Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years

Unit 1
Planning and assessment for language and learning

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Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years

Unit 1

Planning and assessment for language and learning

Defining terms

EAL stands for English as an additional language and recognises the fact that many children learning English in schools in this country already know one or more other languages and are adding English to that repertoire.

Bilingual is used to refer to those children who have access to more than one language at home and at school. It does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all of their languages.

Advanced learner of EAL is a term used by Ofsted to describe children who have had considerable exposure to English and are no longer in the early stages of English language acquisition. These are children, often born in this country, who appear to be fluent in ordinary everyday conversational contexts, but who require continued support in order to develop the cognitive and academic language necessary for educational success.

Minority ethnic group is used in this publication for all those groups other than the white British majority. Although children from these groups may well form the majority in some school contexts, they are still members of groups in a minority nationally and will continue to be referred to as children from minority ethnic groups. Most children learning EAL are from minority ethnic groups. School Census data shows that only a very small percentage of EAL learners are white.

Acknowledgements

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Preface

This publication aims to support schools and settings in promoting the progress and achievement of all learners.

It is underpinned by the three principles of the National Curriculum inclusion statement:

- Setting suitable learning challenges

- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs

- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The Primary National Strategy model of three circles of inclusion illustrates these three principles in practice, and has been used to ensure that this publication will support the learning of children with diverse needs.
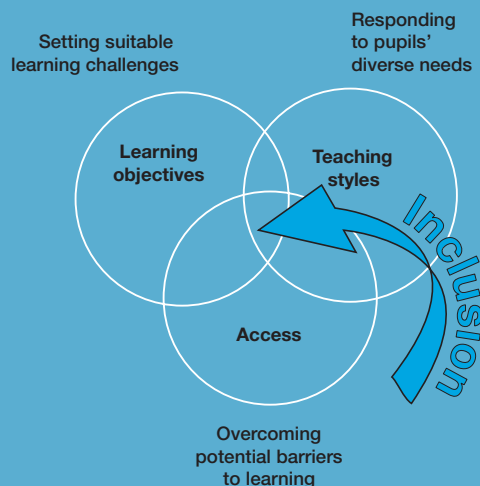
Teachers will need to further adapt the materials for individual children. Some examples of how teachers who have used the materials have done this for their classes have been provided. These are examples only – the particular choice of appropriate learning objectives, teaching styles and access strategies lies with the informed professionalism of the teacher, working with teaching assistants, other professionals, parents/carers and the child.

General introduction

This is Unit 1 of a set of materials: *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years.*

The materials consist of the following:

> **Introductory guide: supporting school improvement**
>
> Unit 1: **Planning and assessment for language and learning**
>
> Unit 2: **Creating the learning culture: making it work in the classroom**
>
> Unit 3: **Creating an inclusive learning culture**
>
> Unit 4: **Speaking, listening, learning: working with children learning English as an additional language**
>
> **Professional development modules** (PDMs) linked to the units and designed to support school-based CPD
>
> Three fliers: **First language for learning**, **ICT for EAL** and **Information for school governors**
>
> A '**route map**' providing an overview of and some guidance for using these materials
>
> A **CD-ROM** containing a variety of additional materials which are referred to throughout the pack
>
> A **DVD** providing some exemplification, particularly of the material related to speaking and listening
>
> An apple symbol is used to highlight practical strategies for teachers.

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Section 1 Designing opportunities for learning

Introduction

Personalised learning means adapting education provision to meet the needs and aspirations of individual children. It is not about individualised learning but about building independence through interaction, intervention, stimulation and collaboration. This interaction can accelerate children's progress beyond what they can do alone.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, Creating a learning culture: Classroom, community, collaborative and personalised learning (DfES 0518-2004 G)

Pedagogic approaches

Pedagogic approaches are influenced by beliefs about how children learn, the context in which the learning is to take place (including the wider social and political context) and the purpose of the learning. Most teachers and practitioners use a range of pedagogic approaches, including direct, inductive, exploratory, experiential, enquiry and problem-solving approaches as well as social or relationship approaches (such as role-play or simulations). However, research has shown that particular approaches are most effective in supporting different kinds of learning. Part of professional knowledge and expertise is in matching appropriate pedagogic approaches to learning needs.

Inclusive pedagogy

Planning learning experiences and matching teaching approaches to children's learning needs is at the heart of personalised learning and is inclusive of all children. However, there are further factors that will influence the pedagogic approaches adopted by teachers when planning for specific groups of children.

EAL pedagogy

Research over the past two decades into the development of young bilingual learners has resulted in the development of a number of theories and principles which underpin the distinctive pedagogy for children who are learning EAL – children for whom the additional language being learned is also the medium of education.

The development of EAL pedagogy has been influenced by social constructivist theories and those which highlight the importance of socio-cultural and emotional factors.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, Creating a learning culture: Classroom community, collaborative and personalised learning (DfES 0518-2004 G)

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EAL pedagogy

A distinctive pedagogy for children learning EAL has emerged as a result of the development of theory, principles and knowledge derived from research over the past two decades into the language and learning of young bilinguals. The work of Cummins, and that of Collier and Thomas, has been particularly influential in the development of this pedagogy. Mainstream educationalists whose theories of learning have been influential in the development of EAL pedagogy include:

- Vygotsky for work on language and conceptual development, socially constructed knowledge and 'zone of proximal development';

- Bruner for work on the link between higher-order language functions and thinking and learning skills;

- Maslow for recognising the importance of socio-cultural factors: all children need a sense of belonging; they need to feel safe and valued in order to learn.

A visual image, adapted from the work of Collier (Thomas and Collier 1997), can be used to describe the main interrelated factors that define the learning situation for children learning EAL as they operate within the classroom or setting. At the heart of the process is the child learning EAL with his or her first language, previous experience of learning, aptitude and learning style. The learners will be affected by attitudes taken to them, their culture, language, religion and ethnicity within the school, beyond the school and in the wider world. Learners' social and cultural experiences will impact on their progress in language acquisition as well as on their cognitive and academic development.

Language development

Socio-cultural

The EAL learner

processes

Cognitive development

Academic development
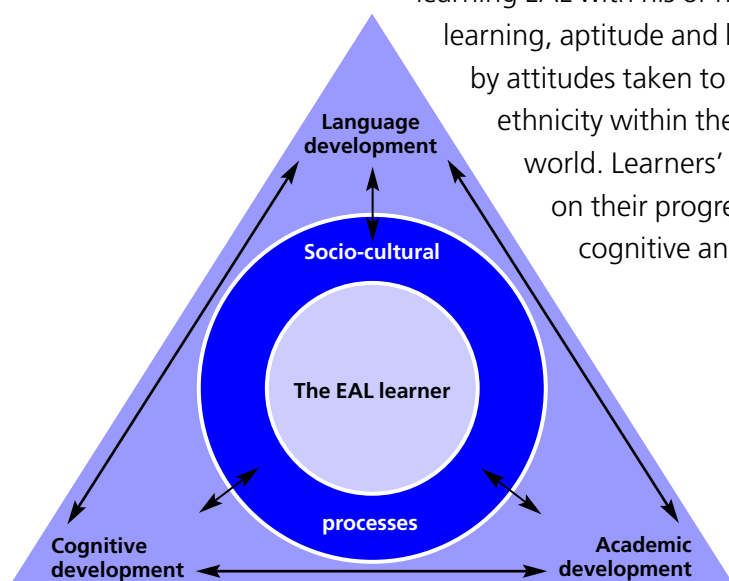
Acquiring EAL in the Primary School Context: adapted from Thomas and Collier (1997)

Cummins, a Canadian educationalist and researcher, has developed theories and models which help us to look at the interplay between language development and the cognitive and academic domain. Cummins adopted the metaphor of an iceberg to distinguish between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive and academic language proficiency (CALP).

