

How does a variety of linguistic literary reading resources effect reading enthusiasm in a culturally diverse primary classroom?

NPEP 2022-23 Ysgol Padarn Sant



*As we follow in Jesus' footsteps, we grow in faith, love and learning
Wrth gerdded yng nghamau Iesu, tyfwn mewn ffydd, cariad a dealltwriaeth.*

Ein hysgol ni – Ysgol Gynradd Gatholig Padarn Sant

Pupils on roll: 125

Free school meals: 17.1%

ALN register: 34.6%

EAL register: 22.4%



As part of a happy and culturally diverse community, nearly 1 in 4 of the children in our school speak English as an additional language.

Supporting literature: Burnett and Merchant (2018).

‘... research over the last five decades in literacy studies has highlighted, certain kinds of literacies have always been valued more than others (Street, 2003). In educational provision, we know that this imbalance can have detrimental effects on many children’s present and future lives.’

‘...teachers of children and young people might usefully spend time investigating the diversity of texts with which their students engage, including popular and digital media. In this sense, our analysis supports longstanding calls for teachers to acknowledge and build on children’s out-of-school literacies.’

Supporting literature: Stille and Cummins (2013)

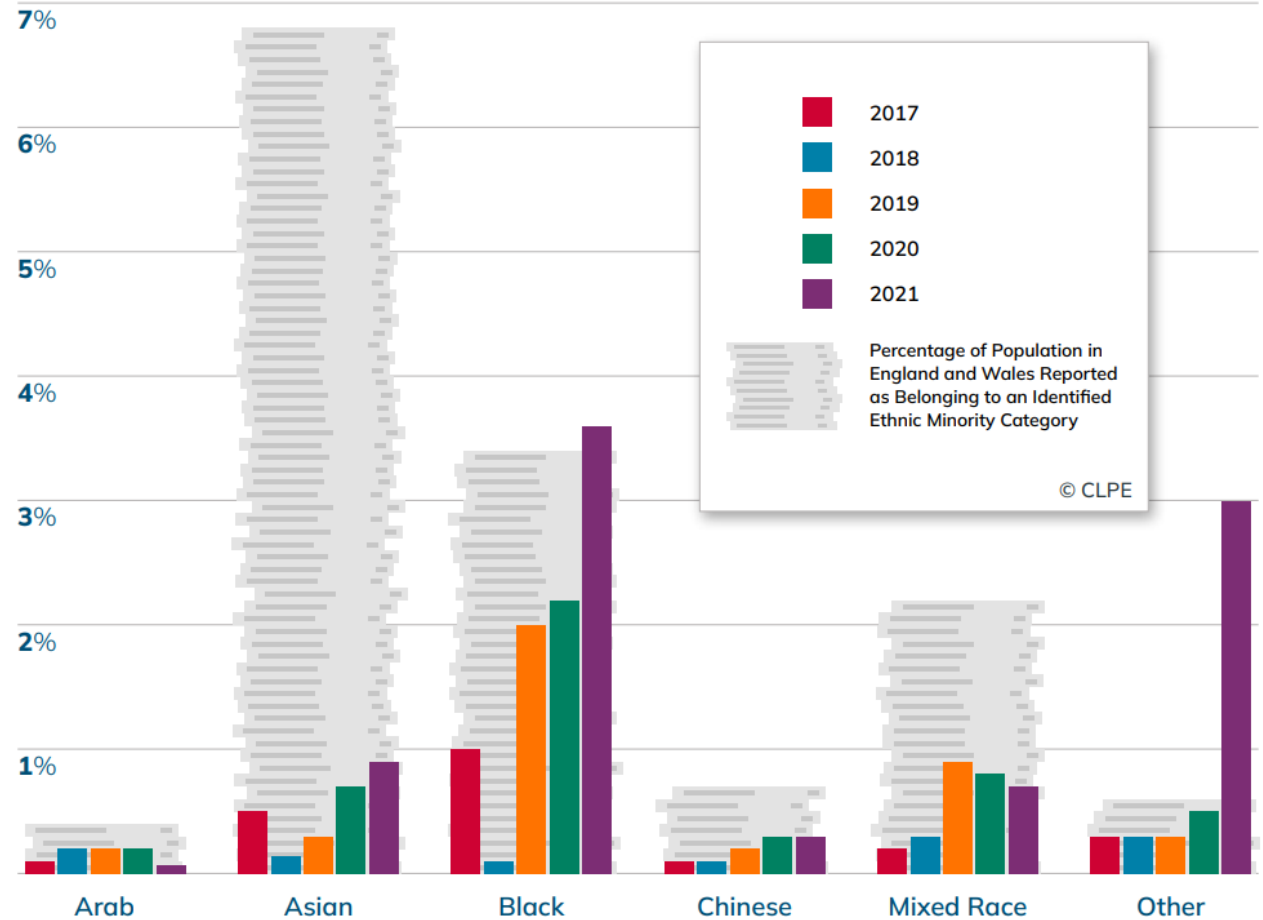
‘...effective classroom instruction will draw upon the full range of students’ linguistic repertoires and diverse histories as a foundation for learning.

