



Australian Government

**Quality Teacher
Programme**



Phase 1 teacher participant example

French Year 2

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South Australia

RCLCE Research Centre
for
Languages
and
Cultures Education



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Acknowledgment

This work was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP).

Attention! TEACHERS AT WORK!

Welcome to an example of teachers' programmes drawn from their work during Phase 1 of the ILTLP. Teachers were asked to plan, document, teach (at least in part) and share, either a long term teaching programme (e.g. a semester long programme or longer) or a short term teaching programme (e.g. a unit or term long programme).

Their work is provided for you to examine, consider and make use of, in expanding your own understanding of intercultural language learning in practice. Not all programmes provided by Phase 1 teachers have been posted on this website. Some teachers did not feel comfortable with sharing their and their students work at this time, others did not manage to obtain the various permissions to include student work and photographs and others did not create programmes that fulfilled the ILTLP requirements.

What kinds of materials can you expect?

- You will not find models of programming that you can instantly adopt and teach among the work posted here. That was never the intention. You will find ideas about programming that you can use, however, working in your own context.
- You will not find 'best practice' or exemplars of definitive programmes for intercultural languages teaching and learning. You will find some outstanding approaches to programming that advance our understanding of how to make intercultural languages teaching and learning a rich and effective learning experience for students.
- You may find what you regard as some errors of language use or some hints of pedagogies of which you may be critical. However, you will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work with students, interculturality and language learning. You will find a great deal to learn from.

What this and other teachers' programmes show are '**teachers at work**'. The Phase 1 teachers responded to their particular contexts, the curriculum and assessment frameworks they must work within, the particular demands they and their students face in languages education and their own 'learning-by-doing' in relation to intercultural language teaching and learning. You will see how a teacher and a group of students working together, taking account of their own identities and cultural understandings, make learning happen. The teacher profiles and reflections generously provided by these teachers provide professional insights into the interaction of programming and 'what happened'. One teacher asks at one stage during her teaching 'Do I know what I am looking for here?' It's a highly professional question about what learning looks like. It's a question for all of us.

You will also get glimpses of pedagogies at work to bring the structure, sequence and assessment aspects of teaching into life. One teacher scratches her head and asks her children how we might categorise the groups they belong to, here in Australia and if they lived in Japan, and the words they would use. Others introduce ICT at crucial moments or involve parents and other teachers. Reading across these programmes, you will get a sense of the dynamic that teaching from an intercultural language teaching and learning stance creates, for teachers, for students, for whole schools in some cases, and for communities in others.

You will learn a great deal!

UNDERSTANDING THE LAYOUT

Teacher participants in Phase 1 of the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice project were asked to develop a number of sections in their programmes or units of work. These sections are explained below. Teachers prepared their programmes on an individual basis, and may not have followed these sections in the same sequence.

Teacher profile

In this section teacher participants profile their socio-cultural and linguistic enculturation, consider how this shapes teaching and learning in their programmes and how they apply this in their interactions with students.

School context

In this section teacher participants describe the context of the school and its language programmes. They may describe the demographics of the school, the languages offered, the levels at which it is taught, the number of students taking a language, the number of teachers, resources and facilities, the assessment requirements and the place of languages in the curriculum.

Programme

The programmes provided by the teacher participants in this section may be a unit of work all of which was taught in the classroom or a long term programme of which a part was taught. The module content and assessment procedures follow the teaching policies and instruments and assessment requirements of the state and territory education system.

Reflection

Here teacher participants reflect on what they learned through their programme preparation, identifying the changes that the intercultural focus necessitated in their programme planning, teaching and assessment and the impact this had on their students' learning.

Teacher participants may refer to students' work but that work is not reproduced here.

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY: Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in a Year 2 French Class for 30 minutes per week

Concept: 'Where people live'

PLANNING

Context:

This is a class of 23 Year 2 girls in an Independent Girls' School in Adelaide's eastern suburbs. The girls' ages range from 7 – 9.

The girls studied Japanese in Semester One as the Junior School policy is that all students study two languages from School Link (4 year-olds) to Year 7. For the past few years this has meant that all students from School Link to Year 6 have studied Japanese for one semester of every year and French for the other semester.