BICS

Basic
Interpersonal
Communicative
Skill

CALP

Cognitive and
Academic
Language
Proficiency
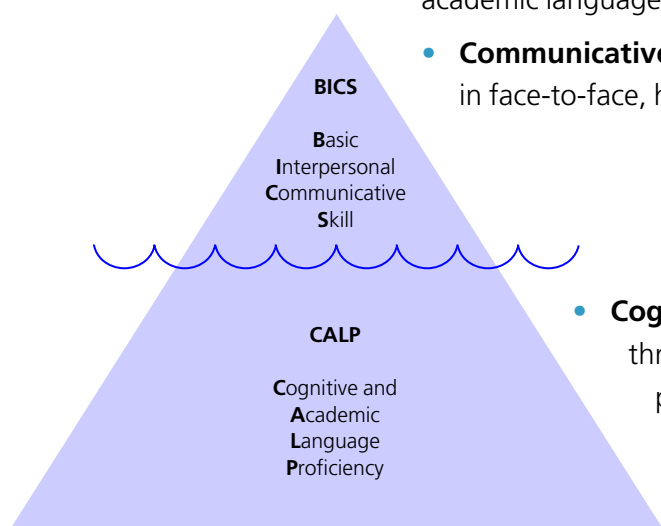
- **Communicative language** (conversational fluency) develops first in face-to-face, highly contextualised situations.

- **Cognitive language** is the language which develops through investigating, exploring ideas and solving problems. Cognitive development accompanies the use of language for purposes such as classifying, analysing, hypothesising and generalising as well as the ability to use abstract language.

- **Academic language** is characterised by the use of the passive voice, ideas and concepts as agents, vocabulary with Greek or Latin roots, use of metaphor and personification and, most importantly, nominalisations (abstract nouns made from verbs and other parts of speech), such as *information* from *inform* and *hunger* from *hungry*.

The ability to use language for academic purposes together with cognitive development (the development of thinking and learning skills) is the key to realising educational potential.

All children develop communicative language (that is, conversational skills) first, but take longer to develop the language that contributes to educational success. Cummins acknowledged that some interpersonal communication can impose considerable cognitive demands on a speaker and that academic situations may also require social communication skills but, generally speaking, children learning an additional language can become conversationally fluent in the new language in two to three years. It takes on average five to seven years, often longer – and some bilingual learners can take as long as ten years – to catch up with monolingual peers in the development of cognitive and academic language proficiency. The distinction between these two types of language and their rates of development is recognised in the Ofsted framework for inspecting EAL in primary schools.

It takes on average five to seven years to become fully competent in a second language, although individuals will vary in the speed with which they acquire this competence. Fluency in spoken English is usually achieved within two years but the ability to read and understand more complex texts containing unfamiliar cultural references and write the academic language needed for success in examinations takes much longer.

Inspecting subjects 3–11: English as an additional language (Ofsted 2000)

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The continuing and significant role of the bilingual child's first language

Cummins' work also highlights the important role of the first language in the child's learning and in their acquisition of additional languages. Those who have developed cognitive and academic language proficiency (CALP) in their first language can transfer much of this learning to additional languages. The diagram below illustrates how a well-developed first language (L1) powerfully supports the acquisition of additional languages. As children deepen their knowledge of their first language and learn to use it for cognitively demanding tasks they develop linguistic proficiency common to all languages.

Surface features L1

Surface features L2

CALP L1

CALP L2

Common underlying proficiency
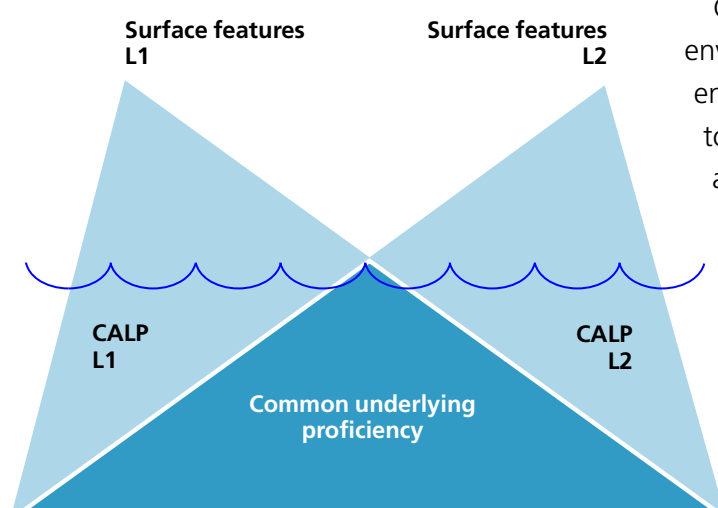
Children who move into a new language environment at an early age can benefit enormously if they are given opportunities to continue to develop their first language alongside English, using both languages for cognitively demanding tasks.

There is considerable evidence that bilingualism can benefit overall intellectual progress where both languages continue to develop and children feel that they are adding English to their language repertoire. How children feel about their languages and, more importantly, what they believe to be the attitude of their teachers to their languages is hugely significant (Cummins 2000). Even where no peers or adults share a first language with a child it is important that the child knows his or her first language skills are recognised and valued.

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Where bilingual approaches are employed, it is important that the first language is not used only when communication has broken down or just to interpret the occasional 'difficult' word. For conceptual development to occur, children need opportunities to hear and use extended stretches of the language.

It is sound educational practice to build on what children know and can do. When this is applied to the use of bilingual strategies, it means building on the language children know best and planning, where possible, for children to meet new learning first in their strongest language. It is more supportive to move from the familiar language into English. Children who already know broadly what they are going to hear in the new language will have 'hooks' on which to hang their new learning (see Unit 2 pages 14–17 for bilingual strategies).

Careful consideration of contexts can support bilingual learners in meeting the demands placed upon them in the classroom or setting. Tasks can be made more, or less, supportive depending on the extent to which they are embedded in a supportive context.

Ways to make contexts more supportive include:

- ensuring that children are able to build on their previous experience;

- scaffolding tasks;

- providing carefully planned opportunities to listen and speak in a wide range of situations across the curriculum.

These strategies are explored further in Unit 2 Creating the learning culture: making it work in the classroom.

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Key messages

- Socio-cultural and affective factors are important. EAL learners will be affected by the attitudes they encounter around them.
  - They need to feel secure, valued and understood.
  - They need to know their first language is valued.
  - Anxiety levels need to be kept low and expectations kept high.
  - Curriculum contexts should be relevant and motivating.

- Children's apparent fluency in English (BICS) may mask their lack of cognitive and academic language proficiency (CALP).

- The first language has an important and continuing role in the acquisition of additional language: knowledge, concepts and cognitive skills developed in one language readily transfer to another.

- Tasks can be made more or less supportive by ensuring that children are able to build on their previous experience, by scaffolding and, crucially, by providing carefully planned opportunities to listen and speak in a wide range of situations across the curriculum.

Note: Unit 3 of the materials, together with the accompanying PDMs, provides further support.

