

First Language Assessment in Schools



What is a First Language Assessment?

Why Carry Out a First Language Assessment?

How to Conduct a First Language Assessment

Assessment Formats & Procedures

Stages of English Language Acquisition

Resources & Materials for Early Years to Key Stage 4

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Introduction

Increasing numbers of children from different countries have arrived in Essex in recent years. Some of these pupils are recent arrivals in the UK; others may have previous experience of English schooling. Pupils will thus be at different stages of English language acquisition.

This pack has been produced in response to numerous requests from schools for advice on the interface between EAL and SEN in individual pupils. It caters for students of different ages who have diverse interest levels and a range of English language skills. Each section contains a format for a 'lead-in conversation' around general subjects, as well as reading and writing tasks and a section on the language of maths, as appropriate to each age group.

What is a First Language Assessment?

A First Language Assessment aims to establish a pupil's level of competence and skill in his/her first language, i.e. Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing, and to enable comparison between the pupil's levels of competence in first language versus additional language, i.e. English.

Why carry out a First Language Assessment?

A First Language Assessment may be appropriate when a learner of EAL does not progress in line with the usual learning curve for English language acquisition and/or if there are indications that may point to a special need.

Where competence in first language is judged to be age appropriate/higher than current competence in English, SEN is significantly less likely to be present even if competence in English is still developing.

Where a pupil's low competence in first language matches low competence in English, this may indicate the presence of SEN alongside EAL.

How soon to carry out a First Language Assessment

This pack aims to provide Assessment formats for pupils from the Early Years up to and including Key Stage 4. First Language Assessments should be undertaken once the pupil has had time to settle and to build some relationships of trust in school. As a rough guideline, a settling-in period of three to six months should be allowed – the younger the child, the longer the settling-in period.



provide First Language Assessments for pupils from the Early Years up to and including Key Stage 4. Assessments should be undertaken once the pupil has had time to settle and to build some relationships of trust in school. As a rough guideline, a settling-in period of three to six months should be allowed – the longer the settling-in period.

Duration of the Assessment Tasks

The duration of each assessment task should be matched to the pupil's age, ability and usual levels of concentration. Pupils often respond well to a brisk pace that emphasises their strengths and does not dwell unduly on any weaknesses. The cost implications of interpreters' time should also be taken into account when planning the detail of a First Language Assessment.

Staffing Implications

A First Language Assessment requires the services of a professional interpreter or person of equivalent skill. First Language Assessments should be conducted jointly by a teacher or TA with EAL expertise and an interpreter who is fully proficient in the pupil's first language. (Please refer to the guidance given below about choosing and using interpreters.)

Resource implications

A range of books and other materials will be needed. The EAL Co-ordinator should select a range of appropriate resources as appropriate to the pupil's age, ability and cultural identity.



Pupils may feel especially motivated if they are allowed to choose their own materials from the range already selected by an adult in this way.

Pupils who are new to the UK may have had very different educational experiences in other countries. Although this pack includes some samples of e.g. picture stories, these should be treated as guidance only.

The role of the Local Authority

It is suggested that schools contact EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service) who will be able to support the First Language Assessment process so that accurate outcomes can be achieved and appropriate follow-up planned and supported. Contact details are listed on the back cover.

How to use this pack

This pack contains sections on the rationale for setting up a First Language Assessment, together with an overview of the EAL acquisition process. A document for building an individual BME Pupil Profile is also provided.

The general section also has advice on staffing, cost and resource implications. It is recommended that practitioners familiarise themselves with these general points prior to planning and setting up a First Language Assessment.

For ease of reference, this pack contains separate sections for assessing pupils in the Early Years and at each Key Stage. Each section has instructions on assessment procedures for each language skill i.e. Listening/Speaking, Reading and Writing. Lists of assessment materials to use at each Key Stage are also included.

Each section contains a sample assessment record for each activity/each language skill. These pages may be photocopied and/or adapted; they should be completed as fully as possible so as to create a comprehensive record of assessment outcomes.

It is strongly recommended that a BME Profile form be completed for the target pupil before setting up a First Language Assessment. In this way, schools can ensure an optimal match of assessment tasks to pupil needs/strengths; completing a profile will also ensure that the interpreter speaks the correct language and is adequately briefed for the assessment task. Furthermore, completing the Profile will increase contact with parents and may thus prove helpful in consolidating and extending home-school liaison.



Stages of English Language Acquisition

The acquisition of EAL is a continuous process. On average, young learners will achieve age appropriate proficiency in English over a period of five to seven years.

When admitting learners of EAL, practitioners in schools should begin to gather background information on each pupil so that EAL provision can be planned and delivered with the student's individual needs and strengths in mind. It will be important to establish e.g. cultural heritage and previous experiences/achievements, and to identify possible factors that may affect learning in an English speaking environment.



The following pages give an overview of the process of EAL acquisition.

1. English Language Acquisition: an overview

STAGES OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Stage 1: New to English

Makes contact with another child in the class. Joins in activities with other children but may not speak. Uses non-verbal gestures to indicate meaning – particularly needs, likes and dislikes. Watches carefully what other children are doing and often imitates them. Listens carefully and often ‘echoes’ words and phrases of other children and adults. Needs opportunities for listening to the sounds, rhythms and tunes of English through songs, rhymes, stories and conversations. If young, may join in repeating the refrain of a story. Beginning to label objects in the classroom, and personal things. Beginning to put words together into holistic phrases (e.g. no come here, where find it, no eating that). May be involved in classroom learning activities in the first language with children who speak the same first language. May choose to use first language only in most contexts. May be willing to write in first language (if she/he can), and if invited to. May be reticent with unknown adults. May be very aware of negative attitudes by peer group to the first language. May choose to move into English through story and reading, rather than speaking.

Stage 2: Becoming familiar with English

Growing confidence in using the English she/he is acquiring. Growing ability to move between the languages and to hold conversations in English with peer groups. Simple holistic phrases may be combined or expanded to communicate new ideas. Beginning to sort out small details (e.g. ‘he’ and ‘she’ distinction) but more interested in communicating meaning than in ‘correctness’. Increasing control of the English tense system in particular contexts, such as story-telling, reporting events and activities that she/he can use. Growing vocabulary for naming objects and events and beginning to describe in more detail (e.g. colour, size, quantity) and use simple adverbs. Increasingly confident in taking part in activities with other children through English. Beginning to write simple stories often modelled on those she/he has heard read aloud. Beginning to write simple accounts of activities she/he has been involved in, but may need support from adults and other children in her/his first language if she/he needs to. Continuing to rely on support of her/his friends.

Stage 3: Becoming confident as a user of English

Shows confidence in using English in most social situations. This confidence may mask the need for support in taking on other registers (e.g. in science investigations, in historical research). Growing command of the grammatical systems of English – including complex verbal meanings (relationships of time, expressing tentativeness and subtle intention with might, could etc) and more complex sentence structure. Developing an understanding of metaphor and pun. Pronunciation may be very native speaker like, especially that of young children. Widening vocabulary from reading stories, poems and information books and from being involved in maths and science investigations and other curriculum areas. May choose to explore complex ideas (e.g. in drama/role play) in the first language with children who share the same first language.

Stage 4: A very fluent user of English in most social and learning contexts

A very experienced user of English and exceptionally fluent in most contexts. May continue to need support in understanding subtle nuances of metaphor and in Anglo-centric content in poems and literature. Confident in exchanges and collaboration with English speaking peers. Writing confidently in English with a growing confidence over different genre. Continuing a new development in English drawn from own reading and books read aloud. New developments often revealed in own writing. Will move with ease between English and the first language depending on the contexts she/he finds herself/himself in, what she/he judges appropriate and the encouragement of the school.