To these principles, we would add the idea that instruction that affirms students’ identities exerts a significant impact both on their self-image and the quality of their language learning’.

Diversity in literature: reflecting realities

(CLPE 2022 report)

Contrast in Demographic Makeup of Real World Populations compared with Story World Populations



Percentage of Total Books Published Featuring a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Main Character (FIG. 3)



Research design and methodology

- Action research approach.
- Objective to find out nationalities, cultures and languages represented and find literature that represented these children.
- Originally designed our research with an idea of conducting research through a mixed method approach of quantitative and qualitative data collection.
- Upon reflection, decided it would perhaps be more conducive in asking children open ended questions and using prompts as part of a semi-structured interview with teaching and support staff.

Research design and methodology

As insider researchers, we have an established rapport with the participants.

However, it was important that we understand we should and could not make assumptions of languages children speak and read in, or would like to read in.



Findings from Questionnaires with Years 4 - 6

Languages spoken at home (1):

14 respondents (82%) answered **english** for this question.



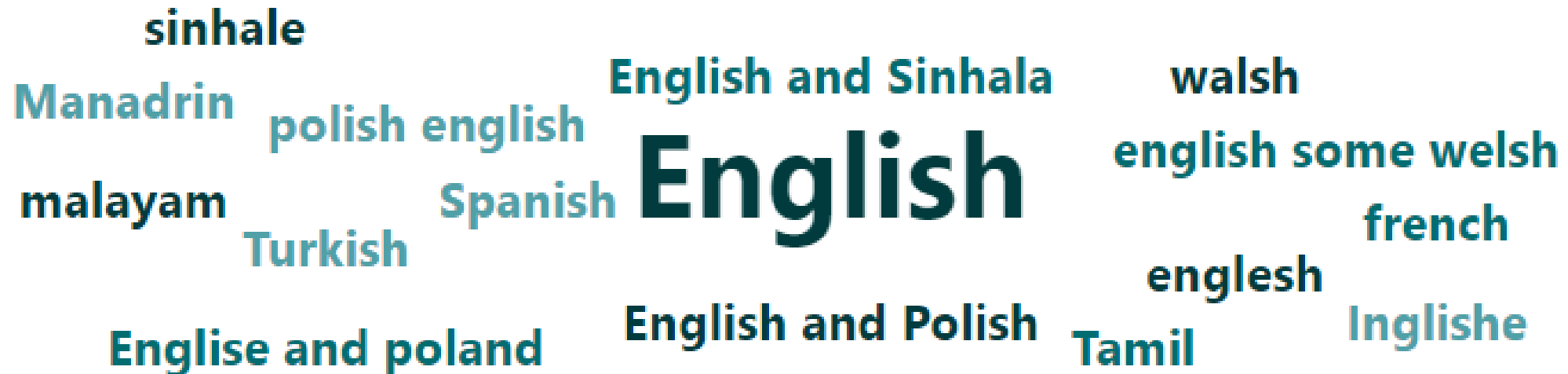
A word cloud visualization of responses to the question 'Languages spoken at home (1)'. The word 'english' is the largest and most central, indicating it was the most common response. Other words are arranged around it in various sizes and orientations, representing less frequent responses. The words include: 'little bit', 'polish English', 'welsh and a lot', 'lot of english', 'welsh a bit', 'polish and spanish', 'spanish', 'welsh', 'bit of Spanish', 'little Welsh', 'welsh and english', 'english/welsh', 'Bulgarian', 'tamil', and 'english some times'.

little bit
polish English
welsh and a lot
lot of english
welsh a bit
polish and spanish
spanish
english
welsh
bit of Spanish
little Welsh
welsh and english
english/welsh
Bulgarian
tamil
english some times

Findings from Questionnaires with Years 4 - 6

Languages spoken at home (2):

11 respondents (55%) answered **English** for this question.