The duration of languages lessons for School Link, Reception, and Year 1 and Year 2 students is 30 minutes per week.

In Semester Two, the focus in Year 2 classroom work has been 'How people live'.

As I started teaching at this school at the beginning of Term Three 2006, in French lessons during Term Three we have been doing 'getting to know you' activities and students have been learning a little about where France is and French traditions, including costumes.

Language learning has included:

- Introducing oneself
- Exchanging information on the level of 'How are you?', 'What is your name?' 'How old are you?'
- Numbers 1 – 20
- Colours

Because of various interruptions (Sports Days, excursions, etc) to the teaching program, students had approximately four hours of tuition in French during Term Three.

The Intercultural Unit:

I taught the unit 'Where people live' over five weeks in Term Four.

Linguistic focus of the unit: How to say 'there is, there are'; 'there is no, there are no'
Adjectives (size age, comfort, and appearance)

Cultural focus: Living in a densely populated country

Intercultural focus: Imagining life in an apartment building

The connections students will be encouraged to explore are those between:

- population and how a town looks
- space and the kind of housing people live in
- space, housing and the proximity of neighbours
- space and leisure activities, pets

Most interactions will be action-related talk and teacher-led. The unit is largely teacher-focussed because I am trying to concentrate a lot of teaching and learning into the two and a half hours of instruction time available in the first five weeks of Term Four.

Learning and teaching resources are photos and other images from my personal collection, or from internet, and texts in French that I have written myself.

Learning activities based on these resources are outlined in the detailed lesson plans. Looking through the resources that students will keep in their folders will show me to what extent they have been engaged with the discussions and understood the concepts under discussion (through how they have marked the texts around which discussion has occurred).

Assessment will be partly through this observation and also through listening to student talk and student questions about the impact of population and apartment living on a person's life. Initiating questions are in the lesson plans; student responses and any significant follow-up questions will be recorded during and after each lesson.

Students will do two assessment tasks on paper:

- a description of their own home in French
- a sorting of images according to where the things portrayed are most likely to be found; in an apartment, a house or both

They will also be interviewed in English and the interviews will be video-taped. Students will select one of the texts they have been working with to show the interviewer: an Australian girl talking about where she lives; a French girl talking about where she lives; student's description of her own home or the sheet on which they have sorted the images.

The planned questions are as follows:

1. What have you been learning about in French lessons this term?
2. Could you show me one of the texts you've been working with and

- tell me what it means ? - read me some of it ?

- 3a. If student has chosen Australian-based text or description of own home:
Is this the sort of house you would have if you lived in France? Tell me what it might be like to live in France.
- 3b. If student has chosen French-based text:
How would your life be different if you lived in a building like this ?
4. Can you tell me why many people in France live in apartments ?

Assessment will be based on the Outcomes required by the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSAF) for Standard 1 (assessed at the end of Year 2)

Listening Makes connections between words and phrases and their meanings in spoken texts

Speaking Uses words and phrases to identify or name objects, in social interaction and action-related talk

Reading Makes connections between words and phrases and their meanings in written texts

Writing Shares meaning by selecting words and phrases to create a text

Understanding Language Recognises key features of the language system, and connections between languages

Understanding Culture Identifies specific cultural practices and values in communities, and recognises patterns across cultures in relation to own experience

The SACSAF Outcomes in bold above are those that will be assessed. Following are the more specific intercultural language learning outcomes that will be assessed during the interview:

- understands that housing styles vary according to the population of a country
- learns that in densely populated countries most people live in apartments
- compares living in an apartment with living in a house
- reflects on what it would be like to live in an apartment

Students will be encouraged to share personal experiences relating to different housing styles and how life-styles can vary according to where one lives.