Hilary Hester Stages sometimes referred to as ‘The Home Office Stages’

<p>STAGE 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Visual support & concrete referents ◆ Gesture & demonstration ◆ Group with good language/role models ◆ Use actions/work of peers to demonstrate what is meant ◆ Key word list ◆ Bilingual dictionary ◆ Bilingual support (peer/adult) ◆ Speak clearly, repetitively ◆ Be prepared to rephrase ◆ Use language consistently ◆ Position pupil where they can hear and see clearly ◆ Accept non-verbal responses ◆ Prompt speech without pressurising ◆ Provide opportunities for pupils to develop basic literacy skills & situations where they can hear texts read aloud ◆ Use illustrated texts 	<p>STAGE 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Visual support & concrete referents ◆ Rephrase when necessary ◆ Repeat & reinforce key points ◆ Check understanding through varied questions ◆ Explore & clarify meaning ◆ Provide good oral feedback ◆ Couch pupils' short responses in sentence form ◆ Group appropriately ◆ Scaffold writing tasks ◆ Use written and oral modelling ◆ Plentiful opportunities to discuss meaning & form of texts ◆ Use illustrated texts but draw pupils' attention to written language ◆ Be aware that pupil may gather gist and miss finer details ◆ Explain particular contexts that may be unfamiliar ◆ Actively encourage awareness & use of a wider vocabulary ◆ Be aware that pupil's mechanical skills as a reader may develop in advance of comprehension skill
<p>STAGE 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Encourage use of more precise terms ◆ Model and use peer models to demonstrate use of specific terms ◆ Provide clear oral and written feedback ◆ Focused discussion re form & content of texts ◆ Annotate & use annotated texts to raise awareness of use of language to produce a cohesive argument ◆ Directed activities related to text ◆ Provide plentiful opportunities for pupils to speak at greater length across a number of language functions ◆ Be specific about the use and appropriateness of different genres ◆ Check pupil's understanding of more complex tasks/questions/instructions ◆ Structured writing activities 	<p>STAGE 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discuss and talk through particular nuances of meaning ◆ Provide clear guidance about the use of language for specific contexts, e.g. writing a technical report, participation in a debate, interview situations, etc. ◆ Encourage wide reading

2. Conducting a First Language Assessment



2.1 Preparing the Ground - building an individual BME Pupil Profile

Before setting up the Assessment, the EAL Co-ordinator should collect all available background information about the pupil. A sample format can be found on the next page.

It is known that a personal conversation with a parent/carer, as well as with the pupil concerned, will usually provide the fullest and most accurate information. If using the Essex BME Pupil Profile, it is advisable to treat this as a guideline for these conversations, rather than to 'send it home' for completion by parents/carers.

Key information about individual pupils, Early Years

The BME Profile should be completed as fully as possible in order to establish key factors that may help or hinder the pupil's English language acquisition.

Key points include the following.

- Which language(s) are spoken at home, day-to-day?
- Do parents/carers feel that the child's use of first language is generally age appropriate?
- What are the child's specific strengths and areas of interest?
 - Practitioners should ensure to include these areas in conversations during the assessment.

For pupils not born in, or not continually resident in, the UK:

- How long has the family lived in the UK?
- What previous pre-school settings has the pupil experienced in the UK?
- What pre-school education has he/she experienced outside the UK? What was the language of instruction?
 - This will give clues as to the length of time that the child has been exposed to the English language and to the degree of cultural adjustment that may still be needed.

Key information about individual pupils, Key Stages 1- 2

The BME Profile should be completed as fully as possible in order to establish key factors that may help or hinder the pupil's English language acquisition.

Key points include the following.

- Which language(s) are spoken at home, day-to-day?
- In which home language(s) is the pupil literate?
- What is the extent of his/her literacy skills, e.g. does the pupil attend a community school ('Saturday school') in the local area?
 - It is known that learners will usually transfer language and literacy skills from their first language to an additional language – in this case, English. For example, a pupil's literacy skills in First Language will support him/her in acquiring comparable literacy skills in English.
- What are the pupil's specific strengths and areas of interest/expertise
 - A) within and beyond the curriculum, and
 - B) beyond the curriculum?
- Practitioners should ensure to include these areas in conversations during the assessment.

For pupils not born in, or not continually resident in, the UK:

- How long has the family lived in the UK?
- What schooling has the pupil received in the UK?
- What schooling has he/she received outside the UK? What was the language of instruction?
 - This will give clues as to the length of time that the child has been exposed to the English language and to the degree of cultural adjustment which may still be needed.
 - Answers will also highlight any literacy skills that the pupil may possess in one or more languages other than English.
- What is the usual school starting age in the pupil's country of origin?
 - Many countries, both within and outside Europe, have school starting ages of six or seven years, so that newly arrived primary pupils may not have had previous experience of schooling as such.

School:

Useful information re: New Arrivals – this page for distribution to all relevant staff

Full name: (in order and underline the family name, please indicate any preferred name)	M/F
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Date / Country of Birth	Date of arrival in UK (if not UK born)	Ethnicity inc GRT & children of Irish heritage	Religion

Please give further information if the pupil has lived in more than one country.

Further background information:

Favourite subjects in school	
Interests and hobbies	
Prior experience which may affect learning e.g. trauma and disrupted education	
Will the pupil be attending community class/school? Please give details	
Does the pupil need to wear particular clothing for cultural and religious reasons?	

Pupil's use of language: (including English)

Languages	Speaking (proficiency) Home/School	Reading (proficiency)	Writing (proficiency)	Used with/where

Previous schooling: (including breaks in education, pre-school and UK education)

Country	Date started	Ages (from-to)	Languages used	Assessment exams/grades	Repeated years

Confidential – this page for use by school office only

Family information:

Name of parents/carers		
Relationship of carer/carers to the pupil (if not parents)		
Contact details of parents/carers		
Siblings	Age	Gender
Other relevant details		

Dietary and health issues:

Favourite foods and preferred diet	
Dietary restrictions	
Known medical conditions	

Support for parents and carers: (tick boxes)

Interpreter support at parents' meetings needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	The parent or carer can bring an interpreter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bilingual translations of school letters and leaflets would be helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/carer can arrange for school letters to be translated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about education system/formal assessment/exams needed for parents/carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact details of local community groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refugee status	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seeker status	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Other information

Asylum seeker/refugee pupil	Foster carer	Social worker	
	Contact details	Contact details	
CLA (Child Looked After)	Foster carer		
	Contact details		

Data collected by: _____

Date: _____

2.2 Materials to Use

Early Years to Key Stage 2

Some or all of the following materials will be needed for First Language Assessment. The EAL Co-ordinator should check that all relevant materials are to hand before starting the Assessment.

Note: *EMTAS is often able to lend suitable materials to schools on request.*

For each individual pupil, age appropriate materials should be chosen which are also culturally appropriate, and which are familiar to the student and meet the child's preferences and interests.

Early Years to Key Stage 2

Listening and Speaking

Materials

Doll Family/Family Photographs
Photo Talk Book
Match-a Balloon Game
Plastic fruit and vegetables
or colour photo cards
Photo Action Cards
Story Sequencing Cards
Classroom objects –
pen, pencil, book, box, ruler ...
appropriate artefacts, e.g. for RE

available from ...

e.g.
AMS Educational
LDA
NES Arnold
***EMTAS can lend
some relevant materials
to schools on request.***

Reading

Materials

dual language text,
as appropriate to pupil's age and
language/heritage

available from ...

e.g. Mantra Lingua,
Milet,
Badger Books,
Bright Books
***EMTAS can lend
some relevant materials
to schools on request.***

Writing

Materials

workbooks e.g.
'All About Me'
'My Life Story'

available from ...

EMTAS
Mantra Lingua

Key Stages 3 - 4

Some or all of the following materials will be needed for First Language Assessment. The EAL Co-ordinator should check that all relevant materials are to hand before starting the Assessment.

Note: *EMTAS is often able to lend suitable materials to schools on request.*

For each individual pupil, age appropriate materials should be chosen which are also culturally appropriate, and which are familiar to the student and meet the child's preferences and interests.

Key Stages 3-4

Listening and Speaking

Materials

Pupil's own Photographs
Photo Talk Book
Colour Photo Cards,
e.g. feelings/emotions/
Spot the Difference/
People and Jobs
Photo Action Cards
School objects –
pen, pencil, book
Subject related equipment
(e.g. Maths, Art, Design & Make,
Textiles, Food Technology)
Culturally appropriate artefacts,
e.g. for RE
Sequencing Cards

available from ...

e.g.
AMS Educational
NES Arnold
LDA
***EMTAS can lend
some relevant materials
to schools on request.***

Reading

Materials

Dual language text
as appropriate to pupil's
language/heritage
e.g. Mantra Lingua 'Myths
and Legends' series
as appropriate to pupil's age
and culture

available from ...

e.g. Badger Books
Bright Books
Milet
Mantra Lingua
***EMTAS can lend
some relevant materials
to schools on request.***

Writing

Materials

workbooks, e.g.
'All About Me'
'My Life Story'

available from ...

EMTAS
Mantra Lingua

2.3 Using Interpreters

Why use a professional interpreter?

In order to yield valid results, First Language Assessments require the presence of a professional interpreter. It is not sufficient to use a community member who speaks the language in question; rather, schools should choose a professional linguist who is both trained and experienced in this highly skilled field of work.

The interpreter must be a native speaker of the pupil's first language and must have a good standard of familiarity with relevant local variations.

For example ...

