learning time has to be spent on developing reading and writing (particularly in a climate of concern about literacy standards). While the focus of this staff development resource is on listening and talking, in practice, the four modes of language are interdependent. A teacher who conveys a sense of pleasure in using and talking about language - and not only English - as well as an awareness of its importance to all of our lives is more likely to be able to motivate pupils to give their best efforts. In a language-rich environment, pupils will extend their vocabulary, recognise pleasing word-choices and effective linguistic structures from their reading and will be encouraged to think about which of these might be incorporated into their writing and talking.

Current approaches that focus on making pupils more aware of the processes involved in effective reading and writing, moreover, rely heavily on talking and listening. Many of the examples on the video reflect this link - for example:

- pupils analysing and evaluating brochures and posters before going on to write their own [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 11.08-11.42]

- evaluating poems [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 14.46-15.03]

- discussing themes in The Merchant of Venice
  [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 15.04-15.19; 18.01-18.52]

- dramatising themes in Macbeth [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 36.47-37.50]

- giving persuasive presentations based on research using non-fiction texts within the Reading For Information strand [SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 11.42-12.10]

List some of the talking and listening activities your pupils have been involved in to develop reading at each of the following three stages:
- *before reading - for example, recounting personal experiences related to the theme, making predictions/sharing expectations about content, devising questions they hope will be answered*
- *during reading - for example, exploring meanings, checking on expectations*
- *after reading - exploring meanings, evaluating impact and effectiveness, discussing themes, comparing texts*

A writer working in schools and one of his pupils testify to the benefits of talking and listening in clarifying thinking and stimulating creativity.
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 38.03-39.01]

List some of the talking and listening activities your pupils have been involved in to develop any genre of writing, not necessarily fiction, in any curricular area within each of the following phases:

- *thinking and planning*
- *using and adapting the plan*
- *evaluating*
- *presenting and publishing*

Reflect on the extent to which you were able to build on these to address oral skills explicitly - or might be able to in future lessons.

An effective school policy on learning is likely to include plans for staff to work on coherent approaches to all four modes of language.

Reflect on the extent to which you could share experiences of developing talking and listening for learning with colleagues.

creating opportunities for talking and listening development

4. ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

"I know it (assessment of talking and listening) is happening here, because it's planned. It's as important as reading and writing. We start in the nursery and it progresses through to P7. Progression allows the staff to build on what's been previously learned. Staff talk to one another, discuss the children and ensure that all the notes are passed on."
[MOYRA MORRISON, HEADTEACHER. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 31.32-31.50]

Another contributor to the video suggests that much learning can be assessed through talk.
[LIZ BAXTER, ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 29.59-30.30]

Identify one area of the curriculum in which you might make more use of oral evidence of pupils' progress than you currently do. Consider the following.

- *What might be the advantages?*
- *Would all pupils benefit from being asked to give oral evidence?*
- *What activities would you devise to obtain the evidence - interview, group discussion, whole class questions, presentations using technology?*

You will need to consider how to evaluate this development in terms of its validity and practicality and, if appropriate, how it might be extended.

We know from research, experience and common sense that feedback is essential to the learning and teaching process. Pupils want and need to know where they are going wrong, what they need to put it right and how the teacher, their peers or they themselves can go about remedying their misunderstandings. There are several examples of this in the video.
If pupils perceive the teacher as the key mediator of their learning success,

the ethos of the classroom and the manner of the teacher are crucial. Throughout the video, teachers and pupils demonstrate sensitivity in responding to talk and make generous use of praise and encouragement. On the other hand, recent research[2] suggests that routine praise badly used can leave pupils uncertain about what they have actually done well.

Consider how you create a secure and positive learning ethos in your classroom.
- *Are you approachable?*
- *Are you 'there for the learner'?*
- *Are your explanations clear and accessible?*
- *Is your feedback positive, sensitive and timely?*
- *Do you always make clear exactly what you are praising?*
- *Is there laughter in your classroom?*
- *Do you give pupils time to think about what they are going to say?*
- *Are pupils expected to listen and respond positively to their peers?*

Pupils need to know how well they are doing and how they can improve. The boy who confesses to a propensity to talk too much is only one of many filmed in the course of this investigation into classroom communication who displayed clear awareness of personal strengths and development needs.
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 30.43-30.58]

Consider which of the following might help pupils to develop self-awareness:
- *using criteria*
- *viewing recordings of themselves*
- *self-assessment checklists*
- *assessing peers*
- *discussing their performance with teachers and peers*

[2] Alexander, Robin (2004). *Towards Dialogic Teaching: rethinking classroom talk.* Dialogos, Oxford University Press.

assessment is for learning

Teachers on the video emphasise the importance of planning and the relationship between planning and assessment. Plans will need to indicate where talking and listening will be the main focus of teaching, where there will be opportunities for learning in talking and listening to be consolidated, practised and formatively assessed, and where the teacher will obtain confirmation about the level of attainment reached by pupils.

