A Study of Primary PGCE Trainees Developing Pedagogy for Children Learning English as an Additional Language.

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Abstract

Background
With the publication of ‘Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years’ (DFES 2006) and the revised professional standards for QTS (TDA 2007) it appears that EAL pedagogy is an important contemporary issue for primary teachers and trainees. Research (Davies and Crozier 2006) indicates that Higher Education provision for trainees in this area of pedagogy is inconsistent. Sixty six percent of NQTs felt ill-prepared to cope with this aspect of their new role (TDA 2008). This area of training is still given the lowest rating of all the aspects considered by the NQT survey. This study aimed to consider the perceptions of primary PGCE trainees; particularly focussing on how they developed pedagogy for pupils learning English as an additional language and what factors most facilitated or hindered this process.

Research Questions
The research questions used within the study were:
How do trainees feel about teaching pupils with EAL?
How do these beliefs, views and understanding change following input from the HE institution that they attend?
What factors do trainees perceive to be most influential in preparing them to teach children with EAL?

Research Methods
A small sample of 12 Primary PGCE trainees volunteered to be involved in the study. They were asked to complete a mind map under the following headings:
How I feel about teaching pupils with EAL.
What I believe about teaching pupils with EAL.
What I know about teaching pupils with EAL.
This was completed during the spring term of the PGCE year. After course input and a multicultural school placement trainees were asked to complete another mind map under the same headings. They then attended group or individual semi-structured interviews which investigated any changes in their understanding and also what they perceived to be most significant in moving their thinking forward. The data was analysed by identifying and grouping themes of responses and discrepancies. Then a constructivist approach was used to draw out trainee perceptions of themselves, teachers and EAL learners.

Research Findings
The study concluded that by the end of the course the trainees had developed some understanding of practical teaching strategies and felt more confident about teaching pupils with EAL. However, trainees struggled to examine their assumptions and their own culturally formed behaviour and needed to consider more deeply how this could affect communication and relationships with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Mentor support was variable in school and often left trainees without satisfactory role models. This highlighted the need for more experienced H.E staff to consider the level of understanding that trainees may hold and begin by helping them to address assumptions and to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity were addressed consistently throughout the training year.
Introduction and Context

Pedagogy for pupils learning English as an additional language is considered by the Government to be an important contemporary issue for primary teachers (DFES 2006). The Professional Standards that trainees must meet to achieve QTS (TDA 2007) specify skills in meeting the needs of children with EAL. For this study and in the context of the Standards for QTS ‘EAL’ refers to any children who use a language or languages other than English in their home context. Primary teachers are expected to be aware of the sequence of cognitive development and consequent learning needs of children acquiring English as an additional language as well as the socio-cultural factors that may act as barriers to achievement (DFES 2006, TDA 2007). This expectation presents a challenge for many HE providers and teacher trainees. In particular, the issues identified in a large survey of HE institutions: were lack of time available, especially during PGCE courses (78%); lack of expertise amongst school based mentors (62%); and the nature of the geographical location limiting trainees’ experiences of teaching children from diverse linguistic backgrounds (50%) (Davies and Crozier 2006). Providers also pointed out that often only a small number of staff in an institution or visiting experts took responsibility for this area of training and therefore the support given during training courses was often inconsistent.

Over the last five years there has been some gradual improvement in trainee ratings for this aspect of their training according to the annual NQT survey (TDA 2008). However the percentage of trainees who felt that their training was good or very good in preparing them to work with pupils with English as an additional language has remained static at thirty four percent in 2007 and 2008. This means that sixty six percent of NQTs felt ill-prepared to cope with this aspect of their new role. This area of training is still given the lowest rating of all the aspects considered by the NQT survey and the geographical areas where trainees felt most prepared were in London and the North East. Sadly it seems that little has changed over recent years in the usefulness of HE input or at least the changes made are too limited and variable across the country.

My own experience both as a trainee, a teacher and now a senior lecturer made me concerned about this aspect of teacher training. I was aware that many trainees were not confident in meeting the needs of this group of pupils but I wanted to know how to move their practice on. Existing research seemed focussed on outcomes for trainees not the process by which they arrived at them or possible barriers to the development of skills in this area. In order to find out how to help the trainees I needed to research their views and experiences.
Research questions
How do trainees feel about teaching pupils with EAL?
How do these beliefs, views and understanding change following input from the HE institution that they attend?
What factors do trainees perceive to be most influential in preparing them to teach children with EAL?

Methodology
I planned a study which aimed to investigate the views and beliefs of trainees as they developed their own pedagogy for EAL learners. This was necessarily qualitative and based on a phenomenological approach (Denscombe 2003, Ehrich 2003) due to its focus on the trainees’ perceptions of their learning process. The participants came from an almost exclusively white monolingual cohort on a one-year Primary PGCE course in a predominantly mono-cultural area. Trainees were made aware that the process would not influence their course results and their responses indicated that they felt free to discuss negative experiences. Originally seventeen trainees volunteered (10% of the cohort) but finally twelve completed all aspects of the process. I compared the participants to the wider course and found that they were broadly representative including male and female students from a wide age group. As in the wider cohort there was one bilingual trainee from a white European background. There was no strong representation from a particular group of trainees on the course that might influence the data gathered.

Following a review of current literature on the subject it seemed important to consider trainee’s views about the impact of ITE methods, reflection and critical incidents as well as the influence of the mentor and trainees’ own belief systems. My first choice of method was to ask trainees to mind map their ideas under broad headings at earlier and later stages of their training: How I feel about teaching children with EAL; What I know about teaching children with EAL; What I believe about children with EAL. This method was based on visualisation and mind mapping used in other research (Potter 2001, Pearson and Somekh, 2000). This was to offer an indication of changes in trainees’ ideas over time and also to act as a form of triangulation for the points discussed later at interview. Trainees created mind maps in the Spring Term and were then invited for interview and a further mind mapping exercise in the summer term following a one week multicultural placement and the completion of college input on the subject of EAL learners.

Interview questions and mind map headings were trialled in a small pilot study. The interview questions were composed from points raised in documentary evidence from the last six cohorts of the three year QTS course and from the first mind map data. The documentary
evidence came from reflective journals from previous years submitted by the trainees after a school experience in a multicultural location. This gave an idea of possible areas of concern and interest that might be useful to discuss with the trainees. Participants in the main study were offered the opportunity to choose between individual or small group interviews in order to allow them to choose a situation which they found most comfortable. The small group interviews amalgamated the features of semi-structured interviews (Drever 2003) and the potential for group discussions (Cohen et al. 2000, Opie 2004). The interviews were recorded on audio tape in order to encourage the trainees to talk more freely and facilitate dialogue with the interviewer (Drever 2003).

The interview data was analysed and categorised through a process of replaying, noting key points and transcribing sections of dialogue. The categories for analysis of the views expressed mostly fell naturally under the themes raised in the semi structured interview questions, feelings, beliefs, development of teaching strategies and factors that the trainees perceived to be influential in developing their pedagogy such as critical incidents or previous life experience. However there were also elements of most interviews where participants introduced new and unexpected ideas and themes and these were also noted and transcribed in a form of, “open coding” (Denscombe 2003:271).

During analysis consistent themes and ideas emerged and I began to try to interpret these viewpoints, firstly looking for why certain ideas or difficulties may have occurred and attempting to attribute some cause to them but also looking more deeply for underlying messages that pointed me to the trainees’ understanding of teaching and their pupils. The questions which I asked of the data during my analysis were concerned with the trainees’ existing belief systems and also my own expectations as a tutor (Freebody 2003, Schostak 2006) and so I could be said to be applying a constructivist analysis (Ernest 1997, Fox 1997).

**Findings and Discussion**

**How do trainees feel about teaching pupils with EAL?**

The majority of trainees reported:

- Positive development in the range of strategies that they now had available to use as teachers of children learning English as an additional language.
- Improved confidence and enthusiasm about teaching in a linguistically diverse environment.
- A desire for further experience and support in this aspect of their teaching.
A small number expressed concern about racial tension within the parent population and difficulties with communicating with parents who spoke little or no English.

How do these beliefs, views and understanding change following input from the HE institution that they attend?

Trainees commented on:
- Growing awareness of their own cultural perspectives and others perceptions of them.
- An improved understanding of the challenge facing isolated learners and newly arrived pupils.

Some mentors had perpetuated the misconception that:
- Children learning EAL use their language difference to manipulate others.

Trainees were much more concerned with their emotional response and changes in cultural understanding that took place during the course than practical teaching concerns. A large proportion of the interview discussions focussed on issues of cultural identity. Superficially, the trainees’ anxieties were allayed by some understanding of the teaching methods used in these schools,

Yes I feel much more confident really because, I mean, what they were doing wasn’t really very much different to just good practice in general. They were just sort of extending the differentiation and I think I sort of thought oh you’ve got to read lots of books and find out all about these mystery strategies but there actually weren’t really any. They were quite common sense things to do and I thought oh it’s not so bad.

The growth in confidence expressed by the trainees was revealed, by their comments in discussion, to be much more about their increased familiarity with a multi-cultural teaching environment.

I think this placement has personally for me, sort of, I’ve accepted more different religions and different cultures because where I’ve come from and my experiences all I see is, you know, the Muslims on the news.

Trainees were very aware of their particular living and teaching experience that had been determined by the geographical location of their homes and HE provider. The importance to them of being comfortable and familiar with a multicultural environment was a consistent theme. This suggests a beginning awareness of the cultural difference between teachers and pupils as highlighted by Pearce (2005) and Santoro (2007).

As white English-speaking trainees, the course focus on diversity and EAL learners and the experience of the multicultural placement were in many cases the first time that the participants needed to consider this issue. It seems that the ‘Critical Whiteness’ education of
American and Canadian ITE could have value here (Davies 2006). Trainees struggled to examine their assumptions and their own culturally formed behaviour and needed to consider more deeply how this could affect communication and relationships with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. These trainees realised that this was the first time that they had really considered cultural identity but were still unaware of their own socio-cultural constructs.

Trainees may need to experience being in a culturally diverse environment before being able to honestly reflect on their perceptions and existing belief systems and it seems that they will require some assistance to really unlearn and question assumptions that are already in place. Trainees mostly did not, as suggested by Hamilton (1993), take on the culture of their placement schools. Instead, in some cases they noted inconsistencies within school practice and questioned the practice they witnessed. Neither did they have an identifiable trainee culture from the HE institution. Rather, they viewed their experiences through their individual socio-cultural experience and background, as suggested by Cole (2007 and 2008) and Santoro (2007), making it all the more difficult for the HEI to support trainees in moving their own understanding forward. The change that the trainees experienced could be summarised as a growing awareness of cultural diversity but the beliefs and understanding underpinning such a change could not yet, for the majority, support a successful pedagogy for EAL learners.

It was noticeable that whilst the trainees participating in this study began to comment on their experience they struggled with reflecting more deeply. Most of the trainees interviewed missed the link between valuing diversity and creating learning opportunities that stimulate and engage all children. They were not able to consider how their own difficulties and unfamiliarity with the need to respond to cultural experience, other than that of white English children, would affect their relationship with the class and the effectiveness of their chosen teaching strategies and lessons. Perhaps a continuous cycle of experience and reflection coupled with the guidance of skilled mentors would at least begin to destabilise some of the trainees’ existing constructs and offer them new alternatives based on positive experiences.

What do trainees believe to be most influential in their development of pedagogy for EAL learners?

Trainees suggested that:

- ‘Critical incidents’ of, often negative, practice witnessed in school made them more motivated to meet the needs of pupils with EAL and aware of what not to do.
First hand experience working in schools with a diverse population helped them to connect theory and practice and allowed them to address their fear of an unknown environment.

Previous life experience of working or living in more culturally diverse communities enabled them to cope more easily with meeting the needs of pupils with EAL.

Some of their peers were not interested in developing pedagogy for these pupils and so their prejudice would prevent them from engaging with the experiences on offer.

The quality of school-based mentoring in relation to understanding how to support pupils with EAL was variable and often poor and therefore did not assist trainees.

Critical Incidents
In discussion, the trainees described how observing other teachers had affected their perceptions of effective pedagogy. In some cases this seemed to be a key influence on developing pedagogy as some trainees learned from, what they viewed as, class teacher mistakes or weaknesses.

He (the pupil learning EAL) would just be there and as an afterthought she (the teacher) would ask me to go and be with him

However, the opportunity for the trainees to reflect critically on their own actions and specific events in the classroom was often missed because of the short period of time that trainees spent working in multicultural schools. In the cases where trainees had spent longer periods of time in placements with some children learning EAL the mentor’s lack of expertise in this aspect of teaching meant that they were unable to support the trainees through a critical incident reflection process that may have been very valuable. Negative experiences may have motivated trainees to want to be more effective classroom practitioners but had not necessarily equipped them with the knowledge of how to change.

Course input
Some trainees felt that discussions with peers, input from EMA staff in schools and their own research during the course had helped them to develop pedagogy as suggested by Loughran (2006) but despite general college input on reflection and evaluation the trainees did not mention these ideas in connection to their learning. Some trainees expressed frustration at not being able to put theory into practice and felt that they would need more experience before feeling truly confident. Certainly the trainees felt that they needed more experience of
working with pupils learning EAL and so would have liked more opportunity to work in multilingual classrooms. Some also suggested that using a specific multicultural placement was tokenistic and that this part of a teacher’s role should be addressed in a more ongoing way. This mirrored my own feelings about the possible issues caused by the additional placement. The use of a specific placement could also suggest to trainees that inclusion is only witnessed in very linguistically and culturally diverse schools, which is of course not the case. Some participants also mentioned their concerns about other trainees and how they seemed uninterested in the opportunities for discussion with the EMA co-ordinator in school. They suggested that those trainees’ own belief systems were interfering with the learning process,

A lot of people didn’t take it seriously and I took it very seriously and it made me very angry”, “I do think a lot of people are like ‘ooh we don’t want to teach those children.”

This suggestion has serious implications if it is accurate as it indicates that any methods used in training may be unable to penetrate some trainees’ existing belief systems.

**Life Experience**

Some trainees indicated that living in a multicultural area, travel or working in a previous job with people from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds had made them more prepared to teach in a school with pupils learning EAL. Whether this did in fact make any difference to the trainees’ success in the classroom is difficult to assess. The same trainees still experienced some anxiety prior to the multicultural placement and certainly were no more familiar with working with diverse pupils in schools than the other participants. Once again the trainees highlighted their perception that knowing and living with people from different ethnic backgrounds was significant to their work as effective teachers. Whilst there was perhaps some over simplification of the influence of their personal experience it was noticeable that the trainees believed cultural awareness and understanding to be as important as language issues, although they were not yet conscious of their own culturally based assumptions.

**First Hand Experience**

Most trainees mentioned the value of experiencing strategies and relationships first hand and the opportunity to relate theory to practice, as suggested by Schon (1990) and Moon (2005):

> It is one thing reading it but it’s another seeing it in practice. Actually being in school, seeing it working really encourages you to bring it in more.

Trainees were also able, in many cases, to link broad theoretical ideas taught in college with the practice observed in classrooms. Whilst many trainees believed this to be valuable, the
quality of such experiences inevitably relies on skills of reflection, analysis and dialogue with a skilled mentor. First hand experience of working in diverse schools was often analysed insufficiently in order for trainees to notice essential principles and practices in this field. There were few opportunities for trainees to move through the process of action, reflection and dialogue in classes including pupils with EAL, largely because of the lack of time spent in diverse schools and the variable mentor confidence in multi and mono-cultural locations.

**Constructing their world**

**Teachers**

On looking more closely at the data the negative description of poor practice in school used by the trainees focussed on teacher difficulty. Frequent use of words like, “struggled”, “don’t know how”, indicated that the trainees had realised the challenge of teaching children with EAL. They did not directly criticise the real or hypothetical teachers discussed, apart from in one case of overt racism. The trainees appeared to be relating continuing anxiety about how they would cope as real teachers and also some understanding that teachers need to carry on learning, that they do not know everything and that their responsibility is not an easy one. This construct then, may show the trainees’ empathy for others and continuing concern about their ability to support this group of pupils effectively. The discrepancy between the trainees’ constructs and my own may also reflect the difference between university expectations of mentoring and real experience in schools. In my idealistic view the trainees would have accessed teacher expertise through reflective dialogue and so perceive the teachers to be skilled role-models. Without this, trainees only noticed the difficulties and not perhaps more subtle adaptations that took place in the classroom.

**Children with EAL**

Before the course input and multi-cultural placement trainees’ feedback was dominated by “What if”, questions. “What if they don’t understand?”, “What if they don’t behave?” Trainees were constructing these unknown pupils as passive recipients of knowledge, unable to function appropriately without English language. This idea shifted considerably following real experience with these pupils. Most trainees expressed surprise at the children’s level of communication and ability to access the curriculum. However, the common factor of the construct expressed was a consistent perception of children with EAL as the ‘others’.