For families of Bengali speaking heritage, a Bengali speaker should be familiar with the Sylheti dialect if this is the family's usual medium of communication.

Speakers of Persian may need to be familiar with either the Dari or Farsi varieties of this language, Spanish speakers may need to be familiar with both Spanish and South American forms of the language, and so on.

Booking local interpreters:

EMTAS can supply contact details of local interpreters and of translating/interpreting agencies operating across Essex. Contact details for EMTAS are listed on the back cover.

Briefing the Interpreter

Interpreters should be briefed prior to the assessment itself on procedures and expectations. EAL Co-ordinators should be aware that interpreters may not have first hand experience of the English education system. The purpose of a First Language Assessment may therefore need to be explained and clarified.

It is often helpful to explain the school's intention to establish whether the pupil's proficiency in his/her home language is of an age appropriate nature. Where pupils are fully literate in their first language, the assessment should extend over all four areas of language – speaking, listening, reading and writing. If the child is fluent but not literate in home language, the interpreter should aim to establish the level of the pupil's oral articulation. Absence of literacy skills might be a sign of SEN but could, on the other hand, also be due to a lack of schooling in home language.

Making the pupil comfortable

If the pupil has not met the interpreter before, it may be advisable to make an introduction in the familiar setting of the classroom before withdrawing the child to a comfortable and familiar area in school – such as, perhaps, a cosy corner of the school library or other favourite spot. The EAL Co-ordinator should carry out the assessment together with the interpreter; a light-touch, game-oriented style may be best so that the procedure feels natural and enjoyable to the pupil.

Many pupils enjoy First Language Assessments, as these will often entail an opportunity to show areas of strength and expertise pertaining to the language and culture of the home.

EAL Co-ordinators should also be aware of potential sensitivities, e.g. where pupils are asylum seekers. Disclosures of painful experiences should be accepted, but never forced, in these circumstances.

Note: Some pupils may have been granted leave to remain in the UK as Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. This means that the child has arrived without an accompanying adult, usually because he/she was forced to flee from a war zone or similar emergency situation. It has been known for children as young as seven years of age to arrive in Britain as Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers.

2.4 Consultation with Colleagues

The EAL Co-ordinator should check with subject teachers/class teachers about the specific English language needs of the target pupil. It is often helpful to consult with the pupil's Maths/Numeracy teacher as to the maths concepts and maths terminology that are currently being taught and to carry out a maths related speaking and listening task in addition to the general speaking/listening task.

Note: Some pupils, e.g. some young asylum seekers and some students from Roma backgrounds, may not possess age-appropriate literacy skills in their first language. This is often due to issues around schooling prior to the pupil's arrival in the UK and does not in itself indicate the presence of SEN.

2.5 Recording Assessment Outcomes

The EAL Co-ordinator should record all observations/assessment findings in detail. Sample recording sheets have been provided for each language skill at each Key Stage. It is essential that this information be retained by the school as evidence when requesting further input and/or intervention.

In the meantime, First Language Assessment findings should be shared among school staff as relevant to the pupil's needs.

3. Assessment Format and Procedures



3.1 First Language Assessment - Early Years Settings

Before considering a First Language Assessment during the Early Years, practitioners should ensure to ask parents/carers for detailed information about the child's use of language at home. Where English is not spoken in the home, a child's entry into the Early Years setting may be his/her first experience of an English speaking environment even if the child was born in the UK.

Young learners of EAL will often need time to learn to distinguish between languages; many go through a prolonged phase of 'mixing' their languages. This is a normal phase of the EAL learning process, which children should therefore be allowed to outgrow at their own pace. A child's use of 'mixed code' in this way should not in itself be treated as a cause for concern. However, concerns may arise where carers find it hard to understand a child when the child is using first language, e.g. in the home.

For an EAL child, the process of settling into a pre-school setting may also demand the negotiation of cultural difference. For example, children may not be used to eating with children who are not their siblings, or to making eye contact with an adult/authority figure. Not all social cultures encourage early independence (e.g. learning to tie own shoe laces). It will therefore be especially important to build rapport with parents so that there can be ongoing exchange of information.

On average, learners take between five and seven years to acquire full bilingualism with English. It is known that learners will usually transfer linguistic competencies from one language to another after an initial adjustment period. Where a child's use of his/her First Language is judged to be age appropriate overall, age appropriate skill in English are therefore likely to follow over time.

If, on the other hand, the child's linguistic capacity in First Language appears to be below age appropriate levels, it may be advisable to carry out a First Language Assessment so as to pinpoint any specific language development needs.

In order to ensure accuracy of outcomes for children in Early Years settings, First Language Assessments should be carried out by arranging a home visit after school, as well as working with the child in the pre-school setting itself. Observations from each setting should be recorded separately (i.e. using one set of recording sheets for each), and should then be compared before evaluating outcomes.

First Language Assessment - Early Years Making a Drawing

It is recommended that pupils make drawings to focus their talk. Where appropriate, an adult could write a title for the drawing, in consultation with the child, using the child's preferred language.

This is a drawing of _____

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a child to draw. It occupies the central and lower portion of the page.

First Language Assessment
Leading in: Early Years Listening/Speaking, General Topics
Recommendation: Please enlarge this page to A3 format when photocopying for use.

Sample Assessment Grid

Name of Pupil:

Date:

Subject matter: Colours red blue yellow orange ...	Can say colour name	Can't say colour name	Can point to correct colour	Can't point to correct colour	Summary: Vocabulary, Colours Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary

First Language Assessment, Early Years Overview of Focus Subjects

It is suggested that the following areas of language/language function should be covered during the assessment.

General Topics

Topic	Vocabulary	Language Functions covered across topics	Language Structures in focus across topics
Self	Food, hobbies, games, sports, TV programmes	Naming	Pupil's use of
Family	Names of family members; Relationships, e.g. mother, brother, sister ...	Describing	Present tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she is doing now/today</i>
Home	Rooms in the house, foods, furniture	Following instructions	Past Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she was doing yesterday</i>
Pre-school setting	Layout, activities, routines	Expressing likes/dislikes	Future Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she will do tomorrow/next week</i>
Colour	Red, blue, green, yellow, orange, white ...	Sequencing	
Foods	Banana, apple, mango, pizza, rice ...	Comparing	Word Order
Animals	Farm animals, wild animals (pets should be included only if culturally appropriate)	Classifying	Prepositions
Actions	Eating, pushing, drawing ...	as above	as above
Size	Big, small, tall, short ...	as above	as above
Positional	In, on, under ...		
Possessive	My, your ...		
Personal pronouns	He, she ...		
Narrative		Recalling, re-telling reasoning justifying predicting	

Practitioners should be aware that parts of speech in English may not have an exact equivalent in a child's first language. For example, only a limited number of prepositions are used in Cantonese describing position/location. Hindi, Urdu and other languages have a wider vocabulary than does English to describe family relationships – e.g. using different words for an aunt on the father's /mother's side of the family. Past, present and future verb tenses may not exist in the same way as some languages rely on contextual clues to indicate tense.

Observations: Pupil's general language use and response pattern

General Language use	never	some-times	mostly	always
Replies in English only				
Replies in mixed code, more English				
Replies in mixed code, more First Language				
Replies in First Language only				

Comments – General lang. use

Response pattern	never	some-times	mostly	always
Communicates using gestures				
One-word response				
Single phrase				
Full sentence				
Extended response				

Comments – Response pattern

Interpreter's additional notes:

- *Does the child appear to understand what you are saying?*

- *Is he/she using spoken language in ways that you would expect for a child of their age?*

- *Does what they say make sense, or are you having to fill in some information in order to understand?*

3.2 First Language Assessment - Key Stages 1 and 2

This section provides a range of activities around children's experiences in the home and at school, as follows.

This pack comprises separate First Language Assessment sections for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Key Stage 1

For each Key Stage, two Speaking/Listening tasks are envisaged, followed by one task each for Reading and Writing. A sample grid for recording outcomes is provided for each task/each area of observation during the Assessment.

Leading in: The '**General Subjects' Speaking/Listening task** is designed to enable optimal rapport between pupil and interpreter through informal talk around topics that are likely to be of interest to the pupil.

Pupil's general language use and response pattern: Observations on the pupil's general language use and response pattern should also begin during this task, and should be noted down throughout the assessment. A sample recording grid has been provided.

Where the pupil is not literate in First Language, this will be the only Assessment task, and a more extensive range of topics should therefore be chosen by the EAL Co-ordinator.

Where the pupil is literate in First Language, talk around General Subjects should be treated as a 'warm-up' activity. The main S/L focus should then be on the more structured talk which forms part of the **Reading task**.

Pupils should be offered the choice of linking their **Writing task** to either the Speaking/Listening or Reading tasks if they so wish.