Progression in talking and listening is complex. It involves a combination of the following dimensions:

- nature of the audience/other participants in respect of familiarity, size, status, level of awareness of their prior knowledge
- purpose - reporting, synthesising, summing up are more difficult than, for example, narrating, persuading
- degree of familiarity and complexity of the topic
- degree of support - eg from a talk frame, teacher prompts
- time for preparation

Consider whether decisions about when to move within and when to move across these dimensions can be built into your forward planning.

The Assessment is for Learning programme[3] is above all aimed at raising attainment through the formative assessment of pupils. Here are some activities that might take place in the classroom:

- exploratory discussion of ideas in pairs or small groups
- problem solving
- more formal group discussion where pupils are developing views or knowledge they already possess
- responses to questions in whole-class context
- impromptu talks to an audience
- reports on learning
- presentations on research
- playing a role
- listening in groups

[3]*www.ltScotland.org.uk/assess*

- listening and responding to questions about oral texts or recorded material
- following instructions

Consider each in turn and, taking account of the nature of the talking and listening that it will elicit, decide what evidence it might give you of pupils' strengths and needs in talking and listening in order to adapt your teaching in response.

What would you consider to be a realistic and useful form of recording the observations you make on pupils on a daily basis?

If you do not already have a system for recording and keeping such assessments, consider devising one to allow you to discuss progress with individuals more effectively.

Periodically you will be expected to assign a 5-14 level to each pupil in talking and listening. In order to do this, you will need to have built into your planning, opportunities for pupils to engage in activities that will allow them to demonstrate their level of attainment as defined in the Attainment Targets. Various suggestions about obtaining such evidence are made on the video, including the use of video recordings.

assessment is for learning

Another possibility would be to plan for a 10-week period in every session in which you will concentrate on three pupils per week as they engage in appropriate activities.

Consider whether this suggestion might be practicable in your circumstances.
Consider whether you might also take into account pupils' own self-assessment records in arriving at a level.

Finally, the test of any teaching and assessment programme in talking and listening will be if young people feel that their communication skills do them justice.

Reflect on whether your plans for developing talking and listening are likely to achieve this.

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TUTORS' NOTES
and
WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

MODERN LANGUAGES

Please note: the Modern Languages material has been designed for use with groups of teachers led by a tutor. Within each of the themes, therefore, the printed material has been divided into workshop notes for teachers and notes for tutors.

TALKING for Scotland

WORKSHOP 1: ENGAGING INTEREST

"Good nursery education is a microcosm of effective language development. Here, children are surrounded by things that engage their attention; they constantly interact with one another as well as with the adults in the room. They are at all times immersed in language".
[NARRATOR. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 04.40-04.57]

It is further suggested in the programme that early language development in young children has much in common with the acquisition of a foreign language.

Consider the extent to which you agree with the above statement.

What conditions pre-exist in first language acquisition that we might try to replicate?

For example:

- *immersion in the target language*

- *the identification of worthwhile activities which encourage engagement on the part of the learner*

The video shows numerous examples of pupils apparently deriving a great deal of pleasure and success from listening and speaking.

Reflect on two or three lessons or learning sequences within your own practice which pupils seemed particularly to enjoy and consider the extent to which they included listening and speaking. Try to identify the factors that contributed to their enjoyment.

Consider whether, in your experience, it is actually easier to engage the pupils for purposeful activity in these skill areas than in reading and writing.

Motivating pupils and engaging their interest is a complex business. On the video, we see pupils listening and speaking across a wide range of diverse situations. Teachers and researchers have identified the following factors as important in securing engagement:

- the task is challenging but achievable: there's 'something in it' for the learner

- there is a clear purpose for activities (an end-product) and an identified audience

- error is handled sensitively and is used as a way of getting to know the learner's current state of knowledge and understanding

- interest, motivation and engagement are secured through a range of enjoyable and worthwhile activities which encourage the children to be confident (if, at times, inaccurate) learners and users of the foreign language

workshop 1: engaging interest

- the pupils can see the 'big picture': how one language area connects to another and to the world outside the classroom

- the pupils are immersed in accessible foreign language in real and meaningful contexts (and in fantasy situations) and are creative with what is frequently a rather limited foreign language repertoire

- the classroom culture is supportive and pupils are given time to think, to rehearse new language, to 'play' with the new language before being asked to produce this new language in speech

Carefully consider what each one of the above might mean in your situation and the extent to which you agree or disagree with them.

Consider how you create a secure and positive learning ethos in your classroom.

- *Are you approachable?*

- *Are you 'there' for the learner?*

- *Are explanations clear and accessible?*

- *Is your feedback positive, sensitive and timely?*

- *Is there laughter in your classroom?*

Suggest any other factors that you have found to be important in determining the level of pupils' engagement in listening and speaking activities. Compare your conclusions with the comments on the video about engagement.

"You can tell by observing the children if they are engaged or not".

"Engagement inspires confidence and achievement".

"...children listening and talking, engaging with the communication challenges".

If listening, then, is so important, we have to reconsider the role of grammar for production versus grammar for comprehension.

Draw up a list of relatively straightforward grammatical functions which could assist the children with their listening.