ASSESSMENT RUBRICS

	1	2	3	4	5
Description of house	Description is incomplete	Description is completed using inappropriate words	Description is completed using 1 – 3 appropriate words, usually correctly spelled	Description is completed using 4 – 6 appropriate words, correctly spelled	Description is completed using 5 or more appropriate words, including connecting words, correctly spelled
Sorting of images	8 images have not been glued onto the A3 sheet and student is unable to explain why	8 images have been glued onto the A3 sheet at random and student is unable to explain why	8 images have been glued onto the A3 sheet and student is able to give a reason for the placement of most of them	8 images have been glued onto the A3 sheet and the student is able to give a reason for the placement of each of them	8 images have been glued onto the A3 sheet and student is able to clearly articulate the reasons for the placement of all of them
Interview	Was able to respond to very few questions	Answered very briefly and not always to the point	Gave appropriate answers to most of the questions	Gave appropriate answers to all of the questions; sometimes showing insight	Gave considered responses to all of the questions; usually showing insight

TEACHING THE UNIT

YEAR 2 FRENCH

Lesson 1

18 October 2006

On habite où ? *Where do people live ?*

Roll call and greetings

Introduction to unit – discussion in English. This term we will be learning about where people live and why.

Reminder about relative sizes and populations of France and Australia.
(*Australia 14 times bigger than France*)

Populations: France 60 million Australia 21 million
Diagrams on board showing relative density of population.

Q How might this influence the way towns and cities look?

In pairs, students look at photos of aerial views of Toulouse and Adelaide.

(*Toulouse selected as its metropolitan area has about the same population as Adelaide.*)

(*Photos labeled so that students know which city is which!*)

Q Discuss, in pairs, what they notice about/in the photos. Each pair to share one thing they have noticed with the rest of the class.

“As we learn to talk about housing in French I’d like you to think about what is the same and what is different about housing in France and Australia ... and also think about how this affects the way people live.”

Read aloud together the following passage (*page 5*); translating each sentence. Use context, photo, prior knowledge and knowledge of English to arrive at meaning. If necessary use the vocabulary list to help you. (*No student referred to this – they had little difficulty in working out what the text was about*)

HW To next French lesson bring a photo or drawing of your house (external view).

NB *No English appeared on the sheet given to students; it is provided here (and elsewhere) for those who are not conversant with the French language.*

Là où j'habite
(Where I live)

Bonjour, je m'appelle Susan.

Hello, my name is Susan

J'habite à Adelaïde, dans le quartier de Salisbury, en Australie.

I live in Adelaide, in the suburb of Salisbury, in Australia

Voici ma maison.

Here is my house.

(photo)

Il n'y a pas d'escalier.

There is no staircase.

Il y a un jardin.

There is a garden.

Ma maison est petite mais le jardin est grand.

My house is small but the garden is big.

YEAR 2 FRENCH

On habite où ? *Where do people live ?*

VOCABULARY LIST

Lesson one

NOUNS

ma maison

my house

à Adelaïde

in Adelaide

en Australie

in Australia

le quartier

the district, the suburb

le jardin

the garden

un escalier

a stair-case

ADJECTIVES

grand, grande

big

petit, petite

small

VERBS

est

is

j'habite

I live

il y a

there is, there are

il n'y a pas de

there is no, there are no

CONNECTING WORDS

et

and

mais

but

voici

here is

où

where

de

of

The sheet handed to the students had the words in a larger font.

Students' comments about the photos of the two cities:

Toulouse

more houses
big river and bridge
more pollution
bird's eye view
busier
more famous
bridge/road across river
more crowded

Adelaide

more tall buildings (businesses)
closer view
Popeye on river
more cars
can see people
more trees
more country
hotter
spread out

I asked the students whether the tall buildings in the Adelaide photo were houses or businesses.

Most of them were very keen to make an observation so I didn't stick to asking one member of each pair to comment.

More student comments could have been noted but by this time there were only five minutes left in the lesson so we moved on to the text about where Susan lives.

**On habite où ?
*Where do people live ?***

Roll call and greetings

Re-read together passage from last week. "Later you will write a similar description for your house."

"In pairs, read and translate the passage below, using the vocabulary list to help you":

Bonjour, je m'appelle Cécile.

Hello, my name is Cécile

J'habite à Toulouse, en France.

I live in Toulouse, in France.

Voici l'immeuble où j'habite. Il y a cinq étages.

Here is the (high-rise) building where I live. There are five floors.

(photo)

Discuss photo. Where else can you see buildings like this? What do you think it would be like to live in a building like this? Do you know anyone who lives in a building like this? *(Had time to discuss only the first question)*

Mon appartement est petit et est au troisième étage.