Language across the curriculum

Each of the subjects of the National Curriculum presents particular linguistic challenges for children learning EAL. However, the broad curriculum also potentially offers an ideal context for the learning of an additional language.

Not only does each subject have its own unique vocabulary which will be acquired only where the child has a reason to use it and/or a need to understand it, but each subject presents the opportunity to further develop, use and apply the language structures appropriate for different purposes.

Teaching writing: material for text level objectives (DfES 0532/2001) available on the accompanying CD-ROM
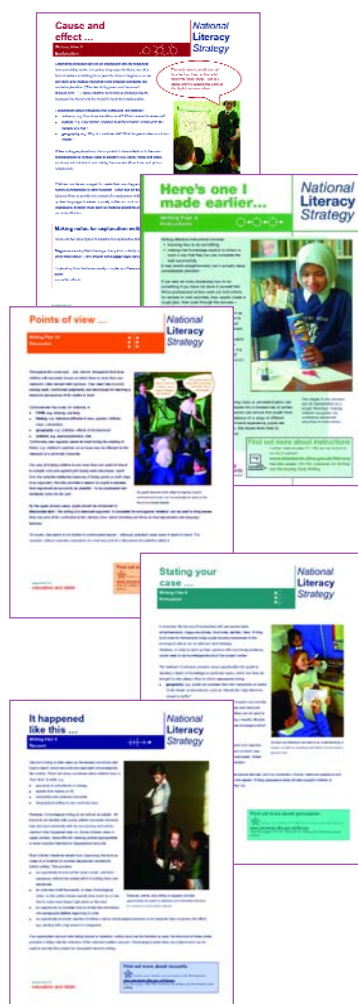
Examples from a range of subject areas

Literacy

Primary Framework, 2006:
Learning objectives for each year have been identified and grouped into speaking and listening, reading and writing objectives under three main headings:

- Speak and listen for a wide range of purposes in different contexts
- Read a wide range of texts on print and on screen
- Write a wide range of texts on paper and screen

These headings present the 'big picture' for literacy and language learning in the primary phase and enable a closer match with the National Curriculum programme of study for English. It is important, while recognising the specific learning under these distinct headings, to continue to see how these areas interrelate in learning and teaching communication, language and literacy.

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> Literacy should be at the heart of curriculum planning so that the subject matter from other curriculum areas is available as content or stimulus for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Equally, skills acquired in the literacy lesson should be applied during the rest of the school day.

Literacy offers many opportunities for children to hear and use language for a range of purposes, as well as to develop metalanguage to talk about their reading and writing. Aspects of fiction and non-fiction present specific opportunities and challenges for children to develop abstract language to talk about language, for example, persuasion and story resolution.

Fiction and non-fiction also provide opportunities to develop and use specific kinds of language such as figurative language including imagery, metaphorical language and similes (see also page 19); idioms such as *have green fingers*, *keep it under your hat*; euphemisms such as those used in advertisements by estate agents *lots of potential and scope for modernisation, compact*; and humour. Reading and writing fiction as well as non-fiction involves use of time (*first*), logical (*therefore*) and causal (*because*) connectives; in addition writing fiction involves use of connectives to draw attention (*meanwhile*) and inject suspense (*suddenly*). For further information refer to Unit 2 of these materials and *Grammar for Writing* (DfEE 0107/2000).

Mathematics

> **Primary Framework, 2006:**
> Seven strands of learning in mathematics have been identified, giving a broad overview of the mathematics curriculum in the primary phase
>
> The seven strands relate very readily to the 1999 Framework and the programmes of study in the National Curriculum Orders for mathematics. Covering the objectives in the seven strands will ensure children reach the Early Learning Goals and the appropriate National Curriculum levels at Key stages 1 and 2.
>
> *continued*

The seven strands are:

- Use and apply mathematics

- Count, compare and order numbers, and describe relationships between them

- Secure knowledge of number facts which can be recalled quickly and used and applied appropriately

- Calculate efficiently and accurately

- Position and transform shapes, recognising and using their properties to visualise and construct

- Measure accurately using appropriate units, interpret and compare scales

- Process, present and interpret data to pose and answer questions.

Mathematics offers opportunities to develop cognitive language as well as subject-specific vocabulary which sometimes carries a different meaning to that of everyday language (e.g. *table*, *point*).

- Children will learn a range of ways to talk about calculations including:

  (X) add (Y) equals, (X) plus (Y) makes, What is the sum of … ? What is the total of … ? How many are there altogether? What is the difference between … ? Subtract (X) from (Y), (X) times (Y) equals … , (X) lots of … /sets of … , Divide (X) by (Y), Count, partition, estimate.

- Problem solving provides opportunities for children to use modal verbs such as *might*, *could* or *couldn't* and *must* to reason and predict.

- Learning about shape and space offers opportunities to use the language of comparison: *longer*, *longest*, *heavier than*; and positional language: *over*, *next to*, *on*, *to the left of*, *in the middle* and so on.

- Data handling and interpretation provides opportunities for children to formulate questions as well as interpret and explain findings.

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- To explain the strategies and reasoning used, children need to use logical connectives such as *if … then …* , *therefore* and *because*; and time connectives such as *first*, *next*, *after that* and *finally* to sequence their explanation.

- Oral and mental work in mathematics provides opportunities for modelling, rehearsing and using the language of mathematics.

Where children work collaboratively in mathematics they will be:

- verbalising their thoughts;

- reasoning;

- explaining.

They will talk together to make decisions about:

- which operations to use;

- which methods are appropriate;

- any equipment that may be useful;

- how to record and communicate their findings.

History

History requires the use of causal reasoning. Children need to use *so* and *because* in order to explain why things happened or why they were as they were.

Recounting events in the past requires the use of the past tense, for example:

- the simple past tense: *Akbhar was a Mughal Emperor who ruled in northern India when Elizabeth I was the Queen of England*;

- for regular occurrences in the past: *In the nineteenth century wealthy Indians used to come to England to study*;

- the passive form, using the past participle: *The Pharoahs were buried with many possessions*.

By upper Key Stage 2 children will explore controversies in history, such as whether a country was right to go to war, and learn to present a balanced argument. *We cannot be sure about … because … . This source suggests that … . On the one hand … . on the other hand … . We have different views today about … .*

Working with primary sources offers a wide range of oral language development opportunities including:

- contrasting old maps of the locality with present-day ones: *There were fields near our school then. There was no mosque there 60 years ago*;

- interpreting and explaining scenes in photographs: *I think that might have been used to wash clothes*;

- comparing newspaper reports: *In this report it says … but in this one it doesn't mention that at all. You can tell this writer thought slavery was wrong because it says, 'those poor negroes' but in this report it says the slaves were happy*;

- exploring feelings and perceptions in face-to-face interviews, for example (programme of study on 'Britain since the 1930s'):

  How did you feel when you heard Jewish children weren't allowed to go to school any more?
  Did you think you'd ever go back to Poland?