Q**Talking** for**SCOTLAND**

workshop 1: engaging interest

TUTORS' NOTES 1: ENGAGING INTEREST

"Good nursery education is a microcosm of effective language development. Here, children are surrounded by things that engage their attention; they constantly interact with one another as well as with the adults in the room. They are at all times immersed in language".
[SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 04.40-04.57]

It is further suggested in the programme that early language development in young children has much in common with the acquisition of a foreign language.
However, the conditions for foreign language learning at school are not 'naturalistic' as they are in first language acquisition. We see the learners for a relatively short space of time between P6 and S4 (approximately 500 hours, if the recommendations in 'Citizens of a Multilingual World' are adhered to) and yet we strive to replicate those natural conditions as best we can.

What might these conditions for effective learning be?

We know that:
- engaging the interest of the learners is crucial to the undertaking: what we ask them to do has to be 'do-able'; early hesitancies, inaccuracies, stumblings have to be handled sensitively; their foreign language learning has somehow to enhance their lives

- the use of the target language is necessary to immerse the learners in the sounds, rhythms and cadences of the foreign language and we know how to make the flow of foreign language accessible through gesture, mime, facial expression, paraphrasing etc

- we need to model, not only the structures and vocabulary we want to teach, but also the power of non-verbal communication and make specific links to those strategies acquired in first language

- feedback is essential to the learning process. Children need to know where they are going wrong, what they need to do to put it right and how the teacher, their peers or they themselves can go about remedying their misunderstandings

- providing feedback gives us and the other children in the class the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the progress that is being made

- when children are enthusiastic about what they are learning, when they are having fun, when the manner of the teacher is positive and nurturing, when their learning is scaffolded, then they will engage in the wide range of learning activities we create for them and with them

The video shows numerous examples of pupils apparently deriving a great deal of pleasure (and success) from listening and speaking.

Motivating pupils and engaging their interest is a complex business. On the video we see pupils listening and speaking across a wide range of diverse situations. They include:

- new language being presented and/or consolidated

- young people interviewing French native speakers in Strasbourg about their perceptions of Scotland

- youngsters in Edinburgh preparing a video in Spanish to share with their partner school

tutors' notes 1: engaging interest

- a filmed dramatisation of a well-known fairy story

- senior pupils listening and responding to personal information being shared by a native speaker

Teachers and researchers have identified the following factors as important in securing engagement.

- The task is challenging but achievable: there's 'something in it' for the learner. When children are using the foreign language, they want to be able to be 'themselves' in the foreign language, to express their likes and dislikes, their opinions, feelings and wishes - just as they would in their first language. Evidence for this can be found in the FLUSS[4] Report. In addition, pupils expressed a great desire to find out about the culture of the country or countries in which their foreign language was spoken;

- There is a clear purpose for activities (an end-product) and an identified audience. (As stated on the video, some teachers may engage their pupils in listening and speaking practice, without sharing the strategies required to make them effective listeners and speakers.) With a little creative imagination, engaging contexts, with worthwhile end-products, can be identified, both by the teacher and by the pupils themselves. For example, making a video of their school/surrounding area to share with a partner school abroad, their foreign language assistant or peers within their school cluster; making audio cassettes of stories to take to their primary schools. Where possible, provide an audience which is wider than the teacher and other members of the class.

- Error is handled sensitively and is used as a way of getting to know the learners' current state of knowledge and understanding. That practice, after all, lies at the heart of formative assessment and the current Assessment is for Learning initiative.

- If teachers are perceived by the learners to be the key mediators of

[4]*Foreign Languages in the Upper Secondary School: A Study of the Causes of Decline. McPake, Johnstone, Low, Lyall/SCRE 1999/www.scre.ac.uk/resreport/pdf/091.pdf*

their learning success (Simpson, M and Ure, J: Differentiation Practices in Primary and Secondary) then it is incumbent upon us to listen and observe and to intervene at strategic points to 'make a difference'.

- Interest, motivation and engagement are secured through a range of enjoyable and worthwhile activities which encourage the children to be confident (if at times inaccurate) learners and users of the foreign language: here again, we need to remember the importance of creating meaningful, challenging and worthwhile contexts for learning which are enjoyable in themselves. There are many examples of youngsters doing just that on the video! Care has to be exercised when children are communicating spontaneously. At such times, their focus will be on precisely that, and not necessarily on expressing themselves with accuracy. On other occasions, for example when they have been given time to 'create' their spoken text, to rehearse it, when they know in advance what will be expected of them, when unpredictability is at a low level, then we might look for greater accuracy in their speaking.

