





## About this guidance

The guidance is in two parts.

**Sections 1 to 4** are intended for subject leaders of modern foreign languages (MFL) and ethnic minority achievement (EMA) in secondary schools. These sections are designed to support a departmental meeting focused on reviewing the attainment of pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL), and should be read in conjunction with the later sections.

**Sections 5 to 8** are for all MFL teachers and their EMA colleagues. They aim to help teachers support pupils learning EAL in the classroom, particularly those working at levels 3 to 4 and who have been learning in English for a minimum of two years, in order to raise these pupils' attainment in MFL lessons.

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### Acknowledgements

In this booklet EMA advisers, EMA teachers and MFL teachers describe how they have supported pupils learning EAL in MFL classrooms. We would particularly like to thank:

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The Key Stage 3 National Strategy is based on four important principles:

- **Expectations:** establishing high expectations for all pupils and setting challenging targets for them to achieve;
- **Progression:** ensuring progression in teaching and learning across Key Stage 3;
- **Engagement:** promoting approaches to teaching and learning that engage and motivate pupils and demand their active participation;
- **Transformation:** strengthening teaching and learning through a programme of professional development and practical support.

This guidance applies these principles to the teaching and learning of MFL for pupils learning EAL. It suggests strategies to help teachers support pupils at different points of learning English:

- to develop their understanding and use of the English language;
- to enhance their learning in MFL lessons.

The guidance also considers how pupils' self-esteem can be developed. Pupils cannot derive full benefit from their MFL lessons unless social aspects of their learning are taken into account. The Strategy has high expectations for all pupils, and the inclusion of pupils learning EAL is a fundamental principle.

The Ofsted report *Managing support for the attainment of pupils from ethnic minority groups* (October 2001) identifies factors that enable bilingual learners to develop their English successfully – these also apply to MFL acquisition:

- joint planning between mainstream and specialist ethnic minority achievement (EMA) staff;
- a focus on the content of the lesson, ensuring appropriate cognitive challenge;
- a parallel focus on the language necessary to complete the task;
- activities that enable pupils to rehearse and explore the language they need;
- opportunities to use and build on their first-language skills, where appropriate;
- continuing support with writing through, for example, the use of matrices for organising information and writing frames for more extended contributions.

Acquisition of academic language can take considerably longer to develop than social language. This advanced level of proficiency in the language for learning is crucial to the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language in all subjects of the curriculum.

The report draws attention to the 'considerable evidence that once proficiency in English was achieved, the progress for pupils learning EAL across the curriculum was rapid and their attainment on a par with or higher than that of their monolingual peers'. In MFL, beginners in English can make swifter progress because the predominance of a common target language, new to all, places them on a more equal footing with other pupils.

### **The role of the subject leader**

Success for pupils learning EAL depends on close monitoring of their academic and personal targets. Meeting their needs should be an integral part of a departmental development plan. The Key Stage 3 Strategy booklet *Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* identifies three core roles for subject leaders in securing the progress of pupils:

**1 Judging standards**, including:

- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' attainment;
- reviewing with teachers their assessments of progress for classes, identified groups and individuals;
- sampling pupils' work;
- discussing work, progress and attitudes with sample groups of pupils.

**2 Evaluating teaching and learning:**

- evaluating the Key Stage 3 schemes of work to ensure they focus on effective teaching and learning;
- observing teaching and giving feedback to colleagues;
- reviewing teachers' planning.

**3 Leading sustainable improvements:**

- leading departmental discussions about priorities for the subject;
- agreeing targets for raising pupils' attainment;
- leading the improvement of teaching quality;
- leading the review, construction and resourcing of the curriculum.

Part of the role of the head of MFL is to ensure that there is an effective learning environment across the department – one which promotes an ethos where pupils learning EAL can feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.

### **A supportive learning environment**

Schools implementing the Key Stage 3 Strategy will provide a supportive, inclusive learning environment based on the following features:

- structured lessons that draw pupils in from the start of the lesson;
- active and engaging tasks that encourage all pupils to participate;
- teaching and learning strategies that are oral and interactive;
- an emphasis on short-term planning, which includes planning for input and support from other adults in the classroom, to ensure the learning opportunities are maximised;
- subject-specific language skills and conventions of particular forms of writing, which are made explicit and demonstrated by the teacher;
- planned opportunities for oral rehearsal in pairs and in small groups;
- a requirement that pupils apply learning, supported by group work, before moving to independent activity.

## **The use of first languages in MFL lessons**

It is an advantage to be multilingual; teachers can acknowledge this in the way they encourage and respond to the use of first languages. Pupils learning EAL are likely to have a better understanding of grammars and the ways in which languages work because they have the advantage of being able to compare languages.

The appropriate use of pupils' first languages in MFL lessons can be crucial to their attainment. Engagement and access to MFL can be impeded if a pupil's first language is not appropriately supported. Here are some golden rules for first-language use.