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Geography

Geography offers opportunities to develop descriptive language including:

- the use of the simple present tense: *Rivers meander across their flood plains towards the sea*;

- the language of classification with present tense verbs and category nouns for describing: *The Sahara and the Kalahari are both hot deserts. Traffic lights and post-boxes are types of street furniture*;

- the language of comparison when looking at photographs of the local area and similar scenes in, for example, towns in Pakistan: *Although the streets in both towns are full of traffic, the vehicles in Jhelum are different from the vehicles in … .*

Science

In science, children are encouraged to question, analyse, respond to and record aspects of the world around them. When working in small groups during practical and investigative activities, children communicate with each other about what they are doing, how they are doing it, what they observe, why they think things are happening in a particular way and what they think may happen, using language for a wide range of purposes. For example:

- to formulate questions and hypothesise: *I wonder what will happen if we … ? Would that happen every time/even if … ? Let's try this pin next to see if the magnet attracts it. Could yoghurt be made from skimmed as well as full-cream milk?*

- to classify: *The wires are made of metal and so is the nail. That rubber isn't though …*

- to compare: *Is that the same? No, it's longer.*

- to generalise: *Magnets attract metal.*

- to predict and challenge predictions: *I think if you move that lever up and down, the light will go on and off. I think it will work if you do it the other way around.*

- to hypothesise: *I think electricity goes through metal.*

- to evaluate and reflect: *How many times did it work? We tried two ways. We could've tried some more*.

- to describe a procedure: *Heat the water … , Plant the seeds 5 cm apart*.

- to sequence events logically in a recount or explanation: *First … , Next … , At the same time …*

- to link cause and effect: *This led to … , As a result … .*

Teaching children about nominalisation (nouns formed from other parts of speech) and modelling the use of scientific nouns formed from verbs supports the development of technical scientific vocabulary. Reporting back following practical activities provides opportunities for children to use this vocabulary: *We were investigating magnetic attraction. These were our predictions. Evaporation occurred.*

Poetry, art and music

Poetry, art and music offer opportunities for children to express a wide range of feelings and to develop emotive and figurative language including imagery, metaphorical language and use of similes: *I like/love/enjoy … ; I prefer this. It reminds me of Romania. Pungent, orange turmeric. The city, alive under its night-time cloak. A tapestry of sounds. Skin like burnished copper. It makes me feel calm. It sounds like the ocean. The rapper roared out rhymes over a rumbling bass*.

PE and design and technology

PE and design and technology afford opportunities for the use of instructional language including imperative verb forms, prepositions and adverbial phrases used for precision and time connectives: *First choose two teams. … . The game ends when … . Place one piece of balsa wood across the other to make a cross*. They also provide oportunities for using the language of evaluation: *This kite flies better than that one because*… .

PSHE and citizenship

There are opportunities across the curriculum, for example, in English, humanities and particularly in PSHE, for children to learn:

- to recognise when language is being used to stereotype, control and manipulate;

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- to use language to resist bias and prejudice, affirm their identities and assert themselves;

- to understand how language shapes the way we see the world;

- to reflect critically on language use in the media and in texts.

   Examples of these kinds of opportunities include:

- looking at word connotations in contrasting media portrayals of refugees, for example, *scroungers flooding into the country, people fleeing from terrible situations and seeking sanctuary*;

- recognising that a secondary source in history, which tells us in those days people did not think there was anything wrong with slavery, is biased because it omits the perspective of at least one group of people, that of those enslaved.

   It is important to remember that these discussions may be particularly and personally relevant to children from minority ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds and need to be managed sensitively.

   Circle time, role-play, puppets and dolls all afford opportunities for children to develop the language they need in order to acknowledge, talk about and manage personal feelings: *When Zilan plays with my brother I feel jealous* and to empathise with others: *I think he feels lonely*.

   Note: See also *Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning* (DfES 0110-2005 G).
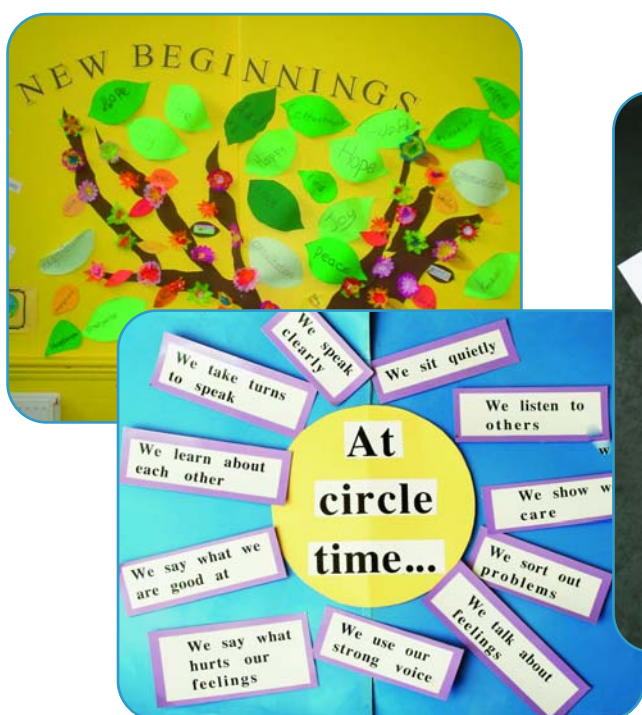
Talk as process and talk as presentation

Different subject areas will offer particular opportunities for different types of talk.

> Barnes (1976) distinguishes between two kinds of talk – 'process talk' and 'presentational talk'. In 'presentational talk' the child gives a prepared reply or exposition, however brief. It is public and intended for a listening audience, often the teacher or practitioner. 'Process talk' is very different. It is exploratory talk concerned with working things out. It is often tentative and uses speculation and hypothesis. Shared understandings can be developed.
>
> *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years,* Creating a learning culture: Classroom, community, collaborative and personalised learning (DfES 0518-2004 G)

Process talk may be thought of as 'first draft' talk where ideas are thought through collaboratively. It is characterised by half-formulated sentences, hesitations and back-tracking. It takes place in a context of real time and space and involves face-to-face communication. Where talk is exploratory and accompanies a practical, investigative or problem-solving activity, this supports the development of cognitive language linked to the development of key aspects of learning.

Talk as process includes:

- social interaction – getting to know others;
- sharing ideas, feelings, opinions;
- discussion and decision making while creating or constructing;
- exploratory talk during inquiry, investigation, problem solving;
- formulating questions and responding;
- interviewing – each other, 'real' people or in role;
- giving directions or instructions;

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- talk during various types of joint text construction activities including 'Dictogloss' (described in Unit 2 page 43);

- 'information gap' activities, where each child has only part of the information he or she requires, and needs to communicate to complete a task. Barrier games, described in Unit 2 pages 86–89, are one example of this kind of communicative activity;

- exploratory talk while using ICT;

- reflective talk during a plenary or review session.

Talk as presentation includes:

- oral reports about characters, the behaviours and attributes of living and non-living things;

- retelling and recounting – fact and fiction;

- explanations of how and why;

- formal debating;

- reporting back following inquiry, investigation, or problem solving;

- drama and recitation.

The continuum from situation-embedded 'process' talk through to written language

The four texts below clearly show the continuum from situation-embedded 'process' talk (Text 1) through to written language (Text 4).

In the first text the speakers are face to face and do not need to name the things they are talking about. They have the benefit of a visual context. It is unlikely that a person not present at the time would understand this text. The further away from an immediate context the talk is, the more the speaker has to make explicit the things to which he or she is referring.

In the second text the talk becomes 'talk as presentation'. It refers to something that happened in the past. The experience must be recreated through language alone. The context must be complete. There is an increase in the use of technical vocabulary. Gradually the features of these texts become more like those of a recount or a report.

Text 1: (spoken by three 10-year-old children with accompanying action) This … no, it doesn't go … it doesn't move … try that … yes, it does … a bit … that won't … won't work, it's not metal … these are the best … going really fast.