My apartment is small and is on the third floor.

Il y a un escalier et un ascenseur.

There is a staircase and a lift.

Il n'y a pas de jardin.

There is no garden.

**YEAR 2 FRENCH
VOCABULARY LIST**

On habite où ?

**Where do people live ?
Lesson 2**

Nouns

l'immeuble	the high-rise building
mon appartement	my apartment
à Toulouse	in Toulouse
en France	in France
cinq étages	five floors, storeys
au troisième étage	on the third floor
un ascenseur	a lift

ADJECTIVES

Ma maison		Mon jardin
grande	big	grand
petite	small	petit
moyenne	average	moyen
moderne	modern	moderne
confortable	comfortable	
vieille	old	
belle	beautiful	beau
	natural	naturel
	paved	pavé

Students preferred to have the French and English, each language in a different colour, written on the whiteboard; very few referred to the lists.

We read both passages as a class, then students were given the following task to do in pairs: "Look at what is written and at the pictures on the two pages we have just been reading. What can you see that is the same? What can you see that is different?"

These responses recorded on the board during the discussion.

SAME	DIFFERENT	
	Susan	Cécile
J'habite (I live in)	smaller	closer shot
	no stairs	5 storeys
	garden (mentioned twice)	no garden
	normal house	main street
	more trees	lots of windows
	fence	apartment
	garage	fountain
	and car	roundabout in front
		flowers at windows

While walking around the room I spoke to various students about what they were noticing. One girl was fascinated by the number of windows in the apartment building photo so I asked her "Why are there so many windows"? She looked at me blankly to begin with so I said "Think about it" and walked away. It wasn't long before she was eagerly telling me that it was because there were so many different families living there all with their own window/s.

Students generally were very good at finding explanations for the things they observed.

When I asked the students what was the main difference between the two pictures and texts, it took a while before someone said that one is Adelaide and one is Toulouse. I should have emphasized the point by ensuring that they knew which city was in which country.

On asking which was bigger I was surprised by the number of students who said Adelaide. I thought that they were confused about the relative sizes until I realised that they were trying to say that Toulouse is smaller with more people. The students were using the terms "bigger" and "smaller" correctly but I should have ascertained whether they were referring to the population or the spread of the city instead of trying to elicit the response I was expecting which was that Toulouse is bigger in terms of population.

When that misunderstanding was cleared up, I asked them "Look at Cécile's apartment building again. Where else can you see buildings like this?"

Responses:

- *Italy*
- *Queensland (and once again I thought that the student had missed the point until I asked "Where in Queensland"? On the Gold Coast*
- *Vietnam (where in Vietnam?) In Ho Chi Minh City*
- *Honolulu*

Again we were running out of time so I stopped the answering to ask another question.

"I have a really hard question for you" and indicated the list of places on the board "What do all these places have in common? What is the same about all of them?"

The first answer was that food is very important in each of these places ... Yes, it is ... what else?

We managed to finish the lesson with the next student who said “They are small places with lots of people”.

Students were then reminded to bring a picture of their house to the next lesson (only 3 or 4 had remembered).

**On habite où ?
Where do people live ?**

Roll call and greetings.

Read aloud together the two descriptions (Susan's house, Cécile's apartment).

Then students write their own text by filling in the gaps (*see below- check beforehand to see whether any students need an apartment template*)

Give adjectives "moyen, moyenne " (*average*), remind students about "très" (*very*)... *if students request it, supply appropriate adjective of colour for the house and garden*)

Students may choose from:

grande, petite, moderne (modern) , confortable (comfortable), vieille (old),
belle (beautiful) + adjectives of colour for the house

and

grand, petit, beau (beautiful), naturel (natural), pavé (paved) + adjectives of colour for
the garden.

Remember the connecting words "et" (and) and "mais" (but)

The adjectives were written on the whiteboard under the heading "maison" (house) and "jardin" (garden) with both French and English provided as well as the connecting words.

This to be presented on an A3 sheet to provide sufficient room for the writing and the illustration of the house. If students wish to do so, they may cut up this sheet and place the separate sentences in a design on the A3 sheet.