### **Pupils should be encouraged to use their first language in lessons when:**

- the cognitive challenge is likely to be high:** problem solving and critical thinking are difficult in a second language, even when English has been learned for several years;
- they are still developing proficiency in English:** it is particularly supportive if pupils use their first language to help comprehension;
- oral rehearsal will help reflection:** for example, before responding to a text, video or visual stimulus.

### **It may not be appropriate for pupils to use their first language when:**

- pupils need to practise the target language to improve fluency;
- pupils need oral rehearsal in the target language so that they are prepared for writing tasks.

## Securing progress for pupils learning EAL

*These questions could be used to begin a departmental review of how pupils learning EAL are currently supported.*

- *Does the current marking policy support diagnostic marking and the identification of targets for pupils?*
- *Are language-learning targets for pupils learning EAL clearly identified?*
- *Where a teacher works with an EMA colleague, do both have a clearly defined and negotiated role in delivering the lesson?*
- *Are opportunities for planned talk maximised in group tasks and plenary sessions?*
- *Does planning allow all pupils to contribute or give feedback over the course of a half-term?*
- *Do teachers provide a frame or other structure to help pupils to listen and make sense of what they hear?*
- *Is there enough support to help pupils with reading and writing in MFL?*
- *Which features of a supportive learning environment occur in lessons you teach or observe within the department? Which require further development?*
- *What is the departmental policy on the effective use of first languages in lessons?*
- *How do teachers plan to draw on first-language experience in order to move forward acquisition of other languages?*

Pupils for whom English is an additional language are not an homogenous group. Extra planning and support may be required to take their specific learning needs into account. Many pupils learning EAL will not reach their maximum attainment without planned additional intervention in their MFL development. Consideration of their learning needs will be essential to maximise their inclusion in classroom activities.

This section focuses on the following:

- pupils' prior experience of learning English;
- composition of peer groups;
- pupils' prior experiences of learning;
- availability of classroom support.

### **Pupils' prior experience of learning English**

Pupils learning EAL in your classes are likely to be at different points along a continuum of experience in learning English.

#### **Pupils relatively new to learning in English**

Beginner learners of English will have minimal or no reading and writing skills in English. They are likely to have been living in England for a very short period of time. Their speaking and listening skills in English may also be at an early stage of development. However, they will all be competent and fluent speakers of their own first language.

#### **Pupils becoming familiar with English**

Typically, pupils at this stage will have increased their fluency in spoken English. They are able to understand instructions and conversations and can participate in learning activities if the context is clear. They may appear to be superficially competent with oral language in English (social talk) but lack the development of English for formal academic purposes, both orally and in reading and writing activities in the classroom. The pupils' facility with 'playground' English sometimes misleads teachers into thinking that the pupils understand and can produce more than is the case. Academic English can take much longer to develop and therefore needs to be planned for, explicitly taught and its learning reinforced in meaningful and purposeful contexts.



### **Pupils growing in confidence as users of English**

Pupils at this stage need continuing support to develop their skills as readers and writers. Pupils may decode text accurately when reading but not process all texts at the necessary level of understanding or speed. Errors in writing will still occur as a result of the different syntaxes of English and the pupils' first languages.

### **Fluent English users**

These pupils will be competent, knowledgeable and fluent users of English, as well as other languages in most social and learning contexts. They will often be high attainers and literate in other languages. They will have gained explicit understanding of how more than one language is structured. This can put them at a considerable advantage as learners in MFL lessons.

### **Composition of peer groups**

The classrooms in which pupils learning EAL will be taught will differ in terms of the languages and literacies prevalent in the peer group. In your school, pupils learning EAL may be in MFL classes with peer groups similar to the following.

#### **A first language shared by a majority**

The *majority* of pupils share a common home language and cultural identity other than English. This is a common experience in many inner-city schools. The first language then becomes the *lingua franca* of the school and MFL teachers should bear in mind that on the occasions when English is used in the classroom it should be scaffolded and modelled in the same way as the target language. Using their first language may be helpful for pupils in the early months of acquiring another language.

#### **A first language in common**

There are just *one or two* other pupils with a shared home language in common in the class. Such pupils may be able to support each other's understanding through use of their first language to explore concepts and ideas before using the languages being taught.

#### **A range of languages and cultures**

There are other pupils learning EAL in the class but from *different language* and cultural groups. MFL teachers will be able to maximise discussions about how different languages work and encourage all pupils to use their knowledge to compare them.

#### **'Isolated learners'**

The pupil is the *only* learner of EAL in the class or the speaker of a language not represented elsewhere in the school – an 'isolated learner'. The pupil will be totally immersed in an English-speaking environment at school but may not feel included. It may be some time before the pupil builds the confidence to risk saying anything in English; however, they may feel able to make a contribution uniquely in the MFL classroom.

