Supporting English As An Additional Language Students
AIMS

• To consider the factors affecting EAL students

• To gain a basic understanding of language acquisition

• To extend the knowledge of strategies to support EAL students
The EAL learner is at the centre of the English language acquisition process and operates within a learning context, the classroom. Socio-cultural factors impact upon the EAL learner’s language, cognitive and academic development.
Whatever their diverse backgrounds, students share a common and distinctive task which is to 'catch up' with a moving target by learning an additional language whilst simultaneously learning curriculum content, skills and concepts.

Students are learning English, learning about English and learning through English.
It will be helpful to know this information about EAL pupils in your classroom.

- Country of Origin
- First Language
- Other Languages Spoken in Family
- Immigration Status
- Number of Years in Australia
- Religion
- Education History
- Ethnicity
There are steps involved in learning a new language.
The stages in learning a new language

- Listening and absorbing (Silent Period)
- Responding to instructions
- Imitating and copying
- Trying out ½ word phrases
- Naming words
- Action words
- Putting names and actions together
- Trying out whole sentences with mistakes
- Correcting mistakes themselves
How Long Does It Take?

• 1-2 years for BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) – context embedded

• 5-7 years for CALPS (cognitive academic language proficiency) – context reduced
Teaching New Language

When learning new words, EAL pupils need to:

- see them
- hear them
- write them
- read them
- say them
- put them in a sentence
- use them in another context

use, reuse, recycle, use, reuse, recycle
**Instant Support Strategies**

- **Explain, model language**
- **Draw pictures**
- **Highlight key part of sentence structure**
- **Label diagrams**
- **Use bilingual and picture dictionaries**
- **Use the internet**
- **Provide opportunities to practise key words in different contexts**
- **Develop bi-lingual key vocabulary lists**
- **Pre-teach key words and give them emphasis through voice tone**
- **Listen attentively to the child**
- **Simplify text and focus on key words**
- **Use visual aids and realia**
- **Translate**
For effective teaching of EAL students:

- Access and use prior knowledge as a basis for future learning
- Position and group students so that they can participate effectively in class
- Provide models of spoken and written language
- Ensure the curriculum, context and selection of resources are culturally relevant and of high quality
- Plan content which takes account of concepts and vocabulary to allow EAL learners to internalise and apply subject specific language
- Recognise that the use of first language will enhance understanding and support the development of English
- Plan for pre-teaching key vocabulary and concepts
- Acknowledge that advanced EAL learners need continuing support
Where EAL students are learning effectively they:

- Develop effective models of spoken and written language
- Are aware of context, genre and audience
- Take initiative to actively manage their own acquisition of English
- Use English confidently
Key Points To Remember:

- Bilingualism is an asset.
- The first language is key to an EAL pupil’s identity, learning and acquiring an additional language.
- Cognitive challenge can and should be kept appropriately high through the provision of linguistic and contextual support.
- Language acquisition goes hand in hand with cognitive and academic development with an inclusive curriculum as the context.