Text 2: (spoken by one child about the action after the event) We tried a pin … a pencil sharpener … some iron filings and a piece of plastic … the magnet didn't attract the pin.

Text 3: (written by the same child) Our experiment was to find out what a magnet attracted. We discovered that a magnet attracts some kinds of metal. It attracted the iron filings, but not the pin.

Text 4: (taken from a child's encyclopaedia) A magnet … is able to pick up, or attract, a piece of steel or iron because its magnetic field flows into the magnet, turning it into a temporary magnet. Magnetic attraction occurs only between ferrous materials.

Pauline Gibbons (2002)
Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning

The further away from an immediate context the talk is, the more it demands of both listener and speaker.

Key messages

EAL learners have to learn a new language while learning through the medium of that new language. To ensure they reach their potential, learning and teaching approaches must be deployed that ensure both access to the curriculum at a cognitively appropriate level and maximum language development.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, Planning and assessment for learning: Designing opportunities for learning (DfES 0520-2004 G)

- Children learning EAL need to learn more than just vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. They must learn to use their whole language repertoire appropriately for a range of different purposes.

- The subjects of the National Curriculum make distinct demands on children's linguistic resources and offer distinct language development opportunities.

- It is useful to distinguish between talk as process and talk as presentation: EAL learners need carefully planned opportunities for both.

- The further away from an immediate context the talk is, the more the speaker has to make explicit the things to which he or she is referring.

- Decontextualised talk makes greater demands on the linguistic resources of speakers and listeners.

Planning for children learning EAL

Planning for EAL learners will be most effective when:

- it is part of the whole school and the whole class approach and is embedded in the usual planning format;

- it takes account of the language demands of the curriculum – both the subject-specific vocabulary and the appropriate language forms associated with the content;

- contexts for learning are relevant, motivating and culturally inclusive;

- it provides opportunities for speaking and listening, collaborative work and other strategies for language development;

- the role of additional adults with EAL expertise and/or bilingual skills is clearly indicated, and they are involved in the planning process or have plans shared with them at the earliest opportunity;

- consideration is given to the language demands of the task, how the children are grouped, use of first language for learning and how both language learning and language use will be assessed.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years,
Planning and assessment for learning: Designing opportunities for learning
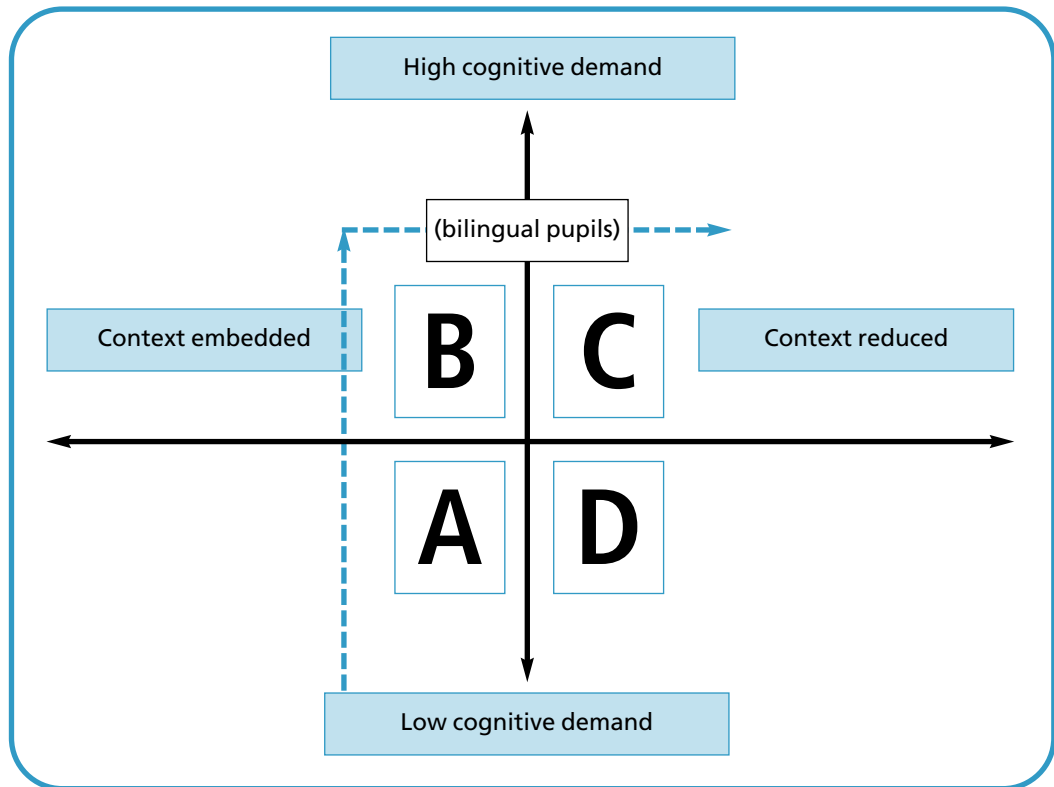(DfES 0520-2004 G)

Setting suitable learning challenges

Cummins noted that when children learning EAL were experiencing difficulty with particular tasks, teachers sometimes felt they had no alternative but to make the tasks easier. This resulted in children doing work which did not stretch them.

As a response to this, he developed a framework which serves as an aide-memoire to focus attention on the level of contextual and linguistic challenge in classroom activities. This framework reminds teachers to keep cognitive challenge appropriately high for children learning EAL by embedding activities in a supportive context.

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Using the Cummins Quadrant

The Cummins Quadrant can be used to identify the linguistic demands which a classroom activity places on EAL learners.

Learners will need to progress from activities planned in quadrant A where the cognitive challenge is low and the activity is embedded in a supportive context, to quadrant B where the context is still very supportive but the cognitive challenge is high, and from there, gradually into quadrant C where there is little supporting context. Children are expected to cope with working independently and individually and tasks are both challenging and abstract.

Tasks in quadrant D, for example, children copying somthing they do not understand, being both undemanding and abstract (context-reduced), would have little, if any, learning potential.

Making the learning contexts supportive for children learning EAL includes providing:

- opportunities to build on previous experience;
- scaffolding learning in a variety of ways;
- carefully planned opportunities to listen and speak in a wide range of situations across the curriculum.

An example of the use of the Cummins Quadrant to show how children learning EAL can be supported to access increasingly abstract and cognitively demanding tasks

Example of an activity planned in quadrant B
Setting up reporting back situations following collaborative activities increases the cognitive and linguistic challenge. Children are required to describe their findings, using their developing additional language, to listeners who have not had the benefit of a visual context.

Moving into quadrant C
The practitioner recasts the language used by the child in order to further develop language. He or she may, for example, model the use of an abstract noun such as **attraction** and explain to children the way in which verbs can be turned into nouns to allow us to talk about abstract concepts, for example *magnetic attraction occurs with some kinds of metals*. Further support to undertake tasks planned in quadrant C can be provided by a graphic organiser developed collaboratively, a frame for report writing and the opportunity to work with a more expert peer.

Example of an activity planned in quadrant C
The child works individually to research, and produce a written report about the properties of magnets.