### **Pupils' prior experiences of learning**

The rate at which a pupil learning EAL is likely to make progress in MFL classrooms can be determined by their prior experiences of learning.

#### **Little or no prior formal schooling**

Pupils may be disadvantaged though their lack of knowledge and understanding about expectations of learning at school. They may not be literate in a standard first language so will be learning to read and write for the first time in an additional language. Some pupils entering Key Stage 3 classes may also be asylum seekers and have limited or interrupted experiences of schooling.

### **Some education in the UK or overseas, but with significant gaps in formal schooling**

Pupils may require considerable support to consolidate and transfer key English skills.

### **Experience of different education systems in two or more countries**

Pupils may not be used to expectations that they play an active part in lessons.

### **Full primary schooling (six years or longer) in the UK**

These pupils should be as literate and fluent in English as their peer group, although their spoken and written English may still show some non-native errors.

### **Full formal education abroad**

Pupils who have received full education abroad are likely to be fluent and literate in a standard language. This advantage will support a speedy transfer into MFL lessons.

### **Availability of classroom support**

MFL teachers *may* have the added bonus of additional support for EAL learners in their classes. The provision of support in terms of personnel and frequency will vary from school to school.

### **Support from an EMA-funded specialist teacher**

Agree which pupils to target for support. Plan jointly for a full partnership role for both teachers. Decide who will do what during the course of the lesson (e.g. model writing, devise and resource starter, work with guided groups). Share evaluation, marking and target setting.

### **Support from an EMA-funded teaching assistant in the lesson**

Negotiate with the assistant a clear, agreed role in helping you with teaching, supporting and assessing targeted pupils learning EAL.

### **Support from someone who speaks the pupil's home language in the lesson**

This is valuable in supporting pupils who are inexperienced in English and in helping you to assess what they know and can do in their first language.

### **Support from a teacher or adviser with planning and resources outside the lesson**

Use the teacher's or adviser's expertise and knowledge of pupils learning EAL to help you plan for inclusion.

### **Support for all lessons with a particular class or year group for a specified period of time**

This resource should give considerable added value to the pupils in the class. Maximise the opportunities to plan, teach and assess collaboratively as above.

### **Support for some MFL lessons with one class in the week**

Plan specific activities particularly relevant for pupils learning EAL within this lesson.

discussion  
points

#### **Pupils learning English: some considerations**

- *A school's population can change over time. Which of the descriptions on pages 6 to 8 most closely fit pupils learning EAL in your school? Are these the same in all classes across Years 7, 8 and 9?*
- *What support is available to your department at Key Stage 3? How is this support allocated? How is it used by the department or individual teachers?*

# 4

## Frequently asked questions

This section looks at some frequently asked questions and possible answers.

**Q** What provision and support can be made for 'new arrivals' in and outside MFL lessons?

**A** *New arrivals should not miss MFL lessons as these provide the greatest opportunity for them to achieve. Additional support could be beneficial, especially if one pupil has joined the course late, for example in Year 8 or later.*

**Q** We don't have any support in class. How can we help pupils learning EAL in our lessons?

**A** *It is often the case that there are no support teachers or assistants working in MFL lessons. However, it will be possible to use the expertise of the school's or LEA's EMA team to help plan ways in which EAL learners can reach their maximum levels of attainment in MFL.*

**Q** How can teachers find time to plan alongside support teachers and assistants who support them for part of the week?

**A** *It is difficult to find time for planning, but even a short discussion or brief planning session can be beneficial. If time cannot be found, sharing medium-term plans with support staff can help them to understand the context of their work. In addition, if short-term plans state how support staff should be deployed and how they should work in lessons, this can greatly enhance their effectiveness.*

**Q** Isn't it better to place beginners in English in lower sets where the pace is slower and there is more emphasis on oral work?

**A** *There should be equal emphasis on oral work in higher sets and able pupils should be with their intellectual peers. A brisk pace and high expectations are important elements in engagement for all pupils.*

*Bilingual pupils know a great deal about language acquisition and may be more adventurous than their monolingual peers. They may find pronunciation of the new language easier to hear and reproduce because they are able to make links with pronunciation in other languages, are aware of the necessity for authentic pronunciation and they may be more willing to experiment with the language. They may therefore need to be in higher sets for MFL than in other subjects. This will apply equally to new arrivals, who should initially be placed according to their intellectual level, rather than the level of their English.*

**Q** Pupils often use their first language between themselves in class. I know that in theory this is OK but I have a feeling that often they do so to exclude others. Also, I am not sure that they are 'on task' all the time. What is appropriate?

