

# **Naldic Conference**

## **“The Academic Achievement of Y6 Pupils with EAL: Child-related and Situational Factors”**

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# Presentation Outline







- **Rationale and background**
- **Methodology**
- **Approach to Data Analysis**
- **Findings**

# Importance of the study



It is expected that by the end of the study, the following targets will be achieved:



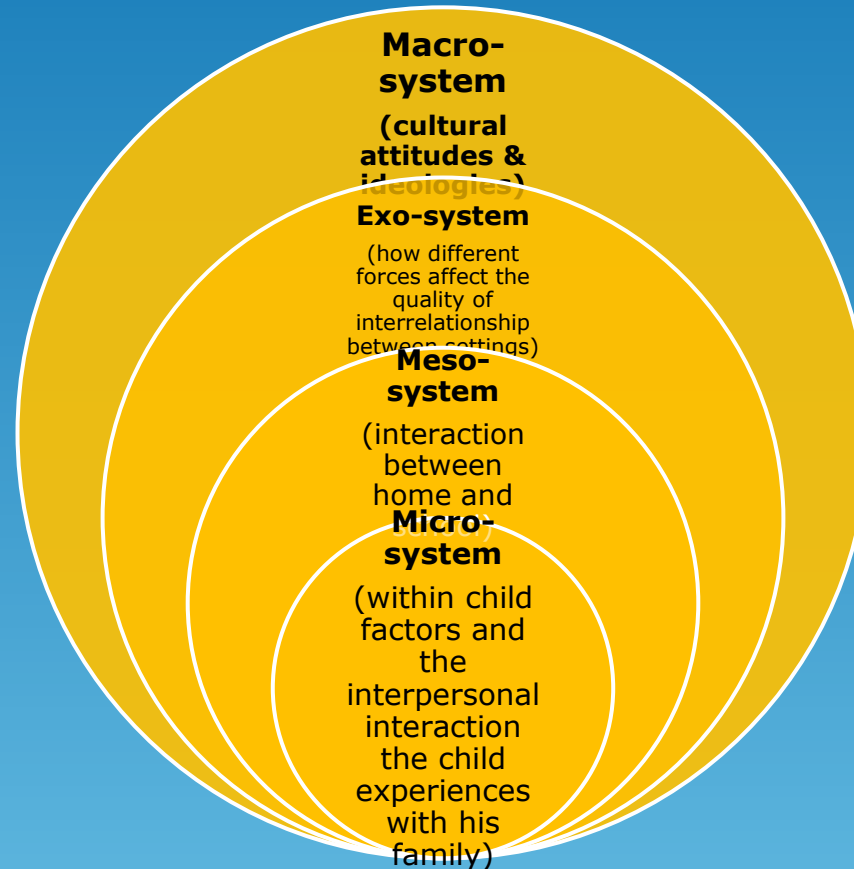
- Provide deeper understanding of EAL policy, practice and provision at different levels, EAL learners, parents and school practitioners and the difference they can make in improving the achievement of EAL children.
  - explore new approaches to raise the achievement of EAL pupils.
  - be an important step in unveiling the inconsistencies behind EAL general status quo.
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# Research Questions



The overarching research question is :  
What are the main child-related and situational factors that impact on the academic achievement of Y6 pupils with EAL?

# Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of child's development



# Methodological Triangulation

- **Triangulation** means the concurrent, but separate collection and analysis of two types of data which are then merged, at the interpretation of results stage (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).
- **Advantages of using triangulation:**
  - The nature of the overarching research question requires two types of data: qualitative and quantitative.
  - Triangulation enabled me to gain some benefit from different methods across the different spectra (David & Sutton, 2004: 45) by bringing the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of different methods.

# Interviews

- Interviews were used in the study as 'exploratory qualitative methods' in order to build 'a better foundation of understanding' (Punch, 2009:279).
- By conducting face-to-face interactional exchange of dialogue, some unexpected themes emerged.
- By semi-structured interviews, any questions concerning both the purpose of the interview and any misunderstandings experienced by the interviewees can be answered.
- **Limitation:** Interviews findings can not be generalized to the wider population (Cohen et al, 2000)

# Obseravtion

- Unstructured observation focused on contextual details that are related to the linguistic capacity of EAL pupils.
- It generated rich data about different features of EAL pupils' learning.
- It explored new features beyond participants' views by observing their everyday practice (Gray, 2004)
- **Limitation:** Although data collected from observation is abundant, extracting themes from the data was a hard task because pupils and teachers were observed concurrently and in the same setting, so there was an element of overlapping and interrelationship between the themes.