Moving into quadrant B
The practitioner models the language children need to classify the objects and prompts the children to make pertinent observations, for example, *the pin and the paper clip are both made of metal*. This will support them to formulate hypotheses which they can test in order to arrive at general statements, for example, *What is the same about all these things? So what seems to be generally true about things made of plastic?* The practitioner recasts the language used by the child in order to introduce new subject-specific vocabulary such as **attract**.
A graphic organiser, constructed with help from a practitioner, would help children to organise their thoughts and record their findings.

B **C**

A **D**

Don't plan activities here!

Example of an activity planned in quadrant A
A group of children, who share a first language, explore the effects of magnets on a selection of familiar objects. They do not have to name the things they are talking about as they all have the benefit of the visual context.

Integrated planning for language and content

Effective planning is objective led. Teachers must first identify learning objectives, then establish success criteria and determine learning outcomes before deciding on appropriate teaching strategies and learning activities.

Where there are children learning EAL, planning should identify the language demands of the activities. Making sure that EAL learners know and can use the language demanded by the curriculum content of the lesson then becomes an additional objective for the lesson.

In order to identify the language demands, teachers and practitioners should consider the oral and written language children will need to understand in order to access this activity, and the language they will need to be able to produce in order to demonstrate success in meeting the curriculum objectives.

To do this, teachers and practitioners should begin by identifying the main purpose for which children will need to use language during the lesson. It may be to explain or describe, for example. They should then go on to consider the grammatical structures children will need to be able to use for this purpose, as well as the vocabulary they will need. For example:

- Oral and written recounts and storytelling require children to use the past tense e.g. *we went by car, my dad was driving*.

- Children will need to use modal verbs, such as *could* (and *could not*), *might* and *must*, to discuss possibilities when solving mathematical problems.

- Describing something requires use of present tense. Writing in the 'report' genre is characterised by the use of present tense verbs and adjectives to describe states, attributes, characteristics, behaviour, habits and routines.

- Giving instructions involves the use of time connectives to sequence the instructions, imperative verbs, determiners, adjectives and adverbs for precision e.g. *take some paper, fold one sheet in half diagonally, trim the edge carefully*.

- When plans include an expectation that, for example, children will explain something, they will need to use a range of connectives to sequence points and show cause and effect (*next, after that*; *so*, *because*, *as a result*, etc.).

It is important to identify the grammatical features children will use in their sentences, as well as any new vocabulary, in order to provide them with models of the language. Planning across the curriculum should identify where the language children need will be modelled for them.

It may be modelled:

- by the teacher or practitioner in shared and guided sessions;

- in print, e.g. by samples of effective writing in the appropriate genre, or by writing frames;

- by peers during activities where children collaborate with more proficient English language speakers.

In addition to identifying the language that will be modelled, planning should indicate other methods and approaches which are supportive of children learning EAL, e.g. how children's prior experience will be activated, how objectives and criteria for assessment will be shared, opportunities to use the first language.

Planning should also identify the opportunities children will have to use the language. Children learning EAL need opportunities for speaking as well as listening in order to rehearse new language in meaningful contexts before being expected to use it in their written work.

The CD-ROM that accompanies these materials contains:

- a grid to support teachers in identifying language structures and vocabulary in planning;

- an example of how this grid has been used to identify language demands and opportunities in planning;

- a checklist for auditing planning.

For further guidance on planning for speaking and listening see Units 2 and 4 of these materials. CPD activities are suggested in PDMs 3 and 4.

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Section 2 Assessment for learning

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, **Assessment for learning** (DfES 0521-2004 G) provides guidance on a range of aspects of assessment which inform planning, teaching and learning. In these materials, additional factors to consider when using the range of assessment strategies with children learning EAL are considered. Further guidance is available in ***Aiming High: Guidance on the assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language*** (DfES 1469-2005 DOC-EN).

The use of quantitative summative assessment data to monitor and review the progress and attainment of children from different ethnic and language backgrounds enables the identification of underperforming groups and the effective targeting of resources to support these groups. The data should also be used to review the impact of interventions and targeted support. The full range of evidence from summative as well as day-to-day assessments should be used formatively to inform planning and teaching.

The use of work samples, oral language samples and question-level analysis drawn from across the curriculum to identify strengths and areas for development in children's responses enables the identification of areas of the curriculum which pose particular challenges to bilingual learners and the language learning required to access these aspects of the curriculum. Questioning, dialogue and observation provide further information to inform planning for teaching and learning. Engaging parents, carers and children in discussion of what has been learned and what needs to be learned next improves achievement.

> When procedures for effective assessment for learning are in place teachers have a systematic way of building up a picture of each pupil, or groups of pupils, which contributes to an on-going dialogue about their learning needs. In the case of bilingual pupils, the systematic identification of language development needs is key to this but not, of course, the sole consideration.
>
> *Aiming High: Guidance on the assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language* (DfES 1469-2005 DOC-EN)

Conditions for assessment

The conditions under which assessment takes place are as important as the strategies and instruments of assessment. The following are characteristics of the conditions which support children learning EAL to show what they have learned and can do:

- classroom ethos that recognises and values all educational achievement;
- safe environment in which the child's identity is affirmed and the child feels able to take risks;
- recognition of the need for a broad as well as detailed picture of childrens' learning needs;
- clarity about the objectives and focus of assessment among adults and children;
- assessment opportunities that take account of cultural, ethnic and linguistic factors;
- assessment tasks that are embedded in supportive and meaningful contexts to enable learners to show what they can do;
- opportunities for self- and peer assessment;
- children's full language repertoire (first and additional language) used by adults and children to enable children to show their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum;
- children supported to reflect on how they learn and how they can improve as learners.

The complex relationship between first language, cognitive and academic development, and the level of proficiency in English will impact on the bilingual child's ability to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills. Staff need to ensure clarity about what is being assessed: assessment of the language of cognition and learning or academic progress. Additional language will not be acquired in a predictable linear progression and cannot be assessed with a simple checklist.

A teacher used the context of making a cup of tea to assess children's use of instructional language.

One child began by saying:
Fill the kettle with water.

Another began by saying:
Put some milk in a pan.

As the teacher was aware of the different ways of making tea, he was able to assess the understanding and use of instructional language within different cultural contexts.

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Evidence for assessment of learning is collected through formal tests (other than during the Foundation Stage), analysis of children's work (oral, written and practical) and observation of children as they engage in tasks. For bilingual learners, the evidence of oral use of language is particularly important for monitoring progress in language development.

Collecting evidence

Observation

Conscious, considered and confirmatory observation of all children as they engage in tasks and activities provides evidence of learning and language use across the curriculum. Observation involves watching, listening and taking notes in a variety of contexts to develop a picture of a child's skills across a range of activities. Assessment involves analysis of those observations in order to understand the learning that is taking place and inform next steps.

Practitioners should make:

- conscious observations of particular children, watching them and listening to their discussions to assess their responses and behaviour during teaching or while they work;

- considered observations of particular children which have been planned and based on earlier assessments, to gather additional information about their achievement;

- confirmatory observations of particular children as part of ongoing assessment that focuses on children's attainment and progress.

Observational assessments in the Foundation Stage

The use of observation to support both formative and summative assessments is a key skill needed by Foundation Stage practitioners to build on children's prior knowledge in order to support their learning. Observations should be made regularly across a range of contexts to assess progress and develop a picture of children's communicative behaviour across all areas of learning.

Where possible, assessment of communication skills should also involve observation of the use of first language. For all scales of the Foundation Stage Profile, except points 4–8 of the Communication, language and literacy scales, children's learning can be assessed in their first language.