I think because they had such a strong identity it was hard to get them to take in the identity of the school.

This shows that some of the trainees were still at the stage of viewing children with EAL as a homogenous mass, different to English speaking children. This indicates that whilst some
changes took place in trainee understanding there was still a long way to go before the views 
gathered from their life experience could be counterbalanced.

Some trainees perceived individual cultural identity as a difficulty and a barrier. This was 
expressed as the persisting idea that children were manipulating adults through their language 
needs.

I think he used the fact that he was obviously foreign to his advantage.

Some trainees also held the misconception that children with EAL only needed support if 
they were newly arrived and those from bilingual English speaking families did not need 
additional support. Trainees focused on communicative levels of English as their measure of 
pupils’ needs, overlooking the complexity of academic language acquisition. This 
misconception was again perpetuated by some mentor views. Once again this was a surprise 
to me as my own construct of children learning EAL was of children with diverse and 
complex needs, some of which can be supported by general strategies but many needing 
individual adaptations and support. Once again the detail, depth and complexity of the issues 
had seemingly been overlooked by trainees. It is possible that this was the result of 
unsatisfactory dialogue in schools but also the way in which EAL had been presented to 
trainees in college. Perhaps by presenting EAL as a discrete subject trainees were encouraged 
to believe that ‘one size fits all’, perhaps trainees had not had enough opportunities to 
consider assessing and planning for individual needs.

Trainees

Many of the participants in the study perceived or at least attempted to portray themselves as 
being prepared for teaching children with EAL because of their prior experience in schools or 
in their own lives. This may suggest that they felt racism or stereotyping were not issues for 
them to overcome. Some of the trainees interviewed believed that they had challenged their 
own personal stereotypes through their experiences during the course and so by implication 
they felt that this was no longer an issue for them. Three mentioned that they were at different 
times unaware of race or colour.

It was quite a strange feeling at first but after, you know a day or two you just 
completely disregarded if there’s any culture or colour barrier there at all.

Clearly the participants believed these to be positive viewpoints and it seems likely that 
during the paired interview each participant influenced the views that the other was prepared 
to express. However, this over-simplified view of what equal opportunity entails again 
suggested that these trainees were still at a very early stage in their own understanding, as this 
might indicate a misplaced belief that ignoring cultural / ethnic difference is best for children.
This problematic view of the ‘invisibility’ of race held by some white teacher trainees is also highlighted by Brown (2002).

Once again my own construct of the trainees themselves was different and had perhaps influenced the usefulness of the course input. I had expected them initially to be fairly unaware of their cultural bias but I had wrongly assumed that they would be able to address their own assumptions by reflecting on experience in the classroom. I was particularly shocked by the suggestion that being unaware of the pupils’ ethnic heritage was a positive attribute. My own experience of living and working in more diverse communities had prevented me from realising the limited understanding of some trainees.

The trainees most needed to develop awareness of the influence of their values on the contexts in which they were working (Ghaye and Ghaye 1998). That is to say the role of their existing belief systems and the effect of these on their teaching, (Pajares 1992, in Loughran 2006). The first step in this reflective journey is that trainees at the stage of unconscious incompetence will need to be aware of their own belief systems before being able to reflect on the impact of them in the classroom. It seems unlikely that trainees’ awareness of their own socio-cultural constructs will be achieved by immersion in one particular teaching environment. Here some interesting parallels emerge. Like the EAL learners themselves, it is dangerous to assume that all the trainees need the same thing. An immersion or permeation model may teach the trainees by example but will not allow them to develop a higher level understanding. This brings to mind the difference between the EAL learners’ surface level of communicative language and cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins 2003). Like the pupils, the trainees need sensitive mentoring and support to achieve a deeper understanding. The support needed from both mentors and tutors must begin at a personal level that values trainees’ individual knowledge and experience but is also able to support them to question, reflect upon and unlearn subjective reactions and assumptions.

