

Esperanto as a starter language

for child second-language learners
in the primary school

Edited by Angela Tellier

Angela Tellier (ed.): *Esperanto as a starter language
for child second-language learners in the primary school*

© Angela Tellier 2013
Second edition (with revisions to chapter 8)

Published in Great Britain in 2013 by Esperanto UK,
Esperanto House, Station Road, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, ST12 9DE
www.esperanto.org.uk

ISBN 978-0-902756-35-9

Printed and bound by ASK Print (www.askprint.co.uk)

Language learning is important because it is a fundamental element in self-understanding, a means by which we break the wall of silence that surrounds us at birth [...] we will lead richer and more secure lives if we learn to appreciate difference and if we can reach beyond our own social envelopes and appreciate how others are closed in theirs.¹

Humphrey Tonkin, Professor of the Humanities
and President Emeritus, University of Hartford, USA

¹ Tonkin (2003: 150).

Acknowledgements

The editor would like to thank Esperantic Studies Foundation, Institucio Hodler '68, and Esperanto UK for their financial support of the Springboard to Languages project; Peter Oliver for designing the covers and the owl graphics in chapters 5 and 7; and Simon Davies for his typesetting and general assistance with the publication of this volume.

Contents

Opening quotation.....	3
Foreword	6
Introduction	8
1. Esperanto as a potential aid to language learning in primary schools	10
2. Theoretical foundations.....	19
3. The Springboard to Languages evaluation project: a summary report	23
4. The Springboard to Languages evaluation project: extracts from the reports	35
5. Springboard to Languages: sample materials and activities	39
6. Springboard to Languages: Comenius multilateral partnership.....	51
7. Comenius partnership: sample songs and dialogues.....	56
8. Recent research into the educational role of Esperanto in the classroom	60
9. Concluding summary and future research.....	63
A. A brief history and definition of language awareness.....	64
B. Abbreviations	65
C. Some notes on Esperanto grammar	66
References	70
Closing quotation	75
About the contributors.....	76

Foreword

SEÁN Ó RIAIN²

I am delighted to write a short foreword to this work, which describes a programme with the potential to revolutionise language learning in Europe: Springboard to Languages (S2L). The idea of a regular, easy-to-learn language as a stepping stone towards learning other languages is not new, but, like the metric system, it needs time to find general acceptance. There have been experiments since 1921 on the use of short Esperanto courses in this role. Though of varying quality, the consistency with which they demonstrate a positive effect, particularly for less linguistically gifted learners, is remarkable.

It is generally accepted that any second language that has been thoroughly learned will help subsequent language learning – the ‘propaedeutic’ effect. But why is Esperanto particularly effective? Professor Wim Jansen³ of the University of Amsterdam mentions five relevant factors peculiar to the language: its regularity; its transparency; its lack of exceptions to grammatical rules; the fact that the culture of the Esperanto-speaking community subsumes contributions from many other cultures; and the fact that Esperanto does not impose any particular models of thought or societal organisation, as other foreign languages tend to do.

The propaedeutic approach has not yet been widely adopted in mainstream language learning, for two reasons: the objectivity of those who speak Esperanto is questioned, whereas non-speakers often fail to grasp the principle involved, i.e. that a regular, streamlined language can be learned more quickly than an irregular one, and that rapid success tends to produce further success. This may finally be beginning to change, largely due to S2L itself: the report of the Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism⁴, set up by the European Commission in 2009, contains a valuable recognition of the possible contribution of Esperanto to improved language learning throughout Europe, and perhaps to the EU’s Europe 2020 goal of ‘reducing the school drop-out rate to 10% from the present 15%’.

As somebody committed to European linguistic diversity, and especially the promotion of the Irish language, the S2L approach is of particular interest to me. The Harris (2006) report showed that, in English-medium schools in Ireland, up to 70% of students make little progress in Irish despite some 12 years’ obligatory study of the language. The educational system has had the unintended effect of excluding the majority from a positive experience of language learning. The S2L approach could break this vicious circle by convincing all learners that they too have talent. The

² Dr Seán Ó Riain is an Irish diplomat, and a Seconded National Expert at the European Commission in Brussels.

³ Jansen (2007: 82).

⁴ EC (2011). The first recommendation in the educational section, on page 9 of the full version of the report, is particularly relevant.

results of the S2L programme, supervised by non-Esperanto-speaking educationalists from the University of Manchester, deserve wide and unprejudiced attention in educational circles.

I pay tribute to Esperanto UK and to all those who have been involved with S2L over the years, but particularly to the programme's motor and the editor of the present volume, Angela Tellier. It has been a privilege to witness Angela's unstinting commitment to improving language education for all learners, her boundless energy and reliability, and her constant good humour.

Introduction

ANGELA TELLIER

The Springboard to Languages project began in 2006, with a programme that has been taught regularly in a small number of primary schools since then. The heads in those schools had vision. They were willing to accept that a unique programme of language preparation might be just the thing to enthuse their pupils and give them a real taste of the enjoyment and success that can come from language learning.

I wanted the children to be motivated to learn languages and have confidence in themselves as linguists now and especially in secondary school. [...] They all love their lessons and often greet me in Esperanto! They develop a ‘can do’ approach to languages, and are proud of their achievements [...]

— Lin Whyte, head of Bar Hill Community Primary School,
in *Languages Today*⁵, Winter 2009–2010: 34

One of the primary schools that participated in the project was the focus of an independent evaluation by a team from the University of Manchester who visited each year over a five-year period to observe lessons, collect questionnaire data, and interview children and teachers. During the same period, the school became involved in a two-year Comenius Springboard to Languages project with partner schools from Germany and Hungary. In this volume, we present summary results of both these projects, together with extracts from the evaluation reports.

The Springboard programme was developed in answer to a need. Its goal was to maximise the benefits that could be obtained from the limited curriculum time available for language learning in English primary schools. It aimed to help children develop positive attitudes to language learning and acquire skills in language analysis that they could carry with them for life – essentially a toolkit to help them learn languages faster and with greater success. In chapter 2 of this volume, Dr Karen Roehr of the University of Essex presents the theory underlying the project.

Uniquely, the Springboard to Languages programme is built around the language Esperanto. This is a language which is easily accessible to children of all abilities, and which offers many of the same awareness-raising advantages as Latin. In short, it is a de luxe construction kit for language learners.

Though it has been generally underestimated, unappreciated, and unrecognised for its educational value by educational practitioners and policymakers, results from studies over the past hundred years consistently suggest that Esperanto has a useful role to play as a starter language in the primary school.

⁵ *Languages Today* is the magazine of the Association for Language Learning, ‘... the UK’s major subject association for teachers of foreign languages’ (<http://www.all-languages.org.uk/>).

[The Springboard programme] is an interesting experiment in fostering language awareness among primary schoolchildren, using Esperanto as a kind of foundation course. It shows some of the basics of how languages work, and how their grammars and vocabularies may differ. It also reveals to the prospective language learner some of the rich phonetic diversity to be found in different languages.

— John Wells FBA, Emeritus Professor of Phonetics, UCL,
personal communication, 5 May 2012

By definition, the results from any small-scale project are always going to be limited to their specific context, yet they may still show encouraging trends. The results of the Springboard case study and Comenius project, taken together with findings from past studies and current research into Esperanto as a starter language in primary schools, are not conclusive, but they are encouraging enough for educationalists and policymakers, including government ministers – indeed, all those who have a voice in deciding language policy for primary-school children – to commission and undertake larger-scale research projects. If Esperanto as a starter language can be used as a means to an end – a world in which citizens are keener to learn languages and show greater confidence, competence, and enjoyment in their use of language for both work and leisure – then surely it deserves serious consideration.

Chapter 1

Esperanto as a potential aid to language learning in primary schools

ANGELA TELLIER

125 years ago, a Warsaw publisher printed a modest booklet⁶ on behalf of Dr L. L. Zamenhof. It contained a root vocabulary of 917 words and 16 key rules of grammar, the basis of the language Esperanto. Its versatility as a language and as a language-learning tool was immediately apparent to early twentieth-century academics, who began to speculate on the possible educational advantages of Esperanto, if taught and learned before or alongside other languages.⁷

Early textbooks for young children began to appear, using Esperanto both as an aid to learning their first language (for example, the small volume⁸ published in 1911 to help young French children aged 7–10 to understand French grammar) and as a tool to encourage the learning of other languages⁹ through the development of what is now referred to as language awareness.¹⁰ Test designers saw in the language various features that encouraged them to include it as a component of early tests of language-learning aptitude.¹¹ Others noted that not only does Esperanto display characteristics that offer similar language-foundation advantages as Latin, but that Esperanto is much more accessible to a greater number of young children.¹²

The salient characteristics of Esperanto

Esperanto was designed to be easily accessible, and free from the irregularities and complexities that other languages display. Its international root vocabulary, similar to

⁶ Zamenhof (1887).

⁷ Sir Oliver Lodge, renowned physicist (1905). Also Prof. John E. B. Mayor, professor of Latin at St John's College, Cambridge, and author of numerous Latin texts: 'But as a first step to other languages, one so simple, so uniform, with such a richness of vowel sounds, as Esperanto, will be invaluable, especially to English folk [... T]o escape from the poverty of our English vowels, will be a help to the mastery of all classical languages, ancient and modern. At five, children should learn Esperanto and then pass to French, Latin, German, Greek, in this order.' BE (1907).

⁸ Picard (1911).

⁹ e.g. Eaton (1928): English, Esperanto, French, German, Latin.

¹⁰ See appendix A.

¹¹ See mentions in Dörnyei (2005), Spolsky (1995).

¹² A Latin teacher, Falgier (1961), wrote: 'Esperanto can fill the void which the absence of Latin leaves in the education of the average pupil, aiding in the mastery of English in the same way as Latin does, laying the same kind of foundations for the study of other languages [...] Esperanto is capable of performing in the mass school of today the functions which Latin performed in the select school of yesterday.'

the main European languages, invites comparisons with other languages.¹³ Characteristics such as direct grapheme–phoneme correspondence (i.e. one letter = one sound) encourage early literacy, help train the ear, and expose English-speaking learners, for example, to a variety of sounds not found in their own language.

The grammar¹⁴ combines elements of simplicity and transparency, to produce a regular system which should result in low learning difficulty. The functions of words in a sentence are immediately obvious from the regular endings – nouns end in *-o*; adjectives end in *-a*, etc.

Granda urso malfacile grimpas altajn arbojn.

Grand-a	urs-o	mal-facil-e	grimp-as	alt-a-j-n	arb-o-j-n
Big-ADJ ¹⁵	bear-N	OPP-easy-ADV	climb-PRS	tall-ADJ-PL-ACC	tree-N-PL-ACC
'A big bear climbs tall trees with difficulty.'					

<i>rapid-o</i>	<i>rapid-a</i>	<i>rapid-e</i>	<i>rapid-i</i>	<i>rapid-u</i>
quick-N	quick-ADJ	quick-ADV	quick-INF	quick-IMP
'speed'	'quick'	'quickly'	'to be quick'	'be quick!'

<i>rapid-eg-a</i>	<i>mal-rapid-ig-i</i>
quick-AUG-ADJ	OPP-quick-CAUS-INF
'very fast, hurried'	'to slow (something/someone) down' (transitive)

The versatility of the language is nowhere more apparent than in the language's do-it-yourself word-building system¹⁶, which allowed Zamenhof to pare the number of root words to be learned down to a minimum, while allowing the user the freedom to manipulate the language to create perfectly comprehensible and meaningful words.¹⁷ For young children, who delight in taking things apart and putting them back together, Esperanto is a de luxe construction kit for language learning.

Does Esperanto help children in later language learning?

In fact, there has been surprisingly little empirical research investigating whether teaching and learning Esperanto before (or alongside) the teaching and learning of other languages aids children in their subsequent learning of additional languages,

¹³ Janton (1973: 59–60): 'La plupart [des lexèmes] sont passés sans changement d'une langue à l'autre [...] et les rares modifications n'ont été imposées que par la nécessité [...] pour éviter l'homonymie [...] la confusion entre lexème et morphème [...] pour éviter la polysémie [...] et] pour donner une forme plus internationale [...]'. ['Most lexemes enter Esperanto from ethnic languages without change [...] the rare instances where modification does take place are [...] to avoid homophony [...] confusion [...] between lexical and grammatical morphemes [...] multiple meanings for a single word [...] and] to achieve greater internationality.' Translation: Janton (1993).]

¹⁴ See appendix C.

¹⁵ For the meanings of these abbreviations, see appendix B.

¹⁶ Some examples can be seen in the section on prefixes and suffixes in appendix C.

¹⁷ Janton (1973: 86): 'La grande souplesse de la composition, la variété des combinaisons permettent de parler avec peu de mots [...]'. ['The great variety of word combinations that the flexibility of Esperanto permits makes it possible to express oneself using a small number of words.']

which means that no firm conclusion can yet be drawn. Linguists can immediately see the potential of the language as an analytical tool, but does a study of the language have any practical and lasting effect on children's ability to learn other languages?

Most of the early studies on the teaching and learning of Esperanto in schools appear, by today's standards, to have suffered from a number of shortcomings. Reporting was often brief or anecdotal, and studies were conducted in a wide range of educational contexts that are not readily comparable.¹⁸ It is evident now that many had poorly defined aims¹⁹, were somewhat superficial²⁰, and lacked clear objectives or methodological rigour, all of which compromise the findings.

Nevertheless, despite these apparent shortcomings, findings from the past hundred years consistently point to the educational benefits that a study of Esperanto can bring to children's first-language (L1) and second-language (L2) learning. Early studies in English schools, for example, reported that children who first learned Esperanto for a year performed better on later tests in French than those who had learned only French.²¹ They also noted a particular advantage for children of lower ability.²² Other reported advantages include heightened language awareness, more positive attitudes to language learning, improved L1 literacy, increased confidence as a language learner, and the all-important 'I can do it!' feeling, which encourages children to persevere in their learning.

Very few studies have been conducted in English-speaking countries.²³ Of these, the most recent was carried out in Australia by Bishop in 1997. Secondary-school teachers, unaware which language the children in their classes had followed previously, rated those children who had been exposed to Esperanto in the primary school as more motivated than those who had not. In addition, teachers rated the Esperanto children's L2-speaking skills and their overall L2 achievement more highly than they rated those of the children who had not previously learned Esperanto.

On balance, it is not unreasonable to conclude that there are certainly trends which suggest that teaching and learning Esperanto as a starter language in the primary school gives advantages to primary-age children that a study of other languages at primary level does not. The Springboard to Languages project and the related research presented in this volume add their voices to the growing dossier of findings which may eventually allow the word 'trend' to be replaced by the word 'evidence'.

¹⁸ Symoens (1992).

¹⁹ Fantini & Reagan (1992).

²⁰ Corsetti & La Torre (1995).

²¹ Fisher (1921), Halloran (1952), Williams (1965a, 1965b).

²² Halloran (1952), Williams (1965a, 1965b).

²³ 1918–21: Girls' County School, Bishop Auckland, UK, under the supervision of HM Inspectors of Schools; 1920: Green Lane School, Eccles, UK; 1924: Wellesley College, Ohio, USA; 1925–31: Columbia University, New York, USA (Prof. E. Thorndike); 1934–35: Public High School, New York, USA; 1947–51: County Grammar School, Sheffield, UK (University of Sheffield); 1948–61: Egerton Park School, Manchester, UK; 1994–97: Monash University, Victoria, Australia (Prof. A. Bishop).

The position of modern languages in English primary schools

The ability to communicate in two or more languages is essential nowadays, and schools are offering modern languages to young learners at an increasingly early age²⁴, in a bid to encourage early development of international communication and intercultural understanding. However, an early start in the classroom does not always result in better learning. The amount of actual contact time available is crucial, since minimal input often results in minimal gain²⁵. The average amount of time allocated to modern language lessons in English state primary schools, for example, is typically less than one hour per week.²⁶

The cognitively more mature adolescent, who can learn explicitly, is generally able to benefit more from limited contact time than the cognitively less mature younger child, who primarily learns implicitly. In other words, older children and adults make use of more developed mental faculties and learning strategies than younger learners²⁷, who typically absorb knowledge more intuitively but more slowly, and who thus need greater exposure to the target language in order to make the same initial progress. Ideally, primary schools would offer young children an intensive language-learning experience (immersion), but this is unlikely to happen without a radical change in government policy. It is imperative, therefore, to maximise the gain that children can achieve in the limited curriculum time available.