The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage places the role of observation as central to effective teaching: 'Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children' (*Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*, QCA 2000, pages 11–12 QCA/00/587).

Practitioners in the Foundation Stage should refer to the wealth of material available to support their skills in making observational assessments. For example, the DVD *Observing children – building the profile* (DfES 1198-2005 GCD1) shows some useful footage of bilingual children accessing curriculum activities through their first language.

Oral language sampling

Samples of children's oral use of language in social as well as academic contexts across the curriculum, recorded on audiotapes or scribed by adults, provide a rich source of evidence for analysis of the linguistic development and proficiency in the additional language. When taking samples, it is important that the planned activity allows for the use of focus language. Comparison of oral and written language is particularly useful for ongoing assessment of language development and for setting curricular targets.

Language samples may be recorded in notebooks or folders, on A3 paper during plenary sessions or on audiotape for future transcription.

The following is an example of an oral language sample:

> Context: Guided exploratory talk session: activating prior knowledge about the purpose of number plates.
>
> Teacher: *What are they for and why do we need them?*
>
> Child with English as a mother tongue provides a model explanation.
>
> Teacher: *Would it be helpful if they were all the same?*
>
> Child: *(No) … Because if someone had a different … same cars and they had the same number plates … it could be the one … one of them, and the one that it wasn't could get the blame.*
>
> Year 5, Zakir

Additional annotated samples of oral language are available on the CD-ROM.

Oral language samples enable:

- an in-depth focus on the child's use of language to identify specific strengths and areas for development;
- error analysis as an opportunity to inform learning and teaching;
- identification of individual priorities as well as patterns across year groups and the school;
- comparison of written and oral language to inform next steps.

Oral language samples provide information on aspects such as intonation, expression and pronunciation that would not be evident in writing, and are a crucial element of assessment for learning.

Oral language samples can:

- capture how children cope with the different social demands placed on them in school – classroom, playground, dining area;

- provide evidence of language use in teacher–pupil as well as pupil–pupil interactions;

- show what individual learners know and can do in English across different curricular contexts;

- provide information for planning and teaching, e.g. planning for specific language use, pupil groupings for particular activities;

- provide evidence of impact of teaching;

- provide evidence which informs expectations;

- motivate learners who make an effort to produce 'best' answers and often expand as well as self-correct.

Potential drawbacks and pitfalls include the following.

- Collection takes considerable time.

- Scribing while teaching may interrupt the flow of the lesson.

- Scribing may interrupt the flow of language being used.

- Samples which do not include details of the context in which the samples were collected or the specific focus will have little value.

- Scribing at speed may lead to inaccuracies in the sample, which in turn will reduce their reliability.

However, awareness of the issues, training, planning for collection and use of ICT can alleviate these drawbacks.

Questioning and dialogue

Questions which promote dialogue may be:

- **prompting** questions, with supporting comments that assess the extent to which children are able to engage in the work being taught and the tasks being set;

- **probing** questions, with follow-up comments that assess children's understanding during and following the teaching and the tasks;

- **promoting** questions, with guiding comments that assess the extent to which children can go on to use and apply what they have learned.

Research suggests that EAL learners at earlier levels of additional language development often rely heavily on lexical clues to meaning (the 'content' words) and pay less attention to, or fail to notice, grammatical clues (Cameron 1999). It is important to focus children's attention on form as well as content while they are listening as well as while they are speaking.

Teacher: *Is a banana animal, vegetable or mineral?*
Child 1: *Animal.*
Teacher: *Why do you think that?*
Child 1: *Because monkeys eat them and monkeys are animals.*
This child thought the question was, *Is a banana an animal's, a vegetable's or a mineral's?* (i.e. to which is it most likely to belong?)

Teacher: *Which other fruit is like an orange?*
Child 2: *I do.*
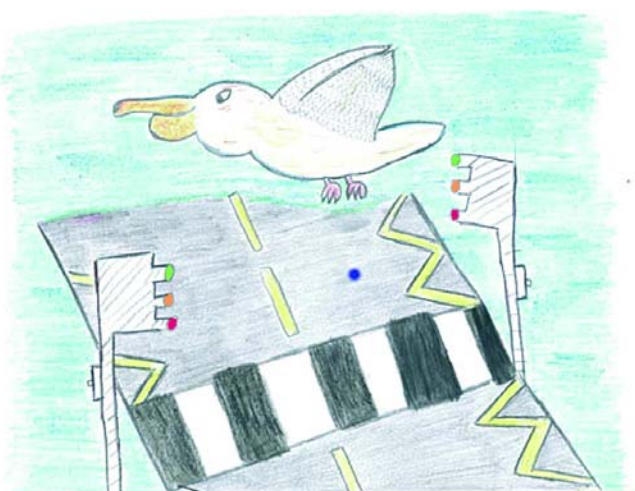Teacher: *What do you mean 'I do'? You do what?*
Child 2: *I like oranges.*

Teacher: *What other fruit do you think is most like an orange?*
Child 3: *An apple.*
Teacher: *Why do you think that?*
Child 3: *Because I like oranges and apples.*

Children's drawings can also provide teachers with information to support assessment.

Following a talk from a road safety officer, a Year 5 child who had recently arrived from Portugal produced this drawing. It provides valuable information about her prior knowledge and what she understood from the 'talk'.

Negatively expressed questions are likely to pose particular challenges for children learning EAL. Teachers should be aware that, when the objective is to probe understanding, questions expressed positively provide a better opportunity for EAL learners to show what they know and understand. However, negative questions can also challenge and extend thinking.

- Hold brief impromptu discussions to follow up any surprises thrown up by children's responses during teaching.

- Hold illustrative discussions to assess children's understanding, to diagnose the reasons for any misunderstanding or misconceptions and to resolve difficulties.

- Hold informed discussions to follow up earlier assessment and diagnoses and to discuss progress, targets and any peer or self-assessments that have been made.

To ensure that children learning EAL are deriving maximum benefit from listening to an extended teacher–pupil dialogue, teachers should check understanding from time to time by repeating, summarising and reviewing what has been said so far and occasionally reformulating a response in order to make the context more complete for listeners. For additional information see pages 54–67 of *Assessment for learning*, in the professional development materials *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years* (DfES 0521-2004 G).
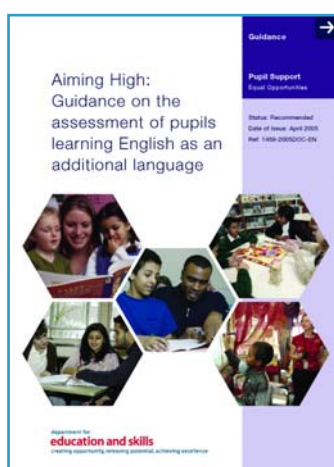

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Samples of written work

Written work from across the curriculum should be analysed at text, sentence and word level in order to provide vital assessment evidence to inform teaching and learning. For EAL learners, such writing samples should also be assessed in terms of the use of English and evidence of specific issues to inform the teaching specific aspects of language development.

For further guidance see *A language in common: assessing English as an additional language* (QCA 2000) and *Marking progress: training materials for assessing English as an additional language* (DfES 0196-2005).