- The pupils can see the 'big picture', how one language area connects to another and to the world outside the classroom. We know from research into the brain, that the brain is wired to make connections, neural pathways between prior and new learning, and that learners need to know how new language connects with previously learned language. We therefore need to ensure that language is frequently revisited and recycled in an ever-widening circle of contexts. Connections can be made between their foreign language learning and their learning elsewhere in school e.g. linking descriptive language to characters in Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings. Talking about current affairs, for example, as part of the daily routine at the beginning of a lesson helps children to contextualise any new language and to appreciate that the foreign language can be used to talk about 'real' things in 'real' time.

tutors' notes 1: engaging interest

- The pupils are immersed in accessible foreign language, with the teacher modelling, and making explicit, strategies for effective foreign language learning. Encourage the participants to reflect on what helped to make them effective and efficient foreign language communicators e.g. rehearsing new language in their heads; preparing potential scenarios in advance; intervening to ask for clarification; listening out for key words and phrases; using their knowledge of grammar to help their listening; accepting the fact that when taking risks, then "..hesitancy, wrong answers, sentences that tail off and drift into nothing, are all indications that the child is thinking. It's what we do if we're thinking out loud. It isn't a nice pat, tidy, fluent thing. It's a bumpy thing full of pauses". [DR CAROLYN YATES, COGNITIVE ACCELERATION PROGRAMMES. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 35.12-35.32]

- They are encouraged to use the foreign language in real and meaningful contexts (and in fantasy situations) and to be creative with what is frequently a rather limited foreign language repertoire.

- The classroom culture is supportive and pupils are given time to think, to rehearse new language, to 'play' with the new language before being asked to produce this new language in speech. We know that children need thinking time, time to rehearse the play with the sounds of the language in their head. They have the right to silence. For many children learning a foreign language, listening, reading and writing are more urgent than speaking. Listening to the flow of language, well supported by paralinguistic features and the written word, helps children to contextualise and hypothesise. Writing the foreign language helps them to keep hold of the new words and structures. If listening, then, is so important, we have to reconsider the role of grammar for production versus grammar for comprehension.

Encourage the teachers to draw up a list of 'grammar for comprehension'

e.g.   *the use of sequence markers in instructions*

    key adverbs which denote tense (hier/gestern)

    the different functions of 'and' and 'but'

    the verb 'to be' followed by adjectives etc.

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tutors' notes 1: engaging interest

WORKSHOP 2:
SUPPORTING LEARNERS IN USING THE TARGET LANGUAGE

"When pupils are immersed in the foreign language, they're hearing the teacher using it for real purposes and they themselves are encouraged to use it. But it can be problematic.........Sometimes there's a need to revert to English to clarify something or it can be for classroom management purposes...we're always looking for a judicious mix".
[HMI JANE RENTON. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 21.12-21.33]

Throughout the video teachers talk of the need for scaffolding, for sensitive error-handling and for generous use of praise and encouragement. In first language learning, children are continually immersed in language, both spoken and written, with endless demonstrations freely given of how 'text' is constructed and used. And we have high expectations that all children will succeed in the acquisition of oracy and literacy.

In your opinion, what are the benefits of using the target language in the classroom?

What are the perceived stumbling blocks?

What is your personal and professional stance on the use of the target language?

In the quotation above, one HM Inspector encourages teachers to use the target language, while recognising that there will be circumstances where teachers may feel they need to use English.

What alternative strategies might you adopt which would encourage you to increase your use of the target language whilst simultaneously supporting the learners?

Draw up a list of any strategies which might combat the reluctance of some foreign language teachers to use the target language. Be as persuasive as possible! What additional support might the pupils need if use of the target language were to be increased?

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workshop 2: supporting learners in using the target language

TUTORS' NOTES 2:
SUPPORTING LEARNERS IN USING THE TARGET LANGUAGE

"When pupils are immersed in the foreign language, they're hearing the teacher using it for real purposes and they themselves are encouraged to use it. But it can be problematic.........Sometimes there's a need to revert to English to clarify something or it can be for classroom management purposes...we're always looking for a judicious mix".
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Throughout the video teachers talk of the need for scaffolding, for sensitive error-handling and for generous use of praise and encouragement. In first language learning, children are continually immersed in language, both spoken and written, with endless demonstrations freely given of how 'text' is constructed and used. And we have high expectations that all children will succeed in the acquisition of oracy and literacy in their first language.

So why immerse learners in the foreign language?

What are the benefits to the learners?

What are the perceived stumbling blocks?

What are the teachers' individual stances on the use of the target language?

To what extent do they agree with the quotation above?

What are the benefits to the learners?

There are many examples of teachers using the target language with their pupils on the video. Their rationale for so doing might include the following.

- It takes the language outside 'practice' and provides opportunities for real communication to take place. If the teacher reverts to English every time something of import is being communicated e.g. school notices, the children will simply switch off!

- It exposes the learners more intensively and extensively to the language and allows them to assimilate its sounds and rhythms over time.

- It gives additional pronunciation practice and additional 'silent' rehearsing time.

- It allows the learners to confront, in supported situations, less predictable language.

- It encourages the pupils to look for, and be alert to, clues both in and around the language itself that give meaning to what is said e.g. context, tone, common sense.

- It develops confidence in the pupils that they can cope.

- It develops problem-solving skills and logical thinking.

- It provides additional challenge.

- It is stimulating and fun for the teacher and, if done in an appropriate manner, stimulating and fun for the learners.

tutors' notes 2: supporting learners in using the target language

What are the perceived stumbling blocks?

