**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

Interviewer NF

Headteacher F HT F

Teacher F

NF There we go. Great. So, it's really good of you to do this. Thanks very much. And I sent the questions through. Did you get those okay?

Teacher F Yeah.

NF Lovely. We don't have to stay with those. If you've got other stuff that you want to talk about, that's fine. And we can obviously talk about the remainder of the project as well, if you're interested to know more. So just go with the flow in terms of what you want to talk about. So, the first one was just kind of a background one to School F’s children in terms of the numbers of multilingual learners you've got and the range of languages.

Teacher F So we’ve got, including English, we've got 26 different languages in the school. The most popular, we've got 20 Nepalese children, eleven Polish and eight Bengali and Turkish. So those are our predominant languages in the school.

NF Oh, that's interesting. Years ago, around 2009-ish when I did my own PhD, I actually did a lot of work with (Name) infants, and it was the Polish population that were coming through then. So that's interesting that that's still quite a dominant language in the school. Great. And I'm just noticing. I haven't kind of clarified your roles. So, HT F?

HT F Head teacher.

NF You are the head teacher.

Teacher F I'm deputy head.

NF You are deputy head. Teacher F, you are also EAL coordinator? Or is there a designated EAL coordinator in the school?

Teacher F Well, it sits with our (inaudible 01:37), but to be honest, and we'll come onto it the next question, because it's been on our development plan, it's something that we've both been looking at.

NF Great. Yes. Let's talk about that then. Talk to me about...I didn't ask for the percentage, did I? So, the rough percentage of children in the school who are multilingual?

HT F About a third.

NF About a third. Big chunk then. So, talk to me about school development planning.

HT F So it was on the development plan for this year. We wanted to look at improving provision for EAL children and making sure that what we were doing was beneficial. So, it's been part of our development plan this year. We started off by sort of profiling all of the children. So, when we were looking at that, we looked at attendance, when and where they joined. Did they come from outside of the country? Were they in English schools beforehand? Did they come from the infant school? What's their home language? We looked at Sandwell, Southford, and then did Bell's profile. And then we tried to look at patterns and to see if there were sort of any particular patterns at all. There wasn't necessarily anything sort of blindingly obvious pattern-wise, but what we then did do is we then asked Year 10s.

We looked at...we start off with Year 4 first, and we then asked the teachers to do a Bell's profile on those children to see if there was anything else that we could pull out of it. And then what each Year 10, then did is they then looked at, what is an action for us on what are we going to do? So, for example, when the Year 4 looked at their data, they looked at sort of three particular actions. So, they were looking at bilingual books for future units of work. Counting in hundred and writing three-digit numbers was something that was coming up. And they looked at books as well. So, they did a sort of deep dive into everything and then using substituting tables to support with grammatical understanding.

So, we then looked at that again with the Year 3 teachers. So, the Year 3 teachers did the same thing. We did the profile. They looked at books to see what else it was that they could be doing. And then from that we then invited EMTAS. We had (name) come in November time to deliver a whole staff workshop for teachers. And basically, the end of the day, it's about immersing children into the curriculum, but knowing the small things that you can do...

NF Absolutely.

HT F - to support them. And I think staff found that session really useful. And I think it was things sort of like the technology that you can use for translating, the apps, and things like that. So, from that side of things, that was where we were up to. And actually, looking at the data. We haven't looked at the summer data, but when we looked at the summer data '23 to spring data '24, actually the gaps in...I'm trying to think. This is whole school, but in writing the gap, there was no gap for IRE writers and combined reading, writing, and maths, there was no gap between EAL and non-EAL children. Slight reduction in reading and writing greater depth. But like I say, we've not looked at the summer data yet. So once that's in we can have a look, but generally speaking, based on that, we feel that the EAL children are sort of performing quite well.

NF They're making good progress.

HT F So I don't think...is there anything I've missed?

Teacher F No.

HT F So I think that's pretty much our plan for this year. And then...well, it sort of comes a bit further about the work that EMTAS have been doing.

NF Now let's move on. That's really, really rich and detailed overview of what you're doing. Thank you. Sounds like you're doing absolutely loads of lovely. So, using Bell as it were, as the kind of first port-o-call for assessing and then looking at working with Bell in a way in order to identify those steps forward, sounds a great way of working. So, I'm just interested to know how...because it's sort of a question for this. So that sounds to me like a success for you in terms of the way that you found to work with them. Is there anything that's kind of challenging about that? How do staff cope with operating at that level? Do they need specific training in using Bell or the way in which they think about their EAL learners or?