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Using the evidence

Curricular targets

Analyses of tests, written work, oral language and day-to-day assessment should be used to identify whole-school issues for learning and teaching. These whole-school issues inform whole-school curricular targets which are layered into specific targets for year groups and then further differentiated for particular groups or individuals. The targets inform the planning and teaching. Tracking learners' progress against curricular targets enables practitioners and leadership teams to ensure that all pupils make progress against age-related expectations and beyond. The Primary Framework (2006) provides a progression for the key strands of oracy, literacy and mathematics and thus supports the development of layered curricular targets.

In addition to curricular targets for reading, writing and mathematics, practitioners working with bilingual learners should also identify aspects of EAL development which require particular attention in planning for learning and teaching. The curricular targets related to language development may require a whole-school focus, for example for explicit teaching of accurate use of the full range of determiners and the range of verb tenses as well as subject–verb agreements. There may also be aspects required for particular groups of learners, for example accurate use of a range of prepositions and prepositional phrases. It is important to share these targets with children in language they understand and to support clarity with visual displays of target statements exemplifying what they mean in practice.

Curriculum targets support learning and teaching because they:

- help children to see how the lesson fits into the 'bigger picture', put learning into context and make connections with other learning;
- enable teachers to focus on what children will learn when planning;
- make children active partners in their learning by enabling them to see the next step in their learning, thus encouraging success and achievement.

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When sharing curricular targets with bilingual learners, staff should:

- take time to discuss or explain learning objectives and success criteria at the beginning of the lesson or session;

- identify language as well as curricular learning objectives and success criteria;

- use child-friendly language where appropriate without compromising the need to understand technical language;

- involve children in formulating the success criteria;

- involve bilingual adults in discussing and explaining learning objectives as well as success criteria in children's first language;

- use visuals, including ICT, to support understanding of success criteria;

- refer to learning objectives and success criteria explicitly during teaching and in reflection and review at the end of the lesson or session.

> Year 6:
> text cohesion
>
> *We can use pronouns and tenses accurately to make sure the readers know who is being referred to and the writing makes sense.*

For further information on the use of **layered curriculum targets, specific aspects of language development and pupil tracking against curricular targets**, see pages 21–29 of *Assessment for learning* in the professional development materials *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years* (DfES 0521-2004 G) and PDM 4 of this toolkit (see the fliers accompanying these materials).

For an example of a layered curriculum target for writing incorporating specific aspects of EAL development see the handout on the CD-ROM.

> Year 4:
> sentence construction
>
> *We can use a variety of adverbial/adjectival phrases to add detail in sentences.*
>
> *We can use prepositions accurately in adjectival and adverbial phrases.*

When sharing curricular targets with parents and carers, staff should:

- share an understanding of what impact the target will have on learning;

- share ideas on how parents and carers can support children to achieve the target.

Sharing learning objectives and success criteria

Learning objectives describe what teachers intend children to learn based on the teaching objective. Success criteria summarise the key points that children need to understand as steps to succeed in achieving the learning objective. Sharing learning objectives and success criteria supports teachers and children to be clear about what has to be learned and know when they have learned it.

Learning objectives and outcomes should be shared with children in language they understand – including, wherever possible, in first language – and supported by visual prompts. Practitioners should identify learning objectives for language development as well as for the learning of skills and curriculum content. Children should be clear about learning objectives across a unit of work to ensure that connections in learning are clear. These connections can be supported by graphic organisers such as concept maps and other visual displays which identify key elements of learning for ongoing reference. Children will also require learning objectives for individual lessons, focusing on curriculum and additional language.

Success criteria can be drawn up with children and displayed to reinforce understanding and serve as prompts as children work or review learning. For further information, see *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Planning and assessment for learning – Assessment for learning (DfES 0521-2004G).

Focused feedback

Focused and constructive feedback on cognitive, academic and linguistic learning fosters motivation and develops confidence in learners. Feedback may be oral or written, and provided to a whole class, a group or individuals. Feedback may be based on assessment by adults or peers. Effective feedback must be planned and prepared for if it is to have the desired impact. Oral feedback is particularly powerful for bilingual learners as it opens up two-way communication about progress and next steps.

Focused oral feedback supports learning because it:

- provides personalised, specific praise as well as advice;
- provides feedback on curricular and language learning as well as skills for learning;
- models the use of metalanguage;
- is in language tailored to meet the needs of the child: it can use verbal as well as non-verbal communication, and use first language to extend childrens' understanding and engagement.

CASE STUDY

John Gulson Primary School

Success criteria cards

John Gulson Primary School, Coventry, which has a high percentage of EAL learners, developed the use of success criteria cards. These cards provided prompts to children to support their learning towards the learning objective, while also addressing language acquisition.

Success criteria

How to achieve your Year 5 writing targets!

I can use conjunctions found in shared reading to join ideas in writing, e.g. *although, since, whenever.*

While working remember to …

- Join two ideas in one sentence using one of these conjunctions:
  before, after, although, since, whenever, because, while, when, so, as, in case

- Try changing a 'but' you have written to *however* or *although*. Does it make sense when you read it aloud to a friend? Does it mean the same?

- Use some of the conjunctions we have practised speaking and are displayed on our wall/tables to join two ideas in a complex sentence.

- Separate the clauses in your complex sentence with a comma. Read it aloud to a friend. Does it 'sound' right?

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The language used for feedback should give strong messages about children's learning and focus on the fact that 'challenge means new learning is taking place'. Feedback should also nurture independence. When addressing difficulties and challenges, emphasising '*This is how we learn. If everything is easy, it means you already knew how to do it, so there's no new learning*' encourages children to admit their difficulties and learn from their mistakes. It is important that the language used is sensitive to children's cultures and focuses on the learning of language as well as curriculum content and skills.

Good, you made a prediction and provided reasons. I liked the way you explained using 'so' and 'because'.

Written feedback, like oral feedback, should identify both success and areas that need to be improved and provide advice and guidance on how to make the improvement. It is also crucial to provide time (and additional support if required) to make the improvement. This may require additional teaching or revisiting the learning objectives. For bilingual learners, use of text marking and symbols to identify successes and areas for improvement avoids the need to use too much text which might be inaccessible to children.

Success and improvement against the learning objective of the task are two of the most effective focuses for feedback.
This does not mean ignoring mistakes but treating them as opportunities for improvement and a focus for teaching and support.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, Assessment for learning (DfES 0521-2004 G)

For further information on oral and written feedback see *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Planning and assessment for learning: Assessment for learning (DfES 0521-2004G).

Peer and self-assessment

Involving children in the analysis and constructive feedback of their own work improves their understanding of their own progress and next steps. Talk and writing response partners provide children with the opportunity to use the language of identifying next steps and learn from each other. Frames, prompts and graphic organisers are also particularly useful. Concept maps developed to activate prior knowledge can be revisited and reworked to reflect and assess new learning (see Unit 2, pages 21–25).

For additional information see *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years,* Planning and assessment for learning: Assessment for learning (DfES 0521-2004 G).

Partnerships with parents, careres and families

Parents and carers of bilingual children can and should be supported in reviewing their children's progress. Availability of staff who share understanding of parents' and carers' experiences of education and their language will support parental engagement in the dialogue linking assessment to learning and teaching. For further guidance on working with parents see Unit 3 of these materials.

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Aiming High: Guidance on assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language (DfES 1469-2005DOC-EN)

Marking progress: training materials for assessing English as an additional language (DfES 0196-2005)

For assessing children's knowledge and understanding of mathematics for early stage learners, see *Assessment in mathematics to support pupils for whom English is an additional language* (DfES 0267-2003)

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Standards

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE