



The Open University

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## WELCOME

### INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON CHILD LANGUAGE BROKERING (TRANSLATING) IN SCHOOL

The purpose of this survey is to learn your views on language brokering by students in schools. Your participation is voluntary, and the results will only be used anonymously for research purposes. Completing this survey will take most people about 30 minutes.

If you interpreted or translated at school between two people who would not otherwise be able to communicate, you have brokered. Here are a few examples of brokering that we would be interested in:

- a) translating a notice brought home from school for your parents who don't know English well
- b) interpreting when your parents talk with a teacher or a teaching assistant or someone in a school office
- c) writing letters or notes related to school for your parents or other family members if they are unable to or uncomfortable with using English.

We want to learn about your experiences if you ever acted as a language broker in connection with your school. Please answer the questions below honestly and thoroughly. If you have never acted as a language broker in connection with your school, click on that button and do not proceed with the survey.

Any personal data collected during this survey will be retained only as long as is necessary to compile anonymised statistical data. After this process is complete all personal data will be destroyed in a secure manner. Cookies, personal data stored by your Web browser, are not used in this survey.

If you are happy to participate in this survey on that basis, please click 'continue' below to indicate your informed consent and move on to the first page of the survey.

- I have read the notes written above and understand what the study involves.
- I understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this project, I can cease work online and withdraw.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study.
- I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- I agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in this study.

[Continue >](#)

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**PART 1 YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH TRANSLATORS**

1. How often have you had a pupil who has translated in school for their parents who could not speak English? *(Optional)*

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

2. I have had pupils translate at school for:

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Formal meetings between myself and their parents, e.g. at parents' evenings				
b. Informal meetings between myself and their parents (e.g. at the beginning or end of the school day)				
c. For a new pupil from overseas who speaks little or no English				
d. Letters sent between school and home				
e. Other				

3. If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

4. Have any of your pupils ever translated for their parents about a very serious or sensitive matter, e.g. to do with special educational needs or moving school or planning for subject choices or a family/school problem? *(Optional)*

Yes No

If the answer to that question was Yes, please explain the circumstances briefly below: *(Optional)*

5. Have any of your pupils ever translated for other pupils who did not speak English? *(Optional)*

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Please give examples of the circumstances. *(Optional)*

6. Have any of your pupils ever translated for other parents who did not speak English? *(Optional)*

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Please give examples of the circumstances. *(Optional)*

7. Please indicate who your pupils have translated for at school:

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Mother				
b. Father				
c. Sibling				
d. Cousin				
e. Grandparent				
f. Other family members				
g. Friend				
h. Other				

8. If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

9. When pupils have translated at school it has been about:

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. The pupils themselves				
b. A sibling				
c. A cousin				
d. A friend				
e. Other				

10. If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

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## PART 2 REVIEWING YOUR EXPERIENCE

11. I have felt comfortable asking pupils to translate at school *(Optional)*

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

12. When I have felt comfortable asking pupils to translate at school it has been because:

Agree

Disagree

a. Lots of their friends do it			
b. It is normal in our school			
c. It is valued by people here			
d. They feel they are doing something useful			
e. I thought their English was good enough			
f. I thought their home language was good enough			
g. I felt they would understand the issues that were being discussed			
h. Other (please specify):			

13. If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

14. I have felt uncomfortable asking pupils to translate at school *(Optional)*

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

15. When I have felt uncomfortable asking pupils to translate at school it has been because:

	Agree	Disagree
a. It is unusual in our school		
b. It makes them stand out from others		
c. Most pupils' parents speak English		
d. It is not appreciated by people here		
e. I thought their English was not good enough		
f. I thought their home language was not good enough		
g. I felt they would not understand some of the issues that were being discussed		
h. Because the issue that was discussed was sensitive		
i. Other (please specify)		