Moreover, English-speaking primary schools find themselves in a peculiarly unique language-learning situation because of the high status of English as a world language. While there has been little direct government support for language learning in English primary schools in the past, this looks set to change. However, simply ruling that language learning should be compulsory for children from, say, age 7 does not tackle the deep-set underlying problems that must still be overcome: despite best efforts, there is still a shortage of primary-trained teachers willing and able to teach languages; curriculum time is at a premium; and there are still transition issues. Secondary-school teachers, for example, may find that their several feeder schools have taught different languages; that many children wish to carry on learning the language they started at primary, but that it is not offered at secondary level; that children from some feeder primaries have progressed more slowly than children from others; or, conversely, that some children may be so far ahead in the language the class is studying that they remain understimulated, and risk underachieving or becoming demotivated.

And the context in which the lessons are delivered is becoming increasingly complex. In a multilingual and mobile society, an English primary-school class typically contains around thirty children with varying language experiences: monolingual children, who have no second language experience to give them the

²⁴ For example, see Enever (2009).

²⁵ Larson-Hall (2008).

²⁶ Cable et al. (2010: 26).

²⁷ DeKeyser (2003), García Mayo (2003), Larson-Hall (2008), Muñoz (2009).

metalinguistic advantage that bilingual and multilingual children appear to enjoy²⁸; bilingual children who may or may not be similarly capable in both languages; children who speak a minority language only in the home, and are possibly in danger of losing it; and recent arrivals who do not speak the local language. It could be argued that the second-language development of some of the children may be restricted, rather than enhanced, by offering less than one hour a week of lessons in a culturally bound modern language to a typically multilingual and culturally varied class. A solution is urgently required.

The advantages of Esperanto as a starter language

It may be possible to boost a young learner's developing capacity for explicit learning, so that they are better able to analyse language and understand how language works, by offering them a language preparation course – essentially a course in fostering language awareness – before the start of formal language lessons. Developing children's language-analytic ability and metalinguistic awareness in this way could help ensure that young children extract greater benefit from the available language input.

Eric Hawkins, a leading advocate of developing children's 'awareness of language' to prepare them for subsequent language learning, was acutely aware of the difficulties that English primary schools face in teaching modern languages, and pleaded in his several – now seminal – papers and books²⁹ for children in primary schools to be given practical instruction in 'learning how to learn'. He highlighted one of the major problems in offering primary languages, which is rarely considered by policymakers today:

Unlike our European neighbours, who can predict that *all* their children will need English, whatever their future careers may be, we cannot possibly foresee, when our pupils are aged 11 or even 13, which one of a dozen possible languages they may later need for work or leisure purposes.³⁰

In short, we as teachers fail children by channelling them into learning a language of our choice, at an age when we should be helping them to acquire the tools that will allow them to learn a language of their choice confidently and independently as an older child or adult.

However, if government policy dictates that all children learn a language at age 7, which of the many available languages should English primary schools choose to teach? How should primary schools ensure that the language needs of all the children in a particular class are adequately met, and that each child is well equipped for learning whichever language he or she may wish, or need, to learn in the future? Practically speaking, these are dilemmas which primary schools cannot solve through modern-language teaching. However, a programme of language awareness taught at

²⁸ Bialystok (2001).

²⁹ See, for example, Hawkins (1987, 1997, 1999a, 2005).

³⁰ Hawkins (1987: 37).

Key Stage 1, at Key Stage 2³¹, or in parallel with language teaching at Key Stage 2 could provide the necessary preparation for successful and enjoyable lifelong learning. Eric Hawkins was firmly convinced that a preparatory programme of language awareness would give children ‘the necessary verbal tools’ for successful future language learning. He envisaged courses offering, for example:

‘education of the ear’; insight into pattern in language; confidence in disembedding new phonological patterns; practice in matching written to spoken symbols; relish for what is new and strange in language.³²

Nor did he neglect the importance of attitudes or the nature of mixed-ability classes: he suggested that programmes of language awareness could help set appropriate expectations in language learning, and level out the ‘cruel unevenness of the language playing field’³³ by encouraging and motivating children of lower ability to believe in themselves as language learners. And ensuring that solid language foundations are properly established before foreign language teaching and learning begins may also raise the level of performance in boys and help even out the gender difference which is still so apparent in language GCSE³⁴ exam results³⁵ today.

The actual language used for propaedeutic purposes is less important than the fact that its structure must contribute to rapid and easy learnability [...] Confidence gained by mastering attainable targets can help students master more difficult languages. Giving weaker students a taste of success in language learning would make the process more democratic and more popular.

— Dr Seán Ó Riain (2007)

Courses in language awareness are not new, but their potential remains largely unrecognised. The majority follow the ‘taster’ pattern, in which children are exposed to several different languages for short periods over one or two years, studying each for approximately a term. The method allows children to note similarities and differences between languages, but essentially it results in ‘horizontal’ learning: children learn the same basic vocabulary and phrases in several languages. What is needed is a course in language awareness which, by focusing on one language, offers ‘vertical’ (cumulative) learning to maximise children’s chances of building on previous language knowledge.

³¹ At state schools in England: Key stage 1 = children aged 5–7 (school years 1–2); Key stage 2 = children aged 7–11 (school years 3–6).

³² Hawkins (1987: 36).

³³ Hawkins (2005: 9).

³⁴ General Certificate of Secondary Education, an academic qualification awarded in a specified subject generally taken at age 16 (in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland).

³⁵ For a summary of performance at GCSE 2011, see <http://www.jcq.org.uk/attachments/published/1593/PressNotice.pdf>.

Latin was, and is, often taught to primary-age pupils in independent schools³⁶ that typically offer smaller classes, more directed learning, and a more intense homework schedule than state primary schools. No longer in general use as a language of communication, Latin is, however, still valued for the grounding it offers in language analysis. But the language is complex and irregular, requires much effort and study to master, and is perhaps less suited to the large mixed-ability classes often found in state primary schools. Esperanto offers the same advantages of intellectual development as Latin, with the additional advantage that it fosters cross-cultural understanding. It is easily accessible to all ability levels, and allows children to manipulate and use the language creatively at a very early stage of their learning. The grapheme–phoneme correspondence enables an early focus on phonics, with the result that children can accurately pronounce, read, and write the language from the start. Programmes using Esperanto as a tool to raise language awareness avoid many of the current problems that are associated with modern-language learning in primary schools, and may offer a long-term solution to improved language learning. Eric Hawkins was favourably disposed:

Provided that a clear distinction is made between Esperanto as a preparation and Esperanto as substitute for an existing foreign language, I would welcome it. I have tried to develop this point at some length in chapter 16 of my book *Listening to Lorca* (CILT 1999). As a part of an introduction to awareness of language, I can certainly see discussion of Esperanto being useful [...]

— Personal communication, 2 April 2007

This chapter highlights how important it is that policymakers (including the government) consider the long-term language needs of young learners very carefully before implementing a new language policy in English primary schools. The introduction of language-awareness programmes into primary schools avoids problems of transition, makes maximum use of limited curriculum time, reinforces the links between modern languages and mother-tongue literacy³⁷, allows all class teachers the opportunity to be involved in language teaching, makes language learning accessible to all children, including those with special educational needs, and, crucially, gives young children at an early age the language-learning motivation and skills they need to make them independent lifelong learners *with choice*.

[...] the early introduction to foreign languages that is needed must be an integral element of a radically re-gearred linguistic apprenticeship whose purpose is clearly educational, not instrumental, preparing pupils to make informed and

³⁶ Schools which are independent of state finance, and therefore not subject to the conditions that schools funded by the state must adhere to; they are generally fee-paying and often academically selective. Preparatory ('prep') schools cater for children up to the age of 11 or 13.

³⁷ Research shows that strong language skills at an early age are more likely to ensure better second language learning at a later age. See, for example, the Bristol Language Project, Skehan (1986); Sparks et al. (2009).

apt choices at the [...] instrumental stage and to attack that stage properly equipped with the tools for language learning.³⁸

Government ministers and policymakers should perhaps be considering the possible long-term effects on children's L1 and L2 achievement of *not* introducing starter-language programmes into primary schools.

Esperanto as a versatile and practical tool for language learning

Theoretical research does not always inform practice as much as it should, nor does practice often influence theoretical research; teaching is one area where the two should perhaps look more regularly and more closely at each other. Current research, for example, suggests that there are cognitive benefits to be gained from knowing two or more languages.³⁹ If so, then monolingual children are at an apparent linguistic disadvantage, and monolingual parents rarely manage to learn a modern language late in life to a high enough standard to be able to use it correctly and fluently with their young children. This is not the case with Esperanto, which allows a learner to reach a high level of competence in a much shorter time than it would take them to learn another language. The father of Ulrich Brandenburg is one of several who have used Esperanto for this purpose:

My parents had the idea of bringing me and my younger siblings up bilingual in German and Esperanto. Father spoke to us in Esperanto, and Mother in German [...] my brothers and sisters and myself still have an equal command of both languages today [...] I became interested in other countries and languages from an early age, and [...] collected languages in the same way that others collect exotic flowers [...] it was a great help to me to understand right from the very early stages of language learning that the same concept can be expressed in several different ways (with varied grammar, different pronunciation [...]) in different languages. Esperanto – easy enough that even a non-native speaker like my father could use it with us on a daily basis with absolute accuracy – helps children to learn other languages.

— Ulrich Brandenburg, the ambassador of Germany in Moscow,
personal communication, 16 April 2012

Esperanto has the added advantage of being a non-threatening language, which encourages a healthy respect and tolerance for other languages and other cultures. Using Esperanto – rather than English – as a basis for developing language awareness allows all children in the class, whatever their ability or first language, to feel that they have an equal opportunity to engage.

As a diplomat, I have frequently been based in different European countries. Esperanto has helped my children to quickly learn the new language and adapt easily to the local culture; it has helped them appreciate and understand the local

³⁸ Hawkins (2005: 8).

³⁹ See, for example, Bialystok et al. (2012).

traditions and customs [...] as a result, they have become very tolerant of different languages and cultures, and fully support diversity in the EU.

— Jozef Reinvart, Senior Counsellor,
Department of General Affairs and Relations with EU Institutions,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia,
personal communication, 18 April 2012

In conclusion, if policymakers in England are serious about ensuring that young children in English primary schools receive the necessary language-learning tools to equip and motivate them for future (and lifelong) language learning, so that they can compete favourably on the job market with young people who already speak two or more languages (including English to a very high standard), then it behoves them to look very closely at the advantages that can be offered to young children by programmes such as Springboard to Languages in which Esperanto features as a starter language.

For more information about the Springboard to Languages programme of language awareness, and about current research into Esperanto as a potential aid to language learning in primary schools, please see:

www.esperantoresearch.org.uk

I definitely think Esperanto has a significant role to play (in aggregate, macro-level language policies: see a report drafted for the French ministry of education in 2005⁴⁰ [...]). However, I've never worked on the impact of early exposure to Esperanto on attitudes towards L2, L3 acquisition; nevertheless, I would consider your assumption in this regard as highly plausible.

— François Grin, Professor of Economics, University of Geneva,
personal communication, 31 May 2010

⁴⁰ <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports-publics/054000678/>

Chapter 2

Theoretical foundations

KAREN ROEHR

Most researchers in the field of second-language (L2) learning agree that adult learners draw on both implicit and explicit knowledge when engaging in the task of acquiring a new language; analogous to this view, most researchers likewise agree that L2 proficiency is achieved through a combination of ‘implicit’ and ‘explicit’ learning processes.⁴¹ Explicit knowledge is knowledge that can be brought into awareness and can be verbalised, whilst implicit knowledge is knowledge that cannot be brought into awareness or articulated.⁴² Put differently, explicit knowledge can be understood as potentially conscious knowledge, whilst implicit knowledge cannot reach consciousness. Correspondingly, explicit learning refers to situations ‘when the learner has online awareness, formulating and testing conscious hypotheses in the course of learning’. Conversely, implicit learning ‘describes when learning takes place without these processes; it is an unconscious process of induction resulting in intuitive knowledge that exceeds what can be expressed by learners’.⁴³ In other words, explicit learning occurs when a learner consciously and deliberately attempts to master language material or solve a language-related problem⁴⁴; implicit learning, on the other hand, is learning without conscious awareness.⁴⁵

It is generally assumed that child learners, i.e. learners who have not yet reached cognitive maturity, learn primarily implicitly. Research with children learning L2s in naturalistic settings (that is: in situations where they are totally immersed in the language) suggests that children learn very successfully – provided that the environment offers large amounts of high-quality language input over a prolonged period of time. Although children initially learn more slowly than adults, they are likely to eventually reach higher levels of proficiency than older learners – again, provided that intensive exposure to the L2 continues over a considerable number of years.⁴⁶

In classroom settings, however, children do not do nearly as well. Research with young classroom learners which compared the attainment of proficiency among children of different starting ages has shown that later starters consistently outperform younger starters on measures of L2 achievement⁴⁷, although there are indications that

⁴¹ e.g. Dörnyei (2009), R. Ellis (2004).

⁴² Anderson (2005), R. Ellis (2004), Hulstijn (2005).

⁴³ N. C. Ellis (1994: 38–39).

⁴⁴ Dörnyei (2009).

⁴⁵ DeKeyser (2003).

⁴⁶ For recent reviews, see Birdsong (2006), Hytlenstam & Abrahamsson (2003).

⁴⁷ Cenoz (2003), García Mayo (2003), Harley & Hart (1997), Larson-Hall (2008), Muñoz (2009).

children who start learning an L2 early tend to have more positive attitudes towards language and language learning than children who start later.⁴⁸

Why should older children, adolescents, and adults do better than younger children when learning a language in the classroom, i.e. in an environment that offers limited exposure to the L2 for a limited period of time? The most likely explanation for this phenomenon is the more advanced cognitive development of older children and adolescents, and the full cognitive maturity of adults. Cognitive maturity facilitates L2 learning in the typical language classroom, characterised by small amounts of input such as one or two hours a week distributed over a school year, because it allows for effective explicit learning. As outlined above, explicit learning is conscious and deliberate⁴⁹; this means that it requires attention and effort on the part of the learner, and it relies on the processing of information in the learner's working memory.⁵⁰ Working memory is a limited resource that has greater capacity in adolescents and adults than in young children. Whilst taxing in nature, explicit learning can be fast and efficient, and it thus enables a (cognitively mature) learner to benefit from L2 input, even if it is only available in small quantities and/or over a relatively short period of time. In a nutshell, explicit learning is more effective than implicit learning in the typical foreign language classroom.

Interestingly, it has recently been proposed that young children may also draw on explicit knowledge and learning⁵¹, though to a lesser extent than adults. This proposal is compatible with the argument that children begin to display metalinguistic awareness from around age 4 onwards, with metalinguistic abilities developing most visibly from around age 6 or 7, in parallel with the onset of literacy skills that are acquired in the first years of schooling.⁵² Metalinguistic awareness refers to an awareness of the nature, function, and form of language. Put differently, if we are metalinguistically aware, we can treat language as an object of inspection and reflection⁵³; we can look at language, and we can talk about it. Just like explicit learning, making use of our metalinguistic abilities is cognitively demanding⁵⁴, so heightened metalinguistic awareness is typically associated with higher levels of cognitive development and greater cognitive maturity.

It follows from this line of argument that if young children's budding metalinguistic awareness and their developing capacity to learn explicitly could be enhanced, their classroom-based L2 learning could potentially be made more successful. Children who are better able to learn explicitly at an early age would be better able to benefit even from limited language input, available for one or two hours a week over the school year.

⁴⁸ Cenoz (2003), Larson-Hall (2008).

⁴⁹ Dörnyei (2009).

⁵⁰ Ashby & Casale (2005), Bailey (2005), Reber (2005).

⁵¹ Milton & Alexiou (2006).

⁵² Birdsong (1989), Gombert (1992).

⁵³ Baker (2006), Birdsong (1989), Gombert (1992).

⁵⁴ Bialystok (2001).

In accordance with this view, one can hypothesise that learning a language which lends itself especially well to metalinguistic inspection, to explicit reflection, and to deliberate analysis may help sharpen a learner's metalinguistic awareness and accelerate the development of explicit learning capacity. In other words, through learning an 'easy' language, the abilities that facilitate learning other, 'difficult' languages might be fostered particularly effectively. In addition, a learning experience that is not fraught with difficulty – and which places success within reach of most learners – may result in particularly positive attitudes towards languages and language learning more generally.

