THE EAL TEACHING BOOK

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PROMOTING SUCCESS FOR MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

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3RD EDITION

SAGE | Learning Matters

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a new edition of *The EAL Teaching Book: Promoting Success for Multilingual Learners* (2015), itself the second edition of *Teaching Bilingual and EAL Learners in Primary Schools*, which was published in 2012. This new edition contains all the content of the previous editions. Facts and figures related to policies and social trends have been updated, some sections have been rewritten in the light of new research and policy, and there are two brand new chapters, one focusing on EAL in the early years (Chapter 4) and one on EAL and literacy (Chapter 5). Another new feature in this edition is the inclusion of Master's level study sections at the end of each chapter.

The overarching aim of this book is to show the ways in which 'EAL' needs to be a central aspect of the professional knowledge of all teachers. The term 'EAL' has been in common use for many years in England to describe pupils who are learning English as an Additional Language in mainstream schools. It has become a shorthand for a huge variety of issues across the whole range of schools and ages of pupils. The professional standards for teachers, introduced by the government in 2011, make it very clear that all teachers need to have training and professional development in order to meet the diverse needs of all the pupils they are expected to teach. This is part of Standard 5, which says that all teachers must:

> *. . . have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.*

The professional standards show how theory and practice always need to be closely connected in teaching. This book shows the ways in which the two can be linked in a pedagogy that plays to the strengths and helps to raise the attainments of EAL learners. Indeed, such a pedagogy will contribute to enhancing the learning of all pupils in mainstream schools, not just those who may have been placed in the category of 'EAL'. The use of case studies to show the integration of theory and practice proved very popular in the second edition and so has been extended in this new edition. These case studies have all been written by practising teachers, from mainstream schools, complementary schools and universities.

Soon after the first edition of the book was published in 2012, we had the introduction of the new national school curriculum which has two short statements that lay down some requirements for teachers in their work with multilingual and EAL learners. These are:

> *Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.*

> *The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in the national curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.*

> (DfE, 2013: 8)

Though brief, these statements are important and they align with the key aims and messages of this book in articulating clear principles for EAL. They recognise the need to understand what pupils bring to their learning in mainstream schools, as this is the basis on which they will build their new learning and their identities as speakers and writers of English – a key element of the sociocultural theories of learning that are explained in Chapter 2. Secondly, they emphasise two crucial points. First, for many EAL pupils, learning English needs to go on simultaneously with learning all the subjects of the curriculum. Second, that many will have greater knowledge of some subjects than they can express in English. These have implications for the whole cycle of planning, teaching and assessing EAL learners and so underpin the ideas presented in all the chapters in Part 2 of the book.

The DfE introduced another change in 2016, related to the assessment of EAL learners. This is the DfE Proficiency Scales, which are covered in this new edition, mainly in Chapter 8 on assessment. Though introduced as part of the national schools' census rather than the curriculum and now – sadly – not an official requirement on schools, the scales offer a useful tool for teachers to understand the needs of their EAL learners and can be used effectively as part of formative assessment processes.

This book raises issues and challenges misconceptions about language teaching and learning generally and about EAL learners in particular. Such misconceptions have, in the past, contributed to what could be termed a 'deficit' model of EAL. EAL learners are sometimes perceived as being on the margins of mainstream education, with problems that need to be sorted out before they can be included fully. This book argues strongly for a positive perspective on diversity and in particular a view of language diversity as a resource and an opportunity for learning, for all pupils. This is why the term 'multilingual' features in the title of the book, reminding us that EAL learners are members of our contemporary multilingual world where using different languages in daily life is normal and natural. It is my hope that the book will instil in our next generation of teachers enthusiasm and passion for an aspect of their work which offers in return a great deal of professional reward and satisfaction.