Concerns about using the target language have been eloquently and genuinely expressed over the years by teachers. Their underlying rationale might include some of the following.

- "Using the target language will just slow down the lesson!"

- "So many pupils are put off by it!"

- "I'm scared that the pupils will miss the really important points of the lesson."

- "I don't think I have the linguistic competence to do that!"

- "I really like to get to know my pupils and it's so much easier to do that in English!"

- "When it comes to discipline, then I revert to English!"

Whilst these are genuine concerns, they may be masking alternative viewpoints and alternative strategies. The teachers should be encouraged to see their own practice in as many of the following as possible.

- Instead of talking about the activity, demonstrate it! Consider the video excerpt where the children are making a weather wheel.

- Remember the pupils' right to silence. In the initial stages especially, bilingual conversations are totally acceptable: understanding is being demonstrated by what the children do and/or say.

- Other pupils can be encouraged to express, interpret, clarify in English in their own words, reinforcing the teaching points.

- Simple language can be so much more effective than complex language in conveying meaning. Sometimes, those with a more limited language resource understand better the difficulties being encountered by the learners. For fluent speakers it is sometimes difficult to gauge difficulties in what appears to them to be obvious. Faute de mieux, advance rehearsal is recommended.

- Rapport is not solely based on language. The kinds of activities done in class are equally important in establishing a supportive classroom ethos. Teacher/ pupil interactions usually have at their base educational, motivational or social ends. Many of these can be achieved in the target language e.g. with suitable support one can comment perfectly comprehensibly on a pupil's new hairstyle or celebrate an exciting event in their life. Use of the target language should be extensive and consistent. It does not have to be exclusive.

- There are certainly some situations in which it would be inappropriate to continue in the target language. If the target language is the norm, the break from routine would highlight the gravity of the situation. Meaning is not conveyed solely by the words we use. Tone, gesture, facial expression, body language are often of equal, or even greater, importance than the words we use in communicating. All of these can be brought in to back up the language that is used and convey meaning clearly.

tutors' notes 2: supporting learners in using the target language

WORKSHOP 3:
PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LISTENING AND TALKING

"Sometimes they're trying to understand too much and they end up understanding very little. So it's important to teach them to focus on certain pieces of information then build it up."
[DOROTHY GRAHAM, PRINCIPAL TEACHER.
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 27.34-27.46]

"I listen, I absorb, I process....a bit like a computer."
[S2 PUPIL. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 18.53-19.06]

As we plan our learning and teaching programmes, it is important to bear in mind what we know about engagement and motivation. In addition it is important to plan for the development of strategic competence in listening and speaking.

As very competent listeners and speakers of the foreign language what strategies do you use:

• *to access a flow of foreign language in face-to-face contexts?*

• *to access a flow of foreign language on the radio or television?*

• *to 'prepare' yourself for spontaneous speaking?*

At the primary stage, the importance of the silent period, mentioned earlier, was being acknowledged by the teachers and the written word provided from the outset. They were being introduced to new language areas that were also revisiting prior learning. Here the children were responding confidently (although not always verbally) to a wide range of instructions; they were understanding the sequence of instructions and responding by 'doing'; they were understanding the frequent asides of their teachers who were praising them, empathising with them, building their confidence before asking them to commit themselves to speech.

At the secondary stage, listening and talking were qualitatively and quantitatively different. Pupils were listening to longer stretches of the foreign language; they were participating in authentic exchanges with native

workshop 3: planning for development in listening and talking

speakers; they were responding verbally and non-verbally to what they were hearing; they were talking at length about themselves and their surroundings; they were exchanging ideas on subjects which were meaningful to them and not always restricted to subjects that are relatively easy in terms of vocabulary but mundane in terms of intellectual development and engagement - they were saying more! In some cases, what they were saying was fluent and accurate. In others, there were all the hesitancies and digressions mentioned on the video by Dr Carolyn Yates. These skills would have been consistently modelled by their teachers because they are taught, not caught.

For the purposes of this exercise, let us consider Listening and Speaking independently.

In the arena of Listening,

- *which strategies would you wish to introduce in the initial stages of foreign language learning?*

- *how would you envisage modelling effective listening?*

- *how might you support children as they listen to pre-recorded text?*

In the arena of Speaking,

- *which strategies would you wish to introduce in the initial stages of foreign language learning?*

- *how would you progress these early skills?*

- *how would you envisage modelling effective speaking?*

- *how might you support children as they prepare for different types of speaking activities?*

QTalking
for SCOTLAND

workshop 3: planning for development in listening and talking

TUTORS' NOTES 3:
PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LISTENING AND TALKING

"Sometimes they're trying to understand too much and they end up understanding very little. So it's important to teach them to focus on certain pieces of information then build it up."
[DOROTHY GRAHAM, PRINCIPAL TEACHER.
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 27.34-27.46]

"I listen, I absorb, I process....a bit like a computer."
[S2 PUPIL. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 18.53-19.06]

It is important to plan for strategic competence in listening and speaking. Teachers are encouraged to consider the strategies they use to access a flow of foreign language in face-to-face contexts, when listening to recorded text on video or television and what they do to 'prepare' themselves for spontaneous speaking.