Esperanto is a language that meets many of the criteria that appear to be associated with low learning difficulty. Recent research has identified a number of characteristics of language items, or linguistic constructions, and of metalinguistic descriptions, or pedagogical rules used to describe language for the learner, that may help predict the relative ease or difficulty with which they can be acquired, both implicitly and explicitly.⁵⁵

According to this research, linguistic constructions which are characterised by transparent form-meaning mappings exhibit low implicit learning difficulty. Transparency refers to language forms that are associated with only a single meaning (rather than several meanings, as the not very transparent morpheme *-s* in English, which can signal plural, possession, or the third-person present tense), and also to meanings that are associated with only a single form (rather than several forms, as the English meaning 'past time' that can be signalled by means of various adverbs such as *yesterday* or by the morpheme *-ed* attached to regular verbs). By the same token, linguistic constructions which are perceptually salient – i.e. easy to perceive in auditory input – and communicatively meaningful – i.e. necessary for the successful comprehension of a message – should likewise be low in implicit learning difficulty. (The English language includes linguistic constructions that do not satisfy these criteria; e.g. the morpheme *-s* is difficult to perceive in the speech stream, and the morpheme *-ed* is communicatively redundant if used together with an adverb such as *yesterday*.) The linguistic constructions that constitute Esperanto seem to satisfy criteria such as transparency, salience, and communicative necessity to a greater extent than most languages, given that Esperanto has highly regular morphology and syntax.

Metalinguistic descriptions – i.e. pedagogical rules that are used in the classroom or in textbooks to describe language for the learner to facilitate explicit learning activities – can likewise be considered in terms of learning difficulty, based on a different set of criteria⁵⁶. For instance, metalinguistic descriptions that are low in conceptual complexity and have high truth value should result in low explicit learning difficulty. Conceptual complexity refers to how 'heavy' a metalinguistic description is in terms of its processing demands; 'English nouns form the plural by adding an *-s*'

⁵⁵ DeKeyser (2005), R. Ellis (2006), Roehr & Gánem-Gutiérrez (2009).

⁵⁶ R. Ellis (2006), Roehr & Gánem-Gutiérrez (2009).

is not conceptually complex, but ‘If the verb in the sentence is positive, a negative question tag is required, consisting of the operator and the subject pronoun that echo the subject and operator in the sentence’ is conceptually complex. Truth value refers to the number of exceptions to the pedagogical rule. Both of the metalinguistic descriptions given in the previous sentence are relatively high in truth value because there are few exceptions. Metalinguistic descriptions that satisfy the criteria of low conceptual complexity and high truth value should be more readily available for Esperanto than for most other languages, because Esperanto is not only morpho-syntactically regular, but also characterised by direct phoneme–grapheme correspondence.

Last but not least, the lexical similarity of Esperanto to the main European languages invites metalinguistic inspection and reflection with regard to lexical semantics, i.e. word meaning. Learners with a European first language – including learners whose first language is English, of course – can draw explicit comparisons, identify similarities and differences between words or morphemes, and can thus potentially enhance their ability to recognise common patterns, to comprehend and to memorise vocabulary.

The empirical work described in subsequent chapters of this volume has begun to investigate the hypothesis that learning Esperanto prior to learning other languages may foster metalinguistic awareness in children, and may thus contribute to the development of the capacity for explicit learning. The research described in the following chapters has also sought an answer to the question of whether learning Esperanto may be associated with more positive attitudes to language and language learning in schoolchildren.

Chapter 3

The Springboard to Languages evaluation project: a summary report

KAREN ROEHR

The Springboard to Languages evaluation project was conducted by Dr Amanda Barton and Joanna Bragg from the University of Manchester in five phases between 2006 and 2011. The aim of the project was to evaluate the effectiveness and success of the Springboard to Languages programme which had been introduced at a small number of primary schools in England. This summary is based on the five individual reports that were produced by Barton and Bragg at the end of each project phase, i.e. at the end of the school years 2006–07, 2007–08, 2008–09, 2009–10, and 2010–11.

1. Aims of the Springboard to Languages programme

The main aim of the Springboard to Languages programme⁵⁷ is to develop the language awareness – and, by extension, the language-learning abilities – of primary-school pupils through a suitably designed teaching and learning programme. More specifically, the programme is based on the hypothesis that the teaching and learning of Esperanto in conjunction with targeted language-awareness activities can enhance children's metalinguistic awareness, which, in turn, is expected to facilitate the acquisition of other languages. In addition, the Springboard to Languages programme is aimed at fostering pupils' global and cultural awareness via links between English schools and schools overseas that likewise offer the teaching and learning of Esperanto to their pupils.

The purpose of the evaluation project was to assess to what extent these aims were achieved in selected schools that had implemented the Springboard to Languages programme.

2. Research design of the evaluation project

As indicated above, the evaluation project was carried out over a period of five years. Throughout this period, the focus was on School A on the outskirts of a large city. In the first and fourth year of the project, two further primary schools were involved for purposes of comparison, namely School B in the north of England (phase 1) and School C, also on the outskirts of a large city (phase 4). In large parts, the evaluation was essentially an extended case study.

Methodology

The evaluation project combined quantitative and qualitative methods, with greater emphasis on the latter. The main research instruments were questionnaires and inter-

⁵⁷ See chapter 5 for sample materials and activities.

views (see below for details). In addition, a limited number of classroom observations were carried out. Results arising from these observations did not make a substantial contribution to the findings presented in the five individual reports, so they are not further referred to in this summary.

Participants

The constitution and size of the participant sample varied between project phases, although it always consisted of intact classes of primary-school children taught as part of the normal school curriculum, and often also included a small number of teachers. The focus was on pupils in Key Stage 2, that is, children in Year 3 (age 7–8), Year 4 (age 8–9), Year 5 (age 9–10), and Year 6 (age 10–11) of primary school. The following table summarises the sampling over the five phases of the evaluation as well as the main instruments used. The child interviewees are typically subsamples drawn from the cohorts completing the questionnaire, with the exception of the Year 6 children in phase 3 and the Year 4 children in phase 5.

<i>School</i>	<i>Children</i>				<i>Teachers</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Instrument</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Head teacher</i>	<i>Instrument</i>
Phase 1							
A	74	3/4	Esperanto	questionnaire	5	included	interview
A	6	3/4	Esperanto	interview			
B	20	3–6	Esperanto	both	3	included	interview
Phase 2							
A	33	4	Esperanto	questionnaire	5	included	interview
A	2	4	Esperanto	interview			
A	61	5	French	questionnaire			
A	3	5	French	interview			
Phase 3							
A	28	3	Esperanto	questionnaire	2		interview
A	6	3	Esperanto	interview			
A	23	5	Spanish	questionnaire			
A	2	5	Spanish	interview			
A	3	6	French	interview			
Phase 4							
A	45	4	Esperanto	questionnaire	2		interview
A	6	4	Esperanto	interview			
C	28	4	French	questionnaire	1		interview
C	6	4	French	interview			
Phase 5							
A	12	4	Esperanto	interview			

Variables investigated

The two main instruments, questionnaires and interviews, were used to investigate the same four variables in the children: attitudes, metacognition, metalinguistic awareness, and, in the first two phases of the evaluation, knowledge of the foreign language(s) taught. The questionnaire data revealed an overall picture and allowed for some quantitative analyses to be conducted, whereas the interview data yielded more specific insights into children's knowledge and thoughts, as well as into some of the reasons and emotions informing their ideas. Interviews conducted with the teachers focused on one variable only, i.e. teacher attitudes towards the Springboard programme. Interview data were analysed qualitatively, except for phase 5, where both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted.

Attitudes

Children's attitudes were examined in terms of their enjoyment of language lessons, whether they thought learning a language was fun, whether they felt they had learned a lot, whether they thought they were good at learning languages, whether they believed they needed to know other languages, whether they looked forward to learning other languages, and whether they enjoyed meeting people from other countries. Thus, questions about attitudes primarily focused on affective components such as enjoyment, confidence, and motivation, as well as on cultural awareness.

Teachers' attitudes were investigated in terms of their views and perceptions of the Springboard programme, i.e. whether or not they deemed it suitable for the pupils they were teaching, successful in achieving its stated objectives, and well-resourced.

Metacognition

Children's metacognition was examined by asking them about their metalinguistic awareness, that is, whether they were able to spot patterns in languages and/or whether they understood how languages borrow from each other. Thus, children were effectively asked to assess their own metalinguistic abilities.

Metalinguistic awareness

Children's self-reports were complemented by a number of tasks aimed at examining their actual metalinguistic awareness. The tasks included translation tasks involving known and unknown languages, a cognate-identification task involving vocabulary from known and unknown languages, a task requiring the understanding of basic metalinguistic terminology ('adjective'), and a plural-formation task involving nouns from known and unknown languages. Overall, the metalinguistic tasks placed a strong emphasis on accessing unknown languages.

Knowledge of language(s) taught

In the first two phases of the project, the metalinguistic tasks were complemented by a small number of language tasks based on the language(s) the children were actually taught at the time. These tasks mostly focused on simple, discrete items of vocabulary and grammar, and required, for instance, simple translation into English, plural formation, or answering basic reading-comprehension questions.

3. Findings from individual project phases

In what follows, the main findings arising from the five phases of the evaluation project are summarised.

Phase 1

Phase 1 of the evaluation focused on children and teachers who had been involved in the Springboard to Languages programme for one year. In the context of the programme at School A, the children had learned Esperanto as their first foreign language. At School B, the children were learning both Esperanto and French.

Children's attitudes

At School A, children generally displayed quite positive attitudes. Nearly half of the sample reported enjoying their Esperanto lessons, and agreed with the statement that learning a language is fun. Just over half of the sample also felt that they had learned a lot in their Esperanto lessons, and stated that they were looking forward to learning another language in the future. By the same token, over half of the sample believed that they needed to know other languages.

At School B, children's attitudes were broadly similar, except that the pupils at this school were mostly unsure as to whether they had enjoyed their Esperanto lessons. Nonetheless, 60% of the sample stated that they had learned a lot in those lessons.

Children's metacognition

Children's statements about their own metalinguistic awareness were characterised by some uncertainty. Nearly half of the children in each school were unsure as to whether they were able to spot patterns in languages, and nearly half of the children at School A were likewise unsure as to whether they understood how languages borrow from each other. By contrast, nearly two-thirds of the School B children claimed to understand this. It is worth noting here that the School B sample included older children (age 10–11) than the School A sample.

Children's metalinguistic awareness

With regard to accessing unknown languages via translation, cognate recognition, and similar tasks, most children showed some facility, successfully translating into English a number of content words in foreign-language sentences, identifying pairs of singular and plural nouns in a variety of languages, identifying the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in a variety of languages, matching sentences for meaning in a variety of languages, and identifying cognates. Nevertheless, a number of children did not attempt these tasks; those who did attempt them coped with them relatively well.

It is noteworthy that the children at the two schools performed roughly similarly on these tasks; one might have expected a superior performance from School B pupils, since these children were learning both Esperanto and French, while the School A pupils were learning only Esperanto.

Children's knowledge of language(s) taught

When tested on their knowledge of Esperanto by means of one-word and two-word translation and plural-formation tasks, children at both schools demonstrated a good grasp of the language they were learning, with the large majority of pupils providing correct responses on almost all of the tasks.

Teachers' attitudes

Teachers' views and perceptions of the Springboard to Languages programme were generally very positive, with the teaching and learning resources being commended. The teacher interviewees felt that the programme had been successful in terms of raising pupils' metalinguistic awareness with a view to facilitating positive transfer between languages. Teachers thought that the regularity of Esperanto might help children develop their literacy skills in English. It was also acknowledged that the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto might be particularly valuable for lower-ability children, since it might raise their confidence with regard to language learning more generally.

Teachers at School A reported that pupils' cultural awareness had been enhanced, with children not only developing greater tolerance towards, but also a greater interest in speakers of other languages. This had been facilitated by the exchange of correspondence and photographs with Esperanto-speaking children at partner schools in Germany and Benin.

Phase 2

Phase 2 of the evaluation focused on children and teachers at School A who had taken part in the Springboard to Languages programme in the preceding year. At the time of data collection, the children who had been in Year 3 in phase 1 were now in Year 4 and learning Esperanto for a second year. The children who had been in Year 4 in phase 1 were now in Year 5 and learning French for the first time.

Children's attitudes

The Year 4 children displayed positive attitudes. Around 80% of the sample reported enjoying their Esperanto lessons, and agreed with the statement that learning a language is fun. Moreover, the majority of children were looking forward to learning another language in the future. These results contrast very favourably with the responses given in phase 1. Just under half of the sample felt that they had learned a lot in their Esperanto lessons, and over half of the sample believed that they needed to know other languages. An overwhelming majority of pupils stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries.

The Year 5 children were less positive. Although over half of the sample likewise believed that they needed to know other languages and stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries, the majority were not sure whether they enjoyed their French lessons or whether learning a language was fun, and only just over 10% of the cohort were looking forward to learning French in the coming year.

It is suggested by the researchers that the difference in attitudes between the two year groups may have arisen from a difference in the quality of teaching. Compared with the Esperanto teacher, the French teacher was not a language specialist, and had less access to good teaching and learning resources.

Around half of the children in each cohort were not sure whether they were good at learning languages, but more Year 5 than Year 4 children agreed with the statement that they were good at learning languages, thus displaying greater confidence in this respect.

Children's metacognition

Children's statements about their own metalinguistic awareness were still characterised by some uncertainty, as in phase 1. Indeed, Year 4 children were less positive, with greater disagreement with the statement that they understood how languages borrow from each other.

Children's metalinguistic awareness

With regard to accessing unknown languages via translation, cognate recognition, and similar tasks, children in both Year 4 and Year 5 again showed considerable facility, successfully translating into English a number of content words in foreign-language sentences, identifying pairs of singular and plural nouns in a variety of languages, identifying the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in a variety of languages, matching sentences for meaning in a variety of languages, and identifying cognates.

Year 4 children performed marginally better than Year 5 children on several of the tasks drawing on translation and transfer between languages, while Year 5 children outperformed Year 4 children on adjective identification. Overall, children's metalinguistic awareness had improved, compared with phase 1. This was also evident in the smaller proportion of pupils who did not attempt the tasks.

Children's knowledge of language(s) taught

When tested for their knowledge of Esperanto by means of one-word and two-word translation and plural-formation tasks, the Year 4 children demonstrated a good grasp of the language they were learning, as in phase 1. The Year 5 children likewise performed well on a simple reading-comprehension measure, aimed at assessing their knowledge of French.

Teachers' attitudes

Teachers' views and perceptions of the Springboard to Languages programme continued to be positive. The teacher interviewees confirmed that pupils were very enthusiastic in their Esperanto lessons. Teachers continued to believe that the regularity of Esperanto might help develop children's literacy skills in English, and perhaps also their numeracy skills. It was again acknowledged that the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto might be particularly helpful for lower-ability children. However, it was also noted that, once exposed to French, it might be the case that higher-ability children are better able to make use of their knowledge of Esperanto.

Phase 3

Phase 3 of the evaluation focused on children and teachers at School A who had been involved in the Springboard to Languages programme in the preceding year(s). Data were collected from children in Year 3 who had learned Esperanto for one year in the context of the Springboard programme.

Data were also collected from children in Year 5 and from a small subsample of children in Year 6. At the time of data collection, the children in Year 5 were learning Spanish in their first year after two years of Springboard in Year 3/4 (phase 1) and Year 4 (phase 2). The children in Year 6 were learning French in their second year. They had previously had one year of exposure to Springboard while in Year 3/4 (phase 1), and one year of French while in Year 5 (phase 2).

Children's attitudes

The Year 3 children displayed positive attitudes. More than half of the sample reported enjoying their Esperanto lessons, and agreed with the statement that learning a language is fun. Moreover, the majority of children were looking forward to learning another language in the future. Overall, the Year 3 children's attitudes were less strongly positive than the attitudes shown by the Year 4 children in phase 2, but generally more positive than the attitudes of the Year 3/4 group identified in phase 1. About two-thirds of the sample felt that they had learned a lot in their Esperanto lessons and believed that they needed to know other languages. Half of the pupils stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries.

The Year 5 children also exhibited positive attitudes. Three-quarters of the sample reported enjoying their Spanish lessons, and more than half agreed with the statement that learning a language is fun. No fewer than 80% believed that they needed to know other languages. Furthermore, more than half of the sample were looking forward to learning languages in the coming year, and stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries. Overall, the attitudes of the Year 5 children contrast positively with the attitudes of the Year 5 children in phase 2.

It is suggested by the researchers that differences in attitudes may again be attributable to differences in the quality of teaching. Unlike the French teacher who taught Year 5 children in phase 2, the Spanish teacher teaching Year 5 children in this phase was a language specialist with extensive subject knowledge and experience. It is suggested that the teacher's expertise and enthusiasm impacted on children's perceptions.

Half of the Year 3 children and a third of the Year 5 children thought that they were good at learning languages, thus displaying greater confidence than the pupils in phase 2. In response to a new question about whether they felt they did well at school, children showed even greater confidence, with more than half of each cohort responding in the affirmative.