**A** *Class rules, including those for talk tasks, need to be crystal clear and negotiated with pupils. The use of the target language for learning is expected at all times unless you expressly suggest that pupils work in English or that particular pupils work in their first language for a clearly defined purpose.*

**Q** Should pupils who are in the early stages of learning English be learning a further foreign language?

**A** *As the target language will be the main medium of communication in the MFL classroom and there will be plenty of visual support, lack of knowledge of English will not be an issue. The beginner in English has the advantage of knowing about the process of starting to acquire a new language (see also the classroom examples on page 12 and the case study on page 22).*

- Q** Some grammar points benefit from explanation in English prior to teaching. How can we help EAL learners in this situation?
- A** *This is an excellent opportunity to draw on pupils' first-language experiences. MFL teachers should inform themselves about pupils' first languages and highlight similarities and differences between the grammars.*
- Q** How do we deal with the assumption in the MFL Framework objectives that all pupils will have built up the necessary underpinning of earlier literacy skills?
- A** *Many newly arrived pupils learning EAL will be fully literate in their first language (other pupils will have been born in the UK and therefore have gone through the British education system). This will provide a firm basis for further language development. In addition, all of the objectives can be differentiated by support or by scaffolding.*



Here are some suggestions to ensure that teaching supports pupils learning EAL in MFL lessons. Most of the suggestions do not require separate planning or provision but are examples of effective teaching and learning that will be particularly supportive of pupils learning EAL.



### **Before the lesson**

- Seek advice from specialist staff; plan together where possible.
- Check that learning objectives are clearly planned to build on prior attainment. Display them and refer to them during the lesson.
- With additional support it may be appropriate to pre-teach key vocabulary, read a piece of text in advance, or provide additional visual materials. This is particularly helpful when the reading of text during the lesson is going to be fairly rapid, for example, when reading a section in a textbook.
- Plan for the deployment of additional adults. Short-term planning should clearly define the roles of all adults and with whom they will be working; this is especially helpful when planning guided work.
- Plan structured lessons that offer additional support for pupils learning EAL to enable them to meet the lesson objectives and expected outcomes.
- Decide how to group pupils for the main part of the lesson. Identify targeted pupils.
- Identify talk activities, ensuring groups provide peer support wherever possible. Assign roles carefully and support active listening. Module 7 of the *Literacy across the curriculum* training file offers many helpful examples of pupil groupings and strategies.
- Select which pupils or groups to ask to feed back to the class in the plenary (remember to tell the pupils at the start of the lesson).
- Provide additional support and plan questions for the plenary to enable pupils to contribute a full response, rather than a one-word answer.

## During starter activities

- All pupils benefit from planned and structured pair and group work. When the activity involves a consideration of grammar, it is helpful to structure discussion groups to include a bilingual pupil if possible; bilingual pupils should be split up around the groups in order to contribute their greater linguistic experience to the widest possible extent.
- Make starter activities 'concrete': for example, matching vocabulary or grouping similar words (see the classroom examples below).
- Whiteboards are useful as they provide a link between talk and writing, allowing pupils to try out their ideas without errors being permanent. They can be used by pupils to draw pictures or symbols rather than words to show comprehension of spoken target language.
- Differentiate questioning to ensure that all pupils are engaged and appropriately challenged or supported.

### classroom examples

#### Language awareness starter activities

These may be helpful in encouraging pupils to look at the similarities between languages rather than the differences, in accessing bilingual pupils' linguistic experience, as a prelude to discussion of grammar and simply for appreciating and enjoying linguistic diversity.

- Give out words for 'mother' and 'father' in at least ten languages. Pupils collaboratively sort them into gender groups and discuss reasons for their choice; they could then attempt to match the words into pairs, match the pairs with their languages, or even try to group similar languages. Pupils could learn from this activity that English and the target MFL are Indo-European languages, thus the Hindi, Gujarati, Farsi, Spanish and Italian words for 'mother' and 'father' are very similar. (This does not apply in the case of Japanese or Chinese: Chinese is a Sino-Tibetan language; Japanese has no proven links to any other language, although possible links with Korean are being considered.)
- Pupils could look at a single word, e.g. 'three', in all of the languages known to the class. When the word is not written using Latin script, it would be good for the whole class to consider how it could be appropriately transliterated: this would also focus the group on producing authentic pronunciation.
- When looking at words imported into English from other languages, pupils could consider:
  - how the word came into English,
  - why English needed the word,
  - whether it replaced an existing English word, and/or
  - why English did not already have a word and how English speakers managed without it or the thing it represents (e.g. 'shampoo', which comes from Hindi).

Possible examples include: jar, sequin, crimson, coffee, sugar (Arabic); hit, sky, leg, skirt, wife (Norwegian and Danish); pill, trek, wagon, prop (Dutch); damp, luck, fireboard, dollar (German); shampoo, bungalow, thug, cot, dinghy (Hindi); umbrella, confetti, piano, corridor, bankrupt (Italian); tent, café, route, blonde, violin (French); rose, bible, atlas, museum, chorus (Greek).

