

The Young Interpreter Scheme: staff experiences of participation

Debra Page | Naomi Flynn | Astrid Dinneen | Ludovica Serratrice

Introduction

- 20% of children are EAL learners making classrooms multilingual.
- Having a peer to translate, and to explain content and classroom activities can help a beginner learner of English to gain some access to the school curriculum (Walqui, 2010).
- One school-based scheme that has capitalised on the role of peers as language and cultural brokers is the Young Interpreter Scheme (YIS) developed by Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS).



- Children are trained to use their language skills and cultural knowledge to facilitate the transition to school for peers who are new to English.
- Although the scheme has proven popular, ten years into its existence there is not yet any research evidence about teachers' views on their own participation.

Study aims

To gather survey information to investigate teachers' and staff experiences of participation in the YIS.

Research question

What are teachers' and staff experiences of the YIS?

- experiences of participation
- challenges to implementation
- perceived academic effects on children
- perceived well-being effects on children.

Method

Participants

57 education staff in schools currently running the YIS.

Materials

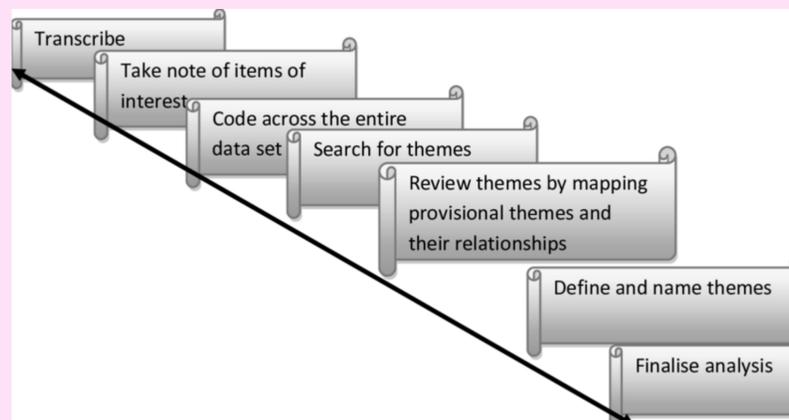
- Questionnaire designed to collect qualitative data on
 - experiences of running the YIS
 - observed effects on pupils involved.

Procedure

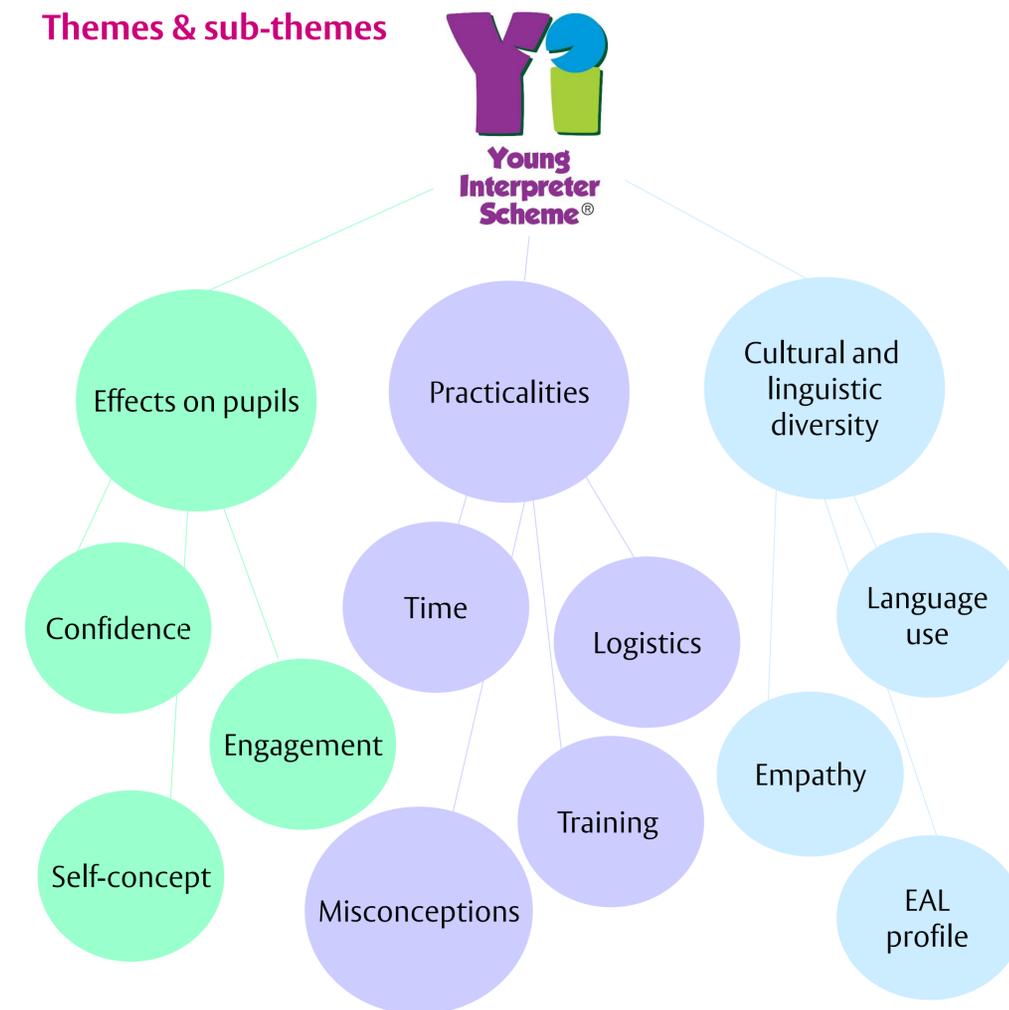
- onlinesurveys.ac.uk
- Link shared via special interest groups and social media.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis - Braun & Clarke's (2006) methodology