Children's metacognition

Year 3 children's statements about their own metalinguistic awareness were once more characterised by some uncertainty, as in the case of the Year 4 cohort in phase 2

and the Year 3/4 cohort in phase 1. Half of the sample was not sure as to whether they understood how languages borrow from each other. The Year 5 children were more positive in this respect, with more than a third of the sample claiming to understand how languages borrow from each other. In accordance with findings in phase 1, it is possible that slightly older children (aged 9–10 in this case) are better able to make metacognitive judgements of this nature.

Children's metalinguistic awareness

With regard to accessing unknown languages via translation, cognate recognition, and similar tasks, children in both Year 3 and Year 5 again showed considerable facility, successfully translating into English a number of content words in foreign language sentences, identifying the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in a variety of languages, matching sentences for meaning in a variety of languages, and identifying cognates.

Although the children in Year 3 were younger and had less experience of learning languages than the Year 5 children, they often performed as well as the older pupils, and on one task even outperformed the older group, which is indicative of a positive influence of the Springboard to Languages programme.

The Year 6 interviewees were less successful in the translation exercise than children from the other cohorts. It is suggested that their lower-quality experience of learning French in the previous year may have had a lasting negative impact on their metalinguistic abilities.

Teachers' attitudes

In accordance with the trend identified in phases 1 and 2, teachers' views and perceptions of the Springboard to Languages programme continued to be positive. One teacher mentioned again that the regularity of Esperanto may help develop children's literacy and numeracy skills in English. Once more, it was acknowledged that the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto might be particularly helpful for lower-ability children. Another advantage of Esperanto may be its potential for allowing children to be playful and creative with language.

The Springboard programme was taught by non-specialist Esperanto teachers for the first time in the school year that was covered by phase 3 of the evaluation. The teachers' comments on the quality and availability of teaching resources for the programme were very positive. The teachers felt that they were able to select and adapt materials in accordance with their needs, which suggests that they were indeed suitably resourced.

Phase 4

Phase 4 of the evaluation focused on Year 4 children and teachers at two schools, School A and School C. The children at School A were in their second year of the Springboard to Languages programme; they had also participated in Springboard while in Year 3 (phase 3). The children at School C were likewise in their second year of learning languages. In contrast to School A, the pupils at School C had been

exposed to three different languages while in Year 3: Latin, Japanese, and German. These languages had been taught as ‘tasters’ in the context of a language-taster programme. At the time of data collection, the children were learning French.

Children’s attitudes

Compared with their responses in the previous year (phase 3), as well as with responses from earlier cohorts on the Springboard to Languages programme at the same school (phase 1 and phase 2), the pupils at School A displayed somewhat less positive attitudes overall. Only a third of the sample reported enjoying their Esperanto lessons and believed that learning a language is fun; the majority of the cohort was unsure about these two points. Around 40% of the sample felt they had learned a lot in their Esperanto lessons, believed that they needed to know other languages, and were looking forward to learning languages in the coming year.

As in previous phases, the researchers suggest that the quality of teaching may be at least partly responsible for this pattern of results. The Year 4 cohort was taught together with Year 3 children who were exposed to Esperanto for the first time. In addition to learning in a large class of mixed age and ability, the teacher interviews suggest that lessons may have been less creative and interactive than in the previous year. The interviews with the children further indicate that personal learning preferences may not have been met in some cases, although it is not possible to generalise these individual comments to the entire cohort.

Cross-cultural contact with Esperanto-speaking children in Hungary and Germany, similar to what was reported in the context of phase 1, allowed for communication with pupils abroad. Perhaps because of this, a large majority of children stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries. The response was more positive than in the previous year (phase 3), although it is similar to the response from the pupils at School C. Otherwise, the pupils at School C displayed slightly more positive attitudes than their peers at School A, although differences are not particularly marked. The only exception is that more than half of the School C cohort believed that they had learned a lot in their French lessons.

Pupils from the two schools also showed broadly similar response patterns in terms of their confidence as (language) learners. About half of each cohort was not sure whether they were good at learning foreign languages, and about two-thirds of each cohort believed that they did well at school more generally. The Year 4 children were thus less confident about their language-learning abilities than they had been in the previous year (phase 3).

Children’s metacognition

The School A cohort’s statements about their own metalinguistic awareness were more positive than in the previous year, and indeed also more positive than any of the other cohorts’ statements in previous years. Just over half of the sample claimed that they understood how languages borrow from each other. The School C children were much less sure in this respect, however, with less than a third responding positively.

Children's metalinguistic awareness

With regard to accessing unknown languages via translation, cognate recognition, and similar tasks, children from both samples again showed considerable facility, successfully translating into English a number of content words in foreign-language sentences, identifying pairs of singular and plural nouns in a variety of languages, identifying the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in a variety of languages, matching sentences for meaning in a variety of languages, and identifying cognates.

On several of the tasks, the School A pupils showed an improvement compared with their performance in the previous year (phase 3). Moreover, the School A pupils occasionally outperformed the School C pupils. This suggests that two years of the Springboard to Languages programme may have been more successful in developing metalinguistic awareness and a readiness to access unfamiliar languages in the children than one year of the language-taster programme plus one year of learning French.

Teachers' attitudes

In accordance with the trend identified in the preceding phases, teachers' views and perceptions of the Springboard to Languages programme continued to be positive. It was again acknowledged that the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto might be particularly helpful for lower-ability children. At School A, the Springboard programme was taught by non-specialist Esperanto teachers for the second year. As in phase 3, teachers' comments on the quality of both resources and support were very positive.

Phase 5

Phase 5 of the evaluation focused on a small group of Year 4 children at School A. At the time of data collection, the children were in their third year of the Springboard to Languages programme.

Children's attitudes

In general, the children displayed positive attitudes, with most interviewees stating that they enjoyed their Esperanto lessons and that learning a language is fun. Similar to the Year 4 cohort from School A in the previous year (phase 4), no more than a third of the interviewees felt that they had learned a lot in their Esperanto lessons. By contrast, nearly all the children interviewed were looking forward to learning languages in the coming year, and stated that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries. Reflecting the relative lack of confidence of the cohort in the previous year (phase 4), only one-third of the interviewees felt that they were good at learning foreign languages.

Children's metacognition

The interviewees' responses to the question of whether they understood how languages borrow from each other broadly reflected the positive pattern of results obtained from the School A cohort in the previous year (phase 4).

Children's metalinguistic awareness

With regard to accessing unknown languages via translation, cognate recognition, and similar tasks, the children interviewed showed good facility, successfully translating into English a number of content words in foreign-language sentences, identifying pairs of singular and plural nouns in a variety of languages, identifying the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in a variety of languages, matching sentences for meaning in a variety of languages, and identifying cognates. Overall, their performance was similar to or better than the mean performance of School A children in previous years who had participated in the Springboard programme.

However, it is worth bearing in mind that, unlike the children in previous years, the interviewees did not complete the tasks in questionnaire format, so any superiority in performance could be attributable to the fact that the questions were read out by the interviewer, and that the tasks were completed in a one-to-one situation.

4. Summary of main findings

Summarising the main findings arising from the five-year evaluation project, it appears that, overall, the Springboard to Languages programme has achieved its main aims of enhancing primary-school children's metalinguistic awareness as well as fostering some cross-cultural awareness.

With regard to metalinguistic awareness, the pupils who were assessed throughout the five phases showed, on average, considerable facility when confronted with metalinguistic tasks requiring them to access unknown languages or to transfer knowledge between languages. Tasks targeting these skills included translation from different languages into English at word and sentence level, the identification of cognates in different languages, the matching of pairs of sentences in different languages for meaning, the identification of singular and plural nouns in different languages, and the identification of the adjective in adjective–noun pairings in different languages.

When comparison groups were available, it was found that children who were participating in the Springboard to Languages programme often performed as well as – and on occasion even outperformed – peers who were older, had more experience of learning languages, or had been exposed to a language-taster programme. This finding suggests that Springboard was successful in raising pupils' metalinguistic awareness, although it should be borne in mind that any comparisons with other groups of children must be interpreted with caution, since variables such as children's general ability, their home background, or the specific characteristics of the teaching context were not controlled for. It should also be acknowledged that the research design used does not allow for conclusions as to whether the teaching and learning of a language other than Esperanto, in conjunction with targeted language awareness activities, would have led to similar results.

In respect of the (limited) information available on children's cross-cultural awareness, it appears that pupils generally developed a positive attitude towards speakers of other languages, especially when the Springboard to Languages programme was combined with activities such as correspondence or exchanges with

pupils in primary schools abroad. Children generally believed that they needed to know other languages, and often reported that they enjoyed meeting people from other countries.

With regard to children's attitudes more generally, an overall positive picture emerged over the five phases of the evaluation. More often than not, a majority of the children who had experienced the Springboard programme reported enjoyment of their language lessons, thought that learning a language was fun, and looked forward to learning other languages.

It is noteworthy, however, that there was some fluctuation in attitudes in evidence, both for Springboard cohorts and pupils learning other languages. On occasion, a minority of pupils had positive attitudes, with a majority opting for a 'not sure' response instead. This was particularly the case with respect to the question of whether they felt they had learned a lot in their language lessons. Reasons for this fluctuation in attitudes are not immediately apparent, although the researchers suggest that the quality of teaching and the quality of learning resources had an important role to play, especially in the cohorts learning languages other than Esperanto.

Questions relying on children's metacognition – i.e. questions which effectively asked pupils to assess their own metalinguistic awareness – often resulted in uncertainty, especially in the first three phases, where it appeared that slightly older children (age 10) might be better able to make the required judgements. Nevertheless, the responses from the Springboard cohorts in the last two phases, though given by younger children (age 8–9), were generally more positive. There are no obvious reasons for this pattern of results.

Children's knowledge of the language(s) taught was only assessed in the first two phases, and to a very limited extent. On average, pupils performed well on the tasks they were given. However, bearing in mind the research design of the evaluation project, it is not possible to say whether participation in the Springboard to Languages programme had any influence on pupils' performance.

The views and perceptions of teachers who were involved in the Springboard to Languages programme, or (as head teachers) had sanctioned its implementation, were generally encouragingly positive. Overall, the teachers interviewed felt that the programme was fulfilling its aims. They believed that the regularity of Esperanto helped with the development of children's literacy and even numeracy skills; they had the impression that lower-ability children in particular might benefit from the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto; and they praised the quality of the teaching and learning resources as well as the support available to them.

It is worth noting that non-specialist language teachers coped well with teaching the Springboard to Languages programme. The programme is intended to be usable by non-specialist language teachers, whose positive comments indicate that the teaching and learning materials provided enabled them to deliver Springboard lessons with confidence.

Chapter 4

The Springboard to Languages evaluation project: extracts from the reports

ANGELA TELLIER

This chapter presents extracts from the yearly phase reports of the Springboard to Languages five-year case study undertaken by Dr Amanda Barton and Joanna Bragg, from the University of Manchester's School of Education. They have been chosen to complement Dr Karen Roehr's summary report of the evaluation in the previous chapter. They illustrate how the Springboard programme developed over the five-year period, and how successful it was in achieving its aims.

In particular, they support the concluding statements that the children participating in the programme

- 'showed, on average, considerable facility when confronted with meta-linguistic tasks requiring them to access unknown languages or to transfer knowledge between languages';
- 'often performed as well as – and on occasion even outperformed – peers who were older, had more experience of learning languages, or had been exposed to a language-taster programme';
- 'generally developed a positive attitude towards speakers of other languages';
- 'reported enjoyment of their language lessons, thought that learning a language was fun, and looked forward to learning other languages';

and that staff participating in the programme, including non-specialist language teachers felt that:

- 'overall [...] the programme was fulfilling its aims';
- 'the regularity of Esperanto helped with the development of children's literacy and even numeracy skills';
- 'lower-ability children in particular might benefit from the learning of a regular language such as Esperanto'.

Phase 1: November 2007

'All four teachers – the class teachers and the Esperanto teachers – felt that the programme had made a positive contribution to the curriculum, especially in terms of enhancing pupils' literacy in English. They felt that learning Esperanto had helped pupils to spot patterns in languages, and, consequently, to identify language forms such as verbs, adjectives, nouns. This knowledge had then been transferred to English. The two class teachers attributed this to the regularity of Esperanto which contrasted with the irregularity of English [...]'

‘In terms of pupil performance, [School B] pupils were at an advantage both in terms of the age of the sample and their experience of learning French. [School A] pupils were nevertheless able to demonstrate an impressive ability to apply the transferable language skills they had acquired.’⁵⁸

‘The teachers and headteachers were all clearly very enthusiastic about the programme, in spite of some initial reservations. They recognised the potential benefits of the programme both for children’s literacy and for their cultural awareness [...] they felt that lower-ability children had benefited particularly from being given a ‘fresh start’ in a subject which allowed them to use their oral skills. They all highly commended the resources and the support they had been given by the programme designers.’

Phase 2: November 2008

‘Taken at face value [...] these results are encouraging in terms of demonstrating the ability of children on the Springboard programme to apply their meta-linguistic skills to translate a language with which they had had very little, if any, contact.’

‘The [...] class] teacher reported that those pupils who were less able in literacy had made more progress than expected. She described how the specialist Esperanto teacher had been surprised to discover who the weakest pupils in literacy were, since their performance in Springboard lessons had not suggested this.’

‘Both the [...] class] teacher and the Springboard teacher confirmed that the children are very enthusiastic in their lessons, a point observed by one of the researchers during observation of lessons. They reported that children pick up Esperanto very quickly and that those children with a second language already “are the ones who pick it up and fly with it...” The head teacher felt that the programme had “gone from strength to strength”.’

‘Pupils [...] demonstrated the ability to look for patterns in languages, and performed well in the task that required them to match two sentences with the same meaning from four in Spanish, Romanian, Esperanto, and English. The younger pupils performed slightly better than their older counterparts in this task. The pupils also seemed to have made progress in terms of their grammatical knowledge, displaying an improvement in their ability to identify the adjectives in paired words in languages that were unfamiliar to them.’

Phase 3: January 2010

‘This suggests that regardless of how successful the Springboard programme is deemed to be whilst it is being implemented, it is the subsequent experience of learning another language which dictates whether pupils are motivated to carry

⁵⁸ Pupils in School A (ages 7–9) had not previously studied a language. Pupils in School B (ages 7–11) had been learning French from age 5.

on learning a language. This experience is invariably influenced by the quality of the teaching. If pupils are taught by underqualified, poorly prepared teachers who are lacking in resources, their experience is likely to be a negative one, and this can have long-lasting effects on their motivation.’

‘There is some considerable evidence in the evaluation findings of the effectiveness of the Springboard programme. The [...] pupils who had been following the Springboard programme in the year leading up to the evaluation had clearly enjoyed it, and were motivated to learn languages in the future. They seemed to experience no adverse effects in being taught by non-specialist Esperanto teachers, and the teachers themselves appeared, on the whole, quite confident and happy with their performance.’

Phase 4: November 2010

‘There is a contrast here between the Springboard pupils [School A] and the French-learning pupils [School C]. While some of the Springboard pupils – though by no means all – endeavour to translate sentences in French and German, languages which they have not learned before, the French-learning pupils are much more reluctant to tackle a sentence in a language which they have not studied before. This is in spite of some of the words in the Esperanto sentence having a clear resemblance to French, namely *malgrandaj* [‘small’, based on *grandaj* ‘big’] and *mangas* [‘eats’]. This suggests that the Springboard programme and the French programme have distinct objectives, as mentioned earlier: while the Springboard programme is based on nurturing language awareness in pupils, encouraging them to look beyond Esperanto towards other languages and to use their knowledge of Esperanto to decode other languages, the French programme is presented more simply as a means of communication with other French speakers.’

‘The pupils on the Springboard programme [learning a language with an international vocabulary base] appear to be more prepared to engage with unfamiliar languages than is the case when pupils are learning only one language [such as French]. They appear to recognise that learning languages makes learning and accessing other languages much easier [...] In this respect, then, the programme has clearly achieved its principal objective: to provide pupils with a springboard to accessing other languages.’

‘In spite of being non-specialists, the evaluation findings show that they [normal classroom teachers] have succeeded in teaching children the importance of learning other languages, as well as how the knowledge of one language can be used to access other languages.’

Phase 5: September 2011

‘A number of this year’s findings resonate with previous years’ findings. First, and perhaps most importantly, children generally enjoy the Springboard programme.’

‘A consistent theme of our findings has been the suggestion that the programme has achieved some key objectives of a language-awareness programme. For instance, pupils are able to analyse languages that are unknown to them, identifying patterns and applying grammatical rules correctly.’

‘This year’s findings seem to show that pupils are aware of the interrelationship between different languages [...] and they were able to give examples. Furthermore, the programme appears to teach them how to analyse languages in close detail, including those with which they are unfamiliar, and it was this that set them apart from their peers who were following the single-language programme last year. Although the Springboard pupils report that they find it difficult to learn a language, their confidence in approaching unknown languages, as evidenced in the plural-forms exercise, is very clear.’