In order to ensure accuracy of outcomes for children at Key Stage 1, First Language Assessments should be carried out by arranging a home visit after school, as well as working with the child in the school setting itself. Observations from each setting should be recorded separately (i.e. using one set of recording sheets for each), and should then be compared before evaluating outcomes.

Key Stage 2

Although separate in content, the Key Stage 2 Assessment section follows the same structure as that described above.

Listening and Speaking

- Aims** – to establish the level of a pupil’s understanding and use of age appropriate concepts in the language of the home.
- to enable optimal rapport between pupil and interpreter through informal conversation

Practical Points

EAL Co-ordinators should

- select appropriate materials in consultation with the pupil’s class teacher
- ensure that the assessment is carried out in First Language
- When assessing Listening/Speaking skills, samples of the pupil’s drawing and/or writing may also be useful.

EAL Co-ordinators/interpreters should phrase all questions with a view to encouraging as much speech from the pupil as possible.

Open-ended questions should be used whenever appropriate.

Pupils could be asked to name, e.g. ‘What is this?’, ‘Who is this?’.

If the pupil can’t name, he/she should be encouraged to point by asking, ‘Where is the ...’

Further questions could include e.g. ‘How..?’, ‘Why...?’.

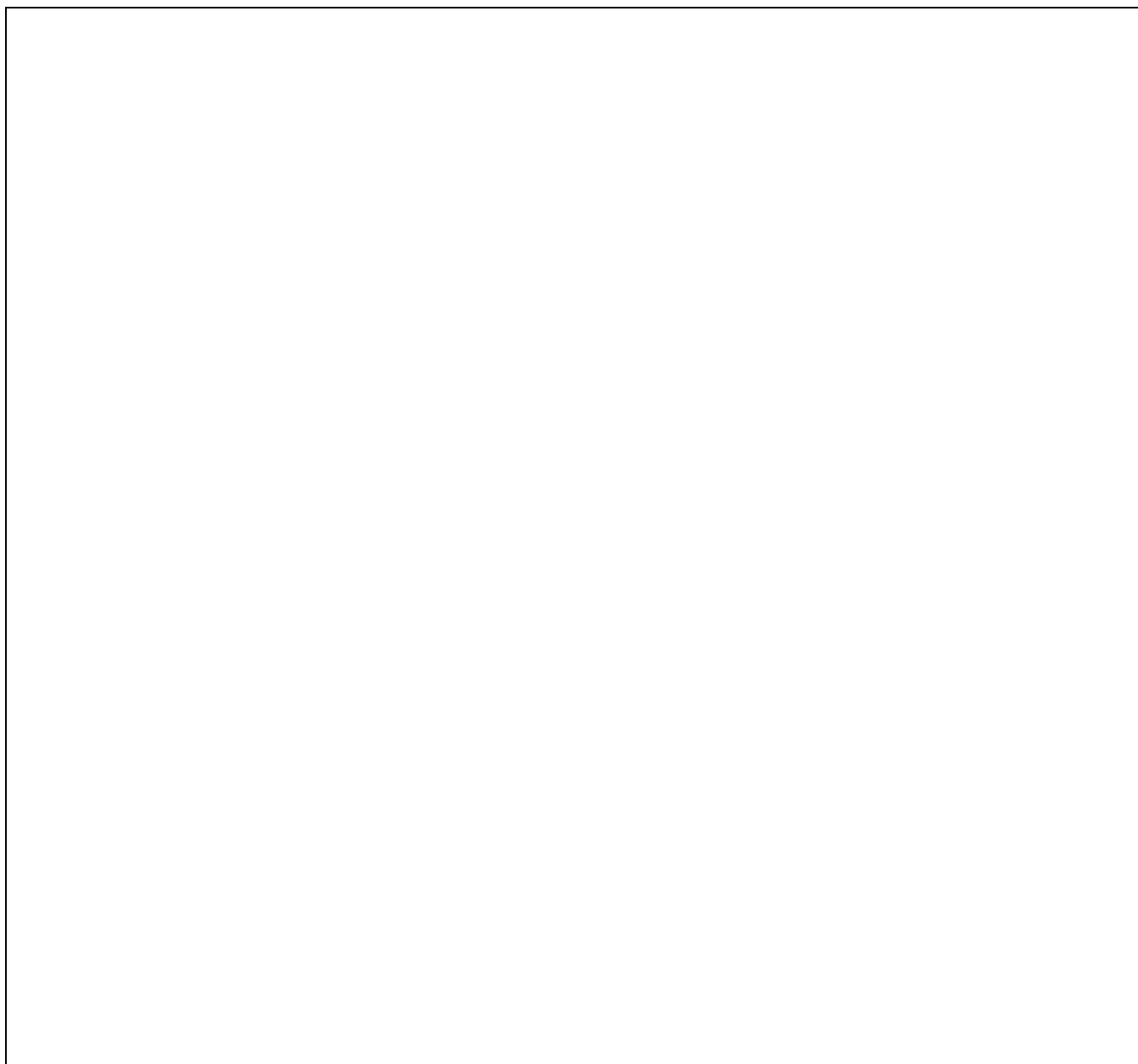
Recording Observations

A sample Assessment Grid is provided on the following page. This can be photocopied as many times as needed, to cover all speaking/listening topics selected for an individual pupil.

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 1 Making a Drawing

It is recommended that pupils make drawings to focus their talk. A title for the drawing could be written by the pupil or scribed by an adult in consultation with the child, using the language of the child's choice.

This is a drawing of _____



First Language Assessment
Leading in: Key Stage 1 Listening/Speaking, General Topics
Recommendation: Please enlarge this page to A3 format when photocopying for use.

Sample Assessment Grid

Name of Pupil:

Date:

Subject matter: Colours red blue yellow orange ...	Can say colour name	Can't say colour name	Can point to correct colour	Can't point to correct colour	Summary: Vocabulary, Colours Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 1

First Language Assessment, Key Stage 1 Leading in - Overview of Focus Subjects

It is suggested that the following areas of language/language function should be covered during the assessment.

1. General Topics

Topic	Vocabulary	Language Functions covered across topics	Language Structures in focus across topics
Self	Food, hobbies, games, sports, TV programmes	Naming	Pupil's use of
Family	Names of family members, e.g. mother, brother, sister...	Describing	Present tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she is doing now/today</i>
Home	Rooms in the house, foods, furniture	Following instructions	Past Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she was doing yesterday</i>
School	Activities, areas of learning, school routines	Expressing likes/dislikes	Future Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she will do tomorrow/next week</i>
Colour	Red, blue, green, yellow, orange, white ...	Sequencing	Word Order
Shape	Square, circle, rectangle, triangle	Comparing	Prepositions
Foods	Banana, apple, mango, pizza, rice ...	Classifying	
Animals	Farm animals, wild animals <i>(pets should be included only if culturally appropriate)</i>		
Actions	Eating, pushing, drawing ...	As above	As above
Size	Big, small, tall, short ...	As above	As above
Positional	In, on, under ...		
Possessive	My, your ...		
Personal pronouns	He, she ...		
Narrative		Recalling, re-telling, reasoning, justifying, predicting	

Note: Where the assessment is set to cover reading/writing as well as listening/speaking, a dual language reading book should be chosen before the start of the assessment. This should then be used to cover the appropriate parts of the Listening/Speaking section (e.g. Narrative). The same book could be used for the Reading section. The pupil could also be given the option of producing his/her Writing task based on this book.

Practitioners should be aware that parts of speech in English may not have an exact equivalent in a child's first language. For example, only a limited number of prepositions are used in Cantonese describing position/location. Hindi, Urdu and other languages have a wider vocabulary than does English to describe family relationships – e.g. using different words for an aunt on the father's /mother's side of the family. Past, present and future verb tenses may not exist in the same way as some languages rely on contextual clues to indicate tense.

2 The language of Maths

Mechanical Maths	Numbers Calculations Plus, minus, multiply by ...	Addition, Subtraction Multiplication Division
Concepts of Maths	Place value Simple fractions Using money Using measures Using decimals Using negative numbers Properties/positions of shapes (2D/3D) Angles Time Length, capacity, mass Volume Temperature Reflective symmetry Simple tables, lists, bar charts, pictograms	Compare Match Classify Explain when to use a particular calculation

Observations: Pupil's general language use and response pattern

General Language use	never	some-times	mostly	always
Replies in English only				
Replies in mixed code, more English				
Replies in mixed code, more First Language				
Replies in First Language only				

Comments – General lang. use

Response pattern	never	some-times	mostly	always
Communicates using gestures				
One-word response				
Single phrase				
Full sentence				
Extended response				

Comments – response pattern

Interpreter's additional notes:

- *Does the pupil appear to understand what you are saying?*

- *Is he/she using spoken language in ways that you would expect for a child of their age?*

- *Does what they say make sense, or are you having to fill in some information in order to understand?*

Reading

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil's reading and comprehension skills in the language of the home.

Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own materials. The EAL Co-ordinator could pre-select a small range of suitable dual language books and let the pupil choose from among these.

Practitioners should be aware that some dual language texts are intended to be read by adults to children. Where this is the case, the interpreter should read but should involve the child in age appropriate ways. For example, the child could be asked to read out individual words or phrases. He/she could indicate how well they understand the text by discussing the story and illustrations in first language.

Assessment tasks around a book should always be preceded and prepared by a conversation about e.g. the title page, illustrations and storyline. Where the book is designed for child readers, adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable when reading aloud.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 1 Reading Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

Reading - Decoding e.g. extent of phonetically correct reading range of sight vocabulary	Notes on pupil's performance:
Reading: Comprehension e.g. ability to re-tell the story ability to answer questions about the characters/storyline ability to express likes/dislikes re the story	Notes on pupil's performance:
Reading: Expression e.g. ability to read expressively as appropriate to the text ability to take punctuation/end of paragraphs into account when reading <i>(Note – some languages do not use e.g. punctuation or paragraphing.)</i>	Notes on pupil's performance:

Writing

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil’s writing skills in the language of the home.

Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own writing task. The EAL Co-ordinator should suggest a range of suitable subjects; the pupil should then be given the opportunity to discuss his/her choice of subject (it may also be appropriate to give ‘thinking time’ at this point).

Materials/Stimuli for writing could include

- the dual language book used in the Reading Section
- a dual language workbook, e.g. ‘My Life Story’ (Mantra Lingua)
- an event in school (e. g .recent school outing or school production)
- The pupil could write about an event from his/her own life. (This activity may not be suitable for e.g. young asylum seekers)

The assessment of writing in first language should be preceded and prepared by a brief conversation. What will the pupil write about, what details will be important? Is a particular style required to make this a successful piece of writing?

Adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable during the Writing task.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 1 Writing Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Writing - Handwriting</p> <p>e.g. quality of letter formation, joined-up writing <i>(Note – some languages do not use 'joined-up' lettering.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Spelling</p> <p>e.g. words of one/two/ several syllables: spellings recognisable (sometimes/often/always) spellings correct (sometimes/often/always)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Storyline</p> <p>e.g. ability to describe setting, order of events aware of cause and effect in the storyline coherence of the storyline</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Syntax</p> <p>e.g. sentence structure: simple/compound/complex phrases: short/extended subject-verb agreement word order prepositions connectives verb tenses – simple, more complex <i>(Note – some languages do not use have verb tenses as such; it may be advisable to check with the interpreter)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Punctuation</p> <p>e.g. full stops, capital letters <i>(Note – some languages do not use e.g. punctuation or start-capitalisation in the way these are used e.g. in English).</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 2

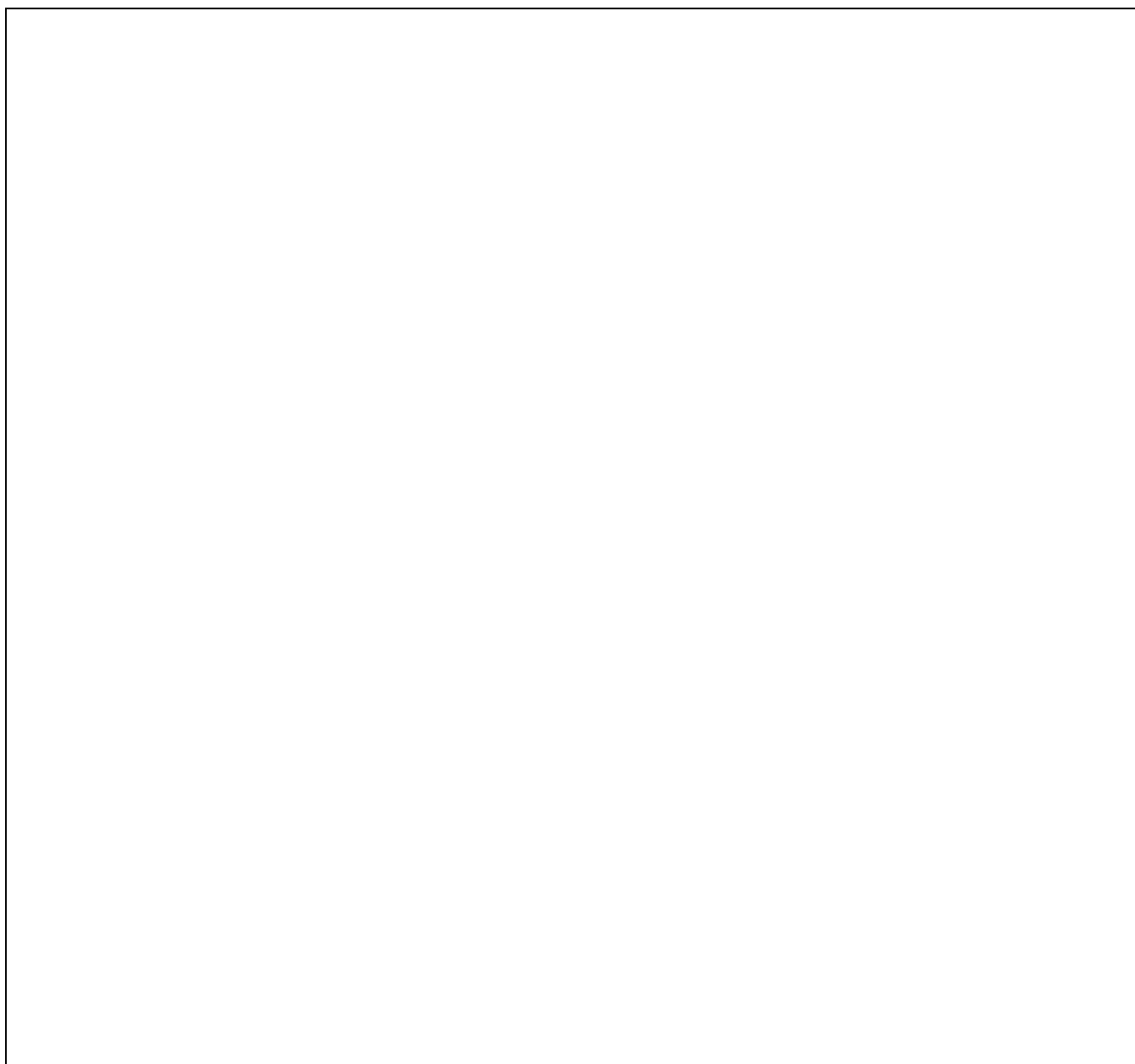
Listening and Speaking

Aims – To prepare a First Language Assessment for learners at Key Stage 2, please refer to the KS 1-2 guidance on pages 23-24.

Making a Drawing

It is recommended that pupils make drawings to focus their talk. A title for the drawing could be written by the pupil or scribed by an adult in consultation with the child, using the language of the pupil's choice. Particular features of the drawing could be labelled in the same way.

This is a drawing of _____



First Language Assessment
Leading in: Key Stage 2 Listening/Speaking, General Topics
Recommendation: Please enlarge this page to A3 format when photocopying for use.

Sample Assessment Grid

Name of Pupil:

Date:

Subject matter: Colours red blue yellow orange ...	Can say colour name	Can't say colour name	Can point to correct colour	Can't point to correct colour	Summary: Vocabulary, Colours Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can say ...	Can't say ...	Can point to ...	Can't point to ...	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 2 Leading in - Overview of Focus Subjects

Some General Topics should be selected as a starter activity for the Assessment. Where it is known that the pupil is not literate in First Language, it may be useful to pursue a wide range of Speaking/Listening activities in order to establish the degree of his/her overall proficiency.