### **During the lesson**

Accepted good practice in MFL teaching is by its very nature supportive of pupils learning EAL, including those at the earliest stages of English acquisition.

- Most of the lesson is delivered in the target language.
- Mime and body language are used to support understanding in both the target language and English.
- There is constant checking for both learning and understanding, and the lesson plan is adjusted accordingly.
- Visual support is provided for new vocabulary.
- There is an emphasis on oral work: individual, whole class, paired, group. Oral homework tasks are also possible, for example in preparation for role-play or question-and-answer sessions. A written text in the target language might be the stimulus for oral work in class; for example, a 'past-tense diary' or a letter containing a brief written account of 'Mon weekend' could be a model for pupils to prepare an oral account in the target language of their weekend.
- Written work is carefully structured to provide models for pupils to follow and to minimise the possibility of error.
- Homework is planned for and is set during the lesson rather than at its end.
- New arrivals are placed with pupils who can provide good models of the target language.



The supportive environment of the MFL classroom gives pupils the opportunity to experiment with the target language without fear of making mistakes. Scaffolding and modelling of the target language encourages pupils' confidence in speaking, including recent arrivals who are new to English.

If pupils who are new to English have literacy skills in their first language, they could be encouraged to record work trilingually in order to further support learning and understanding. This could be set as an alternate homework task if the class task were too difficult for a beginner in English.

### **With classroom support**

- Work collaboratively with specialist staff in preparing group activities and in allocating pupils to groups.

- Be explicit about the role of the additional adult – for example, running a second guided group, supporting a pupil within a group or working generally with the whole class.
- Where the support teacher or teaching assistant shares the first language of the target pupil(s), it may be possible to organise discussions in the pupils' first language. This can be particularly valuable during plenaries when pupils are reflecting on what they have learned during the lesson and how they have learned it.

classroom  
example

### Using a speaking frame

Pupils in Year 7 have been set the task of discussing the differences between school life in England and in France. To support EAL pupils with the cultural knowledge involved, the pupils have been grouped in pairs. Some sentence starters have been provided. At a more advanced level pupils could also be given a list of connectives to create more complex sentences.

Similarly, if the target language was not being used in the classroom such a scaffold in English may prove beneficial for newly arrived EAL learners.

En France	En Angleterre
La journée commence ...	
La récré dure ...	
Il y a ... cours ...	
Les élèves portent ...	

### During plenaries

- Most plenaries will be conducted in the target language but on some occasions it might be preferable to use English.
- Ensure that all pupils have a role and an opportunity to contribute to feedback.
- Tell individual pupils at the beginning of a lesson if they are going to be expected to speak in the plenary. This will give them time to plan for it. Support from a teaching assistant could be used effectively here.
- Make explicit how presentations to the rest of the class are delivered – for example, standing up, facing the class and speaking so that others can hear.
- When grammar has been taught, encourage pupils to talk about what they have learned and how they learned it – use talk prompts or frames. For this it may be more appropriate for pupils to use English or their first language.
- Differentiate questioning.
- Use opportunities to revise and consolidate new and/or key vocabulary.

discussion  
points

### Supporting teaching and learning

- *Identify which of the suggestions for starter activities, for main teaching activities and for plenaries are already strong features of teaching MFL to pupils learning EAL in your school.*
- *Identify which suggestions you would like to develop further in your teaching.*
- *Prioritise these suggestions and agree how you will put them into action.*

Talk is a vital part of the acquisition of any language, first or additional. As part of the process, oral rehearsal is essential to support the development of MFL. It is also an important factor in developing thinking and understanding. Pupils who engage in exploratory talk, using the metacognitive process of 'thinking out loud' by sharing their reasoning and linguistic experience with their peers, are more likely to understand, develop and internalise related concepts.

Typical exchanges during collaborative tasks will include rehearsal of new language and language structures, questioning, explaining, arguing a case, reflecting and predicting. These will need to be modelled by the teacher beforehand.

Formulating hypotheses and reflecting on grammatical structure in English or in pupils' first language, e.g. verb inflections, will also be a feature of the MFL classroom.

Involve pupils in establishing clear organisational routines and ground rules for talk activities in your classroom early in the year and reinforce them regularly.

### **Strategies to develop speaking and listening**

- Make oral language structures explicit in lesson objectives and planning.
- Model and explain the purpose and form of language structures involved in talk activities.
- Ensure your questions encourage full responses rather than one-word answers.
- Group and regroup pupils with clear criteria related to the lesson's objectives and available peer support.
- Use drama to support pupils' understanding and engagement.
- Create opportunities for pupils to be active listeners: invite comments from a range of pupils, asking questions and expecting pupils to ask questions for themselves.
- Provide a purpose for listening. For example, pupils watching a video could be told to listen for certain things: 'This part of the video mentions six details about French schools. Listen carefully to see if you can spot them.'
- Provide a listening frame for pupils to use if they have to listen for a prolonged length of time, such as when watching a video.



