Appendix 2 – A teacher's reflections on developing resources and appropriate strategies

Background situation

I must admit that within my everyday teaching I understood my role in "Embedding E&D" as using differentiation, meeting various learning styles and needs and discussing E&D when agreeing ground rules with my learners. I didn't feel I had the tools or confidence to take it further. I teach subjects such as Holiday French, Child Development and Entry Level Maths and English. Although I was aware that some of these subjects led to Equality and Diversity discussions, I believed that others like Holiday French didn't. I worried about making an Equality and Diversity activity seem parachuted into the lesson. This issue, as well as being met with disregard from learners who feel similar activities are irrelevant to the course they chose.   The 'did anyone watch the news last night? ', was a dreaded discussion starter that I didn't feel I could control. What if it went wrong and a strongly opinionated learner took over the debate or upset other people in the group. Not to mention the time constraint. When teaching I feel that every minute matters in helping my learners achieve their learning targets and this can stretch the time some activities are supposed to take.

Thankfully, I was fortunate to be asked to take part in the E&D project as it changed my perception of embedding E&D in teaching and learning.

Making a change in my teaching

First, I decided that regardless of the subject I am teaching, I will be making E&D an essential part of my teaching practice. I realised that it doesn't have to be part of a specific subject; it could be as simple as quick chat about the main news or an event in the E&D calendar. I am more focused now on raising learners' confidence within and beyond the learning environment, in exploring diversity. This includes, my learners asking me questions about my accent, where I come from, to talking about cultures and celebrations from around the world.

When teaching Arabic, my learners got to explore the language and culture of the Syrian refugees they met, as some were volunteers. They learnt about history, food, celebrations and traditions from different Arabic speaking countries and were encouraged to have open-minded discussions that challenged the stereotyping of Arabic speaking individuals. They became more aware of the diversity of these individuals and how stereotyping can hinder their integration and everyday life.

I now make more of an effort to listen/ watch the news so I am aware of current affairs nationally and around the world. I knew for a fact that I had to strip my mind of any pre-existing stereotypes or judgments. I noticed that having an open mind and confidence in my ability and knowledge, is helping me pave the way for my learners to start a positive discussion as well as keeping the debate under control.

As I mentioned above, I was worried about the reaction of learners who pay for this course and see as the means to learn a language to use on their holiday to Paris. On the first session, I wanted to raise my learners' knowledge of countries where French was spoken. I provided a quiz in which they had to tick names of French speaking countries. To their surprise this list included a lot of African countries as well as North African and Asian. This led to discussing how diverse France is with citizens from individuals from different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds and how this enriches the image of France. I showed the learners a video presenting second generation French Algerian family members talking about how they viewed themselves as proud French citizens but

how they felt their Algerian roots and culture co-exist with their French ones. This led to learners debating the latest news and terrorism in France and they raised the point that stereotyping must be an everyday challenge for families and individuals like the ones in the video.

In addition, I am aware that being from a different culture and background might hinder the way I use resources and how representative they could be of my learners. When teaching French this term, I made sure that among resources and references I used there are illustrations that the students will be able to identify with. For example, on the "About me" session, the learners were encouraged to talk about themselves and introduce their families. I ensured I represented all the individuals in the nationality game with famous people from different countries and gender. I also provided my learners with flashcards with key E&D vocabulary and definition in the target language: "Egalité", "LGBT", "Famille Homoparentale", etc. They managed to match these in groups discussing the meaning and were surprised by the similarity to English when reading these. To their surprise some weren't familiar with the definitions even in English. A learner however made it clear he didn't need to learn this vocabulary and that it won't help him "order a beer" and made a joke about the barman "might as well hit me with his handbag". I challenged the learner's comment straightway stating that this is offensive stereotyping of gay individuals and that as mentioned in the induction, discriminatory comments are not acceptable. I also explained that people in the group are about to talk about themselves and their families and that we have to keep an open mind and embrace the diversity of families come in different types than the stereotypical ones: same sex couples, same sex parents, single parents ect. After this, I provided my learners with bingo card where they had to get to know the other individuals in the group then introduce them to the rest of the group. This gave the learner who made the previous comments the opportunity to talk to and then respectfully introduce two learners who are wives/ same sex couple. I believe that this session made him reflect on his comments towards individuals who may be different from the norm.