Themes & sub-themes



Results

Respondents reported;

- positive experiences of running the YIS
- increases in intercultural awareness
- increases in social and emotional well-being
- positive use of home languages
- lack of time and logistical constraints were the main challenges in running the YIS
- misconceptions around how YIs can be utilised and motivated.

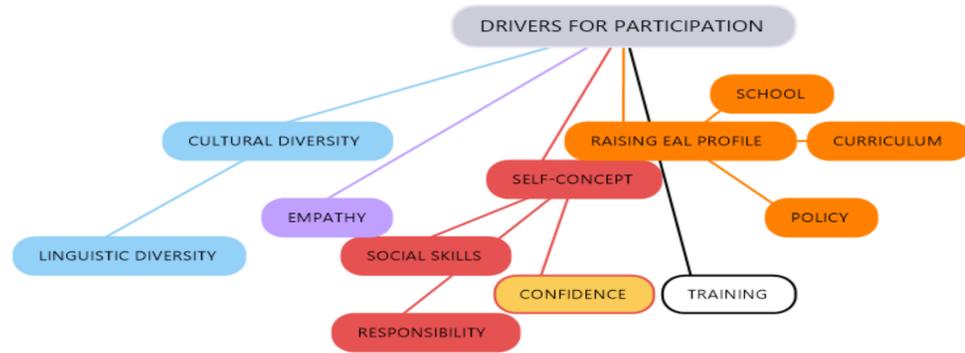
Contact information

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Question: What do you like about the scheme?



Theme	Frequency of occurrence	Examples
Cultural diversity	21	"Promotes cultural and linguistic diversity" "It has helped us ... celebrating the linguistic diversity of the school community"
Empathy	11	"children begin to empathise with the new arrivals" "allows them [children] to develop empathy with others"
Self-concept	10	"Confidence, self-esteem and self-worth all raised" "Gained confidence and self-esteem. A sense of pride and purpose"
Raising EAL profile	7	"the scheme raises EAL profile in the school" "gives EAL a profile within the school that could easily be lost"
Training	6	"the training covers every aspect of the role" "very good training materials"



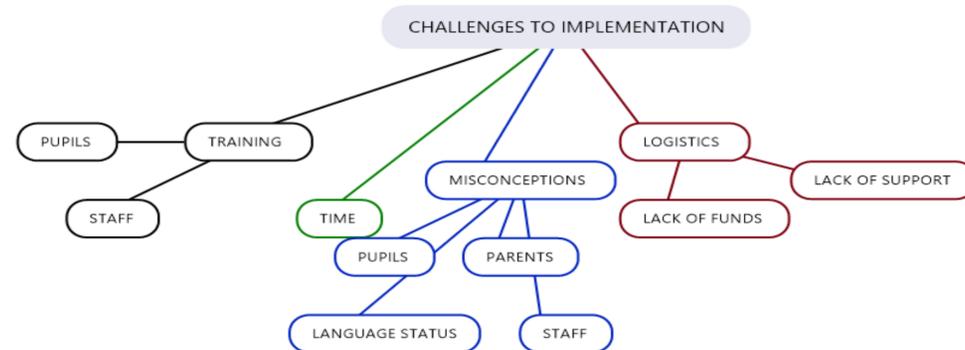
Discussion

- Contributes to the gap in the research literature surrounding experiences of running a formal interpreter scheme in schools.
- Positive views from teachers that the YIS is beneficial for supporting children with EAL.
- However, the scope of this research project was limited to mainly teachers' views.
- Future research should include the views of pupils.