## Language games

The Reading Equality Services EMA team, several of whom were formerly MFL teachers, uses games to practise language across the curriculum for newly arrived beginners in English. Games are an excellent way of practising new vocabulary orally; they can also be used to support reading.

This team has found grid games to be particularly useful and popular with pupils. Each box in a grid contains a drawing or word as a stimulus for spoken target language. For example:

- the word 'aimer' in a box could prompt 'j'aime jouer au tennis' or even 'j'aime jouer au tennis, mais je n'aime pas ...';
- a picture of a building could suggest 'Où se trouve le/la ...' or, when two pairs of pupils are playing, a dialogue involving a set of spoken directions;
- a time written in figures could stimulate 'il est quatre heures moins le quart', 'à quatre heures moins le quart je vais ...', and so on.

### Noughts and crosses

Prepare a 3 by 3 grid, each box with a picture, word, symbol, etc. Each player will also need a set of coloured counters.

In turn, players choose a box and say the word or phrase indicated. If they are correct they can put their coloured counter on the game grid. Play continues until someone completes a line of three counters in their colour.

### Four in a line

1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6

Prepare 6 by 5 grid with 30 boxes, each box with picture, word, symbol, etc., and numbered as shown.

Players will also need a dice and sets of coloured counters (one colour each).

In turn, players throw a dice, find a box with the number shown on the dice, and say the word or phrase required. If they are correct, they put their counter on the box.

If all the boxes with that number are covered, the player may remove one of their opponent's counters; each time an appropriate word or phrase must be said. Counters may be removed and replaced many times in this part of the game, giving the opportunity for a good variety of language to be practised.

Play continues until someone obtains a line of four counters horizontally, diagonally or vertically.

## Speaking and listening

- *How do you currently involve your bilingual pupils in speaking and listening activities?*
- *Do you build in appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their first language?*
- *Discuss ways in which you could strengthen speaking and listening skills and agree on at least three approaches that could be further developed in MFL lessons in your school.*

Many pupils who are EAL learners are likely to need support to access meaning when English and not the target language is being used. They will need a range of strategies, which will help them to modify and evaluate their work. For EAL learners confusions can arise at word, sentence and text level. The extent of these misconceptions will depend upon their literacy skills in their first language and the length of time spent studying MFL. Access to first language/English and MFL/English dictionaries is essential.

### At word level

MFL regularly introduces new words and looks at their attributes. EAL learners should be supported with the literacy terminology necessary to access these words and also be given opportunities to draw upon their knowledge of their first language to further strengthen their understanding.

classroom  
example

#### Supporting the learning of vocabulary

In the MFL department at Reading Girls' School, pupils learning EAL are encouraged to use the following format in recording vocabulary to secure understanding. Progress, particularly in work completed at home, can often be impeded by an insecure knowledge of the meaning of words.

Le français	La langue maternelle	L'anglais ou un dessin
heureux		
triste		

### At sentence level

Knowledge and understanding of terminology such as syntax, verb inflections and gender agreements in both English and the target language are essential in comprehending solid sentence structures. Any reference to English grammar systems should be fully supported for the EAL learner and their own personal experience drawn upon.

### At text level

Across the MFL curriculum pupils will be presented with a variety of texts. These may include authentic magazines, leaflets, recipes and websites. Within these texts there could be potential barriers to learning for EAL learners because of cultural references which are unfamiliar to them, such as food, customs, geographical knowledge.

Module 4 of the *Literacy in modern foreign languages* folder provides further guidance.



Pupils learning EAL will need structured and active tasks to help them to begin to engage with text and to utilise a range of strategies for reading for different purposes. Depending on their previous experience, confusions can arise with the following:

- possibly unfamiliar cultural references – for example, references to common aspects of life, today and in the past, in countries where the target language is spoken;
- reference in text, where meaning is carried across sentences and paragraphs (to previously stated nouns) using pronouns (it, they, he, she);
- meaning carried through the use of complex sentences or clause construction in some texts;
- definitions of words which look similar to English words but have a different meaning, such as 'assister à';
- subject-specific vocabulary and technical terms that vary from the everyday meaning.

### **Strategies to develop reading**

Model strategies for reading texts – for example, skimming, scanning, using images, subheadings etc. – during whole-class sessions and in guided reading groups. Be explicit in describing the strategies you are using as you model them. For example, draw reference links with arrows or mark textual clues in colour. Relate this to the lesson objectives and to the purpose of reading.