‘Certainly, the pupils at [School A] appeared to be more prepared to engage with other languages than their counterparts learning French [in School C] last year, and had a [...] perception of the function of Esperanto as a tool for decoding other languages, rather than being merely a means of transactional communication. To those educationalists for whom language-awareness programmes would seem to be the way forwards in primary school, this is an encouraging discovery. It will take, however, a complete overhaul of parents’, schools’ and policymakers’ instrumental perceptions of the purposes of learning a language, before the potential benefits of such a programme can be fully appreciated. These benefits clearly extend to non-specialist language teachers in primary schools, many of whom continue to search for a viable programme that does not make inordinate demands of their subject knowledge.’

Chapter 5

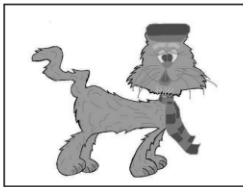
Springboard to Languages: sample materials and activities

This chapter presents some of the materials from Springboard to Languages and related courses, illustrating how Esperanto is used in the programme to raise children's awareness of language and languages.

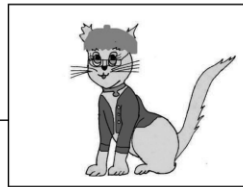
- Examples of the full-colour multilingual classroom posters which heighten awareness of some of the similarities to be found across languages. (These were designed by Angela Tellier and illustrated by Viv O'Dunne.)
- **I can do this!** A set of graded 'can do' statements for language, covering the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking for lessons 1–6, 7–12 and 13–18. (*Saĝa strigo*, in the accompanying graphics, is Esperanto for 'wise owl'.)
- **Wow! I am Language Aware!** A set of graded 'can do' statements for language awareness.
- **Super scenario.** An example of an activity that encourages children to discuss and 'decode' other-language sentences, using primarily their knowledge of Esperanto, but also any other-language knowledge they bring to the classroom, including L1 English.
- **The functions of words.** Examples of how the regular endings in Esperanto can help children develop an awareness of the functions of words in sentences.
- **Animal families.** An example of how children can apply their knowledge of word-builders to manipulate the language and create new words based on an Esperanto root word. (From the children's 'Word-builders' booklet.)
- Examples of activities from a cross-curricular language course for primary-school children (in preparation) which, like Springboard to Languages, uses Esperanto as a preparatory course for learning languages. The course is in two parts:
 1. An Esperanto story-based 'woodland' course, covering aspects of basic science, and incorporating attention to and awareness of language.
 2. A story-based French course, 'La forêt en danger', building on the language structures and vocabulary covered in the first part, and introducing beginner vocabulary, phrases, and grammar in French.

The sample activities illustrate how a language preparation course can be an integral part of different subject areas (here: science, literacy, and numeracy).

Fantastic families

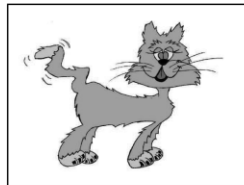


Esperanto avo
Portuguese avô
Spanish abuelo
English grandfather
Dutch grootvader
German Großvater

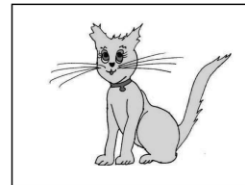


Esperanto avino
Portuguese avó
Spanish abuela
English grandmother
Dutch grootmoeder
German Großmutter

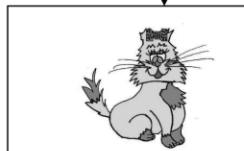
Language
 cousins ...
 not so far
 removed!



Esperanto patro
French père
Italian padre
English father
Dutch vader
German Vater



Esperanto patrino
French mère
Italian madre
English mother
Dutch moeder
German Mutter



Esperanto filino
Portuguese filha
Romanian fiică
English daughter
Dutch dochter
German Tochter



Esperanto filo
French fils
Romanian fiu
English son
Flemish zoon
German Sohn



Esperanto mi
Portuguese eu
Romanian eu
English I
Dutch ik
German ich



Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester. I have a brother and a sister.
 J'ai un frère et une sœur. Mi havas fraton kaj fratino.

Marvellous me

Mi estas ĝirafa.
Mi estas granda.

Esperanto bela
French belle
Italian bella
Portuguese bela
Provençal bello

Esperanto kontenta
French contente
Italian contenta
Latin contenta
Romanian încântată

Croatian inteligentna
Esperanto inteligenta
Estonian intelligentne
Hungarian intelligens
Italian intelligente

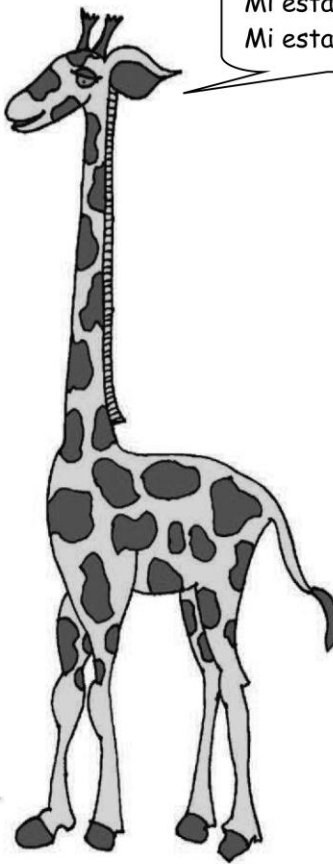
Esperanto eleganta
French élégante
Italian elegante
Polish elegancka
Slovak elegantná

English herbivorous
Esperanto herbovora
French herbivore
Italian erbivora
Spanish herbívora

Dutch jong
Esperanto juna
French jeune
Portuguese jovem
Spanish joven

Dutch Afrikaans
Esperanto afrika
French africaine
German afrikanisch
Italian africana

Esperanto granda
French grande
Italian grande
Portuguese grande
Spanish grande



Je suis une girafe.
Je suis belle.



Sunt o girafă.
Sunt încântată.



Sono una giraffa.
Sono intelligente.



Jestem żyrafa.
Jestem elegancka.



Soy una jirafa.
Soy herbívora.



Ik ben een giraf.
Ik ben Afrikaans.

Language cousins ... not so far removed!

www.springboard2languages.org

Nifty numbers

Esperanto

1	unu
2	du
3	tri
4	kvar
5	kvin
6	ses
7	sep
8	ok
9	naŭ
10	dek

Romanian

1	unu
2	doi
3	trei
4	patru
5	cinci
6	şase
7	şapte
8	opt
9	nouă
10	zece



Italian

1	uno
2	due
3	tre
4	quattro
5	cinque
6	sei
7	sette
8	otto
9	nove
10	dieci

$$10 \times 10 = 100$$

<i>Esperanto</i>	cent
<i>Romanian</i>	sută
<i>Italian</i>	cento
<i>Portuguese</i>	cem
<i>French</i>	cent
<i>Spanish</i>	cien

$$10 \times 10 \times 10 = 1000$$

<i>Esperanto</i>	mil
<i>Romanian</i>	mie
<i>Italian</i>	mille
<i>Portuguese</i>	mil
<i>French</i>	mille
<i>Spanish</i>	mil

Portuguese

1	um
2	dois
3	três
4	quatro
5	cinco
6	seis
7	sete
8	oito
9	nove
10	dez

French

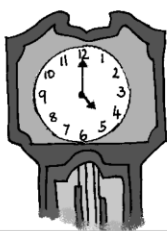
1	un
2	deux
3	trois
4	quatre
5	cinq
6	six
7	sept
8	huit
9	neuf
10	dix

Spanish

1	uno
2	dos
3	tres
4	cuatro
5	cinco
6	seis
7	siete
8	ocho
9	nueve
10	diez

Roman numerals

1	I
2	II
3	III
4	IV
5	V
6	VI
7	VII
8	VIII
9	IX
10	X
100	C
1000	M



Language cousins ... not so far removed!



I can do this! (lessons 1–6)

I can speak Esperanto!

- I can say the names of colours.
- I can count from 1-10.
- I can say my name.
- I can talk about animals.



I can read Esperanto!

- I can read words and sentences.
- I can read a short dialogue.
- I can read a short story.
- I can match words and pictures.



I can write Esperanto!

- I can complete puzzles.
- I can label objects.
- I can fill in gaps.
- I can write about my family.



I can listen to, and understand Esperanto!

- I can understand a song.
- I can understand a short dialogue.
- I can understand simple questions.
- I can understand a short story.



Wow! I am Language Aware! (lessons 1–6)

- I know that words ending in an **a** are telling me: 'Hi! I am an **adjective**!'
- I know that words ending in an **o** are telling me: 'Hi! I am a **noun**!'
- I know that a **j** on the end of a word means *more than one*.
It is telling me: 'Hi! I am **plural**!'
- I know that letter groups like **mal** and **in** can be added to the beginning and end of some words to build new ones.
- I can find a noun and an adjective in an Esperanto sentence.
- I know that words in different languages can sound similar, like *urso* in Esperanto and *ours* in French.
- I know that some languages use signs above and below letters to change the sound of the letter.
- I can match some Esperanto words to words in other languages.
- I can use Esperanto to help me understand a sentence in another language.

I have made a flying start!

I can do this! (lessons 7–12)

I can speak Esperanto!

- I can talk about food and drink.
- I can tell the time.
- I can name my clothes.
- I can talk about animal families.

I can read Esperanto!

- I can fill in gaps in a story.
- I can read a short dialogue.
- I can read a short play.
- I can read a short book.

I can write Esperanto!

- I can complete a table.
- I can complete a memory map.
- I can use word-builders.
- I can write about my friend.

I can listen to, and understand Esperanto!

- I can understand the time.
- I can understand opposites.
- I can understand about animal families.
- I can understand a short story.



Wow! I am Language Aware! (lessons 7–12)

- I know that letters make words, and that words make sentences.
- I know that other languages also use full stops and capital letters.
- I know that other languages use an alphabet which is different from the English alphabet.
- I know that letters that look the same as letters in the English alphabet can sound different in other languages.
- I know that words can be joined together to make new ones, as with *manĝo* and *ĉambro* which make *manĝoĉambro*.
- I can create new words using word-builders, like *kato*, *katino*, *katido*.
- I know that in some languages some words must 'match' other words and take similar endings, as in *tri grandaj*, *orangĝaj tigroj*.
- I know that languages are related just as people are, and I can match similar words in several languages.
- I know that different words in different languages are often just different ways of talking about the same thing.

I have made a flying start!

I can do this! (lessons 13–18)

I can speak Esperanto!

- I can say the days of the week.
- I can ask questions.
- I can play a game.
- I can say what I did yesterday.

I can read Esperanto!

- I can choose a correct answer.
- I can find words in a word search.
- I can follow instructions.
- I can read a diary entry.

I can write Esperanto!

- I can write a postcard.
- I can write an e-mail.
- I can write about myself.
- I can write a short story.

I can listen to, and understand Esperanto!

- I can understand a short play.
- I can understand instructions.
- I can understand a story telling what happened in the past.
- I can understand a story telling what will happen in the future.



Wow! I am Language Aware! (lessons 13–18)

- I know that the verb ending **as** is used to show that 'the time' is *now*.
- I know that the verb ending **is** is used to show that 'the time' is *past*.
- I know that the verb ending **os** is used to show that 'the time' is *future*.
- I know that when two verbs are seen together, the second one has the 'no time' ending **i**, as in *mi deziras mangi*.
- I know that I do not have to understand every word in order to understand the general meaning of a sentence.
- I know that it is more important to try to make someone understand what I mean than to say things right.
- I know that I must listen carefully and speak clearly when having a conversation.
- I know that it doesn't matter if I don't understand what someone is asking me, and that I can ask the person to repeat the question.
- I know that I can speak, read, write, listen to, and understand another language!

I have made a flying start!

‘Super scenario’: at an international conference

The class is taking part in an international conference on animals. The children are delegates who are helping one another, using words from any of the languages they know, to try to make sense of some of the written phrases that appear in the documents. The scenario encourages children to share their language knowledge, to explain their reasoning, and to work together to find a solution. There are no right or wrong answers, just sensible and not-so-sensible ones.

Le nom du hamster est ‘Fred’.	[French]
Die Katze ist braun und blau.	[German]
El elefante es grande.	[Spanish]
Tigrul este negru și verde.	[Romanian]
Sept serpents verts sont sur la grande table.	[French]
Il cammello è grande.	[Italian]
Sechs Katzen sitzen im Haus.	[German]
De kameel drinkt de koffie van de familie.	[Dutch]
În parc sunt trei elefanți.	[Romanian]

The functions of words

Accessing other languages is an important part of the Springboard to Languages course, but so too is encouraging an understanding of the function of words in sentences. The regular endings (-a = adjective, -o = noun, etc) on Esperanto words make the function of those words very clear, and children can be encouraged to transfer this knowledge when accessing other-language sentences. For example, children can be given simple sentences which mean the same thing in Esperanto, English and another language (here, French), and can be asked to circle all the nouns in one colour and the adjectives in another. The task is child-led, but generally leads to a discussion of the similarities and differences between languages, for example: placement of adjectives (i.e. before or after the noun); use of definite articles; elision; and basic etymology (e.g. *blanka* and *blanc* compared with *white*).

La blanka urso estas en la ĝardeno.
 L’ours blanc est dans le jardin.
 The white bear is in the garden.

Children are encouraged to ‘discover’ language for themselves. For example, having learned the future tense in Esperanto, children are asked to explore pairs of sentences referring to present and future time in different languages and to suggest a ‘rule’ to explain how each language pair changes the present tense to the future.

Present tense – ‘now’

Mi manĝas pomon.

I eat an apple.

Ich esse einen Apfel.

Je mange une pomme.

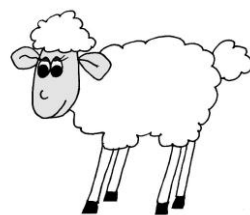
Future tense – ‘next’

Mi manĝos pomon.

I will eat an apple.

Ich werde einen Apfel essen.

Je mangerai une pomme.

Animal families**-in-** female**-id-** young**-ej-** place**-ar-** group**vir-** male**-ist-** person who**-eg-** something larger**-et-** something smaller**ge-j** male and female**ŝafino**⁵⁹**ŝafido****ŝafejo****ŝafaro****virŝafo****ŝafisto****ŝafego****ŝafeto****geŝafoj****ŝafo**

⁵⁹ *ŝafo* ‘sheep’, *ŝafino* ‘ewe’, *ŝafido* ‘lamb’, *ŝafejo* ‘sheep pen’, *ŝafaro* ‘flock of sheep’, *virŝafo* ‘ram’, *ŝafisto* ‘shepherd’, *ŝafego* ‘big sheep’, *ŝafeto* ‘little sheep’, *geŝafoj* ‘rams and ewes (collectively)’.

nomo		dato	
L.O.	I can find three sentences which I think mean the same thing.		

1. Die Sonne gibt Energie.
2. Das Gras ist nun grün.
3. L'erba ora è verde.
4. La suno donas energion.
5. Die Eule frisst das Kaninchen.
6. Il sole dà energia.

The numbers are:



L.O. I can circle the word for 'sun' in each of these sentences.



suno

La suno donas energion.

Il sole dà energia.

El sol da energía.

Soarele dă energie.

The sun gives energy.

Die Sonne gibt Energie.

nomo		dato	
L.O.	I can put the right ending on the words.		

Hi!
I am a noun!
There is **only**
one of me.

o oj

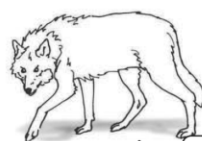
Hi!
I am a noun!
There is **more**
than one of me.



formik



arane



lup



verm



vulp



verm



arane



formik



erinac



mi estas
araneo

ni estas
vermoj



nomo		dato	
L.O.	I can build words for the numbers 1 to 1,000		

1	unu	6	ses	100	cent
2	du	7	sep		
3	tri	8	ok	1,000	mil
4	kvar	9	naŭ		
5	kvin	10	dek		

To multiply, join the words together:

$30 = 3 \times 10$ **tridek**

To add, leave a gap between the words:

$35 = 3 \times 10 + 5$ **tridek kvin**

15	$10 + 5$	dek kvin
21	$2 \times 10 + 1$	
37		tridek sep
92	$9 \times 10 + 2$	
200	2×100	
555	$5 \times 100 + 5 \times 50 + 5$	
999		
1,001	$1,000 + 1$	

Chapter 6

Springboard to Languages: Comenius multilateral partnership

ANGELA TELLIER⁶⁰

The five-year Springboard to Languages case study incorporated a successful two-year Comenius multilateral partnership⁶¹ (2008–2010), which linked schools and organisations in England, Hungary, and Germany. Dr Amanda Barton from the University of Manchester's School of Education carried out an independent evaluation of the project which focused on the English primary school, the coordinating school for the project. This chapter presents a general overview of the project, and includes extracts from Barton's report.