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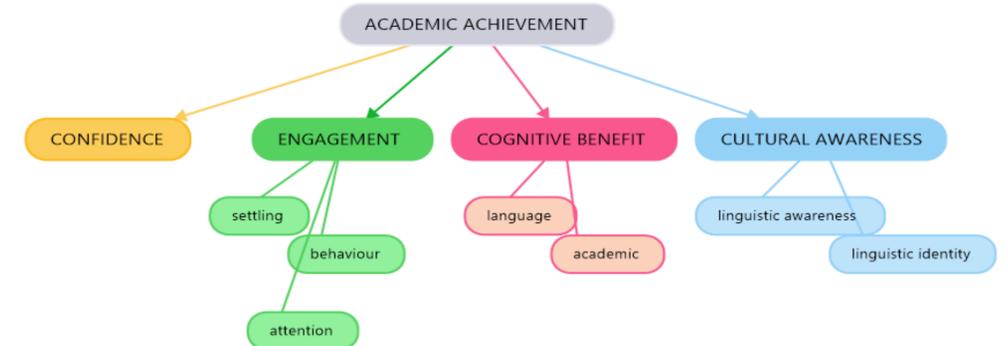
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Question: What challenges have you experienced in running the scheme in your school?



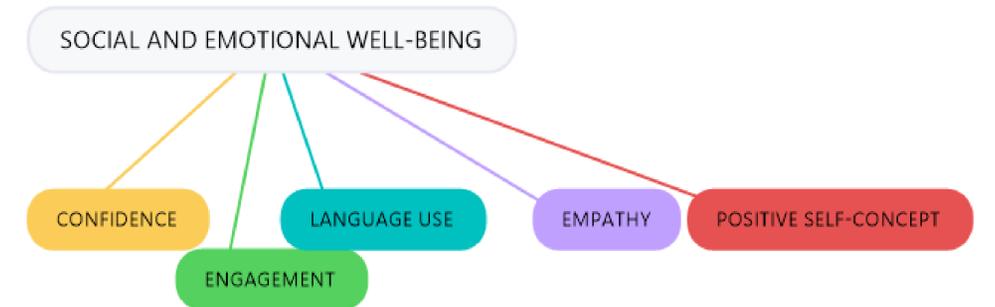
Theme	Frequency of occurrence	Examples
Training	9	"needing to use the Moodle to train students but not always having access to a PC" "training students only to have them move into upper school where they can't spare the time" "needs more practise, videos"
Time	21	"Lack of time" "Finding time for meetings" "Pupils getting time to help new arrivals"
Misconceptions	6	"too few pupils so languages do not overlap" "practical implications associated with diversity of new arrivals" "We have many isolated learners and no dominant L1 group. We are not always able to apply the YI scheme"
Logistics	14	"it's hard from an organisational/logistics perspective" "Resistance from the authorities and lack of funds to implement the scheme"

Question: What changes in pupils involved in the scheme have you observed in terms of academic achievement?



Theme	Frequency of occurrence	Examples
Confidence	13	"More confidence in their abilities" "Increased confidence boosts attainment" "gain confidence to carry out a task"
Engagement	7	"learn to be more focused" "can question and challenge to a greater degree" "more willing to 'have a go'"
Cognitive benefit	9	"They deepen their knowledge on the subjects" "Higher grades" "They have a more sophisticated vocabulary, their speaking skills developed"
Cultural awareness	6	"Children have a broader understanding of the world around them and can question and challenge to a greater degree" "They are more aware of different cultures"

Question: What changes in pupils involved in the scheme have you observed in terms of social and emotional well-being?



Theme	Frequency of occurrence	Examples
Confidence	22	"more confident around school" "Children feel more confident about themselves"
Engagement	8	"EAL students who are buddied are able to access more of the curriculum and settle into school quicker" "more engaged in the school life"
Language use	4	"increased confidence in sharing home language" "more confident to speak up and use their common home language"
Empathy	5	"They are very aware of new starters and like to help them with knowing what to do at school" "They are more open minded and patient"
Positive self-concept	18	"Very positive, especially regarding self-esteem" "Pupils are positive role models in the community and are proud to be part of the team" "self-esteem and self-worth raised"