Moreover, I feel that I am more confident in grabbing learning opportunities within the subject I am teaching to raise awareness of E&D within the group. When teaching Child Development I felt that a learner speaking English as a Second language was dismissed by the rest of the other English speaking learners. I observed their behaviour and noticed that the learners assumed she was abrupt and rude the way she interacted with the rest of the group. As I was teaching communication and language Development, I included a discussion around barriers to communication. I gave the learners a scenario and basic words to use in French and five minutes to practice. I then put some learners on the spot. Under pressure; the learners; some with basic prior knowledge of French and some not, struggled to respond. I then asked them to reflect on the way they spoke, their tone, their body language and how they felt. They all agreed on feeling nervous, stupid, frustrated and that they used their body language, facial expressions and gestures more than they would normally in English. Their tone went higher when nervous too. When asked what could have made the experience more favourable to them, they suggested for the other person to be more patient, getting more notice and thinking time and not being put on the spot. They also came to the conclusion that to a French speaker they may seem ill-mannered or rude but that is them trying to get a point across in a different language. I finally explained that the point of this activity is, to raise awareness of the communication barriers to individuals; children or adults; to whom English is a foreign or second language.

Finally, when teaching E3 English to a young learner on the autistic spectrum, I found myself as a teacher being stereotyped because of my accent and my appearance. On the first session, I

planned a drawing activity to get to know my learner and vice versa. I drew the map of Tunisia, wrote my name in Arabic and wrote je m'appelle Amel in French and my name is Amel in English. I also drew symbols of likes/ dislikes in front of hobbies and food. When asking the learner what he learnt about me from the drawing he said you speak French. By he couldn't identify Arabic so I helped him with this and showed him his name in Arabic. He said I was Pakistani or Afghani. When asked why he thought that he said because of your accent and your hair. He continued that I look like one of the. I showed my learner where Tunisia is on the map and the distance from Pakistan and Afghanistan, and they are on two different continents. I learnt that my learner lacked awareness of the diversity of individuals who live in Britain but come from different backgrounds. Therefore, I planned an E&D quiz for the next session with pictures of people from Tunisia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and Syria. The visuals show individuals, from different ages, genders, backgrounds etc. I haven't had a chance to use this yet, as due to my learner's challenging needs the activity had to be postponed. I am hoping that he will be able to match the pictures with names of nationalities and take part in a discussion on various cultures, language and beliefs. This can be extended into encouraging my learner to research and create a brief article about a country he is not familiar with.

Findings from my experiment

I believe that this project has been a learning curve for me. It challenged my perception of embedding E&D as the dreaded shore added to my workload. I see it as a way to be creative and bring interesting points to the sessions. I am not scared of bringing up discussions as they are an excellent tool to raise awareness of Equality issues and promote celebration of diversity within the learning environment and beyond. This also created a more positive environment for learning. I also learnt that talking to colleagues, doing some research and reading articles opened my mind to different ways of embedding it to teaching and learning.

Next steps

I am confident of my role as a facilitator but aware of the need to carry on learning to keep up to date with changes, events and tools. For example, I haven't managed to use Padlet yet and this is due to my lack of ICT skills. This is definitely something I need to work on as it could be a brilliant tool for my learners too and not to mention benefiting from shared practice. I will seek further development opportunities to improve my skills in embedding E&D as I feel it is a learning process and not all activities I planned will be a success. More importantly, I will strive to challenge myself not to fall into stereotypical attitudes and be a role model for promoting equality and diversity in my everyday practice.

Research Evidence:

E&D Flashcards French

E3 English E&D handout

Beginners French:

LGBT	Acronyme pour personnes Lesbiennes, Gaies, Bisexuelles, Transsexuexuelles / Transgenres et Queers.
Homophobie	Attitude négative pouvant mener à la discrimination directe ou indirecte envers les lesbiennes, les personnes bisexuelles, transsexuelles et transgenres. Ou à l'égard de toutes personnes dont l'apparence ou comportement ne se conforme pas aux stéréotypes masculins ou féminins.
Diversité	Promouvoir l'inclusion continue des personnes d'âges, de capacités, d'origines ethniques, de religions, d'identités de genre et d'orientations sexuelles différentes.
Famille homoparentale	Famille dans laquelle un ou plus d'un parent s'identifie comme étant homosexuel.