**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

Interviewer NF

HeadTeacher A HT A

Teacher A

NF Here we go. Another one here. Lovely. So, if you wouldn't mind just for the recording, if you could just say your name and say what your role is at School A.

HT A I'm Headteacher A, I'm executive head teacher at School A all through four to 16 school.

NF Thank you.

TEACHER A My name is Teacher A. I'm assistant SENCo and EAL lead at School A.

NF Great. And I'm just going to turn the sound up. Are there any questions you've got before we get started? So, you want to know about any aspect of anything, or was it...?

TEACHER A No, not that I can think of.

NF Great. Ok, Lovely. OK, So, just so you know, I've been working with EMTAS for years. They were part of my PhD a long time ago. So, we just work very closely together, and the project basically is me merging my work with their work. But before we do that, we're just wanting to find out where schools are at? Which is what sort of the purpose of this interview is. So, if you could just start by explaining to me. I'm aware that you are actually all the way through to 16, aren't you? 'Cause you are an unusual shape of a school, as it were, which is lovely to see. So, if you want to tell me about...our focus is primary, but whatever works for you. If you can tell us about the numbers and languages of multilingual children in the school.

TEACHER A Of course. We are going to be focusing on the primary, so the infant and the junior site. So, on our infant site, we currently have 64 EAL children. And on our junior site, we have 71 EAL children. And 'cause I look at everything across both sites, so across our primary sites there are 27 different languages spoken.

NF Wow.

TEACHER A Yes, well, there's quite a few languages. I can send the detailed list over if you'd like with just the languages and the number, but predominantly our top three languages are Nepali, Urdu, and Romanian. And on average, so for example, at the moment in our early year’s cohort, there's about 24 EAL children, but in September we've got 38 EAL children starting.

NF In reception?

HT A And that's out of-

TEACHER A Yeah, in reception.

HT A That's out of 90.

NF Out of 90. Gosh. So, you're getting towards 50% in a way. Certainly, well into 40%.

TEACHER A Absolutely. So, this is kind of the largest cohort of children we've had with such a high EAL number. And kind of in line with the other children, Nepali and Romanian, other top of that list of languages. Now normally every year in the start of the year, we work with EMTAS very closely and have a coffee morning. Which is for new parents just explaining about the school system, but equally thinking about how we as a school and EMTAS support. Now recently I've spoken to (name). And I believe you're working with (name) on your project. (name)?

NF Yes. (name).

TEACHER A That's the one. And this year she's kind of going to offer us an extra coffee morning just to help with that pure number so we can be a little bit more dynamic with the target audience and how we can support them.

NF Great. So, the next three questions are kind of all about school development planning and what you do. So, we can take them in any order and just they can combine, whatever works for you in terms of how you want to talk about what your school is like at the moment. So, do you want to talk to me about how multilingualism figures in your school development, school improvement planning? Is it kind of something which you plan for explicitly? Or is it something whereby you have so many children that in a way it's integrated?

TEACHER A HT A shall I talk and then you jump in to add something?

HT A Absolutely. Yeah.

TEACHER A Now with our school improvement plan, it's very much based at all children. So, all children, all backgrounds and just being completely inclusive. And I know that we have now a specific EAL policy and action plan that I'm working towards. And I know that in our teaching and learning policies, although EAL isn't specifically mentioned, it is something that as a whole we work to support all children. And I know planning within different subjects, we try to ensure as much as possible that we can include different texts, different studies about areas all over the world. So not just in geography, but thinking about English and art and music, just so our children are exposed to lots of different texts from lots of different people from all around the world.

NF Sorry, do you mind if I just interrupt there? Do you mean in terms of the actual, the language that text is written in, or do you mean in terms of they're seeing images of or experiences of children and families that look like them as it were?

TEACHER A Both, I think. And so, when there is a piece of work, which we'll kind of go into a little bit more later, thinking about the oracy of learning as well, we want to kind of immerse our children and as you say, see in those pictures, but also learning about the different texts that come from across the board.

NF Sure. I get it.

TEACHER A So that is kind of thinking about the school improvement plan and general planning. Is there anything else I should add there, HT A?

HT A No. What I'm going to do is just get the main priorities up there just to see if we have absolutely put it in there. So, there is something in our school, priority one, develop and improve the quality of education, which is about focus on children that need additional support, vulnerable pupils that would include EAL pupils within that. Yes. So, within that, you've got all your regular training things that you do, haven't you, Teacher A?