It is possible that they might highlight some of the following.

• In face-to-face contexts, we learn to read facial expressions to confirm or contradict our understanding; we intervene to ask for clarification; we listen for contextual clues; we listen for grammatical clues; we bring our knowledge of the world to bear on our listening.

• When listening to recorded text on video or television, we look again for visual and contextual clues; with videos, we can stop and replay; we try to see new language in our head, bringing our knowledge of the phonic system to bear; we listen out for key language; we're confident enough to know that we don't have to understand everything we hear; we sift out from the content what is significant; we skim-and-scan listen as well as engage in focused discrete listening.

• We rehearse in advance for 'spontaneous' speaking, drawing on language we have used before in similar situations; we consider a range of directions the conversation might take e.g. if I say X, then s/he might say Y; we use fillers and place-holders; we paraphrase if we can't find le mot juste.

On the video we see many examples of very young children developing strategic competence in listening and speaking in their first language. For example, many of them demonstrated an awareness of others and were able to talk explicitly about this. Importance was attached to maintaining eye-contact, listening attentively to other speakers and getting ideas from others. There is an interesting example of children working on a 'concentration' activity, listening intently for specific pieces of information, holding this information in their head in order to put it into practice at a later stage. This strategic competence in first language is something that we can surely build on in foreign language learning and teaching.
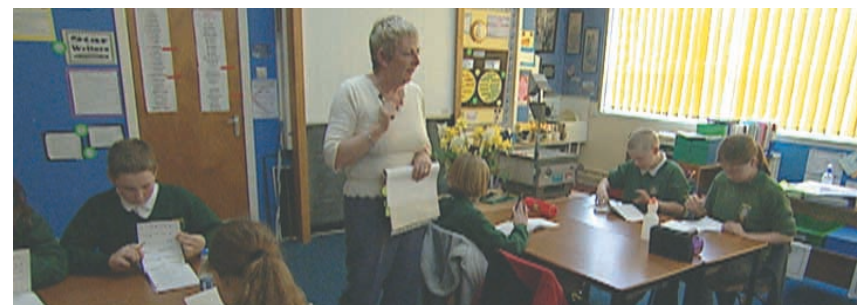
For the purpose of this staff development resource, let us consider the skills of listening and speaking, independently of reading and writing. In the real world of the classroom this is rarely the case. Each skill supports

tutors' notes 3: planning for development in listening and talking

the development of the others. Indeed, for many learners, speaking is the skill which is the least developed in the initial stages. At this point, they are focusing on understanding the spoken word, using context and paralinguistic support to shape their understanding. They need the support of the written word from the very outset to assist their understanding of what is being said and greater access to reading gives them knowledge of vocabulary and structures that they can re-use at a later stage. Writing gives permanence to words and can greatly help when preparing for speaking.

At the primary stage, the silent period was being acknowledged by the teachers and the written word provided from the outset. They were being introduced to new language areas which were also revisiting prior learning. Here the children were responding confidently (although not always verbally) to a wide range of instructions; they were understanding the sequence of instructions and responding by 'doing'; they were understanding the frequent asides of their teachers who were praising them, empathising with them, building their confidence before asking them to commit themselves to speech.

At the secondary stage, listening and speaking were qualitatively and quantitatively different. Pupils were listening to longer stretches of the foreign language; they were participating in authentic exchanges with native speakers; they were responding verbally and non-verbally to what they were hearing; they were talking at length about themselves and their surroundings; they were exchanging ideas on subjects which were meaningful to them and not always restricted to subjects that are relatively easy in terms of vocabulary but mundane in terms of intellectual

development and engagement - they were saying more! In some cases, what they were saying was fluent and accurate. In others, there were all the hesitancies and digressions mentioned on the video by Dr Carolyn Yates. These skills would have been consistently modelled by their teachers because they are taught, not caught.

In the arena of Listening, we might consider some of the following to develop strategic competence:

- respecting the children's right to a silent period

- encouraging them to repeat new language in their heads before speaking out loud - this gives them ample rehearsal time and builds confidence

- we introduce some basic grammatical concepts for comprehension e.g. sequence markers, contrastive conjunctions, adverbs of time etc

- we gradually introduce recorded text

- we build in redundancies to our use of the target language so that the children do not have to rely on their understanding of every word in the flow of speech

- we give the children interesting things to listen to!

- we ask them to reflect on their strategies, to identify during their listening what they're understanding, what key words they're focusing on, what they aren't understanding

- we foreground with them any knowledge of the context they might bring to bear on the listening task

tutors' notes 3: planning for development in listening and talking
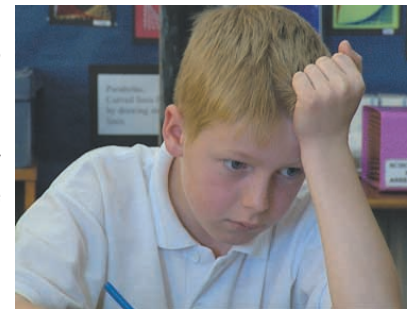
- we teach them how to intervene to ask for clarification and we model that for them with other target-language speakers

In the arena of Speaking, we might consider some of the following to develop strategic competence:

- we share with the learners the fact that speaking a foreign language takes time and we are patient!