**Conclusion**

The small scale of this project means that the results may reflect the experiences of many of the PGCE Primary cohort, but are not necessarily indicative of other courses in this particular H.E institution or beyond. However, there were consistent features emerging from the gathered data which indicate that the sample of participants had some similar issues and experiences. At interview I asked most participants their reason for volunteering. I had expected them to express a particular interest in or anxiety about teaching children with EAL but this was not really the case. Some said they felt it would be useful, that they would gain
from talking to their peers, whilst others were interested in participating in research. It seems reasonable to assume that the trainees who volunteered were coming from different starting points and yet generated some similar data. What would be interesting to know is how far the rest of the cohort had similar issues. Perhaps their experiences were much more positive so they did not feel the need to volunteer? Perhaps they were less interested in reflection and evaluation than their peers? One wonders if there were many further misconceptions and assumptions left with the NQTs from this cohort as they move into school, too embarrassed or unaware to air these in public and now perpetuating the problem in school.

By the end of the PGCE year most of the participating trainees had only begun to understand some of the key messages for teachers of children with EAL. Of course these trainees became NQTs and continued their learning in the school environment. However, I am still not convinced that many were sufficiently aware of their own assumptions on leaving the course to be able to truly reflect on what was happening around them in school. I visualise these unquestioned constructs as an invisible barrier to the achievement of these trainees as successful teachers and therefore the achievement of any children with EAL in their care. Davies and Crozier (2006) indicate that difficulties with providing experiences of diversity may be present in other HE providers in more mono-cultural areas but they do not explore any particular difficulties that the trainees from these areas may have with cultural identity. Further research into the experience of trainees in other comparable institutions might raise some useful suggestions for the way forward for future trainees. In particular, working with other providers to research how best to enable trainees to question their cultural assumptions could be useful as could trialling different ways to support and develop mentor expertise in this field.

The key conclusions that can be drawn from this small scale project are:

- Trainees need opportunities and support to address their own belief system and assumptions about cultural diversity.
- Trainees need to address the issue of cultural and linguistic diversity consistently throughout the year.
- Mentors need more support with their own understanding of EAL and diversity.
- Mentors could use critical incidents from their own and their trainees’ teaching as catalysts for discussion.
- Mentors need to be explicit about their own professional decisions and strategies.
- HE staff need to find ways to facilitate the relationships and experiences above and to further address issues of tokenism, pupil teacher relationships and culturally relevant starting points including effective use of home language in the classroom.

Before beginning this study I realised that this aspect of teaching would be an issue for all trainee teachers and in particular in the geographical area of this HE institution. The project also began to uncover trainees’ views about issues of racism, isolated learners and newly arrived communities as well as the media portrayal of ethnic and religious groups. On reflection, the concerns of the trainees were an understandable response to the rapidly changing demography in their local area and also some negative media depiction of diversity, but one that I had not fully anticipated because of my own comfort and familiarity with teaching in such communities. This indicates how important it is for H.E staff to address their own assumptions about the starting point of the trainees and work from the level that the trainees have reached.

Even following course input and school placement, misconceptions about the language needs of EAL learners and the nature of inclusion were frequent. Finding out about trainee misconceptions in this way has directly influenced the content of the H.E taught session for future cohorts. Some of the misconceptions were a result of the brevity of course input and the fact that messages were not revisited. In an attempt to address these issues trainees now use an ongoing reflective journal to guide and document their progress for this aspect of their teaching throughout the year. The course input now builds up trainees’ knowledge over a series of sessions.

Another long-term task is using the local partnership between the University and school based mentors to ensure that trainees receive consistent messages and that mentors have the support they need in what is, for some of them, a new aspect of their professional role. It seems clear that the H.E institution could play a part in addressing some of the concerns still evident in school through further dialogues with mentors about diversity and EAL; this has been helped by the use of a specific reflective journal for all school placements but could be developed further.

The trainee feeling about EAL learners as they commenced the PGCE course could be exemplified by the question: “What if they don’t understand?” Trainees at the beginning of the course could only focus on communicating their teaching message. By the end of the year trainees had begun to notice that more than basic communication was important. However they were still unconscious of the influence of their own lack of cultural understanding. H.E providers need to find ways to ensure that by the end of the course the trainees no longer see
communication as travelling in one direction or separate from their own understanding of an individual’s context, needs and interests. To develop the self-awareness needed to become effective teachers of pupils from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, with clear pedagogy for these pupils, we need to assist trainees to ask of themselves, “How can I understand?”

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