The prime audience for this book is people who have chosen to become teachers, no matter what route they are taking, from the well-established, university and college-based degree-level and PGCE courses to the vast array of school-based training programmes that are being developed round the country. It is also relevant for other audiences, such as tutors in initial teacher education, NQTs and their mentors, teachers and other professionals working with multilingual and EAL learners in schools, and those engaged in continuing professional development (CPD) and working towards higher qualifications. A new feature in this third edition is the addition of sections at the end of each chapter that provide extra reading and critical questions for Masters' students and tutors. Each one focuses on a different reading, which is easily available online or from a university or college library. Together, these readings constitute a sound basis for Master's level study. Here they are:

	Chapter	Reading
1	Introducing multilingual and EAL learners	K. Safford and R. Drury (2013) 'The "problem" of bilingual children in educational settings: policy and research in England', *Language and Education*, 27 (1), pp. 70-81.
2	All about language and learning	Chapter 2: 'A sociocultural view of language and learning', in P. Gibbons (2006) *Bridging Discourses in the ESL Classroom*. London: Continuum.

	Chapter	Reading
3	What does it mean to be multilingual?	J. Cummins (2008) 'Teaching for transfer: challenging the two solitudes assumption in bilingual education', in J. Cummins and N. H. Hornberger (eds), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education, Volume 5: Bilingual Education*. Boston, MA: Springer, pp. 65–75. Available at https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_116
4	EAL in the Early Years: beginning schooling in a new language and culture	Chapter 3: 'The idea of intercultural competence', in P. Baldock (2010) *Understanding Cultural Diversity in the Early Years*. London: Sage.
5	EAL and literacy: learning to read independently in a new language	Chapter 4: 'The context of the mind', in E. Gregory (2008) *Learning to Read in a New Language: Making Sense of Words and Worlds*. London: Sage.
6	Planning for learning across the curriculum for multilingual and EAL learners	P. Sandoval-Taylor (2005) 'Home is where the heart is: planning a funds of knowledge-based curriculum module', in N. Gonzalez, L. Moll and C. Amanti (eds), *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities and Classrooms*. New York: Routledge, pp. 153–65.
7	Assessing multilingual and EAL learners across the curriculum	S. Hopewell and K. Escamilla (2014) 'Struggling reader or emerging biliterate student? Reevaluating the criteria for labeling emerging bilingual students as low achieving', *Journal of Literacy Research*, 46 (1), pp. 68–89.
8	Promoting independence: using home languages and cultures in learning	J. Conteh and A. Brock (2010) '"Safe spaces"? Sites of bilingualism for young learners in home, school and community', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14 (3), pp. 347–60.

This book provides a theory-informed, accessible, comprehensive source of practical guidance for meeting the needs of children categorised as EAL learners in the early years, primary and secondary schools. As such, it is perhaps still the only book of its kind.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

The book is in two parts. The first part comprises Chapters 1–3 and the second Chapters 4–9. In between the two parts there is a set of principles which are intended to show how theory and practice always need to be integrated in considering the best provision for bilingual and EAL learners – indeed any learners.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING MULTILINGUAL AND EAL LEARNERS – THEORIES OF LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

The chapters in the first part of the book provide theoretical and contextual information to frame the more practical ideas that form the second part of the book. Essentially, this part aims to provide:

- a contextualisation of the issues surrounding multilingualism both globally and in England, including a discussion of the development of the idea of EAL and illuminative vignettes of children who would come under its umbrella;

- an overview of key theoretical models and principles and their practical implications, which explain the role of language in learning generally and the development and learning of pupils who can be defined as 'EAL' and 'multilingual'.

Chapter 1: Introducing multilingual and EAL learners begins by providing some facts and figures which explain how our present 'superdiverse' society in England has come about and is constantly changing. Following this, it aims to answer the question 'who are EAL learners?' by offering vignettes of individual pupils, using terminology from policy documentation over the years. This section covers pupils in five categories, showing the need to be aware of the complexities and uncertainties in understanding their strengths and needs. It ends with a case study about Gypsy Roma pupils in a secondary school. The final section raises some common myths and misconceptions about language diversity and learning which are addressed at different points in the book and returned to at the end of Chapter 9.

Chapter 2: All about language and learning provides a theoretical overview of language, culture and identity in the field of EAL and multilingualism. It explains what is involved in the **functional approach** to understanding grammar and texts, showing the value of this for teaching and learning. The second section provides an introduction to sociocultural theories of learning, in which talk is a central element, and it argues for the importance of talk in working with **multilingual** and EAL learners in particular. Finally, the **funds of knowledge** concept is introduced, which is an important one for understanding the role of home and community in learning.