- we stress the importance of non-verbal communication as well as verbal

- we model intonation, pronunciation, rhythm etc

- we demonstrate, inter alia, the use of connectors and discuss these with them

- we help them to make the connections between new learning and prior learning, through consistently recycling language in a wide range of contexts

- we provide the children with 'flow-charts' to help map out where conversations might realistically go

- we give the children interesting things to talk about!

- we are mindful of the role that preparation has in terms of accuracy and fluency

- we share performance criteria with them and ask them to reflect on the extent to which they are progressing to meet these

- we encourage them to read extensively in order to build up their language repertoire

- we help them to cope with the unpredictable by interjecting, for example, during group speaking activities and extending both their listening skills and their ability to cope

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tutors' notes 3: planning for development in listening and talking

WORKSHOP 4:
WIDENING PUPILS' EXPERIENCE OF LISTENING AND TALKING

"If the focus of talking is thinking, then hesitancy, wrong answers, sentences that tail off and drift into nothing, are all indications that the child is thinking. It's what we do if we're thinking out loud. It isn't a nice, pat, tidy, fluent thing. It's a bumpy thing full of pauses."
[DR CAROLYN YATES, COGNITIVE ACCELERATION PROGRAMMES. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 35.12-35.32]

Contributors to the video suggest that the foreign language has to be used for real purposes with real audiences.

In the early stages of foreign language learning, the pupils are working within relatively circumscribed contexts e.g. personal language, colours, weather, days of the week, the family etc. They are learning vocabulary and structures required to communicate for a variety of purposes (see Strands in Modern Languages Guidelines 5-14).

In order to help pupils make links between these discrete language areas and other areas of their learning, it is helpful to embed some of their learning in a wider context. This applies both to primary and secondary and need not involve us in lengthy discussions with our colleagues.

It is simply necessary to know what is being studied within other areas of the curriculum and to devise a creative range of contexts and activities which enable the pupils to hear and use authentic foreign language for real purposes. But this may well be "a bumpy thing full of pauses" and we should be alert to the need to scaffold the pupils' learning all the way!

Focus on one of the following curricular areas with two aims in mind:

*   *to identify potential links between the foreign language and the world of the learner, and*

*   *to consider a range of contexts for stimulating and worthwhile foreign language learning.*

The curricular areas are: **English Language**
Mathematics
Expressive Arts
Environmental Studies
Science and Technology
Religious and Moral Education
Personal and Social Education

When you have decided on a curricular area, consider which of the following functions might be appropriately presented and/or consolidated:

*   *describing people, places and things*

*   *giving instructions and explanations*

*   *expressing opinions*

workshop 4: widening pupils' experience of listening and talking

- *listening to and telling stories*

- *solving problems*

- *persuading others*

- *finding out about other lands and cultures*

Discuss the extent to which you think that making such connections is:

- *desirable for effective learning?*

- *feasible for effective teaching?*

- *worth going the extra distance?*

On the video we see examples of children outside the world of the classroom - in the streets of Strasbourg, in Edinburgh and in the grounds of a well-known estate. This is not always easy to organise or manage but there are obvious benefits which accrue and some of these are alluded to on the video.

- **What might these benefits be?**

- **Taking into account the context in which you work, what scope is there for widening your pupils' experience of listening and speaking?**

- **Without actually leaving the classroom or the school precincts, are there simple activities which could take the children's learning (however briefly) beyond the world of the course-book?**

We see two examples on the video of children retelling well-known fairy stories. On each occasion, an audience had been identified; there was a real purpose to their work and there was an obvious sense of achievement and pleasure.

- *Are there opportunities within your context of enabling children to engage in storytelling?*

- *From the brief excerpts available, what skills have the children been developing and what foreign language areas have the children been learning and/or consolidating?*

- *What are the advantages of introducing drama into the modern languages classroom?*

- *Are there impediments to your experimenting with this?*

Q**Talking**
for**SCOTLAND**

workshop 4: widening pupils' experience of listening and talking

TUTORS' NOTES 4:
WIDENING PUPILS' EXPERIENCE OF LISTENING AND TALKING

"If the focus of talking is thinking, then hesitancy, wrong answers, sentences that tail off and drift into nothing, are all indications that the child is thinking. It's what we do if we're thinking out loud. It isn't a nice, pat, tidy, fluent thing. It's a bumpy thing full of pauses."
[DR CAROLYN YATES, COGNITIVE ACCELERATION PROGRAMMES..
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 35.12-35.32]

Contributors to the video suggest that the foreign language has to be used for real purposes with real audiences.

In the early stages of foreign language learning, the pupils are working within relatively circumscribed contexts e.g. personal language, colours, weather, days of the week, the family etc. They are learning vocabulary and structures required to communicate for a variety of purposes (see Strands in Modern Languages Guidelines 5-14). In order to help pupils make links between these discrete language areas and other areas of their learning, it is helpful to embed some of their learning in a wider context. This applies both to primary and secondary and need not involve us in lengthy discussions with our colleagues.