The Comenius project had several aims, which included: developing children's general awareness of language; encouraging children to learn and use elements of each of the partner languages, such as core vocabulary and phrases; raising awareness of Europe's multicultural heritage; and discussing communication in the European Union to encourage good European citizenship. The final outcome of the project was to produce a musical in celebration of the linguistic and cultural similarities and differences of the partner countries.

Over the two-year period, approximately 160 children, aged between 6 and 12, took part in the project. Since the children in the partner schools were studying Esperanto as part of the Springboard to Languages programme of language awareness, Esperanto was used as the initial language of communication between the partners. It was also used as a simple gloss to help children to pronounce the partner languages correctly. Examples of some of the specially written songs and dialogues, including the Esperanto gloss, can be found in chapter 7.

Throughout the project, children, staff, pupils, and parents were in regular contact with each other via email and blogs; children also exchanged the more traditional postal letters, postcards, and small gifts. Coordinators from the partner schools used online collaboration tools to communicate and cooperate effectively. Children learned elements of each other's languages, and practised their new skills via video conferences, speaking, and singing in Esperanto, Hungarian, English, and German.

⁶⁰ Angela Tellier was the partnership's coordinator. This chapter is based on: Amanda Barton's evaluation report (July 2010), Karen Roehr's summary report of Barton's report; the Comenius application form (2008 call) for school partnerships; and the Comenius report form (2008 call).

⁶¹ 'Multilateral partnerships are cross-curricular projects that involve at least three schools or colleges from at least three European countries. They enable staff and students in the UK to work together with partners in other Comenius-eligible countries for the duration of the two-year partnership.'

(<http://www.britishcouncil.org/comenius-multi-lateral.htm>)

From the beginning, the project encompassed cross-curricular work. Children designed and made their own props for the plays – for example, animal masks – and learned to play some of the songs on ocarinas and glockenspiel. The musical was divided into three acts: Language and Country; Culture and Traditions; and Town and School. Children learned dialogues and songs in four languages, acted in plays, explored aspects of their own and each others' culture, and made videos of their school and town. Whenever possible, the children themselves filmed the work in progress, and the outcomes.

Each school visited the other two partner schools, which meant that children were guests in other countries twice, and hosts in their own country once; each visit lasted approximately five days. The visitors stayed with local families, and children took part in lessons at the host school. Together the group explored the local area, learned about the culture and customs of the host country, and prepared and rehearsed the songs, dances, and plays. Each visit included an evening presentation to which local dignitaries, press, family, and friends were invited.

In her summary report of the project evaluation⁶², Roehr notes that:

the project was impressive in its scope, and it is equally impressive that almost all of the planned activities were carried out. The objectives were ambitious, but they seem to have been met to a large extent, which is clearly a positive outcome [...] the facilitation of direct contact between children in different countries was one of the strongest points of the (generally very strong) project [...] Apart from the Springboard aim of enhancing children's metalinguistic awareness in preparation for further L2 learning through the teaching and learning of Esperanto, the Comenius project placed a strong emphasis on what is termed plurilingual and pluricultural competence. This includes enhancing motivation to learn languages, and encouraging tolerance of and respect for others.

The research drew on pupil and parent/carer questionnaires which included questions about children's knowledge of the countries of Europe, their attitudes and perceptions of other cultures and languages, and parental opinions on the project. Parents and carers were also asked what they felt their children had gained from the project, and whether they felt that they themselves had become more aware of other European languages and cultures through their own involvement. Questionnaires were administered twice, once at the beginning and once at the end of the two-year project. Roehr comments that although 'neither the pupil questionnaires nor the parent questionnaires were exactly the same at pre-test and at post-test [...] there is a sufficient number of directly comparable items available', which allows for some meaningful comparisons to be made.

Roehr summarises the main findings of the evaluation study as follows:

- (1) With regard to the children [...], most objectives of the Comenius project were met.
- (2) With regard to the parents, generally positive attitudes were in evidence.
- (3) [...] the children may have benefited more in terms of knowledge

⁶² Roehr (2011: 1–2).

gained (metalinguistic awareness, other factual knowledge such as countries in Europe) than in terms of developing more positive attitudes across the board [...] it may also be the case that children's generally positive attitudes at the start of the project meant that there was simply not much room for improvement, although this must remain a speculation.

Other attitude questions clearly showed the expected positive trajectory, however, among them children's greater appreciation of differences between people and cultures and their positive take on this, and their understanding that English is not inherently 'the main language'. [...]

As in the case of the Springboard evaluation, it is not clear whether any gains in children's knowledge and any improvements in their attitudes were exclusively due to the Comenius project, since there was no control group – a point Barton rightly acknowledges (p. 22).

As is to be expected in a project of this sort, it is the comments made by participants which probably reveal the most interesting insights. Although the project necessarily involved extra work, the teachers and staff at the participating schools were all extremely positive about the benefits of the experience for the children involved:

It was great to see the children from all three countries working and playing together, from football matches to country dances to impromptu counting games, they seemed to get over any initial nerves very quickly and made the most of the experience.

— Classroom teacher, following one of the visits

We are proud to be able to offer this opportunity to the children of [our school], and I'm very pleased indeed with this, the final visit of the two-year collaboration. I would like to think that some of the friendships formed and renewed this week will last a lifetime.

— Deputy head, following the final visit

The parents and carers appeared to be equally positive. Barton comments that:

[...] at the end of the project [...] parents had gained some insight into the potential cultural benefits for their children. When asked via the questionnaire to explain why they felt their child had benefited, the parents whose children had visited Hungary or Germany were most likely to comment on the 'great opportunity' their children had had in having direct contact with children from another country and seeing another culture. There was a general feeling that the project had made children more aware of different languages and cultures, and that they had discovered that language barriers were not insurmountable:

My daughter encountered problems communicating initially, but still had a desire to communicate with German and Hungarian children, and I hope this will be a motivator to learn other languages. It became a good exercise in problem solving, as the desire to communicate was strong.

They found common interests, expressions, and gestures, and copied each other, resulting in learning languages, games, and form[ing] friendships. [...]

The post-project questionnaire asked parents whether they had become more aware of other European languages and cultures through their child's involvement in the project. Only three parents responded in the negative. One parent answered 'no', but qualified this by writing: 'I was already aware. We are a very multicultural family.' [...] Those parents who had been directly involved in the project were more likely to report direct gains themselves, such as the following:

Due to our visit to Germany and my awareness of how little German I could speak compared to my host family's ability to speak English, I enrolled in German lessons and went on to do another course in German conversation. [...]

Parents were then asked specifically what they felt they, or their child, had learned about Europe or foreign languages [...] One parent described how the ease of picking up Esperanto had been 'confidence-building' and another described the broader impact of her daughter's language acquisition:

She and her friends play games in the playground to date that are a mixture of German, Hungarian, and English phrases, chants, and actions they learned and combined. They have included their friends who did not attend the trips, who also use the same phrases.

Two comments were made about the cultural gains and, like the one below, these were made with specific reference to the trips abroad in which their children had participated:

It has opened his eyes to the way different countries communicate, what it's like to go to school in a different country and experience what it's like to live in a different community. You cannot replicate this experience on a normal holiday in a foreign country.

As well as appreciating cultural differences, parents were also aware of how they and their children had become aware of similarities between their own and others' lives in a different country:

Throughout the project I had a feeling of togetherness and common interest with everyone. We [...] discovered that we had a core of common values centred around our children's education. [...]

It's only by staying with a family and becoming involved with their lives for a short period that you can start to appreciate how their way of life differs to your own, or how it is similar. [...]

I believe that they realised the life in Germany is not much different from life in Britain.

Barton concludes:

In the interviews, pupils were clearly able to express how Esperanto helped them to learn other languages, and, in the interview in June 2010, all of the pupils claimed that they had ‘learned a lot’ of language because of the logic and accessibility of Esperanto. Learning Esperanto had had a practical purpose; they recalled conversing with children in Hungary and Germany in Esperanto through a Skype link, and they acknowledged that Esperanto had enabled them to communicate when the German and Hungarian pupils had visited their school. The visit had also given them the opportunity to ‘compare our languages together’.

The findings suggest that, by the end of the project, pupils’ metalinguistic skills had also improved. The evidence of this was found in their performance in tasks requiring them to analyse unknown languages and identify common patterns. Their ability to identify similarities between languages, particularly English and Esperanto, improved significantly over the course of the project.

The project seems to have enjoyed overwhelming parental support; just over three-quarters of the parents were supportive of the concept of a foreign-language preparation course at the outset of the project, and the majority were convinced of the possible benefits to their children’s language skills and intercultural knowledge. 98% agreed with the importance of children gaining intercultural knowledge. The parents who completed the post-project questionnaire were highly appreciative of the opportunity that the project had afforded their children [...] The enthusiastic comments made on the parental questionnaires are clear testimony to the success of the project.

Chapter 7

Comenius partnership: sample songs and dialogues

This chapter presents examples of the multilingual songs and dialogues which were written especially for the Comenius programme. Esperanto was used as a simple gloss to help children to pronounce the languages correctly.

Language

Song, to the tune of *Frère Jacques*

Esperanto

Hej, saluton! (×2)
Kiel vi? (×2)
Nun mi devas iri... (×2)
Ĝis revid'! (×2)



English

Hi, hello there! (×2)
How are you? (×2)
But I have to go now ... (×2)
See you soon! (×2)

[HAJ, HELO VE]⁶³
[HAŬ A JU]
[BAT AJ HAV TU GOŬ NAŬ]
[SI JU SUN]

German

Hi, hallo du! (×2)
Wie geht's dir? (×2)
Leider muss ich gehen... (×2)
Tschüs, bis bald! (×2)

[HAJ, HALO DU]
[VI GETS DIR]
[LÁJDER MUS IH GÉJEN]
[ĈÜS, BIS BALT]

Hungarian

Hej, szervusztok! (×2)
Hogy vagytok ? (×2)
Sajnos, most mennem kell... (×2)
Hát viszlát! (×2)

[HEJ, SÉRVUSTOK]
[HODJ VÁDJTOK]
[ŠÁJNOS MOŠT MÉNNEM KEL]
[HAT VÍSLAT]

Dialogue⁶⁴

E: Hello!
G: Hallo!
H: Szia!
A: Saluton!

[SIA]

⁶³ The brackets show the pronunciation of words by respelling them as if they were Esperanto.

⁶⁴ E = English children; G = German children; H = Hungarian children; A = All together.

E: What's your name?	[ŮOTS JO NEJM]
G: Wie heißt du?	[VI HAJST DU]
H: Hogy hívna?	[HODJ HÍVNAK]
A: Kiel vi nomiĝas?	
E: I'm called (Jenny).	[AJM KOLD ĜÉNI]
G: Ich heiße (Angela).	[IH HÁJSE ANGÉLA]
H: Az én nevem László.	[AZ EN NEVEM LÁSLO]
A: Ni nomiĝas (Jenny), (Angela) kaj (László).	
E: Where do you live?	[ŬE DU JU LIV]
G: Wo wohnst du?	[VO VONST DU]
H: Hol laksz?	[HOL LAKSZ?]
A: Kie vi loĝas?	
E: I live in England.	[AJ LIV IN ÍNGLND]
G: Ich wohne in Deutschland.	[IH VÓNE IN DÓJĈLANT]
H: Magyarországon lakom.	[MÁDJARORSAGON LÁKOM]
A: Ni loĝas en Anglio, Germanio kaj Hungario.	
E: That's interesting.	[VATS ÍNTRESTIN]
G: Das ist interessant.	[DAS IST INTERESÁNT]
H: Ez érdekes.	[EZ ÉRDEKEŠ]
A: Tio estas interesa.	
E: Now I have to go – see you soon!	[NAŬ AJ HAV TU GOŬ, SI JU SUN]
G: Jetzt muss ich gehen – tschüs, bis bald!	[JETST MUS IH GÉJEN, ĈŬS, BIS BÁLT]
H: Most mennem kell.	[MOŠT MÉNNEM KEL]
A: Nun ni devas iri – ĝis baldaŭ!	

Country

Song, to the tune of *Alouette*

Jen Anglio kun ĉefurb' Londono:
 Buckingham-Palac' kaj jen Big Ben;
 jen la granda rad' 'Okul'' kaj la ponto ĉe la tur';
 kaj Tamiz' (×2), bestĝarden' (×2), katedral' (×2), ho...

[‘This is England with capital London:
 Buckingham Palace and here's Big Ben;
 here's the big wheel 'Eye' and the bridge at the tower;
 and the Thames (×2), zoo (×2), cathedral (×2), oh...’]

Germanio kun ĉefurb' Berlino:
 Olimpika Stadiono jen;
 kaj la Brandenburg-pordeg' kaj Kolono de la Venk';
 Havel-Spree (×2), Murmuze' (×2), operej' (×2), ho...

[‘Germany with capital Berlin:
here’s Olympic Stadium;
and the Brandenburg Gate and Victory Column;
Havel-Spree (×2), Mauermuseum, an opera house (×2), oh...’]

Hungaria urbo Budapeŝto:
Heroplac’, Fiŝista Bastion’;
jen la rivereg’ Danub’ kaj la Plac’ Lajos Kossuth;
kaj Ĉenpont’ (×2), Gellert-mont’ (×2), kaj banej’ (×2), ho...

[‘Hungarian city Budapest:
Heroes’ Square, Fisherman’s Bastion;
here’s the big river Danube and Lajos Kossuth Square;
and the Chain Bridge (×2), Gellert Hill (×2), and a spa (×2), oh...’]

Jen eŭropaj landoj kaj ĉefurboj,
Vidindaĵoj interesaj jen!

[‘These are European countries and capitals,
These are interesting things to see!’]

Dialogue

- A: Kio estas la nomo de granda rivero en via lando?
[‘What is the name of a large river in your country?’]
- E: The river Thames flows through London.
[VE RÍVE TEMZ FLOŬZ FRU LÁNDN]
- G: Die Flüsse Havel und Spree fließen durch Berlin.
[DI FLŬSE HÁVL UNT ŠPRE FLÍSŬ DURĤ BERLÍN]
- H: A Duna és a Tisza folyók.
[A DÚNA EŠ A TÍSA FÓJOK]
- A: Kvin grandaj riveroj nomiĝas Tamizo, Havel, Spree, Danubo kaj Seine.
[‘Five large rivers are called Thames, Havel, Spree, Danube, and Seine.’]
- A: Kaj kio estas la nomo de alta monto en via lando?
[‘And what is the name of a high mountain in your country?’]
- E: The highest mountain in England is Scafell Pike.
[VE HÁJEST MÁŬNTN IN ÍŬGLND IZ SKÁFEL PAJK]
- G: Der höchste Berg in Deutschland ist die Zugspitze.
[DER HŬĤSTE BERG IN DÓĴĤLANT IST DI CÚKŠPITSE]
- H: A legmagasabb hegy a Kékes.
[A LÉGMAGAŠAB HEDJ A KÉKES]
- A: Tri altaj montoj estas Scafell Pike, Zugspitze kaj Kékes.
[‘Three high mountains are Scafell Pike, the Zugspitze, and Kékes.’]

- A: Kaj kio estas la nomo de granda lago en via lando?
[‘And what is the name of a big lake in your country?’]
E: The biggest lake in England is Windermere.
[VE BÍGEST LEJK IN ÍNGLND IZ ŬÍNDAMIA]
G: Der größte See in Deutschland ist der Bodensee.
[DER GRÖSTE ZE IN DÓJĈLANT IST DER BÓDNZE]
H: Magyarország legnagyobb tava a Balaton.
[MÁDJARORSAG LÉGNADJOB TÁVA A BÁLATON]
A: Tri grandaj lagoj estas Windermere, Bodensee kaj Balaton.
[‘Three big lakes are Windermere, Bodensee, and Balaton.’]