HT F I think time. It takes a long time, and you have to know the children well. So, it's making sure that you are getting...well, the teachers need to know the children before you do it. It does take a long time. I don't know. We've not really spoken to staff about what their thoughts were because this was sort of part of a (inaudible 07:08).

NF Absolutely.

HT F But we gave staff time to do it, so I wouldn't necessarily say it's...The barrier, I suppose, is giving staff time to do it. But we were able to do that because if you're going to do something, you need to give people the time to do it and do it properly so they can think about it, not after school quick (inaudible 07:31) thing.

NF Especially Bell, it's quite...I know obviously you can kind of really get very fine grain with Bell, can't you? But even using just the basic levels of proficiency, it's quite a lot of thinking and understanding about language development, isn't it, going on there for the teacher, I think. Great. So, time is what everybody would say, I think. And it's a challenge. So, in a way it's feeling to me like...and forgive me if I'm just putting words in your mouth. Do you argue, that you treat EAL as kind of integral to school development? So, it's not that there's kind of a...we would definitely have a staff meeting, I don’t know, twice a year on EAL or something like that. It feels like it's something that is kind of there all the time, is ongoing in practice?

Teacher F 30% of the (inaudible 08:22). So, it can be.

NF Absolutely. Great. So, talk to me about how you've used EMTAS. You've mentioned about (name's) staff meeting. Do you use them in other ways?

HT F Yeah. I've just actually got H in the office who does all of the admin bits. So, we have one-to-one support as well. And we have EMTAS come in and support us. So, depending on their needs, and that's through...they've been very good about that staff meeting. We've had SAT's reader this year for a pupil. So, somebody came in to do that. But it's just as in when...

NF So is that when a pupil's been in this country for less than a year? Is it? That they can have a reader.

HT F Yeah. So really, it's just EMTAS might come and do some one-to-one work with children. It might be signposting resources, it might be...we're sort of quite flexible in the way. It depends on what we need, really. It depends on what the children need. But we've got a good relationship with EMTAS. I think when I went to my head teacher conference, they saw that I was from School F, “Oh, we do a lot of work at School F!”.

NF I think as you're saying, there's a long established relationship, isn't there, with both schools in fact. And the focus of the work that I do which you may have had time to have a look at, is that it's very much about introducing ways of working more that are to do with talking, speaking in class and oracy. And I wondered if you've got any initiatives going on in school that are oracy-related at the moment?

HT F Well, we've been doing some work on spoken language, which fits in really well. So, it is trying to increase that and give children opportunities to do that across the curriculum. So that's something, again, that's on our school development plan, which we will then be embedding next year, sort of launch this year. So that's for all children.

NF Great.

HT F And we all understand as well. We've also been looking at tier two vocabulary, and I'm picking that...

NF Wonderful.

HT F - sort of dual meaning of words and there's been a lot of work. And again, that will continue next year to be embedded. So those were the two things. Teacher F is English lead as well.

NF Great.

HT F So that's something that we've introduced this year, because we understand that vocabulary is a complex thing.

NF So the work I've been working with for the last few years is a system that comes across from the states. We're not going to re-replicate that in the EMTAS materials that we create, but in my Talk Rich Teaching project, we were working with whole class. So, the idea is that anything I come along with, as it were, is whole class. It's not just for the children with EAL. It just happens to work particularly well for the children with EAL. So, it's not an interventional or a bolt-on, as it were. It's just a way of working. And it fundamentally is about teachers encouraging children to say more and trying harder for themselves to say less, which we all find really hard as teachers. I never stopped being like that as a lecturer either.

So that's the kind of focus of it. And if you've already got kind of oracy-oriented type stuff going on, that could be quite a fit. So, we are looking to develop materials that schools might use themselves, rather than its EMTAS comes in and presents something and says, do this. The idea is there'd be a suite of materials that schools could access to use in line with their own school development plans, as it were, is kind of the idea. But we are very aware there. If we just kind of put things out there and without any kind of structure to it that schools may or may not feel they want to use those. So, we're interested to know, if we produced some kind of online toolkit, what might it have in it that would interest you? Assuming that it's around oracy and EAL, but oracy for everyone. What might it have in it that you might find appealing? And, also in which ways would you think you might be encouraged to use it, including if EMTAS were involved, as it were? Sorry, there's a lot of questions all at once there. Just say what you like.