# School Policy Documents

- The main purpose of using documentary material 'lies in its abundance' (David & Sutton, 2004:117)
- Data obtained from documents complemented data obtained from other sources such as interview and observation.
- The documentary analysis draws mainly on Jupp (1996) approach to selecting documentary materials:
  - Establishing **authenticity** which refers to whether these documents are original
  - Credibility**: Which refers to the accuracy of documents
  - Representativeness**: which refers to whether the selected documents represent the totality of school's documents about EAL
  - Meaning**: Which means that the content of documents should be relevant to my research topic.

## Questionnaires

- Questionnaires can reach a wide audience efficiently (Gray, 2004, Gillham, 2000)
- Questionnaires consist of closed questions according to Likert scale. Closed questions are quick to complete and they can be coded quickly.
- **Limitation:** Low response rate

# Sample

- 3 primary schools with high number of EAL pupils
- 30 EAL pupils from Y6
- School practitioners (class teachers, EAL teachers, EAL coordinators, multilingual assistants, SENCOs)
- 30 parents of EAL pupils from different minority ethnic groups.

# **Ethical Issues: A number of ethical issues should be considered:**

- Confidentiality and anonymity**
- Accuracy**
- Voluntary participation**

# Approach to Data Analysis

- **Grounded theory :** is a way of generating theory through research data rather than testing ideas formulated in advance of data collection and analysis (Seale (ed)2004).
  - 'The grounded theory emerged from the data in an unforced manner, accounting for all of the data' (Cohen et al, 2007: 494).
  - Grounded theory is both an overall approach to research and a set of procedures for developing theory through the analysis of data (Punch, 2009)
  - **Main Features of grounded theory:**
    - It requires an innovative approach to data selection.
    - It relies primarily on qualitative data such as unstructured observation and interviews.
    - It took more structured forms of data collection as the study becomes more focused.
    - The process of data analysis centres on 'coding' the data into categories for the purpose of comparison.
    - A successful conclusion is a achieved at the end of research

# Key Features of Grounded Theory

**Glaser and Straus (1967: 237) suggest three main criteria:**

- The closeness of the fit between the theory and the data**
- If the theory is understandable by key people working in the field**
- The theory should be generalizable to many situations, not just to a specific type of situation relevant to a particular enquiry.**

**Rationale for adopting the grounded theory:**

**The rationale for adopting the grounded theory approach is that there is the unavailability of theory on EAL .**

# **If you adopt the grounded theory in your research you will....**

- **Begin with your research questions**
- **Follow a set of procedures in order to analyse the data (thematic analysis, coding and grouping)**
- **Literature review will be guided by the grounded theory**

# Findings

## **EAL is a multidisciplinary field**

EAL is a multidisciplinary field. The academic achievement of EAL pupils has been looked at from different angles:

**1.Linguistic perspective:** In order to investigate language proficiency of EAL pupils. Their literacy skills in terms of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

**2.Ethic and Cultural point of view:** Studies about social capital, parents from different ethnic groups, and parents affiliations.

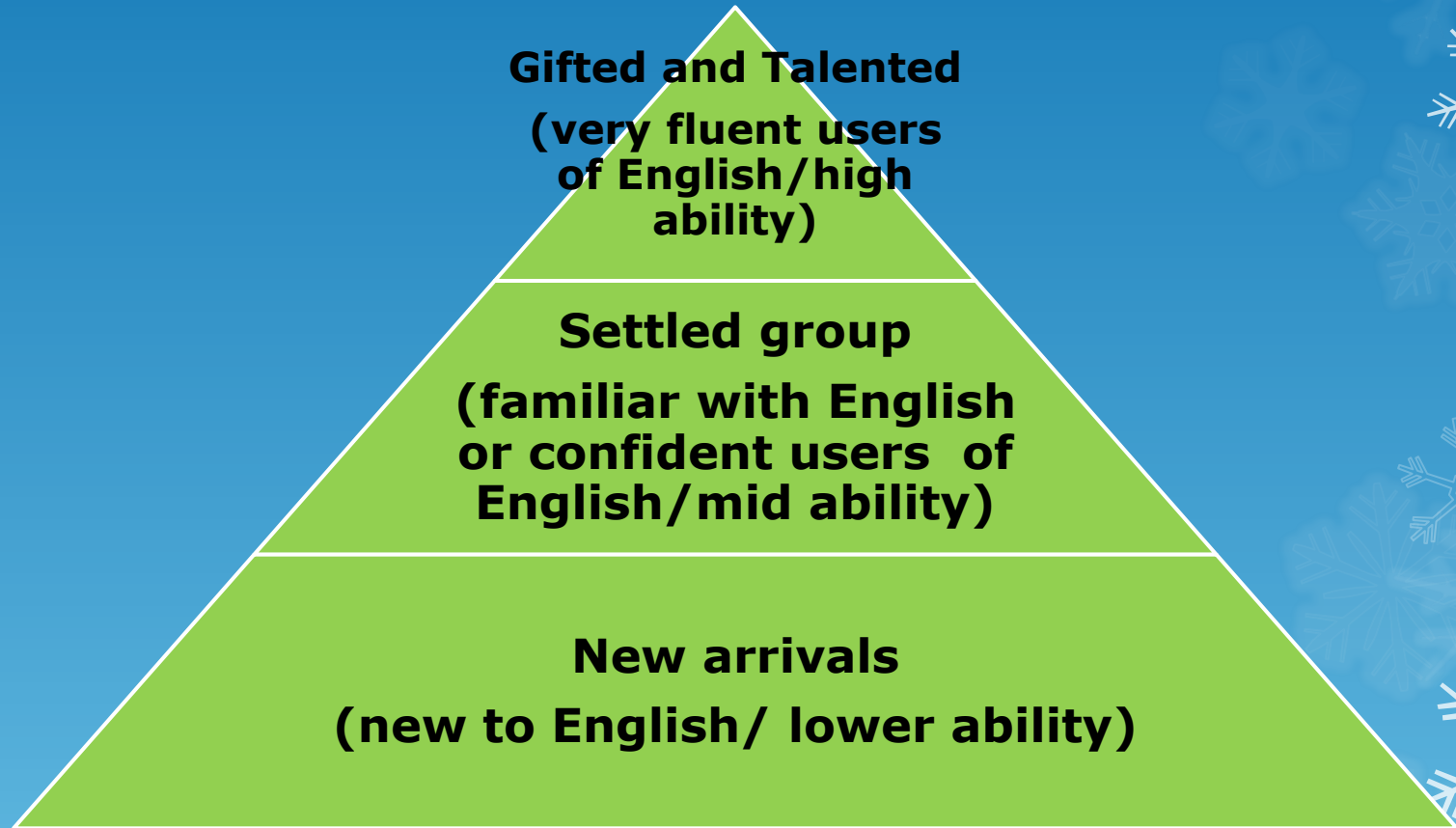
**3. EAL policy, practice and provision:** Governmental documents were used such as Ofsted inspection reports, School league tables, schools websites, SEN code

**4. Educational Inclusion and equality:** Documents about Child's rights, equal opportunities and Every Child Matters

## Findings

- ❑ **There is an underachievement issue in EAL pupils who are new to England and are beginners in English.**
- ❑ **A particular concern should be given to the categorization and identification of three different groups of EAL pupils:**
  - Newly arrived pupils**
  - Advanced learners of EAL**
  - Gifted and Talented (G&T)**
- ❑ **Individual characteristics and needs of EAL pupils**

# Categorization of EAL Pupils



## In light of the above classification the following points should be considered:

- EAL children assigned to the same category may have "*individual differences*" and "*varied needs*" in terms of teaching strategies and additional support.
- Particular children in different categories may have the "*same educational needs*".
- EAL children often experienced "*a range of language needs*", so they may not be fitted neatly into the categories listed above.

# Within Child factors:

- **Language Needs**
- **Special Educational Needs**
- **Emotional and Social Needs**
- **Behavioral Needs**

# Example....Case Study

A newly arrived child comes from a Gypsy traveller family. He has been to school for eight months. He has arrived recently from Romania to stay in England. In the past he had disrupted schooling. He does not speak English. Due to inaccurate information about his schooling in Romania and his parents' lack of English, he's well behind his peers of newly arrived children in the development of basic skills of "survival English". There are no children in his class speaking Romanian. The Romanian multilingual assistant comes two hours a week to support his learning. He went through a "silent phase" without speaking at all for more than five months.


*'(Pupil G) is having problems socially, so therefore he's not speaking. And we need to get him speaking and to be confident. You can tell by his body language. He's not actually interacting normally with the other children' (Inclusion teacher, school C)*

*'They appear quite lonely and I don't know if this is a language issue or becomes like a social issue because there are social aspects as well. They don't find it easy to socialize with the other children that have already established themselves in the school. It's very difficult at break times, it's very difficult at dinner times, it's very difficult if you want to ask a question. When to ask and how' (SEN teacher, school C)*

# Situational Factors...home-related factors

- **Language barrier**
- **Negative experiences of schools**
- **Children's education is the responsibility of schools only**
- **Experiencing racism and bullying**
- **Children's education is not their first priority**
- **Uneducated parents who can not see the importance of having link between home and school.**
- **Big families**
- **Poverty**

# Parenting styles of parents of EAL pupils



**1. Supportive parents**

**2. In-between parenting**

**3. Neglectful parents “unengaged”**

## The following types of social capital are prevalent across parents interviewed:

1. **Bonding social capital:** Can be defined as dense, tight-knit, homogenous social networks of family or friends. Keeping identity is their first priority by keeping language, culture, traditions and customs.

'we need to keep our language. Our identity' (Pakistani parent, school A)

2. **Bridging social capital:** Can be defined as having social network that gives people access outside their immediate network of friends and relations to access valuable resources and information. Keeping identity is not a priority. They even sacrifice their language and traditions to get involved in the Westernized lifestyle.

'Our Black African children. Their parents are more Westernized and more open to what's going on' (EAL subject manager, school B)

## Situational factors ...school-related factors

- ❑ Lack of **interpreters** and **translators** especially in the case of some uncommon languages such as Dari, Latvian and Romanian who can support the children in their learning process:

*'Our hardest was (Pupil C). When he first came...probably now about a year and a bit now. We couldn't have a Latvian interpreter. We didn't have one at all' (EAL subject manager, school B)*

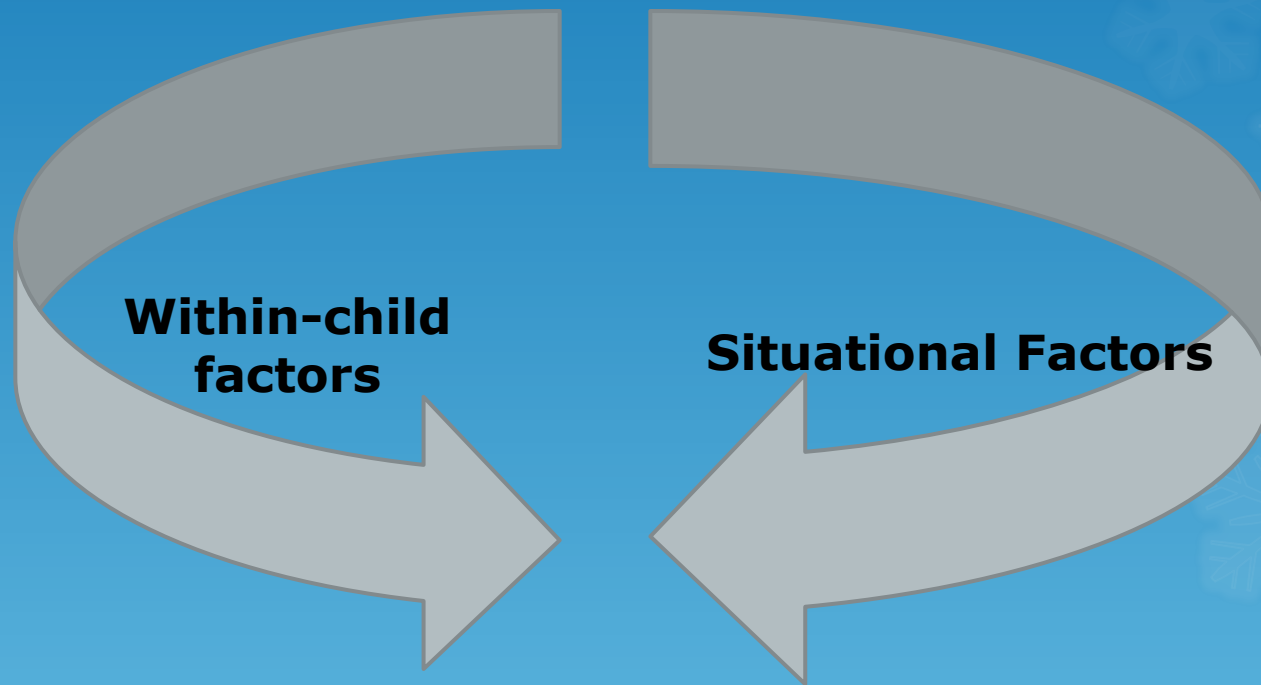
- ❑ Inaccuracy of language assessment tests for newly arrived pupils for the following reasons:
  - Assessing big number of newly arrived pupils within a short period of time
  - Using inaccurate language assessment forms
  - *'I mean recently... we've sort of assessed lots of children. I've assessed 60 children in two weeks' (EAL coordinator, school B)*

# School factors...

- Deficiency of up-to-date training and knowledge of EAL pupils' needs among class teachers (especially newly qualified teachers).

*'I can't think of particular instance when we did a lot of work. So I don't think I have got any particular training. So I don't think that I have been trained particularly well. It's just sort of learning few things along the way.'* (Y6 class teacher, school B)

# The Missing part...finding a synthesis



# Thanks