TEACHER A Yes.

HT A That are then embedded within your particular action plan, which sits behind the main priorities.

NF Yes.

TEACHER A So thinking about specifically our EAL children and how we help them access, yearly we have EMTAS come in to do some training with the staff. And I feel I have a really good relationship with (name of EMTAS teacher) who will come in and do the training because, often, we have some newly qualified teachers that come in. So, we kind of almost go over the same things and it's a refresher for other staff. But I know last year we didn't have any NQTs. So, we kind of tailored the planning, sorry, the training specifically for what our staff want. And I asked the staff as well, we've got this EMTAS time, what do you feel like you would like to develop further?

So, I will conduct training as well EMTAS for teaching staff and support staff. And I did… completed the SEAL training over the last two years, which was really beneficial and especially thinking about...'cause obviously I wear two hats, my SEN hat and my EAL hat. So it was really beneficial thinking about how I can combine those two and kind of come up with a process for teachers to understand the differences between (inaudible 07:40) and EAL, and how we can address that and how we can monitor it and take the appropriate steps, because I know that I found some of our really experienced teachers haven't necessarily worked with are completely new to English...

NF No.

TEACHER A … (inaudible 07:55) child before.

NF And that's always the challenge, isn't it? That's always...

TEACHER A Absolutely.

NF …that worries the most.

TEACHER A Exactly. And as I said in my training, sometimes what I'm talking about might not necessarily be relevant to your class now, but we never quite know who is going to be coming into our school. So, I just want to empower teachers to kind of have the basic knowledge, but equally know who to come to and where to go to get that support when realised you've got a child starting on Monday that has no English whatsoever. And ultimately not thinking about their education per se. We want them to feel happy and secure and welcomed into our school.

NF Right, lovely. And then the next question sort of talks about, how are they given support? In a way I think you've kind of talked about that. So that's through the amount of training that staff have from you. Do you have bilingual assistants or…?

TEACHER A We don't have any bilingual assistants employed by us, but we obviously use EMTAS. And for example, recently we've had a couple of children started who are refugees. So, I liaised with their family support worker, but also EMTAS before they started. And I think actually the week they started, we had one of the bilingual assistants come out to see them and the teachers because actually it's really difficult. But it's really important to know their language, their level of English, but level of understanding in their home language first because actually the children that started were literate in their home language, which was brilliant because then we could get lots of resources for them that had home language on them, that they were going to be able to access and read. And I know that the children felt really welcomed by that.

And we have new...I tend to go off on a tangent, so people call me back when needed. But we have new arrival ambassadors in the school. So, they were prepared as were the classes. And I know that some of our children went home at the weekend and learned some diaries. So actually, when they come into the school, they could speak just a few key phrases that made them feel really welcome. And the bilingual assistant who came to visit them commented to our admin assistant in the office how the children…. or how happy the children were and how impressed he was with the way they had been welcomed into the school, which was obviously lovely.

HT A It's just those few words makes a difference, doesn't it?

NF Huge.

HT A So at the secondary site, whilst we don't have people employed as bilingual assistants, we do have some members of staff who are also fluent in Urdu and Polish. So that's quite useful whenever we need somebody to come in and interpret at a meeting or just initially to meet the parents. And we've got various members. So, a member of staff at the junior school speaks Greek. And I remember several years ago she came over to the senior site to meet with some parents there and the child. Again, as Teacher A was saying, actually she (inaudible 10:58) a child to establish what the baseline was in their home language. And it turned out that that particular child actually couldn't read or write in Greek either. So therefore, we'd ascertain then that there were additional needs. So just kind of that little...whatever we can do internally, we do.

NF And that's always so hard, isn't it? The children actually that join between EAL, and special need is really complex.

HT A (Inaudible 11:23).

NF Yeah, really complex. So much goes on. And it feels that you've talked a lot looking at question four about current successes as there's a lot going on very highly developed systems. I have to say, just as an aside, it's been very lovely for me doing these interviews because I find out just how much EMTAS do. And I don’t know how aware you are of what goes on in other local authorities, but there isn't an EMTAS in every local authority. In fact, there are very, very few EMTAS. Yes. So, we are very, very happy and lucky people in Hampshire, frankly, as kind of an aside.

What about challenges or anything that kind of feel difficult for you? And everyone talks about new arrivals, and I wish I had some kind of magic bullet that said yes. And this is what you do with your new arrivals. I just be honest with you, no, I don't. But what are the challenges for you?

TEACHER A Aside from the new arrivals, I think, especially thinking about the upper key stage. I know the struggles that teachers have kind of come to me about is when there is a big text that they are studying or if it is a particular topic area. Now, technology is amazing and online often you can find variations of texts. However, sometimes the children don't read in their home language, which is obviously an added difficulty. So… sometimes challenges come when we don't expect them. So, it's just trying to think of my bank of knowledge. Could we use one of the many forms of technology to translate to them? Could we do it a bit more visually? Is there something that's more appropriate? But as you said, EMTAS are amazing. And although aside from the fact that they come in and we do the normal profile meeting with the child, with the bilingual assistant, I will often email them and say, this has come up…. have you got any advice? What can we do? And they will give that advice or signpost me into a direction that might be beneficial.

NF Great.

HT A I think it becomes more of an issue that the older the child, then the higher up the school they are, because obviously if they arrive in early years or Year 1, Year 2, it's a very language-rich environment anyway, isn't it?

NF Absolutely.

HT A So the gap certainly is more pronounced the older they are.

NF Yeah, 'cause of the complexity of the curriculum they need to access and the type of language. And it's very complex, isn't it?

So, the next question was one that EMTAS wanted me to ask, which is just around aspects of, are there things that you've accessed from? And it sounds like you've accessed quite a lot. And are there aspects that, if any, have become part of your school practice as opposed to them still leading them?

TEACHER A I think one of the main things that EMTAS have helped support in training and that we do as a school now is using the Bell Foundation. So that is amazing. It took a little while to implement, and now teachers are more competent with it. And actually, it is an expectation for our EAL children that are not achieving to actually press them against the Bell Foundation because obviously that helps me and helps the senior leadership team to understand where that child is. Because ultimately understanding how long it takes children to acquire their BICS and their CALP and understanding that kind of curve. Is really important, because I think there is an expectation for children to academically progress. And I think teachers feel almost that they're not doing enough if they're not where they should be, but actually understanding that for that EAL child, what is the next step? And actually, kind of having an understanding of where they are and how we can help support to move them further.

NF So Bell is something that's used kind of consistently throughout the school? Or is it...?

TEACHER A Yes. So currently there is a meeting with senior leadership team with a class progress of use. So, as you can imagine, there's the list of children within the class and where they sit. And often there's some of the EAL children that were just kind of the not achieving category, but now within that category, they are rated A, B, or C, wherever they may be. And I know that the teachers I've spoken to, who feel this is a benefit because sometimes, although they may not move to a next band, they've got their paperwork that they can show, actually at the start of the year, this is what I could highlight, but now they have achieved much more. And it is really good with the framework as well that teachers have some direct guidance of what they can do to help support.

HT A Very much so. So that's something from the other side of it. So, I'm leading those who progress within meetings. It is really helpful. It gives you that measurement of progress within, doesn't it? Even though they may not be meeting at the start.

NF I think what I love about Bell is it's about measuring progress appropriately for them, because the standard assumes a monolingual English speaker basically, doesn't it? And it's about what they can do rather, than what they can't do. So, I'm sure that works really well for you. It's great that you've got it so fully integrated.

They also wanted me to ask, EMTAS, are there any things that you've requested support in which you've found less helpful and don't use? I have to say, I've drawn a blank on this with other schools so far.

TEACHER A (Inaudible 16:49). And there's nothing specifically I can say that, oh, they told us to implement this, and we have it. And I think it very much depends on that individual child. And obviously the bilingual assistants come in and we'll speak to teachers and give them a bank of ideas, which we try, but actually sometimes teachers may try it, and it isn't successful or it's not practical to implement that. So that again is on a very ad hoc basis as to what will work well with that child and within that class.

NF And that would be the same for any of our children, wouldn't it? It's all about, as you say, tailoring for the individual. So that sounds entirely sensible.

So, moving towards the last two questions. The reason I'm asking about oracy is my own research, which has been largely trying to bring a way of teaching from the US to the UK over the last five years or so of working mostly with schools in Southampton. It's focused very much on what I refer to as talk-rich teaching or oracy. And so, we're just interested to know what schools are already doing in terms of oracy?

TEACHER A I'm not sure if HT A's just disappeared.

NF I think she has.

TEACHER A (Inaudible 18:04).

NF Let's just admit her back in. I think she must have been having trouble with that.

TEACHER A No, she's not abandoning me.

NF I think she's got thrown out (inaudible 18:16).

HT A Hi, (inaudible 18:16).

TEACHER A We are just talking about now the oracy and what we can (inaudible 18:20). Now I spoke to our English lead, who is also assistant head, yesterday about this because this year, I don’t know if you've ever heard of ELKLAN?

NF No, I don't know that one.

TEACHER A Don't ask me what it stands for because I don't even know if it does stand for anything. But ELKLAN is a project that all the schools...do you know what it stands for HT A?

HT A It's named after the people who designed the programme.

TEACHER A There we go. So basically, that is as an older (inaudible 18:47) cohort and as a school that has very much been a focus this year. And that is all based on kind of understanding children's level of English and really almost stripping it back. So, I think sometimes as an adult we kind of forget the really important steps of language acquisition and how a small step missed out, makes a huge impact.

NF Absolutely.

TEACHER A So this is something that teaching staff and support staff have been focusing on this year. And I know when we had our EAL excellence award validation, it's something that I spoke about because it's had an impact on all of our children and 'cause obviously we're thinking about oracy, but just thinking about the visuals that are used to support throughout the Fall now, absolutely has an impact.

NF That's interesting. Sorry to stop you there. So, kind of even a small, a really incremental change, something visual alongside being more orally oriented is helping.

TEACHER A Absolutely. And we use Widgit very much as a school. I'm not sure if you...so we use that not just for our SEM pupils, but in class as well. So that not only will help with visuals around the school, but for a lot of our children helping with plans in work and adapting work tasks just to help support them with that understanding. Now also I know with all our English topics or English schemes of work, a lot of time is spent at the beginning of whatever subject it may be. A lot of talking, a lot of getting in...how can I put it? My mind's gone. Focus a lot on talk for writing and generating idea. We're not expecting the children to be like, oh, this is the book we're doing… crack on. It is very much the talk for writing, ensuring the children understand those key words and introduce a new vocabulary in a way that they understand.

NF Yes. Which is a context, as it were, you mean?

TEACHER A Absolutely. Yes.

NF Subject related and experience related.

TEACHER A And as HT A said, in our early years in Year 1, our curriculum is very much based around talking and providing opportunities for the children to talk and to understand. And just almost, I think ELKLAN has empowered teachers and support staff to almost take a bit of a step back and think, oh, actually this child's...there's something happening with this child's communication. What piece of the chain is broken, so to speak, that we can help support?

NF Sorry. So is that a set of initials, an acronym? Is it L-C-L-A-N or something? Or E-L?

TEACHER A No, it's E-L-K-L-A-N. And as HT A said, it's named after the people who came up with the scheme of (inaudible 21:33).

NF I'll have a look.

HT A It's a K, init? E-L-K-L-A-N.

TEACHER A Yeah.

NF Great. HT A, I was just explaining when I think you got thrown out of the meeting momentarily there.

HT A That's not (inaudible 21:46).

NF The reason there's the focus on oracy is because my own research, which has been for the last five years or so working with American colleagues and looking at bringing a way of teaching over from there to here, is very focused on looking at what we do with the whole class. It's not a bolt-on, it's not an intervention. It's about basically upgrading the amount of talk that's going on in the class amongst the children. At its kind of most basic, its teachers say less, children say more, which to be honest is my mantra for all my teacher training, whether they're first year trainees or with practicing teachers. So hence the interest in oracy. So, it sounds like you're already kind of well into that as part of your kind of normal school improvement, school development going on as well. Something that you've already picked up on.

HT A Yes.

NF So to move into what the project is, it's quite organic at the minute, 'cause the point of it at the moment was to share understanding between me and EMTAS as it were and to find out what the school's at. So, we're very much into kind of finding out term now, but we have to quite quickly start putting some materials together. And the way we are thinking it's going to work is that we are going to put together a suite of, I'll call them training materials. I don't like the word training 'cause they're… let's call them professional learning materials. And they will introduce kind of this kind of oracy as part of the whole EAL agenda, which is not quite so emphasised in the EMTAS training at the moment.

So, it'll be a set of materials with something like, what the principles are of these materials, how to use these materials and then some stuff, some sets of ideas as it were.

And we are interested to know what schools think they might access or might want to access. What sorts of things they would find useful in any way, if you're kind of offered kind of a sense of, what makes good professional learning materials for you, as it were?