Languages read at home

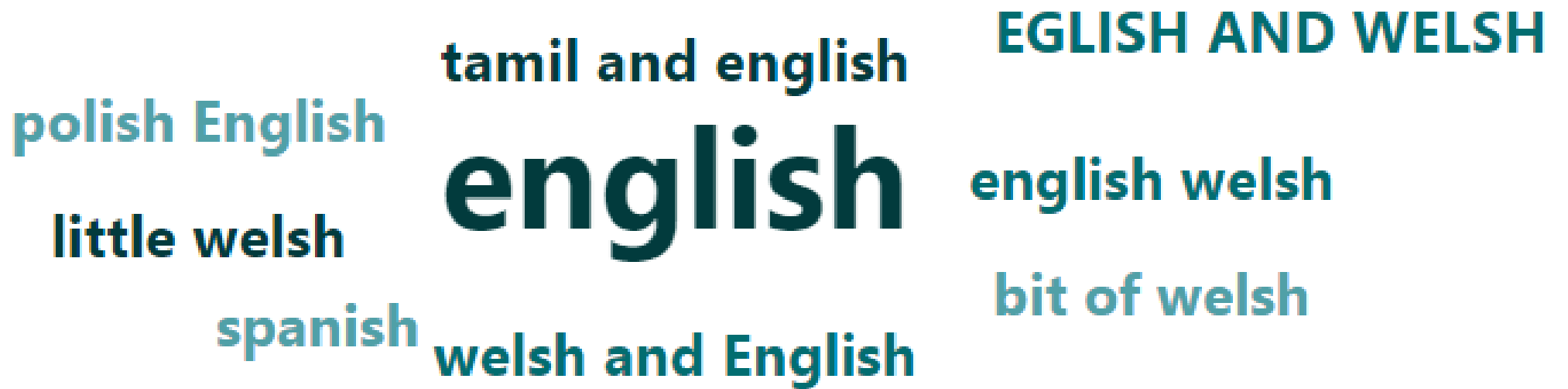
We noted from the following responses that although many of the children spoke a variety of languages, confidently at home, their reading in those languages was sometimes less developed.

We wondered if this was because of the lack of linguistically diverse literary resources accessible to them.

Findings from Questionnaires with Years 4 - 6

Languages they read in (1):

13 respondents (76%) answered **english** for this question.



Findings from Questionnaires with Years 4 - 6

Languages they read in (2):

3 respondents (15%) answered **English and Welsh** for this question.

Eiglish and sinhale

litter bit

bit of welsh

English and Sinhala

English polish

Englise and Welsh

bit of Tamil

English and Welsh

little bit

Spanish

englesch

bit of turkish

welsh and english

weshe lglish

Findings from Padlet comments with Years 5 - 6

Kinds of books they would like in school:

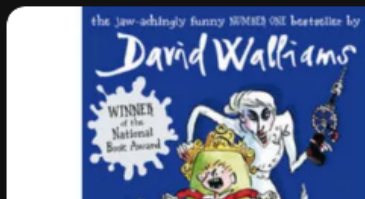
I would love to have more Spanish books and my favourite books to read are comedy, Drama, Mystery, Romantic comedy and Fantasy. The names of books I like are Dork diaries, Enola and Sherlock Holmes, Agent without license and I like books that are quiz books.

This is one of my favourite authors book it is coming out on March 28th 2023

I love the author Sharon. M Draper She wrote a book called blended and I love it!

horse and fantasy books

This is the book I am reading and I really like it



mystery books

I like books about Horses

I would like to learn about space and see more animals like bunnies

My most favourite author is Dav Pilkey.