Teacher F I've one for you. So, can you give an example of something you are thinking of? (Inaudible 13:14) thoughts onto it. (Inaudible 13:16).

NF So let's say we talk the first...let's say, it's got a series of units, and the first unit is what is oracy? And it's something like a kind of definition of what we think oracy is. It's a very accessible short teacher-friendly reading that teachers might want to engage in. It's potentially a few slides that you might share at a staff meeting or which staff might go through themselves and it's perhaps a video clip. So, something like that. So, it might be something like, what is oracy? And then it might be something along the lines of another one of… developing oracy in activities with new to English learners or developing oracy in activities with more advanced bilingual learners. So, think of them as kind of bundles of resources, as it were. Does that make sense?

Teacher F What would a resource actually look like? So that's your TPD there, but are there going to be examples of things you can practically do in the classroom?

NF Yes. So, there'll be some things like taking a plan and taking a look at a plan and saying, in which ways could we change the activities in this plan in order that they are more talk-oriented, rather than, say, going straight to a written outcome? And there'd be examples of how you might do that. That's the idea at the moment.

Teacher F But we (inaudible 14:36).

NF Sorry?

Teacher F That's what we need.

NF So the ideas of...yes. So, say you are working with...I've worked extensively with the school in Southampton, for example. And one of the things they did at the outset was they changed...I'm not saying that our schools will need to do this with this project, but they changed the nature of their learning units in humanities subjects basically. So, they turned a Year 4 module around the Roman invasion in Britain into a module called, “Why did the Romans Invade Britain?” And then every lesson is a learning question. So, it's examples like that of where we've seen other schools do this. And then there might be materials in it that explain why that's useful. So it is that sort of thing. It wouldn't be endless examples. It would also be about, example, some materials would be around why would you want to be doing this? Why is this a good idea? Another...sorry, I'll keep going until you interrupt me if you want.

Teacher F No, no, no, no.

NF If you've got more questions. Another thing we think we're going to do, 'cause we're at the planning stage together at the moment, is we might need materials that are for senior leaders, materials that are for classroom teachers, which would be much more along the lines of, here's a lesson plan. These are the ways in which you might adapt this written outcome into a more talk-based outcome, but also possibly a learning unit or a set of materials that are specifically for learning support assistance, and the ways in which they might work as well. So, there are various levels at which we might produce the materials, as it were. So, you can see what the challenge with this project is. It's completely...it's a bit organic in that I'm working with EMTAS at the moment and we're discussing a lot. Then we're talking with schools as well to see what would you do? What would you want? So, we'll have something hard and fast next term with a view to a pilot in November onwards. Sorry, I've blabbed a lot there. Do you want to ask me some more questions?

Teacher F No. So, what I think we need is examples of how to increase oracy. So, we have the learning questions already. I'm not sure we're working hard enough. We have develop enough the oracy activities. And also, we do have children that don't speak English, so including them...

NF Absolutely.

Teacher F - is our most difficult thing to do. I've got one in my class. It's really, really difficult. But she's got a very hard...she's a really good learner, so it makes it easier for us, but it's making sure that oracy activities relate to everybody and all the children are getting something from it.

NF Yes, absolutely.

Teacher F That's (inaudible 17:28). That's magic.

NF There's no magic bullet for that. I have to be honest with you. And also again, with the school I've worked extensively over five years, we found it just takes a lot of time. So, I think there'd be no pretence from us that between...say, we piloted materials with schools. We are hoping from November 24 to February 25. It would be schools giving us feedback on how usable they were and what else they'd want to see. It wouldn't be that we could make a difference. We wouldn't be claiming to make a huge difference for your learners between November and February, but we'd certainly be looking to provide you with strategies that might in the longer-term feed ways of working.

So, the schools where I've seen it work well in the US, for example, where I've seen it used more, nobody makes a decision to kind of do oracy all at once. It might be decisions to work with these materials, say, that each teacher chooses one lesson a week, when they might try and work in this way. And that's enough at first. It's a way of building the habit, if you like, of teachers saying less and children saying more, rather than saying, I've got to go for broke and do this across all my lessons.

Teacher F Yeah, (inaudible 18:45).

NF It's too hard. It takes time to change our practice. We've become very learning outcome-oriented, haven't we? Over the last few years, particularly in English, I think. And teachers need nurturing to shift towards a state in which they feel brave enough to allow more talk. I think is part of the battle, isn't it? So, I think the materials would be working with that sort of trying to support mind-set shift as well, understanding that it's not easy to just...well, suddenly just do some more talking. That doesn't happen. If that happened, then you wouldn't be saying what you're saying as it were. It's hard, isn't it?