1. General Topics

Topic	Vocabulary	Language Functions covered across topics	Language Structures in focus across topics
Self	Food, hobbies, games, sports, TV programmes	Naming	Pupil's use of:
Family	Names of family members; Relationships, e.g. mother, brother, sister ...	Recalling information	Present tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she is doing now/today</i>
Home	Rooms in the house, foods, furniture	Describing	Past Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she was doing yesterday</i>
School	Activities, areas of learning, school routines	Following instructions	Future Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she will do tomorrow/next week</i>
Colour	Red, blue, green, yellow, orange, white ...	Expressing likes/dislikes	
Shape	Square, circle, rectangle, triangle ...	Sequencing	Word Order
Foods	Banana, apple, mango, pizza, rice ...	Comparing	Prepositions
Animals	Farm animals, wild animals (pets should be included only if culturally appropriate)	Classifying	
Actions	Eating, drawing, writing...	Reporting (e.g. school)	
Positional	In, on, under ...	Explaining	
Possessive	My, your ...	Evaluating	
Personal pronouns	He, she ...		
Size	Large, small, long, tall, short	As above	As above

Practitioners should be aware that parts of speech in English may not have an exact equivalent in a child's first language. For example, only a limited number of prepositions are used in Cantonese describing position/location. Hindi, Urdu and other languages have a wider vocabulary than does English to describe family relationships – e.g. using different words for an aunt on the father's /mother's side of the family. Past, present and future verb tenses may not exist in the same way as some languages rely on contextual clues to indicate tense.

2. The language of Maths

Mechanical Maths	Numbers Calculations Plus, minus, multiply by ...	Addition, subtraction multiplication division
Concepts of Maths	Place value Simple fractions Using money Using measures Using decimals Using negative numbers Properties/positions of shapes (2D/3D) Angle Time Length, capacity, mass Volume Temperature Reflective symmetry Symmetry of 2D shapes Area, perimeter Scale Metric units/imperial units Simple tables, lists, bar charts, pictograms Problem solving Describing nets pupil has made during Maths lessons in school Describing 3D models pupil has made	Concepts on focus across areas of Maths Measure Compare Match Classify Explain when to use a particular calculation Begin to solve problems independently Graphically represent Describe Estimate

Observations: Pupil's general language use and response pattern

General Language use	never	some-times	mostly	always
Replies in English only				
Replies in mixed code, more English				
Replies in mixed code, more First Language				
Replies in First Language only				

Comments – General lang. use

Response pattern	never	some-times	mostly	always
Communicates using gestures				
One-word response				
Single phrase				
Full sentence				
Extended response				

Comments – response pattern

Interpreter's additional notes:

- *Does the pupil appear to understand what you are saying?*

- *Is he/she using spoken language in ways that you would expect for a child of their age?*

- *Does what they say make sense, or are you having to fill in some information in order to understand?*

First Language Assessment - Key Stage 2

Listening/Speaking to re-tell a story KS2

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil's understanding and use of age appropriate concepts in the language of the home.

Note: Where the assessment is set to cover reading/writing as well as listening/speaking, a dual language reading book should be chosen at this point during the assessment. This book should then be used to cover the Listening/Speaking section, as well as the Reading section. The pupil could also be given the option of producing his/her Writing task based on this book.

The EAL Co-ordinator should choose an age appropriate, as well as culturally appropriate, picture narrative from a sequencing box. (Picture stories such as those available from Schubi may be suitable.)

Activity 2 - Sample Assessment Record Key Stage 2

Assessors should give detailed written feedback on each language skill displayed by the pupil during this task.

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Language functions: sequencing, re-telling</p> <p>e.g. includes all elements of the story summarises details correct order of events aware of cause and effect in the storyline able to justify can make predictions can make deductions can empathise shows reasoning skills</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Linguistic competence: re-telling</p> <p>e.g. uses appropriate vocabulary uses descriptive adjectives uses adverbs substitutes own vocabulary for that used in the original story expresses present time – past time future time</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Syntax</p> <p>sentence structure: simple/compound/complex phrases: short/extended subject-verb agreement word order prepositions connectives verb tenses – simple, more complex <i>(Note – not all languages have verb tenses as such; it may be advisable to check with the interpreter)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Pronunciation</p> <p>Clarity of enunciation Fluency of speech</p> <p>Intonation <i>(Note – pronunciation is not usually a direct indicator of proficiency in a given language; however, any difficulties in this area may point to other issues connected to learning.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

Reading

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil’s age appropriate reading/reading comprehension skills in the language of the home.

Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own reading material. The EAL Co-ordinator could pre-select a small range of suitable dual language books and let the pupil choose from among these.

The assessment of Reading in first language should be preceded and prepared by a brief conversation about the book, e.g. the title page, illustrations and storyline. Adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable when reading aloud.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language assessment - Key Stage 2 Reading Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

Reading - Decoding	Notes on pupil's performance:
e.g. extent of phonetically correct reading range of sight vocabulary	
Reading: Comprehension	Notes on pupil's performance:
e.g. ability to re-tell the story ability to answer questions about the characters/storyline ability to express opinions about the story	
Reading: Expression	Notes on pupil's performance:
e.g. ability to read expressively as appropriate to the text ability to take punctuation/end of paragraphs into account when reading <i>(Note – some languages do not use e.g. punctuation or paragraphing.)</i>	

Writing

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil's age appropriate writing skills in the language of the home.

Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own writing task. The EAL Co-ordinator should suggest a range of suitable subjects; the pupil should then be given the opportunity to discuss his/her choice of subject (it may also be appropriate to give 'thinking time' at this point).

Materials/Stimuli for writing could include

- the dual language book used in the Reading Section
- a dual language workbook, e.g. 'My Life Story' (Mantra Lingua)
- an event in school (e. g. recent school outing or school production)
- The pupil could write about an even from his/her own life
 - (This activity may not be suitable for e.g. young asylum seekers.)

The assessment of Writing in first language should be preceded and prepared by a brief conversation. What will the pupil write about, what details will be important? Is a particular style required to make this a successful piece of writing?

Adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable during the Writing task.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language Assessment – Key Stage 2 Writing Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Writing - Handwriting</p> <p>e.g. quality of letter formation, joined-up writing <i>(Note – some languages do not use 'joined-up' lettering.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Spelling</p> <p>e.g. words of one/two/ several syllables: spellings recognisable (sometimes/often/always) spellings correct (sometimes/often/always)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Storyline</p> <p>e.g. ability to describe/evoke setting order of events range of vocabulary awareness of cause and effect in the storyline coherence of the storyline, quality of characterisation</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Syntax</p> <p>sentence structure: simple/compound/complex phrases: short/extended subject-verb agreement word order prepositions connectives verb tenses – simple, more complex <i>(Note – some languages do not use verb tenses as such; it may be advisable to check with the interpreter.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Punctuation</p> <p>e.g. full stops, capital letters, question marks <i>(Note – some languages do not use e.g. punctuation or start-capitalisation in the way these are used e.g. in English.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

3.3 First Language Assessment - Key Stage 3 and 4

Listening and Speaking

- Aims** - to establish the level of a pupil's understanding and use of age appropriate concepts in the language of the home.
- to enable optimal rapport between pupil and interpreter through informal conversation

This section provides a range of activities around pupils' experiences at school and, where appropriate, also in the home, as follows.

Key Stages 3 and 4

Two Speaking/Listening tasks are envisaged, followed by one task each for Reading and Writing. A sample grid for recording outcomes is provided for each task/each area of observation during the Assessment.

Leading in: The '**General Subjects**' S/L task is designed to enable optimal rapport between pupil and interpreter through informal talk around topics that are likely to be of interest to the pupil.

Pupil's general language use and response pattern: Observations on the pupil's general language use and response pattern should also begin during this task, and should be noted down throughout the assessment. A sample recording grid has been provided.

Where the pupil is not literate in First Language, this will be the only Assessment task, and a more extensive range of topics should therefore be chosen by the EAL Co-ordinator.

Where the pupil is literate in First Language, talk around General Subjects should be treated as a 'warm-up' activity. The main S/L focus should then be on the more structured talk which forms part of the **Reading task**.

Pupils should be offered the choice of linking their **Writing task** to either the Speaking/Listening or Reading tasks if they so wish.

Preparation: The EAL Co-ordinator should choose an age appropriate, as well as culturally appropriate, picture narrative from a sequencing box. (Picture stories such as those available from Schubi may be suitable for Key Stage 3 pupils.)

For the Maths section, a range of current maths equipment and Maths tasks should be provided. Adults should be aware that learners of EAL may find it difficult to solve Maths tasks involving complex instructions in English, even if they are familiar with the relevant mathematical concepts. The pupil's performance during the Speaking/Listening and Reading Tasks will give an indication of his/her ability to understand complex instructions in First Language.

A sample format for recording observations has been provided.

Points to Consider

For pupils at Key Stages 3-4, prior information gathering should take place re the education system in the student's country of origin, e.g.

- Age of transition in country of origin
- Types of secondary schools in country of origin
- Number of years of both primary and secondary education student has experienced, either within or outside the UK. Practitioners should be aware that the age of primary-secondary transition may differ between the UK and a student's previous country of residence.