Chapter 3: What does it mean to be multilingual? addresses relevant theories about multilingualism and their practical implications in making the best provision for multilingual and EAL learners. Beginning with an overview of global contexts, it moves on to consider research related to multilingualism and education, in particular the work and ideas of Jim Cummins. A case study illustrates what it is like to be a multilingual learner in a mainstream school in England. The chapter ends by emphasising the importance for pupils' success in school of understanding the nature of home and community learning experiences that multilingual and EAL learners bring to school.

Part 1 closes by articulating some 'key principles' for promoting success for EAL learners, which are illuminated with practical examples in Chapters 4–9.

PART 2: PROMOTING LEARNING – PRACTICAL APPROACHES FOR MULTILINGUAL AND EAL LEARNERS

Based on the key principles identified in the first part of the book, the second part (Chapters 4–9) focuses on practical classroom issues. It covers the important themes of planning, classroom strategies, resources, assessment, language across the curriculum and making links with home and community contexts.

Chapter 4: EAL in the Early Years: beginning schooling in a new language and culture provides overall guidance and examples of practical strategies for working with multilingual and EAL

learners in the early years. The funds of knowledge philosophy underpins the whole chapter, along with its practical implications. It illustrates the ways in which different settings can support children's active learning in the early years and the importance of learning through play. There is an extended section on literacy, which introduces the notion of **emergent literacy** and its importance for multilingual and EAL learners in the early years.

Chapter 5: EAL and literacy: learning to read independently in a new language provides a brief account of what independent readers need to do and the place of phonics within the whole picture of reading. It argues that phonics have been given too dominant a role in the teaching of reading in recent years. The chapter provides examples of ways of using multilingual and EAL learners' full language repertoires to open out learning to read. Finally, it addresses two key issues for multilingual and EAL learners – understanding **academic language** in different subjects across the curriculum and the importance of developing reading for pleasure.

Chapter 6: Planning for learning across the curriculum for multilingual and EAL learners provides guidance for planning language-focused activities across the curriculum using a framework (the Cummins' quadrant) which makes clear the ways that planning can support the progression of learning from simple, context-embedded tasks to more complex, more academic levels. There is a wealth of ideas and suggestions for developing activities that link language learning and content learning. Case studies illustrate the role of talk in primary science, the ways subject and 'EAL' teachers can work together, planning for collaborative talk and including new arrivals in your lessons.

Chapter 7: Assessing multilingual and EAL learners across the curriculum begins by raising issues for EAL learners related to the national, standardised models of assessment in place in England and suggesting some principles for assessing EAL and multilingual learners. It stresses the importance of assessment for learning (AFL) and introduces activities which can be used with pupils to enhance their future learning. The new 'Proficiency in English' Scales for EAL learners are introduced and discussed. Case studies are included on assessing learners across the curriculum in a secondary school, teachers' and pupils' views on science in primary schools and newly arrived pupils' views on their experiences in their first year of schooling in England. The possible confusions between language needs and special needs are addressed and the chapter ends with some practical advice on AFL, observing pupils and consulting with parents.

Chapter 8: Promoting independence: using home languages and cultures in learning discusses the importance of promoting independent learning and practical ways of doing it in multilingual classrooms. Following this, it discusses ways of involving families and communities in learning and briefly introduces the work of **complementary/supplementary schools**. Then there are sections on bringing home languages and cultures into school, and the use of dual language books in promoting independent learning. The final section, on using personal funds of knowledge, includes two case studies: the first on using Spanish as a means of including one newly arrived multilingual learner in science lessons and the second on learning place value through a counting song in Bangla.

Chapter 9: Conclusions: synthesising learning and moving on revisits the myths identified in Chapter 1 and the principles at the end of Part 1. It invites readers to reflect on their developing professional knowledge and suggests ways of moving on in order to extend and

strengthen their professional expertise related to multilingual and EAL learners. It ends with an annotated list of further reading.

The new case studies in this revised edition provide a rich resource of classroom practice over a range of topics and learners.

REFERENCE

Department for Education (DfE) (2013) *The National Curriculum in England: Key Stages 1 and 2 Framework Document*. London: DfE.