TEACHER A I kind of had a think about it and also thinking about it from a class teacher point of view. So just kind of making whatever it is available very user friendly and quite dynamic, 'cause I know that I've done quite all the training on the EMTAS Moodle. It's not the most user-friendly system. And I think that probably has put some teachers off, because obviously teachers have a very high workload. And actually, they're probably going to access these kind of resources if they have a child in mind. So having something that is user friendly, quite dynamic and can be signposted into a specific area, if that makes sense.

NF Yeah, absolutely.

TEACHER A And as we said, it's really hard to say actually this would really...I would name something specific that would benefit because actually all our EAL children are so different.

NF They're different. Absolutely. So I think another thing to say about it, which is hopefully helpful for you, is that the way we are seeing it working and the way I've worked with a set of schools in Southampton, where we've done it more at kind of whole staff level rather than it being a teacher goes to this to look at what they might do for their one pupil. It's… let's look at this together and look at ways in which we might tweak our practice together and then assess where we...in a way, you are already there, aren't you? 'Cause you're already working with the ELKLAN project, as it were. So, it would be a bit like working with an aspect of ELKLAN maybe, specifically for EAL and kind of making decisions around that.

So, for example, some of the schools I've worked in have done things like, I can think of one school in particular, changed the number of children that sit in groups in their classroom. They changed from six to four. Was one of the first things they did. And then left that for...that was the change they made. Other ways in which teachers have liked working with it is they've said, this is going to be something we focus on just in guided reading ,or just in one particular type of lesson a week where we are focused on this kind of small group interaction. “Teacher says less, children says more” approach, as it were. So, there are different ways in which schools might choose to engage with it, is what we're hoping. Sorry, I'm babbling on now. So just interrupt me if you've got a question.

And the way in which we see it rolling out is...well, it's a pilot. The project is a pilot. So, it would be having schools such as yourself, or other schools who wants to be on board with this really, working with the materials between November 24 and February 25. And then basically reporting back to us on how that's gone. And the expectation… there's not an expectation that EMTAS are coming in and delivering staff meetings for this to work. We would do an initial setup meeting, but that could be online. Doesn't have to be….it could be with whoever you felt relevant for it. And we would then probably have kind of check-in clinics again online. And perhaps something like an observation or two during that three-month period just coming in to say, how's it going? Show us, if you want to, what you're doing. So that sort of thing. So, it's very much, here are some materials with some, we hope, very clear guidance on how we think they are best used. And then it's kind of, tell us how it's going ,and tell us how it went, is basically what we're looking at.

TEACHER A What do you think, HT A?

HT A Well, I think we're interested in.

NF Lovely.

HT A Absolutely. (Inaudible 27:52).

NF No one has to commit today. I realise that there's nothing. We have to sit there and go, yes, definitely. And sign it. We're not signing on any dotted line. What we're doing is I'm interviewing the schools. A lot of people are interested. We said originally, we'd take six schools, but to be honest, I think we can go beyond that to whichever school is, however many schools are interested, given that it's the nature of the way in which we're going to be rolling it out. We had thought originally it would be kind of a version where EMTAS were coming in a lot, but schools simply can't release a number of staff meetings for that to happen. So, I think that's just not realistic for any you or for us to be doing.

So, I think what we'll do is, we'll...I'm still collecting interviews, which is great. People have been really, really lovely like yourselves in giving time to do it. And then either ... I think it'll probably be the earliest, the very early part of the autumn term. It may be a little bit towards the end of the summer term, but I think people would rather have...oh, they'll have new things to think about in September, but we'll see how that goes. We'll just send out an email and saying, this is what we think it's going to look like and sign up or not now, as it were. So, we'd be back in touch. Does that sound practical for you?

TEACHER A It's good, yes.

NF Lovely.

TEACHER A And I will get the consent forms sent to you straight away.

NF Bless you. Thank you very much.

TEACHER A Not a problem.

NF Is there anything else we haven't covered that you wanted to ask me about or mention?

TEACHER A Not that I can think of. I think we've covered everything.

NF You have. Thank you. Thank you so much for your time. It's really lovely meeting you both and spending time with you.

TEACHER A Brilliant.

NF And I'll be in touch again either in July or September.

TEACHER A Well, thanks so much.

NF Thank you so much. Bye-bye.

TEACHER A Take care. Bye-bye.

NF Bye-bye.