Bulgarian Books

I really like comedy books and Harry Potter books

Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Hunger Games

my favourite book author is David Williams

I really want to learn sign language

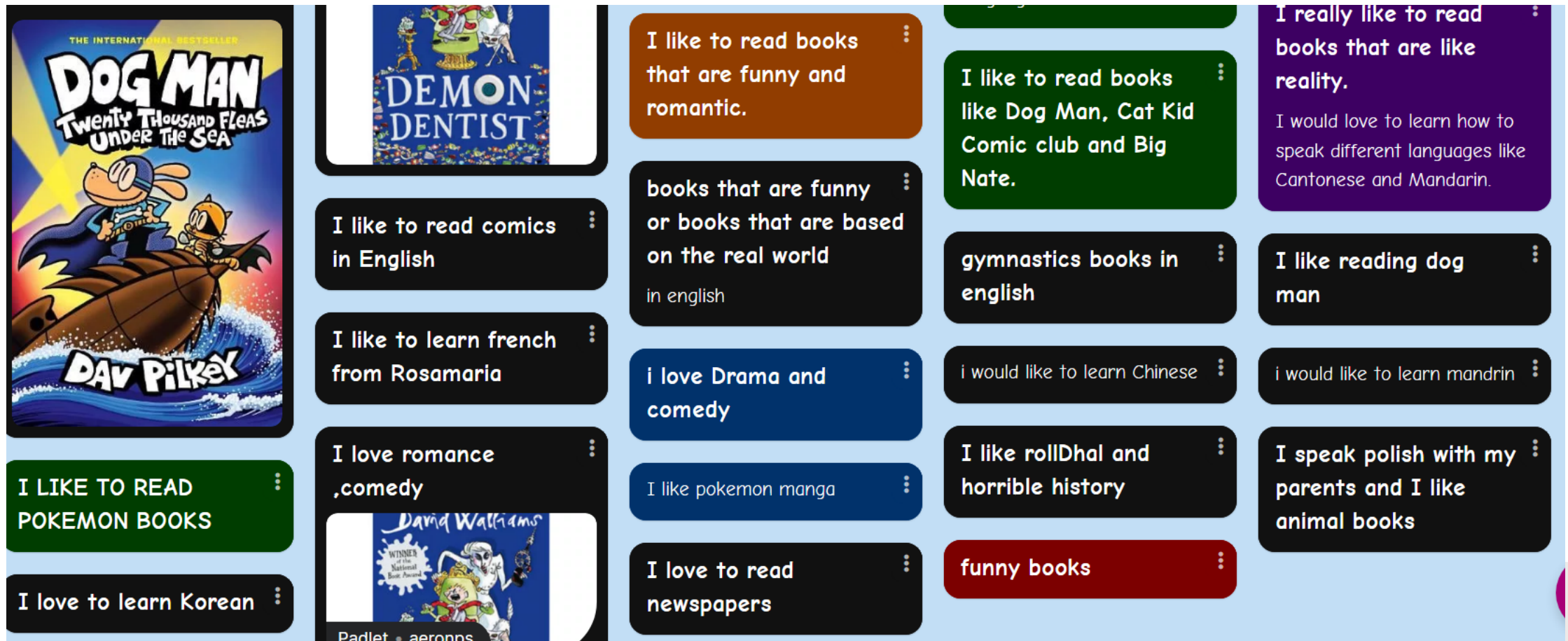
My favorite author is JK Rowling, Roald Dahl and Stacy Gregg

I like funny books and Marvel books and Diary of a Wimpy Kid because it can be nice to read books with your friends that make you laugh and have fun and also learning things 👍😊

I really like to read

Findings from Padlet comments with Years 5 - 6

Kinds of books they would like in school:



The Padlet board displays the following content:

- Book Covers:**
 - DOG MAN: Twenty Thousand Fleas Under the Sea** by Dav Pilkey
 - DEMON DENTIST**
 - David Walliams** (National Book Award Winner)
- Comments:**
 - I like to read books that are funny and romantic.
 - books that are funny or books that are based on the real world in english
 - i love Drama and comedy
 - I like pokemon manga
 - I love to read newspapers
 - I like to read books like Dog Man, Cat Kid Comic club and Big Nate.
 - gymnastics books in english
 - i would like to learn Chinese
 - I like rollDhal and horrible history
 - funny books
 - I really like to read books that are like reality.
I would love to learn how to speak different languages like Cantonese and Mandarin.
 - I like reading dog man
 - i would like to learn mandrin
 - I speak polish with my parents and I like animal books
 - I like to read comics in English
 - I like to learn french from Rosamaria
 - I love romance ,comedy
 - I LIKE TO READ POKEMON BOOKS
 - I love to learn Korean