VOICI MA MAISON
Here is my house

Bonjour, je m'appelle

Hello, my name is

J'habite à Adelaïde, dans le quartier de,

I live in Adelaide, in the district of

en Australie.

in Australia.

Voici ma maison.

Here is my house.

Ma maison est

My house is.....

Mon jardin est

My garden is

I noticed when I collected the work at the end of the lesson that some students had finished off their sentences in English.

**On habite où ?
Where do people live ?**

Roll call and greetings.

Discuss living in a house and living in an apartment.

Q. What do you think it would be like to live in an apartment?

How would it be different from living where you are now?

Where would your neighbours be?

Continue description and illustration of own house. "Make sure that you have used French words to finish off the sentences. Look at the board. Which are the French words? (*the ones in blue*) Which are the English words? (*the ones in black*) Which are the words for describing a house? (*on the left of the board*) Which are the words for describing a garden? (*on the right of the board*) And here are some joining words you can use (*in the middle of the board*)."

The discussion was interesting. Students had a view of apartments derived either from the glamorous pent-houses or the shabby tenements seen in American and British television shows. A few had lived in apartments or residential hotels when their family first moved to Adelaide and they were waiting for their house to be built or looking for a house. They seemed to find the experience a positive one.

The students' descriptions of their house ranged from excellent (using the adjectives appropriately and including connecting words) to incomplete. Some completed the sentences with one word only but if they differentiated the spelling for the feminine house and masculine garden that was acceptable. Most students managed this differentiation.

Only one student asked why the spelling for "beautiful" was "belle" for the house and "beau" for the garden.

**On habite où ?
Where do people live ?**

Roll call and greetings.

While activities below are going on, individual students are being interviewed about what they have been learning in French lessons this term and what they think living in France would be like. What would be the same as living in Australia and what would be different? Interviews to be digitally recorded. Specific questions asked are on pages 2 and 3 of this document.

If description of house not yet complete, finish this off.

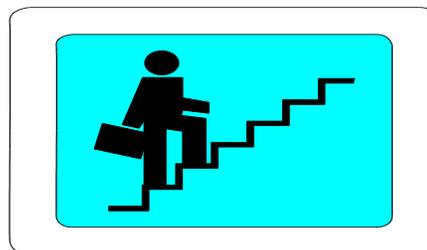
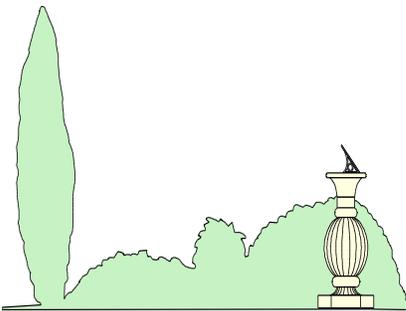
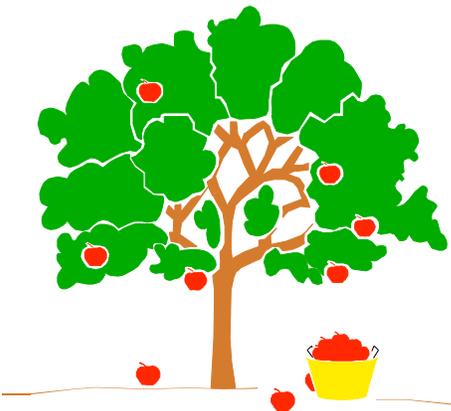
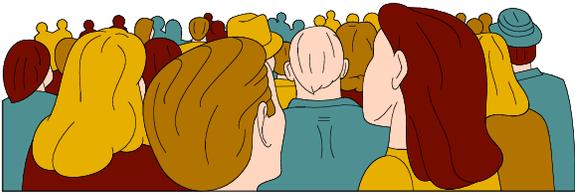
“When your house description is complete, onto the large A3 sheet which is labeled “une maison” (a house) “un appartement” (an apartment) “les deux” (both) stick each of the 8 pictures from the smaller A4 sheet; under the heading which you think is appropriate. What are the pictures on the A4 sheet? Where do you think the pot plant would belong? In the house? In the apartment? Or both? Why? How about the fruit tree? ...”
Continue giving examples until all students understand what is required.

When both the house description and the picture sorting activity are complete, students go through work in folder and complete anything that is unfinished.

This lesson lasted an hour instead of the usual 30 minutes and after 45 minutes some students were becoming restless even though I discovered later that they hadn't in fact finished everything they were supposed to do. Having a stranger with a video-camera in the room unsettled most of them.

Many of them were worried by the picture sorting activity because they were afraid of putting a picture under the wrong heading. I kept telling them that as long as they could explain why they had put the picture where they had there were no right or wrong answers. This was a notion that some of them simply could not accept.

These are the 8 pictures which students had to stick under an appropriate heading:
House, Apartment or Both.



UNIT EVALUATION

YEAR 2 FRENCH

Lesson 6

22 November 2006

On habite où ? *Where do people live ?*

I decided a sixth lesson was needed to “close” the unit and acquire student feedback.

Discuss under which heading each of the 8 pictures was glued and why. (*Ten minutes only*)

Give out Student Feedback sheet and read through it with the students. Students mark their responses as we read each statement to ensure that they know which aspect of the unit is being referred to in the statement.

Collect feedback.

22 students completed the feedback; one was absent.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK:
COLLATED RESPONSES**

Please circle the response/s that best describe/s your opinion.

I thought that the discussion of the pictures of Adelaide and Toulouse was:

- (a) interesting **9** (b) hard **4** (c) easy **14** (d) boring **10**

I thought that reading about where Susan lives was:

- (a) interesting **13** (b) hard **6** (c) easy **8** (d) boring **7** (e)

I thought that reading about where Cécile lives was:

- (a) interesting **11** (b) hard **5** (c) easy **8** (d) boring **7** (e)

I thought that talking about houses and apartments was:

- (a) interesting **13** (b) hard **2** (c) easy **12** (d) boring **5** (e)

I found drawing my house and writing about it in French:

- (a) interesting **10** (b) hard **5** (c) easy **13** (d) boring **2** (e) **fun; it was fun**

I thought that the activity where I had to decide where to put the pictures (house, apartment or both) was:

- (a) interesting **6** (b) hard **2** (c) easy **12** (d) boring **4** (e) **nervous**

How I felt about being video-taped and interviewed:

Popular; embarrassing (2); boring; scared; “happy, good, shy”; “I was inbarist”; “nivis cos lv nevn beh vibo tapt bfor”; “good, ok”; “kindove embaracey”; “I felt very interesting”; “A bit inbarest”; neves; “fun interesting short”; “I got very boring”; “fun interesting different”; “I felt very very nervous, scared”; “easy and shy”; “It was fun and I felt a bit inbarest”; “weid but fun”; “I was not video But I wad like it.”

I think that living in an apartment would be

“Difrint sqoshe and sqesy”; Different; “bad because you don’t get pets Oh no”; “boring unpopular”; “esiting because It wold esiting”; “fun but different”; “Different and boring and scary”; “Different hard”; not good; “different”; “non fun because we wouldn’t have a garden”; “fun, tidy, and more space” (this student is writing from personal experience); okay; “not as good as living in a house”; “it would be embarrassing”

Total Responses: Easy – 67; Interesting – 62; Boring – 35; Hard – 24

These results are interesting in that, to some extent, they reflect the desire of the students to write the “right” thing. Certain words (embarrassing, different, popular) had been written on the board to help students who had asked how to spell them. It may have seemed to some of the students that, as these words were on the board, it was necessary to use at least one of them.

The use of the word “boring” in some unusual contexts may indicate that some of the students have different conceptions of what it means. One student described the same activity as both interesting and boring. I expect it palled over time.

Interestingly enough, the two students who indicated “boring” for every section of the feedback participated enthusiastically during the discussions and produced good written work.

Student Assessment Responses

As I have not yet viewed the video-tape of the students’ interviews, I have inserted the commentary of the interviewer, Anne-Marie Morgan from RCLCE at the University of South Australia.

I thought I could fill you in on the students’ responses as I perceived them during the interview:

Most had a clear sense of their own home and living arrangements, and all seemed to live in houses, which helped to make the difference between apartment living and house living clearer for them, and to reinforce this geographical-cultural difference that was at the core of your unit.

Most also understood that the reason people were more likely to live in apartments in France was because of space issues, ‘it’s more crowded’, ‘there isn’t as much room’, ‘there are more people in the city’. All were willing to compare the two types of living arrangements and had obviously considered this during the unit.

Understandably, most preferred their own situation, where they had a house with a yard to play in and without people all around them. A point many made about living in an apartment was that they would have to be more considerate of noise with regard to neighbours, so this is quite a sophisticated response for children of this age.

A positive they saw of the French situation was being close to friends to play with. Many thought having pets would be difficult.

A few students were able to read their French quite well, and could translate it into meaningful English.

A couple were unsure of what the other country was, but many Australian children this age can't tell you that Adelaide is a city and Australia is a country, so I wouldn't be too concerned about this.

Overall, there was clearly engagement with the topic, and these young students had compared and reflected, had actively participated in the unit, had gained insights not only into another culture but also their own and had thought about their responsibilities to others, so were beginning to embark constructively on intercultural language learning.

TEACHER EVALUATION

What did I learn through participating in this project?

I learned that:

- changing my practice is both stressful and time consuming
- it is extremely satisfying to develop a unit of work that has a clear purpose
- it is very challenging to expose my work to the perusal, and feedback, of others
- moving beyond my usual practice is invigorating
- even when I think I know what intercultural language teaching and learning means, I'm not sure that my classroom practice exemplifies it
- sometimes what I mean and intend are not clear to others
- knowing exactly where I hope to take my students increases my expectations of them and of myself
- working within a clear framework and according to specific principles boosts my confidence in the classroom
- examining my practice gives rise to contradictory states of mind!
- at Year 2, a six-week unit in a 30 minute per week program does not allow much scope for exploring the intercultural through the French language.

I learned to:

- question carefully; choosing my words and leaving the questions open-ended
- listen more carefully and openly
- give students time to explain
- ask "Why?" and "How?" and "Where?"
- be more specific and explicit in developing activities and tasks
- program for primary students instead of secondary

I learned not to:

- make assumptions
- allow the fact that I was hoping for a particular response or insight to blind me to the validity of the unexpected

What changes did the intercultural focus necessitate in my program planning, teaching and assessment?

My program planning was more structured, coherent and forward looking. Having recently returned to teaching after a six-year gap, and being in the early stages of transition from secondary to primary teaching, my programming was initially of the "one week at a time" style. As a result of my involvement in this project, instead of almost discrete lessons, I needed to develop a connected approach.

Planning became wider ranging as I sought more up to date and relevant resources. I made more use of internet and images and tried to connect with the themes taught by the classroom teacher.

The connections between language and culture and learning needed to be clear. Teaching and learning activities had to combine in such a way as to support the students in progressing towards and achieving the desired outcomes. The outcomes had to be explicit, achievable and determined as part of the planning process.

The teaching had to be more interactive with more opportunities given to students to express their opinions and share their experiences. Discussions and assessment activities needed to relate to their lives and interests and also allow them to speculate. Questions had to be put in ways that would encourage participation, hypothesising and sharing of information. A balance needed to be struck between learning the French language and understanding French culture/s; in this short time-frame I found it impossible to teach the culture through the language.

Assessment had to be more sustained and tasks and activities designed in such a way that they would allow students to demonstrate successful achievement of the learning outcomes. Observation and recording of observations needed to be done during and after every lesson. In most respects, assessment was easier as what I wanted students to learn, and how they could express this learning, was clear from the outset.

What impact does the intercultural focus have on student learning?

This is difficult for me to say as I had taught the students for only one term prior to beginning the project and the only assessment tools I had used were observation and student self-assessment.

I certainly expected more of the students as a result of designing the interculturally focused unit of work. They were able to complete a text using appropriate and, in most cases, correct French and to make choices about what belongs in a house, apartment or both using logic, experience and what they had learned during the unit. During their interviews, they were able to articulate their understandings about French and their own culture with respect to housing and how this impacts on lifestyles and responsibilities towards others.

In terms of positive interactions in the classroom, the students were more engaged during the intercultural unit and were able to make more meaningful contributions than during Term Three as the unit encouraged them to share their interests and experiences.

