Research in Primary School Classrooms:
1. An Early Start to French Literacy in KS2.
2. Memorising Formulaic Utterances in KS1

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Languages in the Primary Classroom Workshop – University of Essex
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Overview

Reciprocity between Research and Practice

1. Research-inspired Practice
   – Exploring literacy and oracy pedagogy in KS2 classrooms

2. Practice-driven Research
   – Exploring ways to support oracy in KS1 classrooms
Research-inspired Practice

Systematic and explicit FL literacy and Oracy pedagogy in KS2
FL literacy and oracy in Key Stage 2: Starting with Research and the Curriculum

- Primary FL National Curriculum (2014) supports literacy and oracy development
- KS2 practice tends to be oracy-focused, print last (Graham et al., 2014; Jones & Coffey, 2006)
- KS3 literacy practice sometimes lacks creativity & imagination (Ofsted, 2011); texts are undemanding (Woore, 2014)
- Importance of Literacy:
  - Cultural awareness
  - Allows for use, reflection, evaluation (e.g. Little, 2007; Manchón, 2014)
  - Extends input beyond classroom
  - Could support cross-curricula benefits (FLES studies – Taylor Wood, 2003)
The Teaching Intervention

• **Sound & print together**
  – Some evidence suggests that L2 literacy skills can develop alongside oral proficiency (Genesee et al., 2008)
  – Cross-linguistic influence (Koda, 2008)

• **Focus on L2 sounds**
  – Oral sub-lexical skills an essential part of developing word recognition (Hu & Catts, 1998)
  – Need to encourage production/discrimination of distinctive L2/FL sounds (Genesee et al., Walter, 2008)

• **Systematic and explicit phonics instruction**
  – Phonics instruction is an important component in learning to read (Adams, 1990)

• **Experience L2 sound and print**
  – Independence & exploration (Mitchell, 2002); creativity and imagination (Ofsted, 2011); active use...for purposes that matter (Hawkins, 1996)

• **Action Research, Years 5 & 6, n=45, 23 weeks.**
Primary MFL Literacy

- Read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases & simple writing.

- Link the spelling, sound and meaning of words.
• Write phrases from memory and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly.

• Describe people, places, things and actions orally and in writing.
Reading words and sentences

Sounds, meaning, appreciate stories

- Focus on sounds: ON, AN and final silent letters
- “PETS” were target GPCs in phonics instruction
- Use of cognates: pique-nique; dansent; désordre
- Exceptions: ours
- Authentic language: “il tombe des cordes”
- Visuals
### Learning FL Oracy and Literacy: Key Findings - Core FL measures

- All FL measures showed significant gain at post-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FL Measures</th>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
<th>Post-Test</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>s.d.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>s.d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL reading aloud</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.525</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.871</td>
<td>-3.886</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL reading comprehension</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.380</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.282</td>
<td>-3.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL elicited imitation</td>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>7.642</td>
<td>25.22</td>
<td>8.393</td>
<td>-5.464</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL receptive vocabulary</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>3.220</td>
<td>19.64</td>
<td>3.880</td>
<td>-2.57</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.13</td>
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- Teaching oracy & literacy together does not seem to disrupt the learning.
- FL general proficiency and FL literacy showed strong, positive relationship at post-test.

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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

School of Humanities
Learning L2 Oracy & Literacy

Key Findings

- Teaching FL oracy and literacy together appeared not to disrupt the learning.
- FL oracy and literacy developed together and could be mutually supportive.
- L1 reading age, NC reading, NC writing levels and VWM influential across all FL constructs at all test times.
- Teaching intervention could not “compensate” for the L1RAge advantage.
- French sound/spelling links emerge slowly and familiarity (i.e. practice) is important.
- Learners struggled to apply these links to novel words.
Practice-inspired Research

Supporting FL Oracy in KS1
Supporting Oracy in KS1: Practice-driven research

• Is it possible to develop mini role-play in KS1?
• Do gestures really help with memorising?
• Can I extend my learners beyond numbers and simple greetings?
• Could these children learn utterances to use in daily classroom life?
The Theory

• Stories L1, L2, FL classrooms:
  – engage learners, help acquire language implicitly (Morgan & Rinvolucri, 1983; Pesola, 1991)
  – contribute to oral skills development in FL (Kirsch, 2016; Tsou, Wang & Tzeng, 2006)
  – allow for repetition and chanting – L2 (e.g. Sneddon, 2008)
More theory....

• Formulaic sequences are used in L1A, L2A and FL learning e.g. (Myles & Cordier, 2017):
  – “rote learned or imitated chunks of unanalysed language” – eventually break down – FL learners aged 11-13 (Myles, Hooper & Mitchell, 1998)

• A role for gesture in L2/FL: gesture type; recognition vs. recall; oral vs. written (e.g. Kelly, McDevitt & Esch, 2009); Quinn Allen, 1995)
  – Gesture production aids vocabulary learning; better than visuals alone; children aged 4-5 years (Tellier, 2008)

• DCSF KS2 Framework encourages story use and gesture.
The Intervention

- 2 “stories”: one with gesture/one without
- Engaging visuals with related formulaic utterances
- Meaning elicited in English from visuals
- Formulaic utterances learned in French
- Memorisation: formulaic utterances matched for syntactic complexity and syllabic length
- Action Research; Years R, 1, 2; n=24
- Presentation over 3 consecutive weeks – immediate post-test; delayed post test on 5th week.
- Stories presented to children in groups, video-recorded and each participant’s performance examined. Groups of 3-4 children. Scored by word-level (re) production.
Story One – No Gesture

- Bonjour! Je m’appelle Georges
  - 6 syllables/5 items
- Est-ce que tu veux jouer?
  - 6 syllables/6 items
- J’ai marqué!
  - 3 syllables/3 items
- Nous avons gagné!
  - 5 syllables/3 items
Story Two - Gesture

- J’aime jouer à la marelle.
  - 7 syllables/6 items
- Je suis triste!
  - 3 syllables/3 items
- Est-ce que tu veux un tour?
  - 6 syllables/7 items
- Nous nous amusons!
  - 5 syllables/3 items
## The Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Post-Test</th>
<th>Delayed Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story One – No Gesture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14 words – 20 syllables)</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>2.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Two - Gesture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17 words - 21 syllables)</td>
<td>10.48</td>
<td>4.833</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Post-Test Non gesture/gesture T Test: $t = -3.385$; asymp sig = .004; effect size 0.33 - moderate
- DPT Non gesture/gesture T Test: $t = -1.327$, asymp sig = .201
- Strong, positive relationship: story 1/story 2 scores ($r = .747$, $n=18$, asymp sig. = <.001)
Implications

- Gesture helped memorisation – statistically significant increase post-test
- Memorisation is short-term – no statistically significant difference delayed post-test
- No difference due to gender in performance
- Gesture boosts short-term learning but faster attrition (loss)
- Still need plenty of practice opportunities.
Thank you for listening – A.Porter@soton.ac.uk

It's not easy and takes time and effort!

I ❤️ learning French because we have a good teacher and our teacher makes it fun. Although it is hard work, I give it 3/3.

Sometimes it feels like I might not need it but it is fun to learn and it makes me feel smart!!!!
References