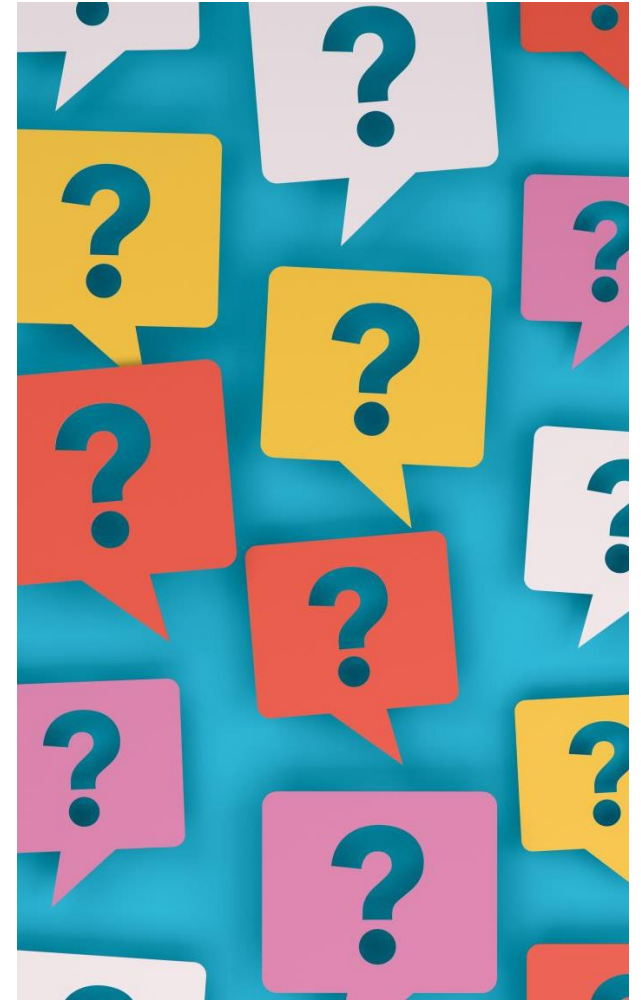
Padlet • aeronps

Research design and methodology

According to the ideas and views of the children and staff, we sought to provide a variety of literature in various languages and representative of a variety of cultures as possible before discussing with the children involved through semi-structured group interviews to examine the impact this had, in the summer term.

Limitations:

- Difficulty finding some language books – e.g Sinhalese.
- Difficulty finding some genres of literature in a variety of languages.
- Estyn inspection before Easter holidays – research on hold.
- Unable to fully assess reading ability of home languages.



Guiding considerations for diversifying literacy resources in our school (CLPE)

Ensuring Breadth and Balance

- Are readers able to encounter varied portrayals of characters of colour, depicted with a range of personalities and represented as experiencing a full spectrum of emotions in the books you produce/ stock?

Valuing the Creatives

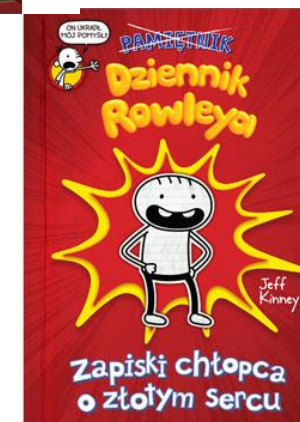
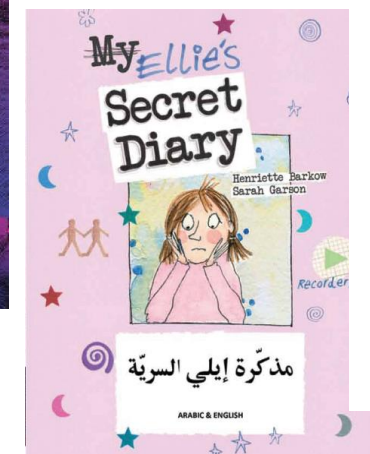
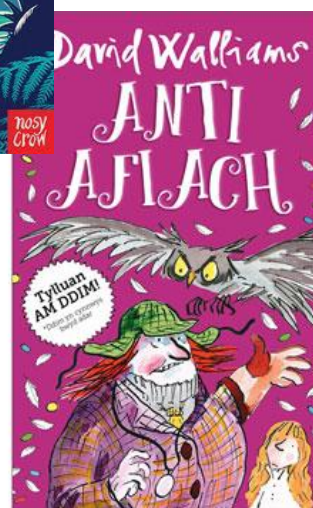
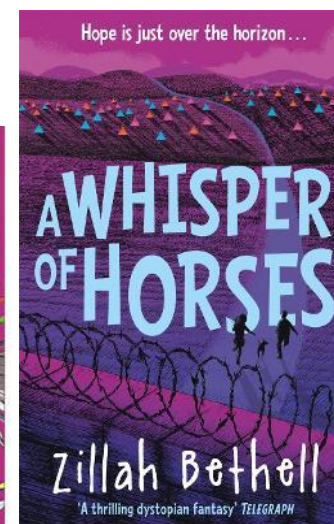
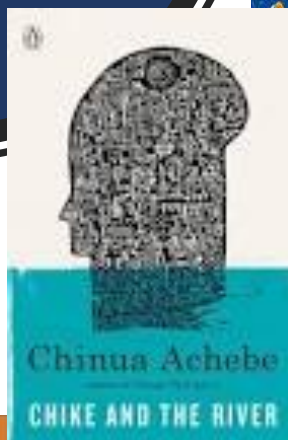
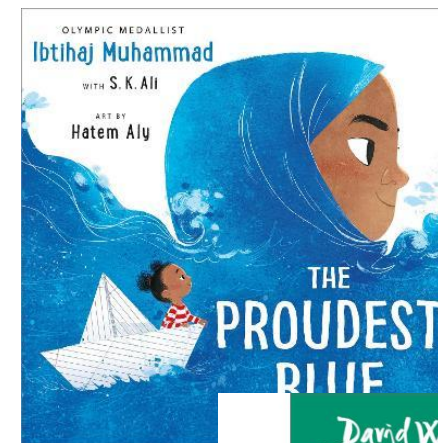
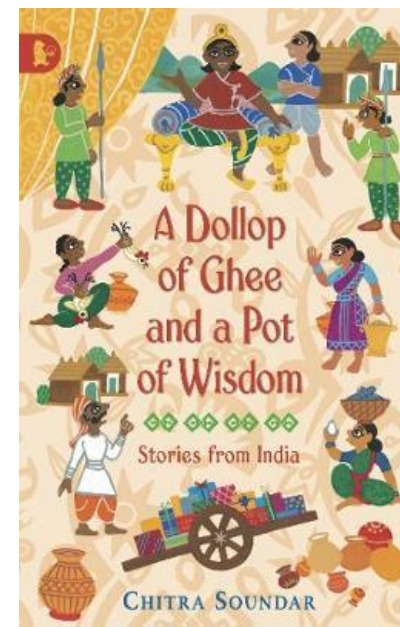
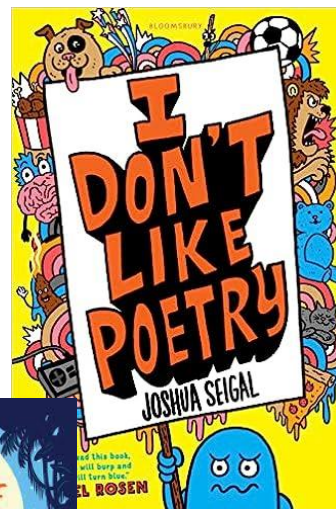
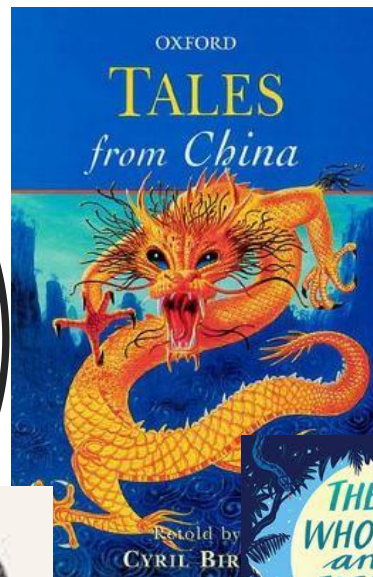
- Is there a sustained investment in both established and new authors from a range of backgrounds who are able to paint characters and worlds with the integrity that the subject matter deserves? Does your output/ stock reflect this diversity of talent?

Determining Meaningful Presence

- Do the characters of colour featured in the books we publish/stock reflect the UK population and the world at large, not as a tick box exercise but as a meaningful and accurate representation of the interconnected, diverse society within which our children are growing up?