Culture and Traditions

- A: Saluton! Kiel vi festas en via lando?
E: Hello! How do you celebrate in your country?
[HELO! HAŬ DU JU SÉLIBREJT IN JO KÁNTRI]
G: Hallo! Wie feiert man bei euch?
[HALO! VI FÁJERT MAN BAJ OJĤ]
H: Szervusz! Hogy ünnepeltek ti az országotokban?
[SÉRVUS! HODJ ŬNNEPELTEK TI AZ ÓRSAGOTOKBAN?]
E: In England, groups dance in colourful costumes to celebrate the first of May.
[IN ÍNGLND GRUPS DANS IN KÁLAFUL KÓSTJUMZ TU SÉLIBREJT VE FEST OV MEI]
En Anglio grupoj dancas en buntaj kostumoj por festi la unuan de majo.
Ili svingas blankajn tukojn aŭ batas bastonegojn.
Muzikistaro akompanas per akordeonoj, violonoj, flutoj kaj tamburoj.
Ili nomiĝas ‘Morris dancers’ [MÓRIS DANSZ].
[‘They wave white cloths or beat clubs. A band accompanies with accordions, violins, flutes, and drums. They are called Morris dancers.’]
G: In Deutschland tanzen Gruppen von Männern und Frauen
in Kostümen und Masken, um Karneval zu feiern.
[IN DÓJĈLANT TANCN GRÚPEN FON MÉNERN UNT FRÁŬEN
IN KOSTŬMEN UNT MÁSKEN UM KÁRNEVAL CU FÁJERN]
En Germanio dancas grupoj da viroj kaj virinoj en kostumoj kaj maskoj
por festi karnavalon. Ili nomiĝas ‘Trachtengruppen’ [TRÁĤTENGRUPEN].
[‘In Germany, groups of men and women in costumes and masks dance to celebrate
Carnival. They are called Trachtengruppen.’]
H: Magyarországon augusztus huszadikán Szent István
és az új kenyér napját ünnepeljük. A tűzijátékok nagyon szépek.
[MÁDJARORSAGON ÁGUSTUŜ HŬSADIKAN SENT ÍSTVAN
ES AZ UJ KÉNJER NÁPIAT ŬNNEPELJŬK. A TŬZIJÁTEKOK NADJON SEPEK]
En Hungario ni festas la 20-an de aŭgusto la tagon de Sankta Stefano
kaj de la nova pano. La artfajraĵoj estas belegaj.
[‘In Hungary, on 20 August we celebrate St Stephen’s Day and the Day of the New Bread.
The fireworks are superb.’]

Chapter 8

Recent research into the educational role of Esperanto in the classroom

New manuscripts

Tellier, A. (2013)

The chapter details the development of a written test of metalinguistic awareness suitable for group administration to English-speaking children aged 8–11. The test requires children to solve a series of language-related tasks based on both natural and constructed languages. Pilot studies investigated the performance of children from five English schools. The descriptive statistics from classes of children aged 8–11 years ($N = 154$) showed a good distribution of scores, with no obvious indication of a ceiling effect. Findings indicated an overall age-based advantage, with older children outperforming younger children, an apparent bilingual advantage which increases with age, and a statistical difference in overall performance between boys and girls, with girls outperforming boys. A series of verbal protocols ($N = 22$) helped to validate the test, and revealed interesting insights into children's thought processes.

Tellier, A. & Roehr-Brackin K. (2013a)

In the minimal-input setting of a foreign language classroom, adolescents typically outperform younger children. The greater cognitive maturity of older learners manifests itself in greater language-learning aptitude, greater metalinguistic awareness, and enhanced capacity for explicit learning. We examined whether the teaching and learning of either Esperanto or French would facilitate the development of language-learning aptitude and metalinguistic awareness in 8–9-year-old children, thus setting the scene for enhanced explicit learning even at a young age. Following instruction in either Esperanto or French over a school year, all children ($N = 28$) made significant gains on measures of aptitude, metalinguistic awareness, and second-language (L2) proficiency. Effect sizes in the Esperanto group were larger throughout, however, with greater homogeneity of performance in evidence. Moreover, we found that language-analytic ability emerged as a significant predictor of L2 achievement in the sample as a whole.

Tellier, A. & Roehr-Brackin, K. (2013b)

Drawing on recent theoretical work on explicit-versus-implicit second-language learning, we discuss the potential advantages of teaching and learning Esperanto, a highly regular and transparent language, prior to teaching and learning a natural L2. Specifically, the paper argues that children's budding capacity for explicit L2 learning may be boosted with the help of Esperanto, since the characteristics of this language

should facilitate the development of language-analytic ability and metalinguistic awareness. Enhanced explicit L2-learning capacity would be particularly advantageous in the minimal-input setting of the average foreign-language classroom, which typically offers greater benefits to the cognitively more mature, older child/adolescent than the cognitively less mature, younger child. The paper presents the findings of an empirical study which investigated whether the teaching and learning of Esperanto, compared with the teaching and learning of natural L2s, would have any long-term effects on learners' metalinguistic awareness. Working with a sample of children aged 11–12 ($N = 203$) who, in the preceding four school years, had been exposed to either Esperanto plus a natural L2 (Group 1) or various combinations of natural L2s (Groups 2–6), we found no significant differences in overall level of metalinguistic awareness as measured by a dedicated test. We did find, however, that the Esperanto children significantly outperformed the other groups taken together on one of the eleven metalinguistic tasks included in the test. Moreover, unlike children from several of the comparison groups, the Esperanto group showed no gender differences, with girls and boys displaying a more homogeneous performance on the test of metalinguistic awareness as a whole.

Conference papers

Roehr-Brackin, K., & Tellier, A. (2013)

Researchers agree that instructed second-language (L2) learning in classroom settings benefits from learners' ability to draw on explicit knowledge and processes. Explicit knowledge and processes are closely tied to heightened metalinguistic awareness, defined as awareness of and knowledge about the characteristics of language as a system and a means of communication. Recent research with child L2 learners has begun to investigate from today's perspective the long-standing idea that learning an 'easy' language such as the constructed, entirely transparent language Esperanto prior to engaging with European languages frequently taught in UK classrooms may enhance metalinguistic awareness and thus convey benefits for future (explicit) learning. The present quasi-experimental study extended this avenue of research to beginner-level, non-specialist adult L2 learners in a university setting ($N = 28$). Specifically, it sought to establish (1) how learners engaged with and responded to a set of Esperanto learning materials during a three-week self-study period, and (2) whether attempting to learn the basics of Esperanto would have any impact on learners' language-analytic ability and their performance in their chosen L2. The paper reports on experimental participants' reported use of the learning materials and perceptions of their own metalinguistic abilities. In addition, it draws comparisons between the experimental and control group participants' performance on LAT-C and in-class language tests. Initial conclusions arising from the study as well as specific proposals for future research are put forward.

Tellier, A. & Roehr, K. (2010)

The paper presents a quasi-experimental study carried out with English-speaking primary-school children aged 8 to 9. For the duration of a school year, group F (N = 14) was taught French, and group E (N = 14) was taught Esperanto. All children were tested for language-learning aptitude, metalinguistic awareness, and L2 proficiency at the beginning and end of the experimental treatment. Results showed that metalinguistic awareness and L2 proficiency improved significantly in both groups; moreover, both groups made significant gains in aptitude, with considerable individual variation in evidence. This indicates that aptitude is not stable in the young participants. Correlational analyses revealed a complex pattern of relationships which suggests that aptitude, metalinguistic awareness, and L2 proficiency were more closely associated in group E children than in group F children.

Tellier, A. (2010)

Existing research suggests that the phenomenon ‘the earlier you start, the better you succeed’ is not applicable to classroom contexts where the advantage of early starters becomes apparent only after a substantial number of hours of input. Where L2 learning is concerned, minimal input is often equivalent to minimal gain. The paper presents findings from a small-scale empirical study in an English state primary school with two parallel classes of 8–9-year-olds learning languages for one year. Group E (N = 14) were taught Esperanto, and group F (N = 14) French. Children were pre- and post-tested for language aptitude, metalinguistic awareness and language proficiency in both languages; in addition, they were asked about attitudes to language learning. Results showed that all children progressed significantly on all measures, but that group E progressed better than group F, not only in proficiency in Esperanto but also in French. Additionally, group E children showed more stable overall patterns of development. Moreover, group E had a more positive attitude to language learning and to themselves as language learners.

Chapter 9

Concluding summary and future research

The average amount of time allocated to modern-language lessons in English state primary schools is typically less than one hour per week. The amount of contact time available is crucial, since minimal input often results in minimal gain. But curriculum time is at a premium, and it is difficult to see how increasing the time spent in study of another language could be satisfactorily woven into an already full day. A possible answer would be to try and kick-start children's explicit learning through the prior learning of a relatively easy and transparent language such as Esperanto. This would perhaps allow children to develop useful metalinguistic skills at an early age and thus potentially encourage faster and more efficient learning of a second language.

The Springboard to Languages case-study is a step on the way to fully investigating the theory that Esperanto has a potentially facilitative role in child second-language learning. Like any research, it has limitations, but it is a much more serious investigation than the majority of those which have preceded it. It has demonstrated that children find Esperanto easy to learn, and that, practically speaking, it helps children to access unknown languages.

Findings from the research presented in this publication suggest that it would be desirable to undertake a larger-scale investigation to further explore the potential benefits of learning Esperanto prior to learning other foreign languages. If funding is obtained, such a study would look at both child and adult language learners. It would examine whether and to what extent the learning of elementary Esperanto can enhance a person's ability to learn explicitly. In other words, is Esperanto able to boost children's and adults' conscious knowledge about how languages work, and can it enhance their analytic abilities with regard to language? If it can, language learning in a classroom environment should be easier and result in greater success, so an answer to this question would have considerable practical implications for teachers, educational policymakers, schools, colleges, and universities.

Another issue to be investigated is whether learning Esperanto interacts with individual learner characteristics, such as attitudes to language learning, language-learning aptitude, and working-memory capacity. Put differently, does learning Esperanto lead to more positive beliefs about languages and language learning? More positive attitudes should result in higher motivation, and thus lead to greater success in the language-learning endeavour. And can learning Esperanto compensate for low language-learning aptitude or low working-memory capacity? If it can, then learners with a less favourable ability profile in these respects could benefit from learning Esperanto prior to tackling other languages.

Any expressions of interest in the study or offers of financial support would be welcome. For further information, please contact Dr Karen Roehr-Brackin (*kroehr@essex.ac.uk*).

Appendix A

A brief history and definition of language awareness

The germ of language awareness first sprouted in British schools, and has its roots firmly in classroom practice. Michael Halliday, in his introduction to the book *Language in Use*⁶⁵, referred to the ‘development of awareness’; this became known as ‘awareness of language’, and is now more often referred to as ‘language awareness’⁶⁶. It is, however, a difficult concept to define.

In practice, there are many methodologies and definitions that can be applied to language awareness. Language-awareness organisations and programme authors define the term either broadly or narrowly according to their own understanding and perceptions of which features of language awareness they consider relevant.

The Association for Language Awareness (ALA) defines the concept as ‘explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching, and language use’.⁶⁷

The Springboard to Languages programme defines the aspect of language awareness that applies to the teaching and learning of a language in primary schools as ‘conscious knowledge about the nature of language, about the similarities and differences between particular languages, and about the significance of these similarities and differences’.

Definitions of language awareness, whether general or more specific in scope, subsume an understanding that ‘talking about language’ and ‘doing things with words’ will positively influence not only L1 skills, but also children’s attitudes and motivation for foreign-language learning, and will likewise increase their tolerance and understanding of other cultures.

For a more detailed exploration of the topic, see James & Garrett (1991).

⁶⁵ Doughty et al. (1971: 10), cited in Hawkins (1987:74).

⁶⁶ The terms ‘metalinguistic awareness’ and ‘language awareness’ are used synonymously in this volume: ‘language awareness’ in chapters that refer more to practical education and classroom practice, and ‘metalinguistic awareness’ in those that refer more to underlying theory.

⁶⁷ <http://www.languageawareness.org/web/ala/web/about/tout.php>

Appendix B

Abbreviations

The glosses of Esperanto words and sentences on pages 11 and 69 use the following abbreviations, based on the Leipzig Glossing Rules⁶⁸:

ACC	accusative case (i.e. marking the direct object of a verb)
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb
AUG	augmentative (i.e. indicating a larger item of the same kind)
CAUS	causative (i.e. expressing the causation of an action or change of state)
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
N	noun
OPP	opposite
PL	plural
PRS	present tense

⁶⁸ <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>

Appendix C

Some notes on Esperanto grammar ⁶⁹

Pronunciation

A sounds like ‘a’ in *father*. C is like ‘ts’ in *its*. Ĉ is like ‘ch’ in *chip*. E is like ‘e’ in *pet*. G is like ‘g’ in *get*. Ĝ is like ‘g’ in *gem*. Ĥ is like ‘ch’ in *loch*. I is like ‘i’ in *machine*. J is like ‘y’ in *yes*. Ĵ is like ‘s’ in *pleasure*. O is like ‘o’ in *pot*. R is never silent. S is like ‘s’ in *so*. Ŝ is like ‘sh’ in *she*. U is like *oo* in ‘moon’. Aŭ is like ‘ow’ in *how*. AJ is like ‘y’ in *sky*. EJ is like ‘ay’ in *day*. OJ is like ‘oy’ in *boy*. The penultimate syllable of each word is stressed.

Nouns, adjectives, article

Nouns have the ending **-o**. Adjectives have the ending **-a**. In either case, the endings **-j** for plural and **-n** for accusative may be added. An adjective used with a noun agrees with the noun.

There is no indefinite article (English ‘a’ or ‘an’), but there is a definite article **la** (English ‘the’), which does not take any endings.

The accusative is used to mark the direct object of a verb.

Juna knabo legas novan libron.	<i>A young boy is reading a new book.</i>
La altaj arboj havas multajn foliojn.	<i>The tall trees have many leaves.</i>

Verbs

There are six verb endings:

-as	present	Mi legas la libron.	<i>I read (am reading) the book.</i>
-is	past	Mi legis la libron.	<i>I have read the book.</i>
-os	future	Mi legos la libron.	<i>I will read the book.</i>
-u	imperative	Venu! Ili venu!	<i>Come! Let them come!</i>
-us	conditional	Se li volus, li venus.	<i>If he wanted, he’d come.</i>
-i	infinitive	Mi volas legi ĝin.	<i>I want to read it.</i>

Adverbs

The ending for adverbs is **-e**, but many common adverbs (e.g. **nun** ‘now’) are used without an ending. If an adverb with the ending **-e** denotes position, then the accusative ending **-n** may be added to denote movement into the position.

Mi venos tuj.	<i>I shall come immediately.</i>
Mi sidas hejme.	<i>I’m sitting at home.</i>
Mi biciklas hejmen.	<i>I’m cycling home.</i>

⁶⁹ Reproduced and slightly simplified from Grimley Evans (2009), with kind permission.

Pronouns

The pronouns are: **mi** ‘I, me’, **ni** ‘we, us’, **vi** ‘you’, **li** ‘he, him’, **ŝi** ‘she, her’, **ĝi** ‘it’, **oni** ‘one’, **ili** ‘they, them’, **si** reflexive. The pronoun **si** refers to the subject of the clause. The pronoun **oni** is used more frequently than ‘one’ in English.

Li vidas lin.	<i>He sees him (someone else).</i>
Li vidas sin.	<i>He sees himself.</i>
Oni devas longe atendi.	<i>You have to wait a long time.</i>
Oni diras, ke ...	<i>People say that ...</i>

Word order and questions

The order of subject, verb, and object in an Esperanto sentence may be changed for emphasis:

Tion vi jam scias.	<i>You already know that.</i>
---------------------------	-------------------------------

To make a yes–no question in Esperanto, add **ĉu** in front of the corresponding statement:

Vi trovis ĝin.	<i>You found it.</i>
Ĉu vi trovis ĝin?	<i>Did you find it?</i>

Other questions use **ki-** words:

Kion vi diris?	<i>What did you say?</i>
Kie vi estas?	<i>Where are you?</i>

Participles

There are active and passive participles for past, present, and future, and the participle can have the adjective, adverb, or noun ending:

-i- past	-nt- active	-a adjective
-a- present	-t- passive	-o noun
-o- future		-e adverb

A participle with a noun ending denotes a person.

flugi <i>to fly</i>	→	fluganta birdo	<i>a flying bird</i>
legi <i>to read</i>	→	leganto	<i>a reader</i>
veni <i>to come</i>	→	la venonta aŭtobuso	<i>the next bus</i>
Legante, oni lernas.	<i>You learn by reading.</i>		

Numerals

0 nul, 1 unu, 2 du, 3 tri, 4 kvar, 5 kvin, 6 ses, 7 sep, 8 ok, 9 naŭ,
 10 dek, 11 dek unu, 12 dek du, ..., 20 dudek, 21 dudek unu, ...,
 100 cent, 101 cent unu, ..., 120 cent dudek, ..., 345 tricent kvardek kvin, ...,
 1000 mil, ..., 2000 du mil, ..., 9999 naŭ mil naŭcent naŭdek naŭ,
 10 000 dek mil, ..., 100 000 cent mil, ..., 1 000 000 miliono.

Use **-a** for ordinals: **unua** ‘first’, **dua** ‘second’, ...

Word formation

Words in Esperanto are often created by combining other Esperanto words and elements. This is one of the features of Esperanto that makes it easier to learn, as it reduces the amount of vocabulary that must be memorised.

