



Age
8+

In the park

Context:

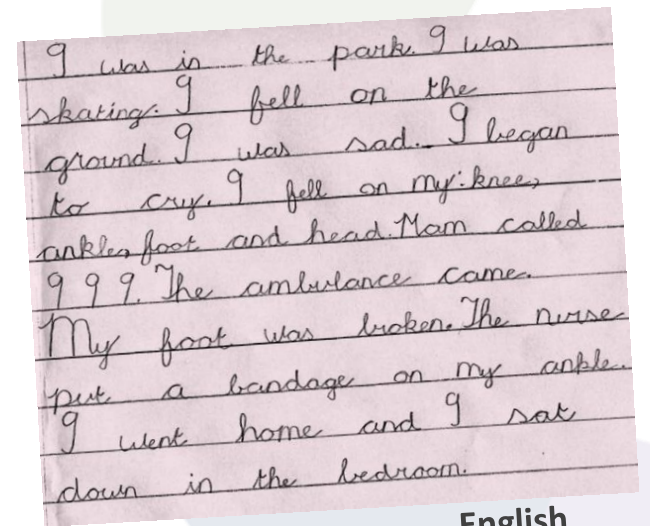
- A primary school in Dublin, Ireland. English is the language of schooling. The Irish language is a curricular subject that is taught in an integrated manner with English. The official *Primary School Curriculum* allocates 3.5 hours per week for the teaching of the Irish language at this age level.
- There are 36 children in this Third Class aged 8+. 30 of these children speak home languages other than English. Within this group there are 14 different language backgrounds.

Reasons for choosing the activity:

- The class teacher chooses the topic of accidents so that children can describe and explain various experiences they themselves may have had or are aware of in the lives of family or friends (→ relying on existing knowledge). It is, therefore, a topic that is meaningful to them (→ meaningful language learning).
- The teacher wants to expand the vocabulary and use of the Irish language in the class (→ language learning is a process). The lesson is introduced in the Irish language.

Description:

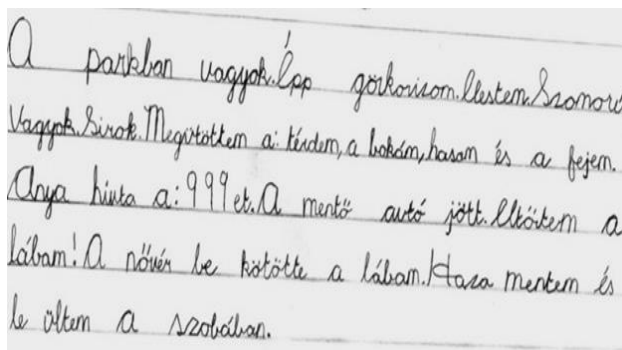
- The topic is introduced using existing and new vocabulary and phraseology to allow children to describe their experiences and ask questions based on the class discussion (→ language learning is a process).
- During the course of the lesson, the teacher encourages children to contribute from their own experiences and in their own languages (→ relying on existing linguistic repertoires). Doing this makes the topic much more relevant for all children (→ meaningful language learning) with the result that there is a greater degree of engagement on their part (→ active learning).
- In order to enhance their understanding of the topic, the teacher asks the children to write as homework, a short description in Irish of a real or imaginary accident.



English

Observation:

- Several children choose to write their homework in three languages, i.e. Irish, English, and their home language(s) (→ autonomous learning).
- Children's enthusiasm for writing in home languages creates an energy that is self-supporting for peers who are not native speakers of English.
- Writing homework in three languages becomes the norm for many young learners.
- Children engage autonomously in writing in all the languages they know simply because it pleases them to do so. The unofficial title for this work – devised by the children themselves – is 'Not Homework'.
- There is increased interest in, and use of, the Irish language for communication orally and in writing. English speakers begin using Irish for dual-language purposes (→ active language learning).
- Children help each other to learn additional languages that attract them (→ active language learning).

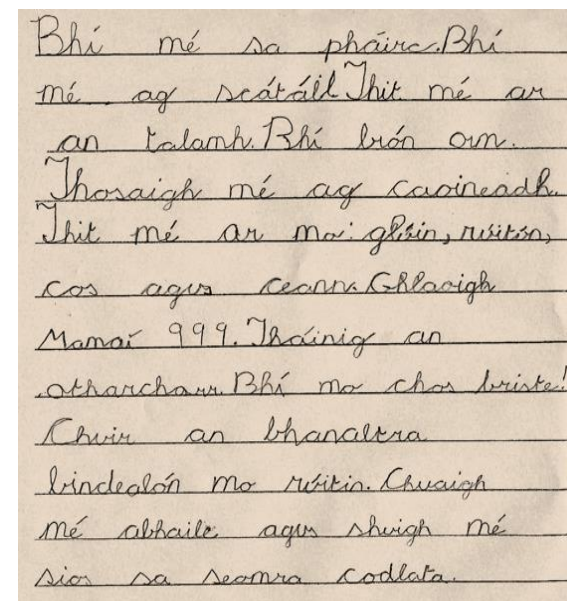


A parkban vagyok. Épp gyakorolom lestem. Szomorú vagyok. Szokt. Megittottam a kócsok, a bokor, a haram és a fejem. Anya kint a: 999 et. A mentő autó jött. Elköttem a lábam! A nővér be kötötte a lábam. Haza mentem és le ültem a szobában.

Hungarian

Variation:

- As there are no native speakers of Irish in the school, all children are learning Irish as an additional language. Irish creates a level pitch from which all children are learning and acts as a bonding agent for use of all the languages of the classroom including the language of schooling.
- **Language awareness** is an added bonus for all children regardless of their home languages. Encouraged by their teacher, young learners willingly offer linguistic insights concerning their home language(s), English and Irish.



Bhí mé sa pháirc. Bhí mé ag seachtáil. Thit mé ar an talamh. Bhí brón orm. Thosaigh mé ag scríobhadh. Thit mé ar mo ghleis, rúitín, cos agus ceann. Ghlaoigh Mamá 999. Tháinig an otharchair. Bhí mo char briste! Chuir an bhanaltra lincealón mo rúitín. Chuaigh mé abhaile agus shuigh mé síos sa seomra codlata.

Comments:

- Increasing interaction between all groups helps to cultivate social cohesion between individuals and groups in the classroom.
- Experience of a classroom environment where the languages and cultures of all children are valued, enables an atmosphere that supports increased interest and autonomy in children's learning.