Use strategies which help to structure reading, such as DARTs (directed activities related to text). These help pupils to access text and focus on the information they need. They also allow pupils' reading skills and needs to be assessed. DARTs should be used as part of interactive whole-class teaching and collaborative group and paired work so that pupils can try out their ideas orally. Examples of DARTs include:

- sequencing;
- prioritising;
- matching pictures to text;
- matching phrases to definitions;
- filling gaps in text;
- matching the beginnings and endings of sentences;
- the use of true/false statements;
- sorting to determine which information is not needed for a piece of work;
- grouping information together to identify similarities and differences between key words and phrases.

### Supporting pupils with a challenging text

Year 7 pupils studying the topic of 'Myself' are given an unseen text which they as a group are going to on work with the teacher. The group is a small lower ability set with several EAL learners.

*Je m'appelle Ludovic. J'ai treize ans. Je suis en sixième. J'habite à Darmétral, près de Rouen.*

*J'ai les cheveux courts et châtons et les yeux marron. Je suis assez grand. Je mesure un mètre cinquante. Je porte des lunettes.*

*Je joue de la guitare classique. Je suis sportif. J'aime le football, le rugby et j'adore faire du skate.*

*J'ai une chienne qui s'appelle Amandine.*

Les mots que je connais	Les mots transparents	Les mots difficiles
je	la guitare	des lunettes
les cheveux	le football	assez
les yeux	le rugby	près de

Pupils read the text in pairs. Then, through a variety of strategies modelled by the teacher, the pupils are encouraged to explore the text. They are asked to identify familiar words and cognates, use their dictionary skills, skim for gist and scan for detail.

The different reading strategies used help to support the pupils to become more confident and independent when working with texts at word and sentence level. At a more advanced level it helps pupils to work out the meaning of texts using the shared conventions.

### Reading

- *Which aspects of reading do your pupils learning EAL find particularly challenging?*
- *What do you currently do to support them with reading tasks in your lessons?*
- *Do you provide opportunities for analysis of text to promote more independent study for pupils learning EAL?*
- *Identify which suggestions listed above could be developed further in your teaching.*

In general, as for speaking and reading, the processes of writing need to be explicitly modelled by the teacher and supported through collaborative activities and guided group work. After this experience, carefully planned frames and sentence starters can support pupils toward independent writing.

Pupils will also need to experience reading good clear examples of the kind of writing which is required for a task. Writing activities need to be preceded by purposeful talk. Pupils can then hear and rehearse some of the sentences which they will need in order to develop a mental model ('a voice in the head') of the MFL structures required.



Pupils learning EAL may show patterns of error when writing in the target language in their MFL lessons which are related to their experience of the structures of their first language. Teachers should sample pupils' work and read it carefully in order to detect any patterns of error which can then be discussed with the pupil concerned.

### ***Differences in language systems***

A pupil's first language may contain both similarities and major differences in the way in which basics such as tense, gender and number are conveyed. For example:

- In Urdu, gender and number are both shown through the verb inflection and the tense is provided through a verb suffix.
- In Chinese languages, tense is conveyed other than through the verb, and the ends of words are not usually pronounced.
- Nouns in many South Asian languages (Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, etc.) have cases, as does Albanian.
- Russian verbs have aspects as well as tense.
- Most languages do not have the definite and indefinite articles; not all languages have genders.
- In many South Asian languages, 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' are the same word and the time is defined via the verb inflection. Speakers of these languages will already have had difficulty learning that these expressions of time are important in English and will probably now have to learn that they are also important in the target language.
- Vocabulary differences may include greater precision in describing family relationships than are present in English or the target language. For example, 'tante' may cause confusion for a new arrival because of the lack of information it conveys.
- Spelling in the target language may assist a new arrival's access to spelling in English (see the case study on page 22).

Bilingual pupils have a great deal to offer in discussions on grammar; their linguistic expertise should be drawn upon to enrich the linguistic experience of the MFL classroom.

### **Strategies to develop writing**

- 'Scaffold' writing through writing frames, etc. It is important that scaffolding is scaled down and removed once it is no longer necessary.
- Provide paragraph headings.
- Structured questions will allow answers to be combined as continuous prose.
- Modelled writing: demonstrate how writing is composed and refined, especially at word and sentence levels.
- Shared writing: include pupils in a shared writing activity to which they contribute, to support and shape their first attempts at writing in a whole-class context.
- Guided writing: this allows pupils' writing targets to be addressed through interactive focused teaching.
- Shared reading of pupils' writing: explicitly identify successful conventions.
- Diagnostic marking: ascertain the most commonly made errors by close-marking pupils' work. These errors can indicate writing targets for individuals or groups of pupils.

*discussion  
points*

#### **Writing**

- *Which aspects of writing do your pupils learning EAL find particularly challenging?*
- *What do you currently do to support them with writing tasks in your lessons?*
- *Identify which suggestions listed above could be developed further in your teaching.*



## Case study

### There are many ways to learn a language ...

Pupil X is currently in Year 11 at Highdown School, Reading, and is supported by Sally Snow.

