



Tool 3 – Reflecting on the languages of the children in my class and in my school

Our classrooms and educational contexts are increasingly diverse and complex. Exploring what language or language varieties the children in our classroom and educational context know, speak, or understand will help us understand the variety of language learning pathways and knowledge that the children bring to our educational setting. This recognises that language learning is a socio-emotional process. This learning takes place both within and outside of the education system: in the home, with the family, in the community, as well as in the educational system.

Task: Explore the languages of the children in your classroom

What are the languages that the children in your class can speak?

... And how do you know?

How can you find out what language(s) or language varieties the children in your class or setting know?

What are the tools and mechanisms that you could use to ask the children to share their language (learning) experience within an educational setting?

For example:

- [Language portraits with children](#) – these can provide an indication of the languages that the children know and have experienced and [they view their own languages](#).
- The completion of a [language portfolio](#) or a [language biography](#).
- What information is provided through other mechanisms – for example the information provided by parents or through the official records?
- How can parents or family members be invited to share the experiences of the language and cultures of the children?