It is simply necessary to know what is being studied within other areas of the curriculum and to devise a creative range of contexts and activities which enable the pupils to hear and use authentic foreign language for real purposes. But this may well be "a bumpy thing full of pauses" and we should be alert to the need to scaffold the pupils' learning all the way!

The teachers are asked to focus on a curricular area with two aims in mind:

- *to identify potential links between the foreign language and the world of the learner, and*

- *to consider a range of contexts for stimulating and worthwhile foreign language learning.*

A range of language functions has been identified. The following represents some suggestions for possible links.

English Language:
Describing people places and things in relation to a novel being studied in class e.g. Harry Potter, Lord of The Rings, The Incredible Journey, The Silver Sword; expressing opinions about characters, setting and plot; adapting English stories into the foreign language e.g The Enormous Turnip, The Hungry Caterpillar.

Mathematics:
Problem-solving involving mental arithmetic; shape, colour and size; percentages involved in class surveys converted into bar-charts; estimating the size of angles.

RME:
Expressing opinions on moral dilemmas e.g. bullying, racism and the challenges of 'otherness'; listening and talking about cultural differences; retelling biblical stories etc.; listening to descriptions of the Festivals of Light.

The teachers are then asked to determine the extent to which making such connections is desirable, feasible and worth the effort.

Expressive Arts:
Listening to and telling nursery rhymes; drama; expressing opinions in role-play and simulations; dramatic performances; PE activities in the classroom or the gymnasium e.g. warm-ups, simple aerobics.

Environmental Studies:
Language to describe physical geography e.g. points of the compass; giving directions and map-reading; understanding key historical landmarks and speaking about key characters in history: discussing current affairs and expressing opinions; describing people in relation to anatomy; finding out about life cycles in relation to botany; weights and measures; endangered species; finding out about global warming etc; finding out about other lands and cultures.

QTalking for SCOTLAND

tutors' notes 4: widening pupils' experience of listening and talking

WORKSHOP 5:
ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

"You need to plan for assessment to take place........If your programmes of study address the guidelines, and you build on the activities which will ensure that the attainment targets are being met, then you've got your evidence. Your evidence is in your planning."
[LIZ BAXTER, ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING.
SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 32.12-32.27]

Assessment is for Learning is above all aimed at raising attainment through formative assessment of pupils. Research tells us that this implies:

- sharing intended learning outcomes with the pupils at the outset, showing how their new learning links to prior learning and providing them with the 'big picture'

- identifying assessment opportunities at the planning stage for ongoing evaluation of the pupils' learning

- sharing performance criteria at the outset

- providing opportunities for peer – and self – assessment

- identifying at an early stage any barriers to the pupils' learning

- discussing with the pupils how to put their misunderstandings right

- providing opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate their progress and their achievements thereafter

- recording observations and discussions in order to inform forward-planning

Consider each in turn and decide the extent to which you are already overtaking these strategies. What implications are there for your current practice? To what extent do you feel confident that you know what constitutes a 'good' performance in listening and speaking? How can we make performance criteria accessible to our pupils?

Teachers' formative assessment of pupils to improve learning will be heavily supported by self – and peer – assessment. The video provides an example in modern languages of pupils assessing their peers' performance after a formal speaking test. The performance criteria have been shared with the pupils and have been written up after a brainstorm on the whiteboard. The pupils talk knowledgeably about what constitutes a 'good' performance and the manner of the teacher ensures that each pupil's contribution is welcomed and validated.

Identify a language area and decide how you might present the learning outcomes in user-friendly language.

Go on to select one particular strand within Listening and Speaking and determine how you would share the performance criteria with your pupils.

workshop 5: assessment is for learning

GATHERING EVIDENCE

"Teachers are used to having a lot of hard evidence. Assessment evidence can be collected in a variety of ways. It doesn't have to be in written form. It could include pupil discussions, entering into dialogues, individual interviews, video evidence".
[LIZ BAXTER, ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING. SEE VIDEO EXTRACT 29.59-30.30]

Periodically you will be expected to assign a 5-14 level to each pupil in listening and speaking.

In order to do this, you will have built up a wide data-base of information about each pupil's performance in these skills and you may even have decided to administer a more 'formal' test to confirm your professional judgement. It would be important for you to feel confident about, and comfortable with, the Attainment Targets and Exemplifications in the 5-14 Guidelines where additional advice about gathering evidence is offered.

What would you consider to be a realistic and useful form of recording the observations you make on pupils on a daily basis? For example, a tick against a daily register to indicate positive evidence, a note of names beside identified criteria in your lesson plan? You might also wish to include pupils' own self – and peer – assessment records in arriving at a level.
If you do not already have a system for recording and keeping such assessments, consider devising one to allow you to discuss progress more effectively with individual pupils.

Q Talking for SCOTLAND

workshop 5: assessment is for learning

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