16. If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

17. It has been suggested that the advantages of having children act as translators on behalf of their parents/peers at school include some of the following. For each one indicate whether, on the basis of your experience, you agree that this is one of the advantages.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know
a. Parents tend to prefer this arrangement to having a professional interpreter or a member of the school staff						

acting as translator						
<b>b.</b> Children tend to prefer this arrangement to having a professional interpreter or a member of the school staff acting as translator						
<b>c.</b> Parents seem to feel it is better to keep things within the family						
<b>d.</b> The child understands what their parents already know and what they need extra explanation about						
<b>e.</b> The child understands what their peers already know and what they need extra explanation about						
<b>f.</b> The child learns both languages better						
<b>g.</b> The child comes to understand both cultures better						
<b>h.</b> The child learns social and communication skills						
<b>i.</b> Other (please specify):						

**18.** If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

**19.** It has also been suggested that there are some disadvantages. For each of these indicate whether, on the basis of your experience, you agree that this is one of the disadvantages.

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>a.</b> Young people may not know one of the languages well enough so that they make translation errors						
<b>b.</b> The meeting may cover sensitive issues so that the child or the parents may be embarrassed						
<b>c.</b> The child may not want their parents to know about some negative things at school so that they deliberately play down what a teacher has said						
<b>d.</b> A child may not want to say negative things to their peers, so that they deliberately play down what the teacher has said						
<b>e.</b> The child may feel it is inappropriate to say boastful things about themselves so that they do not translate accurately when teachers praise them or describe their best achievements						

f. Translating at school for their family may impose excessive responsibilities on children so that they feel stressed or anxious						
g. Translating at school may take up children's time that would better be spent on other things						
h. The translator is in a position of power because no one else understands everything that is being said. That gives children too much power in relation to their parents						
i. Other (please specify):						

**20.** If you ticked 'other' above, please briefly tell us about your experiences. *(Optional)*

**21.** Have you ever had to ask a child to translate about something negative at school *(Optional)*

Yes No

If the answer to that question was Yes, please explain the circumstances briefly below: *(Optional)*

**22.** Have you ever had to ask a child to translate about something positive at school *(Optional)*

Yes No

If the answer to that question was Yes, please explain the circumstances briefly below. *(Optional)*

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**PART 3 COMPARING YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS**

**23.** Compare the feelings and thoughts of the teachers who are described below with how you yourself have felt when you have had a pupil act as a language broker or translator at school. Indicate how similar to you they are or how different.

	That is very like me	That is quite like me	That is not like me	I am not sure
a. Peter would have been happier to use a professional translator at school				
b. Fiona would rather have had a child translate for their family at school than use a professional translator				

c. Sam thought that it helps a child's parents learn English faster if their child translates for them at school				
d. Liz felt that translating at school gives children too many responsibilities too young				
e. Joel found it hard to put things in a way that his pupils could easily translate				
f. When a pupil was there to translate for their parents, Amanda felt uncertain who to look at and who to talk to.				
g. When a pupil acted as translator, Mike felt he was not in control of the situation.				
h. When a pupil acted as a translator, Francielle often felt that she could not trust them.				

**24.** Compare the young people who are described below with the young people who you yourself have experienced as translators at school. Indicate how many of those wh

	<b>That is like most of those I have observed</b>	<b>That is like some of those I have observed</b>	<b>None of my pupils was like this</b>	<b>I am not sure</b>
a. Pedro believed it was important to make an exact word for word translation of what the teacher and his parents said.				
b. Mandeep did not translate every word as she felt it was most important to explain to the person listening what she believed the person talking was trying to say.				
c. Tolu gave a short version of what was said so as not to waste everyone's time.				
d. When a teacher said something that Nawal did not quite understand, she always asked for an explanation so as to get it right in her home language.				
e. When a teacher said something that Marcela did not quite understand, she often felt embarrassed and pretended she had grasped what was meant.				
f. When Savas was translating at school, he usually tried to tell his parents what he thought they wanted to hear.				
g. When Rubia was translating what her parents say at school, she would often tell what she thought the teacher				