HT F I think though definitely sounds useful. I think what you're trying to develop.

NF I hope so.

HT F I think as well from my point of view, sometimes when training modules come in, I know there are some training modules from the SCN team. They are hours and hours and hours. And actually, as a result, I've not even completed one module because I haven't got the time.

NF You haven't got time.

HT F And I think if you are looking at training for staff or things like that, I think it's about manageable chunks. A 20 minute or a 15 minute, let's look at this clip, let's look at that, because...

NF Yeah, absolutely.

HT F - it's about how we can then balance that strategically with everything else that we need to do as well. So, I think when you are looking at your training kit, it's really having it in those short little snaps of time because...

NF Absolutely.

HT F - again, trying to sort of plan when you're going to do that. And actually, from a person sitting there and doing it, you can take in something for 15, 20 minutes, whereas if you're sat there for an hour, you start...so I start zoning out.

NF Particularly for teachers at the end of a day. And they're just exhausted anyway in the staff meeting. And it's just not practical. Now this is very much, we hope the approach will be...well, we know the approach, it'll be a matter of successfully transmitting it through the materials, would be taking something really manageable and a one-step, bitesize approach as it were to, let's all try this shift in our practice for this number of weeks.

HT F Almost quick takeaway or a quick try, that's manageable?

NF Yes.

HT F And I'll say that there's thought behind it.

NF But with a view to in the longer term making the bigger shift, just acknowledging that in the longer...it is going to take time. We won't all within two weeks suddenly become much more talk rich. It just doesn't happen. So, all I'm doing at the moment is interviewing all the lovely people that have agreed to talk with me. And then we'll get back to schools at the beginning of the autumn term to check in with you and say, “do you think you want to do this?” And explain to you in more detail then what the commitment as such would be. So, it would be something like, we would definitely need schools to attend some sort of introductory meeting so that you knew what on earth we were sending to you. Otherwise, it would...you know.

And then it might be working with the materials over time and perhaps some check-ins. We might do kind of a clinic feedback. That sort of thing. But there's no way in which we are going to come and ask you if we can have ten staff meetings between November and February. Obviously, the answer would be “on your bike”. So that's fine. No, I've worked with a set of four Southampton schools as well for six months in 2022 doing it. And no, that's alright. Don't worry. And obviously as a practitioner myself will be a long time ago. I do have a very realistic...I hope I have a very realistic grasp of what's doable.

HT F No, I think that's the only (inaudible 22:54) we're on the same page and I totally agree with you. You can't have ten staff meetings?

NF No.

HT F No.

NF No.

HT F It's not going to work.

NF No, it's definitely not.

HT F But I think it's manageable if you...you wouldn't necessarily need everybody to be at the introductory meeting. Maybe it depends on your audience or whether it is...then regular check-ins. You can just do that with key people.

NF We can.

HT F And then we can work out how we possibly then run it out...

NF Absolutely.

HT F - and disseminate staff.

NF And how far you want to take it. Absolutely.

HT F That actually sounds quite exciting. I think probably spoke to…

Teacher F -the data's very nice for you there.

NF That's good. That's great. Lovely. So, shall we leave it that you are sounding keen and we're still on the same page?

HT F (Inaudible 23:45) on the same page. Yeah.

NF Because originally, we thought we'd just pilot it with six schools, but to be honest, if twelve schools are keen and we are looking at this model whereby you are working with the materials and we are checking in, then I think we can manage as many schools as want to do it, to be honest. At least, I'm going to say that bravely now and it's okay. (Inaudible 24:08) but it's mad not to, isn't it? I'd rather we are looking at potentially creating something that would go out countywide once it's more developed. So, the more schools we have on board, the better really.

HT F No. And I think the fact that you're saying sort of November time to sort of launch it into the summer term, for us now, that is enough for us to sort of, when we're looking...

NF Is it enough?

HT F …(inaudible 24:30) good plan. We can sort of go, well, around November time we need to make sure that we've got capacity to do X, Y, Z and then we can look at where that fits in with our strategic plan for the year.

NF Fabulous. Great. Thanks so much.

HT F It was very nice to meet you.

NF It's really nice to meet you too as well.

HT F We look forward to hearing from you sort of in the autumn term.

NF Absolutely. You will do. Thanks so much.

HT F Thank you. Bye-bye.

NF Take care. Bye-bye.