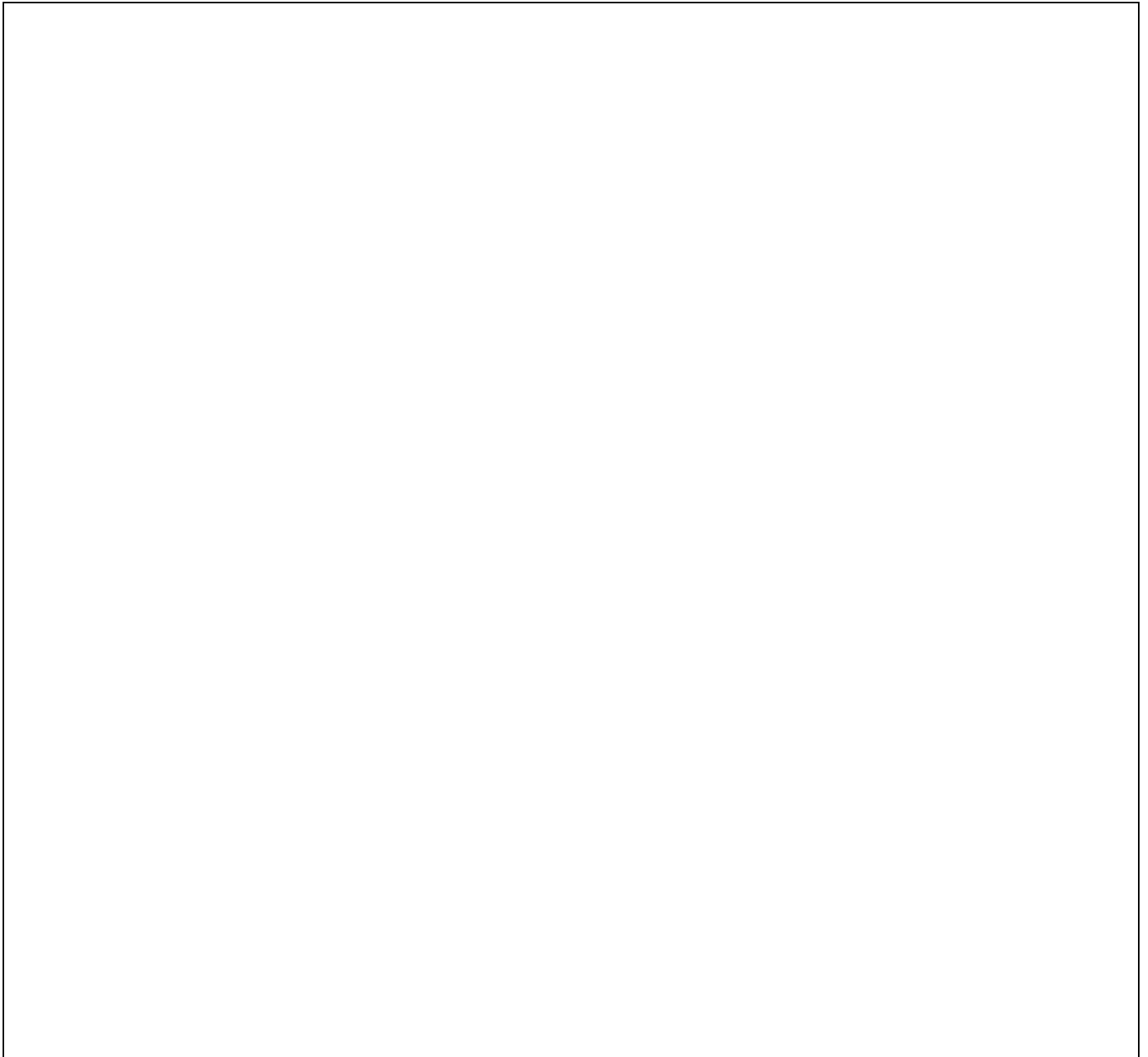
Note: Where the assessment is set to cover reading/writing as well as listening/speaking, a dual language reading book should be chosen before the start of the assessment. This book should then be used to cover the Listening/Speaking section, as well as the Reading section. The pupil could also be given the option of producing his/her Writing task based on this book.

First Language Assessment - Key Stages 3 and 4

Talk Around a Drawing

Pupils may find it useful to make drawings to focus their talk. When using this method, a title for the drawing could be written by the pupil or scribed by an adult in consultation with the pupil, using the language of the pupil's choice. Particular features of the drawing could be labelled in the same way.

This is a drawing of _____



First Language Assessment
Leading in: Key Stage 3 - 4 Listening/Speaking, General Topics
Recommendation: Please enlarge this page to A3 format when photocopying for use

Sample Assessment Grid

Name of Pupil:

Date:

Subject matter: Foods (using colour photos)	Can name	Can't name	Can point to correct photo	Can't point to correct photo	Summary: Vocabulary, Foods Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter ... (using colour photos)	Can name	Can't name	Can point to correct photo	Can't point to correct photo	Summary: Vocabulary ... Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter: School Subjects Maths Science English ...	Can discuss fluently	Can discuss with some difficulty	Can discuss with much difficulty	Can't discuss	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary
Subject matter	Can discuss fluently	Can discuss with some difficulty	Can discuss with much difficulty	Can't discuss	Summary: Vocabulary, Subject: Doesn't know most words Knows most words Has good vocabulary

First Language Assessment and Key Stage 3 and 4 Leading in – Overview of Focus Subjects

Some General Topics should be selected as a starter activity for the Assessment. Where it is known that the pupil is not literate in First Language, it may be useful to pursue a wide range of Speaking/Listening activities in order to establish the degree of his/her overall proficiency.

1. General Topics

Topic	Vocabulary	Language Functions covered across topics	Language Structures in focus across topics
Self	Food, hobbies, games, sports, TV programmes, favourite books/films	Naming	Pupil's use of
Family	Names of family members; Relationships, e.g. mother, brother, sister ... (discuss only if appropriate to pupil's home situation)	Recalling information	Present Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she is doing now/today</i>
		Describing	
Home	Rooms in the house, home routines (as appropriate to pupil's home situation)	Following instructions	Past Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she was doing yesterday</i>
		Expressing likes/dislikes	
School	School subjects, school routines; questions around homework	Sequencing	Future Tense <i>e.g. talking about what he/she will do tomorrow/next week</i>
		Comparing	
Foods	e.g. photos showing foods also available in school cafeteria	Classifying	Word Order
		Reporting (e.g. school)	
Country of Heritage	(discuss only if appropriate to pupil's home situation)	Explaining	Prepositions
		Evaluating	
Actions	drawing , writing, reading, using ICT	As above	As above
Positional	in, on, under, next to ...		
Possessive	my, your, his, her, our, their		
Personal pronouns	he, she, we, they ...		

Practitioners should be aware that parts of speech in English may not have an exact equivalent in a child's first language. For example, only a limited number of prepositions are used in Cantonese describing position/location. Hindi, Urdu and other languages have a wider vocabulary than does English to describe family relationships – e.g. using different words for an aunt on the father's /mother's side of the family. Past, present and future verb tenses may not exist in the same way as some languages rely on contextual clues to indicate tense.

2. The language of Maths

Mechanical Maths	Numbers Calculations Plus, minus, multiply by ...	Addition, subtraction multiplication division
Concepts of Maths	Place value Simple fractions Using money Using measures Using decimals Using negative numbers Properties/positions of shapes (2D/3D) Angle Time Length, capacity, mass Volume Metric units/imperial units Temperature Symmetry Dimensions, area, perimeter Scale Interpreting diagrams, e.g. tables, lists, bar charts, pictograms Variability Problem solving Describing nets pupil has made during Maths lessons in school Describing 3D models pupil has made Averages - mean, median, range Intersecting lines Parallel lines Compound measures, e.g. speed Probability	Concepts on focus across areas of Maths Measure Compare Match Classify Explain when to use a particular calculation Begin to solve problems independently Graphically represent Describe Estimate

Assessment Record - Key Stages 3 - 4

Listening/Speaking to recount a passage of text

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Language functions: sequencing, re-counting</p> <p>e.g. includes all elements contained in the text summarises details aware of cause and effect in the text includes descriptions of characters (where relevant) correct order of events (where relevant)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Linguistic competence: re-counting</p> <p>e.g. uses appropriate terminology uses an appropriate range of vocabulary, incl. e.g. descriptive adjectives, adverbs, connectives substitutes own vocabulary for that used in the original text</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Syntax</p> <p>sentence structure: simple/compound/complex phrases: short/extended subject-verb agreement word order prepositions connectives verb tenses – simple, more complex <i>(Note – not all languages have verb tenses as such; it may be advisable to check with the interpreter.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Pronunciation</p> <p>Clarity of enunciation Fluency of speech Intonation <i>(Note – pronunciation is not usually a direct indicator of proficiency in a given language; however, any difficulties in this area may point to other issues connected to learning.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

Pupil's general language use and response pattern

General Language use	never	some-times	mostly	always
Replies in English only				
Replies in mixed code, more English				
Replies in mixed code, more First Language				
Replies in First Language only				

Comments – General lang. use

Response pattern	never	some-times	mostly	always
Communicates using gestures				
One-word response				
Single phrase				
Full sentence				
Extended response				

Comments – response pattern

Interpreter's additional notes:

- *Does the pupil appear to understand what you are saying?*

- *Is he/she using spoken language in ways that you would expect for a young person of their age?*

- *Does what they say make sense, or are you having to fill in some information in order to understand?*

Reading

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil's age appropriate reading/reading comprehension skills in the language of the home.