My impression is that they learned less of the French language for production purposes than in Term Three, although some students were able to read and understand quite a long text for this year level. The fact that the French they learned was learned in context outweighs considerations of quantity.

What recommendations would I make to others about implementing intercultural language learning?

Lay the ground work: make sure that students have the linguistic resources, (*mainly a willingness to learn the language and developing literacy in their own language*), some background knowledge (*do not assume that the students have a particular knowledge base*), group working skills and the positive classroom ambiance that will enable them to move comfortably into a more demanding approach to language learning than is usually required in a primary school.

Encourage students to take risks and try to persuade them that there is not always a “right answer”.

Plan carefully – know where you want to take your students’ learning and understandings ... be clear about Outcomes from the outset

Be patient ... explore students’ ideas ... beware of negative reactions to unexpected responses ... be sensitive to students’ desire to share (even when it is not relevant to the discussion!)

Be prepared to work hard and search long to find appropriate resources ... or establish an effective sharing network!

Be organized and make the most of your allotted instruction time

(I was fortunate and had the lunch hour available before my lessons to set up the room, write on the board, distribute folders, resources and equipment, which saved a lot of lesson time ... I also was “free” after the lesson so was able to copy what had been written on the board, make notes about what I had observed during the lesson and adjust my planning for the next lesson in the light of my observations.)

Enjoy the depth of learning and understanding ... be prepared initially to use the target language less during lessons to allow for discussion of concepts.

(I certainly intend to teach this unit to next year’s Year 2 class but will not go as quickly as I did this term so that students have time to assimilate the French and English language involved in making the intercultural connections. I had a sense that students wanted to use French more during the lessons, as they were accustomed to hearing and speaking it more often than writing it.

In 2007, there will also be time to lay the appropriate groundwork and to continue the unit with a look inside housing in both countries and perhaps in other francophone countries as well. Through describing what is in a house and finding words and expressions that simply do not translate, the intercultural understandings will increase in depth.

Question in such a way that students make connections themselves.

PROFILES

The Languages Program

As the school is an Independent School in South Australia, languages learning is compulsory from Reception to Year 9. This school prides itself on having the girls learn two languages (French and Japanese) in the Junior School.

The School Link (four year old students in the Early Learning Centre) class also learns the two languages as do the Year 7 girls. At the end of Year 7 they decide which language to study in Year 8 onwards.

In recent years, School Link to Year 6 students, in each year of their schooling, have studied Japanese for one semester and French for the other. From 2007 onwards this will change so that students have at least one year to study each language but there will still be an alternation; students in the odd years taking Japanese and those in the even years taking French. In Year 7 they will study both prior to making their choice of language for further study.

There are three languages rooms in the school: one for the Junior School (School Link to Year 6) and two for the middle (Years 7 – 9) and senior (Years 10 – 12) school (one for Japanese, the other for French). Each of these is well-equipped and well-stocked with resources. The languages budget is generous and girls from year 7 onwards buy their own text and workbooks.

In the Junior School, reports using the five-point scale (1 – 5) are written at the end of each semester. For each Learning Area, the Outcomes assessed that semester are indicated and a number from one to five is assigned for each Outcome. At some year levels these numbers are averaged to give an overall score and a description of the student's attitude and effort in the subject is given.

Currently 97 students are enrolled in Pre-school, 158 in the Junior School, 150 in the Middle School and 195 in the Senior School.

Teaching and learning occur in line with the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework.

The School Community

The school has been accredited by the Council of International Schools so there is an international focus and exchanges, overseas trips and the enrolment of students from other countries, are encouraged.

Nineteen nationalities are represented in the student body but approximately 95% have Australian nationality. There are five nationalities represented among the staff with the highest group being Australian.

The Student Group

All of the students were born in Australia but one third of the class has parents or grandparents of other nationalities, including Danish, Greek, Italian, Arabic, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. One student speaks another language at home (Greek) and a second attends Saturday school for Ukrainian.

For most of the students their prior language learning experiences consist of the semester of Japanese or French they learn from School Link to Year 1 if they have been at this school throughout those years. A number of students come from other primary schools where they may have learned Italian, German, French or Japanese for 60 minutes or less per week.