CLPE report, 2022

Literature examples



Findings from second Questionnaires with years 4-6

"I love
reading tamil books"

Why did you choose
the book you are
reading?

"I like to learn French"

"because im half turkish"



"because am from Romania
and I like Latin."

Findings from second Questionnaires with years 4-6

"French is fun to learn"

Are you enjoying the books? Why?

"yes I enjoyed the Romanian and Latin."

"I enjoy the book"



"I enjoyed how I could read my own language and the Latin was just fun and cool."

Findings from second Questionnaires with years 4-6

"YES of course"

Do these books
make reading ore
fun (enjoyable) in
school?

"YES FOR SURE"

"YES."



"yes I think it is
enjoyable"

Findings from second Questionnaires with years 4-6

"Are there any learning 10 minutes of Tamil a day"

Any other comments about the new books?

"there cool/fun/exiting/entertaining."

"it is because to know other languages"



"It is fun to learn other languages"

Additional findings

- Questionnaires prompted impromptu discussions regarding their language use, where they liked to speak different languages and with whom.
- For example, some children spoke Sinhala together in school, whilst some children didn't speak to each other in Tamil as they felt they should be using the opportunity to develop their English skills.
- Many of the children also expressed that they would like to have access to books that better represented them.

Staff discussion:

"In St Padarn's we have children with parents from: Romania, Poland, India, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Nigeria, Ghana, Turkey, Belgium, Slovakia, Czechia, England, Northern Ireland, Spain, Taiwan and Wales."

"We think many children enjoy reading. They are keen to come into class and get their books out, they actively go to the reading corner."

"They enjoy having books on the playground."

"Factual books are a hit."

"They ask to listen to a story being read, enjoy sharing facts with the class, class are calm when it is story time at the end of the day, and they enjoy discussing their books with each other."

"Most children bring their reading books back, having read them at home."

Findings from staff discussion:

- There are many nationalities and languages represented in our school, and these are recognised by all teaching staff.
- Children in our school enjoy reading and being given the time and space to do so (for example, being able to take books onto the playground).

Staff discussion:

"The new books with different languages in are proving to be popular. Initially this may be a novelty so now waiting to see if this has a concrete positive effect."

"There is an issue that they can't keep them in their trays so they can't progress with reading one book."

"Due to the small number of books it is a bit of an issue – sharing/trying to keep the same book."

"The representation of different cultures is very important to our children - for example the Welsh scheme we use is very 'white European'."

"Audio books would be good – many of the children speak a language but are not able to read in that language."

"The boys in particular enjoy factual books – especially about WW2, space, animals, minibeasts. We would like some new chapter books (more updated), anime comic books, high interest but low-level reading materials for example the Diary of the Wimpy Kid – lots of pages but minimal text."

Findings from staff discussion:

- More books needed – with a greater variety of genres.
- In agreement that a variety of more culturally representative books should be available.
- Access to audio books in a range of languages for children who can't read in their first / additional language confidently.

To conclude:

Although our research is continuing - so far, we have found that the children are really enjoying having access to more literacy resources that represent them and their realities better.

We will continue to source literature resources (including audio books) that represent all the children as best as possible in our school, to encourage our children to celebrate themselves and our community in all its diversity.

Our aim for this research is to help our school understand how we can continue to create an environment that is inclusive and encourages multilingualism.



Going forward:

As a reflexive research process, we have discovered there is so much more to explore...

We would like to involve parents to gain a better understanding of how we can encourage reading in a variety of languages at school.

To explore the impact this has on their language use amongst peers in school also.

How does reflecting their realities through literacy resources affect their learning?

References

Burnett, C. and Merchant, G. (2018), '*Affective encounters: enchantment and the possibility of reading for pleasure*', *Literacy: UKLA*, 52(2), pp. 62-69.

Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (2022), '*REFLECTING REALITIES*', Survey of Ethnic Representation within UK Children's Literature 2017–2021, online: https://clpe.org.uk/system/files/2022-11/CLPE%20Reflecting%20Reality%202022%20WEB_0.pdf Accessed: 5.6.23

Stille, S. and Cummins, J. (2013), '*Foundation for Learning: Engaging Plurilingual Students' Linguistic Repertoires in the Elementary Classroom*', *TESOL Quarterly*, 3, pp.630 – 637.