Change of ending

You can change a noun into an adjective, a verb into a noun, and so on, by replacing the ending:

kato	<i>a cat</i>	→	kata	<i>feline, catlike</i>
manĝi	<i>eat</i>	→	manĝo	<i>meal</i>
bela	<i>beautiful</i>	→	belo	<i>beauty</i>

If a word does not already have a grammatical ending, one can be added:

tro	<i>too (much)</i>	→	troa	<i>excessive</i>
nun	<i>now</i>	→	nuno	<i>present time</i>

Compounds

There are two main types of compound. In the first and more common type, elements are added in front of a word to restrict or further specify its meaning. This is also how most compounds work in English:

kanto + birdo	→	kantbirdo	<i>songbird</i>	(a kind of bird)
birdo + kanto	→	birdkanto	<i>birdsong</i>	(a kind of song)

In the second type, a group of words is combined with a new grammatical ending:

ruĝ[a] ‘red’ + har[o] ‘hair’ + -a	→	ruĝhara	<i>red-haired</i>
tri ‘three’ + angul[o] ‘corner’ + -o	→	triangulo	<i>triangle</i>

A grammatical ending may be included between the elements of a compound, depending on how hard the combination is to pronounce, or how hard the elements are to distinguish: **birdkanto** or **birdokanto**.

Prefixes and suffixes

Esperanto has about forty prefixes and suffixes in general use. Here is a sample:

dis-	dispersal:		
	doni	<i>give</i>	→ disdoni <i>give out, distribute</i>
	dise	<i>all over the place</i>	
mal-	opposite:		
	bona	<i>good</i>	→ malbona <i>bad</i>
	granda	<i>large</i>	→ malgranda <i>small</i>

-ar-	collection, group:				
	ŝafo	<i>sheep</i>	→	ŝafaro	<i>flock of sheep</i>
	homo	<i>person</i>	→	homaro	<i>mankind</i>
-ebl-	possibility:				
	vidi	<i>see</i>	→	videbla	<i>visible</i>
	eble	<i>perhaps</i>			
-ec-	quality:				
	simila	<i>similar</i>	→	simileco	<i>similarity</i>
	mola	<i>soft</i>	→	moleco	<i>softness</i>
	eco	<i>characteristic</i>			
-eg-	augmentative:				
	urbo	<i>town</i>	→	urbego	<i>city</i>
	ege	<i>extremely</i>			
-ej-	place:				
	biciklo	<i>bicycle</i>	→	biciklejo	<i>bicycle shed</i>
	ejo	<i>location</i>			
-et-	diminutive:				
	urbo	<i>town</i>	→	urbeto	<i>small town</i>
	ridi	<i>laugh</i>	→	rideti	<i>smile</i>
	eta	<i>tiny</i>			
-id-	offspring:				
	ŝafo	<i>sheep</i>	→	ŝafido	<i>lamb</i>
-ig-	make, cause:				
	klara	<i>clear</i>	→	klarigi	<i>explain</i>
	boli	<i>boil (intransitive)</i>	→	boligi	<i>boil (transitive)</i>
	igi	<i>make, render</i>			
-il-	tool				
	skribi	<i>write</i>	→	skribilo	<i>pen</i>
	demandi	<i>ask</i>	→	demandilo	<i>questionnaire</i>
	ilo	<i>tool, means</i>			

Affixes can be combined:

malpligrandigi

mal-pli-grand-ig-i

OPP-more-big-CAUS-INF⁷⁰

‘to make (cause to be) smaller’

⁷⁰ For the meanings of these abbreviations, see appendix B.

References

- Abello-Contesse, C., Chacón-Beltrán, R., López-Chiménez, M. D., & Torreblanca-López, M. M. (2006, eds.)
Age in L2 acquisition and teaching
 Oxford: Peter Lang
- Anderson, J. R. (2005)
Cognitive psychology and its implications (6th ed.)
 New York: Worth Publishers
- Ashby, F. G. & Casale, M. B. (2005)
 ‘Empirical dissociations between rule-based and similarity-based categorization’
Behavioral and Brain Sciences 28(1): 15–16
- Bailey, T. M. (2005)
 ‘Rules work on one representation; similarity compares two representations’
Behavioral and Brain Sciences 28(1): 16
- Baker, C. (2006)
Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism (4th ed.)
 Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Benati, A. (2009, ed.)
Issues in second language proficiency
 London: Continuum
- Bialystok, E. (2001)
Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition
 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Bialystok, E., Craik, F., Luk, G. (2012)
 ‘Bilingualism: consequences for mind and brain’
 in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 16(4): 240–250
- Birdsong, D. (1989)
Metalinguistic performance and interlinguistic competence
 Berlin: Springer
- Birdsong, D. (2006)
 ‘Age and second language acquisition and processing: A selective overview’
Language Learning 56(S1): 9–49
- Bishop, A. J. (1997)
Ekparoli project report 1994–1997
<http://web.archive.org/web/20040301110024/http://www.education.monash.edu.au/projects/esperanto/Ekrep97.htm>
- Cable, C., Driscoll, P., Mitchell, R., Sing, S., Cremin, T., Earl, J., Eyres, I., Holmes, B., Martin, C., & Heins, B. (2010)
Languages and learning at Key Stage 2: A longitudinal study final report
 Department for Children, Schools and Families, UK
- Cenoz, J. (2003)
 ‘The influence of age on the acquisition of English: General proficiency, attitudes and code-mixing’
 in García Mayo & García Lecumberri (2003: 77–93)
- Corsetti, R. & La Torre, M. (1995)
 ‘Quale lingua prima? Per un esperimento CEE che utilizzi l’esperanto’
 [‘Which Language First? For a European Community Experiment Using Esperanto’]
Language Problems and Language Planning 19(1): 25–46
- DeKeyser, R. M. (2003)
 ‘Implicit and explicit learning’
 in Doughty & Long (2003: 313–348)

- DeKeyser, R. M. (2005)
 'What makes learning second-language grammar difficult? A review of issues'
Language Learning 55(S1): 1–25.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005)
The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second-language acquisition
 London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009)
The psychology of second language acquisition
 Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Doughty, P., Pearce, J., & Thornton G. (1971)
Language in Use: A Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching
 London: Arnold
- Doughty, C. J. & Long, M. H. (2003) (eds.)
The handbook of second-language acquisition
 Malden, MA: Blackwell
- Eaton, H. (1928)
General Language Course (IALA).
- EC (2008)
 European Commission, *Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe*
 Brussels: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, P9 Eurodyce
- EC (2011)
 European Commission, Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism
Policy recommendations for the promotion of multilingualism in the European Union
http://ec.europa.eu/languages/news/20110707-civil-society-report_en.htm
- Ellis, N. C. (1994)
 'Consciousness in second language learning:
 Psychological perspectives on the role of conscious processes in vocabulary acquisition'
AILA Review 11: 37–56
- Ellis, R. (2004)
 'The definition and measurement of L2 explicit knowledge'
Language Learning 54(2): 227–275
- Ellis, R. (2006)
 'Modelling learning difficulty and second language proficiency:
 The differential contributions of implicit and explicit knowledge'
Applied Linguistics 27(3): 431–463
- Enever, J. (2009)
 'Can today's early language learners in England become tomorrow's plurilingual European citizens?'
 in Nikolov (2009a)
- Falgier, G. (1961)
 'Esperanto in the School Language Program'
Classical Bulletin 37(3): 37–38
- Fantini, A. E. & Reagan, T. G. (1992)
Esperanto and education: Toward a research agenda
<http://dok.esperantic.org/f-r1.htm>
- Fisher, A. (1921)
 'Modern languages by way of Esperanto'
Modern Languages 5(6): 179–182
- García Mayo, M. d. P. (2003)
 'Age, length of exposure and grammaticality judgements in the acquisition of English as a foreign language'
 in García Mayo & García Lecumberri (2003: 94–114)
- García Mayo, M. d. P. & García Lecumberri, M. L. (2003) (eds.)
Age and the acquisition of English as a foreign language
 Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

- Gombert, J. E. (1992)
Metalinguistic development
 Hemel Hempstead: Harvester
- Grimley Evans, E. T. (2009)
Esperanto Mini-Dictionary
 Esperanto-Asocio de Britio
- Halloran, J. H. (1952)
 'A four-year experiment in Esperanto as an introduction to French'
British Journal of Educational Psychology 22(3): 200–204
- Harley, B. & Hart, D. (1997)
 'Language aptitude and second-language proficiency in classroom learners of different starting ages'
Studies in Second Language Acquisition 19: 379–400
- Harris, J. (2006)
Irish in primary schools: Long-term national trends in achievement
 Dublin: Department of Education and Skills
- Hawkins, E. (1987)
Awareness of Language: An Introduction
 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Hawkins, E. (1997)
 'Foreign languages in the primary school? The early start re-examined'
 Paper presented at the conference 'Modern Foreign Languages for Primary School Age Pupils', London.
- Hawkins, E. (1999a)
 'Foreign language study and language awareness'
Language Awareness 8(3&4): 124–142
- Hawkins, E. (1999b)
Listening to Lorca
 London: CILT
- Hawkins, E. (2005)
 'Out of this nettle, drop-out, we pluck this flower, opportunity: re-thinking the school foreign language apprenticeship, *Language Learning Journal*, No. 32, 4–17
- Hulstijn, J. H. (2005)
 'Theoretical and empirical issues in the study of implicit and explicit second-language learning: Introduction'
Studies in Second Language Acquisition 27(2): 129–140
- Hyltenstam, K. & Abrahamsson, N. (2003)
 'Maturation constraints in SLA'
 in Doughty & Long (2003: 539–588)
- James, C., & Garrett, P. (1991)
 'The scope of language awareness'
 in James & Garrett (1991, eds.: 3–21)
- James, C., & Garrett, P. (1991, eds.)
Language awareness in the classroom
 London: Longman
- Jansen, W. (2007)
Esperanto: la plej bona propedeŭtiko ['The most propaedeutic language']
 Materials from the international conference in Moscow on 13 April 2007
 Moscow: Eŭropa Universitato Justo
- Janton, P. (1973)
Que sais-je? L'espéranto ['What do I know? Esperanto']
 Paris: Presses Universitaires de France
- Janton, P. (1993)
Esperanto: language, literature and community
 ed. H. Tonkin; trans. H. Tonkin, J. Edwards, K. Johnson-Weiner
 Albany: State University of New York Press

- Larson-Hall, J. (2008)
 ‘Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal-input situation’
Second Language Research 24(1): 35–63.
- Lodge, O. J. (1905)
School teaching and school reform
 London: Elibron Classics, 2004
- Mayor, J. E. B. (1907)
The British Esperantist 34:186
- Meara P. (1986, ed.)
Spoken Language
 London: CILT
- Milton, J. & Alexiou, T. (2006)
 ‘Language aptitude development in young learners’
 in Abello-Contesse et al. (2006: 177–192)
- Muñoz, C. (2009)
 ‘Input and long-term effects of early learning in a formal setting’
 in Nikolov (2009b: 141–159)
- Nikolov, M. (2009a, ed.)
Early learning of modern foreign languages: Processes and outcomes
 Bristol: Multilingual Matters: 15–29
- Nikolov, M. (2009b, ed.)
The age factor and early language learning
 Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Ó Riain, S. (2007)
 ‘The Challenge of Multilingualism Policy and Language Learning’
 Commission Européenne: Direction Générale de la Traduction, *DGTinfo* 522: 14–16
- Picard, J.-M. (1911)
L’Esperanto à l’école, ou l’Enseignement méthodique de la langue française aux enfants par l’esperanto : Cours élémentaire (entre 7 et 10 ans)
 [‘Esperanto at school, or the Methodical teaching of the French language to children by means of Esperanto: Elementary course (between 7 and 10 years)’]
 Coulommiers: Imprimerie Paul Brodard
- Reber, R. (2005)
 ‘Rule versus similarity: Different in processing mode, not in representations’
Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 28(1): 31–32
- Roberts, L., Ewert, A., Pawlak M. & Wrembel M. (2013)
EUROSLA Yearbook: Volume 13 (2013)
 John Benjamins Publishing Company
- Roehr, K. & Gánem-Gutiérrez, G. A. (2009)
 ‘Metalinguistic knowledge: A stepping stone towards L2 proficiency?’
 in Benati (2009: 79–94)
- Roehr K. & Gánem-Gutiérrez G. A. (2013, eds.)
The Metalinguistic Dimension in Instructed Second Language Learning
 London: Bloomsbury
- Roehr, K. (2011)
 ‘Summary report of the 5-year Springboard to Languages project evaluation’
 Unpublished commissioned report for Esperanto UK
- Roehr-Brackin, K., & Tellier, A. (2013)
 ‘Enhancing metalinguistic awareness in instructed adult L2 learners: students’ perceptions and performance’
 Paper presented at the 9th Annual Conference of the BAAL Language Learning and Teaching SIG, 4–5 July 2013, St. Mary’s University College, Twickenham
- Skehan, P. (1986)
 ‘Where does Language Aptitude come from?’
 in Meara (1986)

- Sparks, R., Patton, J., Ganschow, L., & Hunmbach, N. (2009)
 ‘Long-term crosslinguistic transfer of skills from L1 to L2’
Language Learning 59(1), 203–243
- Spolsky, B. (1995)
 ‘Prognostication and Language Aptitude Testing 1925–62’
Language Testing 12: 321–40
- Symoens, E. (1992)
Al nova internacia lingvopolitiko: la propedeŭtika valoro de Esperanto
 [‘Towards a new international language policy: the propaedeutic value of Esperanto’]
 Esperanto-dokumento 28–29E, Rotterdam: Universala Esperanto-Asocio
- Tellier, A. (2010)
 ‘Language awareness in primary schools: maximum benefit despite minimal input?’
 Paper presented at the 10th International Conference of the Association for Language Awareness, Kassel, Germany
- Tellier, A. (2013)
 ‘Developing a measure of metalinguistic awareness for children aged 8–11’
 in Roehr & Gánem-Gutiérrez (2013: 15–43)
- Tellier, A. & Roehr, K. (2010)
 ‘Language-learning aptitude and metalinguistic awareness in primary-school children’
 Paper presented at the 20th Annual Conference of the European Second Language Association (EuroSLA), Reggio Emilia, Italy
- Tellier, A. & Roehr-Brackin, K. (2013a)
 ‘The development of language-learning aptitude and metalinguistic awareness in primary-school children: a classroom study.’
Essex Research Reports in Linguistics 62(1): 1–28
- Tellier, A. & Roehr-Brackin, K. (2013b)
 ‘Metalinguistic awareness in children with differing language-learning experience’
 in Roberts et al. (2013: 81–108)
- Tonkin, H. (2003)
 ‘Why learn foreign languages?’
 in Tonkin & Reagan (2003)
- Tonkin, H. & Reagan T. (2003, eds.)
Language in the 21st Century
 Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing
- Williams, N. (1965a)
 ‘A language teaching experiment’
Canadian Modern Language Review 22: 26–28
- Williams, N. (1965b)
Report on the teaching of Esperanto from 1948 to 1964
 Manchester: Denton Egerton Park County School
- Zamenhof, L. L. (1887) (as ‘Dr Esperanto’)
 Международный языкъ [‘International language’]
 Known in Esperanto as *Unua libro* [‘First book’]
 Warsaw: self-published

Bar Hill School has used Esperanto over the past five years to raise awareness of other languages and to help pupils acquire skills and understanding of modern foreign languages. It has had the added advantage through its simple structure in being a very inclusive language, as all pupils regardless of age or ability have accessed it as a means of communication with other children in other countries. It has motivated children to want to learn a modern foreign language, and has helped children make a smooth transition from Esperanto to Spanish in years 5 and 6. [...]

Esperanto is now taught in years 1, 2, 3, and 4, and, having seen the benefits, all teachers, governors, and the majority of parents are fully committed to it. Through INSET and parents' evening and the purchase of books and AV equipment, parents have supported their children in the language at home.

—Lin Whyte, head teacher of Bar Hill Community Primary School, Cambridgeshire, one of the schools following the Springboard to Languages programme, personal communication, 2010

About the contributors

Karen Roehr-Brackin is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex. Her research interests include explicit and implicit knowledge in second-language (L2) learning; the role of individual learner differences in L2 learning, in particular language-learning aptitude, working memory capacity, and cognitive learning/style; and usage-based approaches to language learning and teaching. She is interested in adult and child learning, the effects of language instruction, and language education. Her work has been published in international journals and edited volumes.

Angela Tellier is a PhD candidate in the Department of Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex. Her research interests include metalinguistic awareness and language aptitude in child L2 learning; the role of metalinguistic instruction in the acquisition of explicit/implicit knowledge; and the development of language readiness in child L2 learners. A qualified language teacher, she has taught languages and language awareness to pre-school groups, and at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. She is the author and co-author of several language courses, including the Springboard to Languages language-preparation course.