The pupil was an unaccompanied asylum seeker who arrived during Year 9. He had suffered personal trauma and the injuries incurred shortly before his escape from Kosova had led to severe visual impairment. A statementing procedure began immediately. He has been supported from Year 9 to Year 11 by Sally Snow, who, in addition to her RNIB qualification, speaks both French and Spanish.

In Kosova, pupil X was denied both media and educational access to Albanian. He could, however, receive Italian television programmes; watching these became his major pastime because of the dangers outside. He achieved an excellent command of spoken Italian without having any formal teaching or having the chance to talk to Italians. He had not had access to either French or English in Kosova.

In supporting him across the curriculum, Sally drew upon his fluent Italian to assist in his acquisition of both French and English. He does not consciously draw upon his knowledge of Albanian grammar in learning French grammar, but will make the connections and comparisons when invited to do so. He feels that his Italian has been of major assistance to him, both for its proximity to French but also for the experience of acquisition in itself. He especially noted that in acquiring Italian there was a great deal of listening and reflecting before he began to attempt to speak (to himself!).

His newly acquired French was frequently used to access information in other subjects in Year 10. Italian also clarified meaning as pupil X progressed onto higher quality language and more complex grammar, especially complex tenses. Simultaneous translation took place between English and French across the curriculum which speeded acquisition of grammatical structure in both oral and written disciplines.

All new language was first presented orally and written forms introduced only when pronunciation was secure. This was necessary because of the pupil's very limited access to print, but both he and Sally feel that this emphasis on listening and speaking helped him to become confident in his active use of French so quickly. When the head of MFL took pupil X's mock GCSE tape home, her husband overheard and assumed that he was French.

When the written word was introduced, switching between the French and English alphabets was a popular game. Similarities in spellings between English and French means that some spellings which are difficult in English, because they are not written as they are pronounced, are sometimes phonetic in French; examples are *village*, *courage* and other masculine nouns ending *-age*. When learning English spellings ending in *-tion*, *-age*, *-ly* comparisons are constantly drawn with French and Italian.

Sally quickly realised that pupil X was very able and arranged for him to be placed in sets which reflected his ability rather than his level of English, despite the fact that visual access to text was extremely limited. He is now in top sets for both English and French and his estimated grades are A\* for French and C for English (his oral presentation, on Hamlet, was graded A/B – he regards Shakespearean English as simply another language in which he finds echoes of Italian cadences). In the estimation of his English teacher, the English pupils with whom he works have benefited from their work with him and he is responsible for pulling up their grades.

Pupil X now intends to study both French and English at AS level.

## Resources and further reading

*Assessing the needs of bilingual pupils: living in two languages* (2nd edition), D. Hall (David Fulton, 2001; ISBN 1 85346 799 5)

*Educational inequality: mapping race, class and gender*, D. Gilborn and H. Mirza (Ofsted, 2000; ref: HMI 232)

*Framework for teaching modern foreign languages: Years 7, 8 and 9* (ref: DfES 0335/2002) [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3)

*Inclusive schools, inclusive society*, R. Richardson and A. Woods (Trentham Books, 1999)

*Literacy across the curriculum* (ref: DfES 0235/2001)  
[www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3)

*Managing support for the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups* (Ofsted, 2001; ref: HMI 326) [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

*Negotiating identities: education for empowerment in a diverse society* (2nd edition), J. Cummins (Trentham Books, 1997; ISBN 1 85856 077 2)

*Raising aspects of ethnic minority achievement* (ref: DfES 0639/2001)

*Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning*, P. Gibbons (Heinemann, 2002; ISBN 0 325 00366 1)

*Secondary subject report 2000/01* (Ofsted ref: HMI 371) [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

*Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* (ref: DfES 0102/2002)

*Supporting refugees in 21st century Britain*, J. Rutter (Trentham Books, 2001; ISBN 1 85856 185 X)

### Information on pupils' languages

*The other languages*, V. Edwards (University of Reading, 1997; ISBN 0 7049 1065 9), contains detailed information on some of the most widely spoken community languages in the UK.

*The languages of the world*, K. Katzmer (Routledge, 2002; ISBN 0 415 25004 8), contains information on language families and their locations, basic information and written samples with translation of almost 200 languages.

In addition to translation, the website [www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com) provides profiles of languages.

### Websites

This small selection of websites offers a range of different types of support. Numerous commercial materials can be found via the Internet by using one of the commonly used search engines and searching for 'inclusion'.

### General advice on inclusion and availability of resources

[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)

[inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk](http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk)

### Resource materials, including translation sites and foreign-language resources such as newspapers

[www.linguanet.org.uk](http://www.linguanet.org.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

[www.onlinenewspapers.com](http://www.onlinenewspapers.com)

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