Note: Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own reading material. The EAL Co-ordinator could pre-select a small range of suitable dual language books and let the pupil choose from among these. Alternatively, dual language or first language texts could be chosen from the internet provided that the interpreter is able to verify that texts are appropriate to the pupil's age and to the school context. The assessment of Reading in first language should be preceded and prepared by a brief conversation about the book, e.g. the title page, storyline/content and any illustrations.. Adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable when reading aloud.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language Assessment – Key Stage 3 - 4 Reading Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Reading - Decoding</p> <p>e.g. extent of phonetically correct reading range of sight vocabulary</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <p>e.g. ability to re-tell a narrative ability to answer questions about the characters/setting/storyline ability to express opinions on the text e.g. ability to comment on genre and style identifies key features/themes/characters e.g. ability to select essential points ability to comment on layers of meaning (where relevant)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Reading: Expression</p> <p>e.g. ability to read expressively as appropriate to the text ability to take punctuation/end of paragraphs into account when reading <i>(Note – some languages do not use e.g. punctuation or paragraphing.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

Writing

Aim – to establish the level of a pupil's age appropriate writing skills in the language of the home.

Note: Pupils will often feel particularly motivated if they are allowed to choose their own writing task. The EAL Co-ordinator should suggest a range of suitable subjects; the pupil should then be given the opportunity to discuss his/her choice of subject (it may also be appropriate to give 'thinking time' at this point).

Materials/Stimuli for writing could include

- the dual language book used in the Reading Section
- a dual language workbook, e.g. 'My Life Story' (Mantralingua)
- an event in school (e. g .recent school outing or school production)
- The pupil could write about an event from his/her own life
 - (this activity may not be suitable for e.g. young asylum seekers).

The assessment of Writing in first language should be preceded and prepared by a brief conversation. What will the pupil write about, what details will be important? Is a particular style required to make this a successful piece of writing?

Adults should ensure that the pupil is made comfortable during the Writing task.

The following format could be used for recording observations.

First Language assessment - Key Stage 3 and 4 Writing Task

Pupil's Name:

Date:

<p>Writing - Handwriting</p> <p>e.g. quality of letter formation, joined-up writing <i>(Note – some languages do not use 'joined-up' lettering.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Spelling</p> <p>e.g. words of one/two/ several syllables: spellings recognisable (sometimes/often/always) spellings correct (sometimes/often/always)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Coherence</p> <p>e.g. clarity of expression range of vocabulary used order of events awareness of cause and effect coherence of sentences/paragraphs <i>(Note – some languages do not use paragraphing; interpreters may be able to advise.)</i> ability to write in a style appropriate to genre</p> <p>ability to describe/evoke setting (where relevant) quality of characterisation (where relevant) ability to build tension in the text (where relevant)</p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Syntax</p> <p>sentence structure: Simple/compound/complex phrases: short/extended subject-verb agreement word order prepositions connectives verb tenses – simple, more complex <i>(Note – some languages do not use have verb tenses as such; interpreters may be able to advise.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>
<p>Writing - Punctuation</p> <p>e.g. full stops, capitalisation, commas, speech marks, question marks, exclamation marks, paragraphing <i>(Note – some languages do not use punctuation, capitalisation or paragraphing in the way these are used e.g. in English.)</i></p>	<p>Notes on pupil's performance:</p>

4. Where to go from here – following up on First Language Assessment



Assessment outcomes

A first Language Assessment may indicate e.g. that a learner of EAL also has further educational needs. The assessment may indicate e.g. that the pupil

- Is Gifted and Talented
- has Special Educational Needs
- needs more time and/or support to adjust to the English education system
- presents other concerns.

Next Steps

EMTAS Advisers and Consultants can actively support the First Language Assessment process in schools and can also help schools determine what follow-up may be appropriate in each case. Follow-up may entail e.g. the implementation of further personalised provision within the school, increased home-school liaison or seeking intervention by other ECC agencies.

In order to enable further provision as needed, it is essential that detailed records of the First Language Assessment are retained by the school as evidence when requesting intervention, and as a record of an individual pupil's needs and strengths to inform personalised teaching and support.

5. FAQs and Further Reading



1. Q: A pupil is learning EAL slowly. His/her behaviour could indicate the presence of SEN. How can teachers tell if this child has SEN in addition to learning EAL?

Comment: Although the overall proportion of SEN learners with EAL has been low, it will be important to identify any SEN where there are concerns. Practitioners should be aware that many learners of EAL go through a Silent Phase, usually lasting several weeks, before they feel ready to speak. It is not unusual for pupils to give a 'spaced out' impression during this time. The Silent Phase is a normal part of the EAL acquisition process. Practitioners should allow pupils to complete this phase before considering SEN related issues.

It may be helpful to refer to the Overview of English language acquisition which can be found at the beginning of this pack.

Further Reading:

For pre-school settings: EAL/SEN: A guide for Early Years Practitioners, SENCOs and ENCOs (EMTAS at Essex County Council, 2011)

For Key Stage 1 and above: Distinguishing the difference – SEN or EAL? By Birmingham Advisory and Support Service, Authors: Susan Rosamond, Imtiaz Bhatti, Marion Sharieff and Karen Wilson. Editor: Marie Birkinshaw. ISBN: 1-898244-72-3

2. Q: A pupil with EAL can speak English fluently but seems to be very slow at writing in English.

Comment: Many learners of EAL are able to converse in English fluently, but will still need scaffolding for more academic language and especially for writing tasks, given that writing demands significantly higher levels of abstraction than does any other language skill.

Further reading:

Cameron, L. and Besser, S. (2004). "Writing in English as an Additional Language at Key Stage 2". Department for Education and Skills, Research Report 586. Nottingham: DfES Publications, **Oct 04**, pp.137.

Cameron, L. (2003). "Writing in English as an Additional Language at Key Stage 4 and post-16". London: Office for Standards in Education, **March 03**, pp.65.

Cameron, L. (2002). "Measuring vocabulary size in English as an additional language". Language Teaching Research, **6/2**, 145-173.

3.Q: A pupil with EAL does not use any form of verbal communication in school, or communicates verbally in some situations but not in others.

Comment: A small number of learners of EAL may develop Selective Mutism. This may follow a traumatic event at home or at school, and/or may be linked to relationships at home or at school.

Further reading: Selective Mutism and the bilingual learner, by Peta Ullmann. NALDIC Quarterly, Autumn 2011, Vol. 8, no. 4

4. Q: What connections exist between the acquisition of English as an Additional Language and a pupil's possible need for Speech and Language Therapy?

Comment: EAL cannot in itself be classed as a Special Need. However, where Additional Educational Needs have been diagnosed in a learner of EAL, sessions with a Speech and Language Therapist may be indicated.

Further Reading: Developing a language therapy package to meet the needs of EAL learners, a 2011 NALDIC Conference paper by Dr Sean Pert, bilingualism.co.uk http://www.naldic.org.uk/Resources/NALDIC/Professional%20Development/Documents/NC19_Pert_SLT_EAL.pdf

For extensive coverage of issues around EAL and SEN, see Naldic Quarterly vol. 9 no. 2, Winder 2012.

6. Acknowledgements

A number of First Language Assessment documents have been published by Local Authorities and other bodies in England. Colleagues have been generous in sharing their First Language assessment systems, and EMTAS would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who made their materials available to us and whose input inspired this pack. More specifically, EMTAS' First Language Assessment pack draws on ideas and formats from the following publications.

- **'Informal First Language Assessment'** by Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service
- **'Assessing the first language skills of pupils developing English as an additional language. Guidelines for facilitators in schools'** by Margaret Brown, *London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham*
- **'Mother Tongue Assessment KS1 and KS2'** by Hounslow Language Service

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