wanted to hear.				
<b>h.</b> When Ali was translating at school, he seemed to be embarrassed.				
<b>i.</b> Luca looked as if he hated translating for his parents.				
<b>j.</b> When Tugba was translating for her parents, she seemed to be proud to be helping.				
<b>k.</b> Mohammed and his parents operated like a team together when he was translating for them at school.				
<b>l.</b> When Maria was translating, she used to hide things from her parents that she did not want them to hear.				
<b>m.</b> When Kamamba was translating at school, he used to explain to his parents how the curriculum worked and what the school expected of him.				
<b>n.</b> When Rumana was translating for her parents at school, she seemed to be in charge and they were like children.				
<b>o.</b> When Danh was translating for his parents at school, they were always in charge and he followed their lead.				

**25.** Thinking back on your experiences at school indicate how far you agree with each of the following statements:

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>a.</b> Translating helps children learn English						
<b>b.</b> Translating helps children learn more of their first language						
<b>c.</b> I think children enjoy translating in school						
<b>d.</b> I feel proud of my pupils when they translate in school						
<b>e.</b> Translating makes children more independent and mature						
<b>f.</b> Children understand British culture better because they translate						
<b>g.</b> Children understand their first culture better because they translate						

h. I don't like it when children translate in school							
i. I am embarrassed when children have to translate in school							
j. Translating at school could be stressful							

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**PART 5 HOW CAN WE MAKE THINGS BETTER**

**26.** Choose your most memorable experience of child brokering - briefly describe this situation and why you found it memorable.  
*(Optional)*

**27.** Suggest **two** things that the school or the teachers could do which you think would improve the conditions for effective language brokering and translating in your school.

**First** *(Optional)*

**Second** *(Optional)*

**28.** Your name (which will not be divulged in any report of the study): *(Optional)*

**29.** Name of school (which will not be divulged in any report on the study); *(Optional)*

**30.** Gender:

Male Female

**31.** Age

**32.** No. of years' experience in teaching

**33.** Your country of birth

34. Country/countries where you attended school

If more than one, put in brackets after each country the age you started and finished school there.

35. Your parents' country/countries of origin:

36. What languages do you speak and understand in addition to English? (Please leave blank if not applicable).

	Please state language
a. Language 1	
b. Language 2	
c. Language 3	
d. Language 4	

37. How well do you **understand** these languages?

	I can understand language fluently	I can understand it fairly well	I can understand it a little
a. Language 1			
b. Language 2			
c. Language 3			
d. Language 4			

38. How well do you **speak** these languages?

	I can speak language fluently	I can speak it fairly well	I can speak it a little
a. Language 1			
b. Language 2			
c. Language 3			
d. Language 4			

39. Which if the following most closely describe your main duties in the school?

*(select all that apply)*

- Head teacher with no class teaching responsibilities
- Head teacher with some class teaching responsibilities

Member of senior management team with no class teaching responsibilities  
Member of senior management team with some class teaching responsibilities  
Secondary subject teacher with form tutor responsibilities  
Primary class teacher teaching mainly Key Stages 3-4  
Primary class teacher teaching mainly Key Stages 1-2  
SENCO  
Teacher of English as an additional language  
Other or a combination - Please explain your duties briefly:  
a. If you are a subject specialist, indicate the subject area(s) here: *(Optional)*

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b. If Other or a combination of the above - Please explain your duties briefly: *(Optional)*

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We will be aiming to have individual interviews in a personal meeting or by phone with a small number of adults who have taken part in this survey. Key areas that are identified from the survey as uncertain or important will be explored in greater depth in these interviews which will not last longer than 45 minutes.

**40.** Would you be willing to take part in an interview? *(Optional)*

Yes No

**41.** If you are willing to take part in an interview, please leave a contact email address so that we can arrange the interview  
*(Optional)*