

**"Eye-opening": How we can use multimodal texts with school staff to support more inclusive school and classroom narratives**

***5 September 2024,  
5:00pm – 6:00pm, Online***

***April Edwards***



This session will be recorded and made available on the VicTESOL website.

If you have any questions, please place them in the chat. They will be answered by the presenter after the presentation.

If you have any technical difficulties, please use the chat function to talk to VicTESOL staff or email:

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Key EAL knowledge and assumptions



Complete and reflect on a multimodal activity



Key implications (2 case studies)



Q & A



# EAL teacher speak

- EAL learners or EAL/D
- Bilingual/ multilingual/ plurilingual/ monolingual
  - Plurilingual teaching approaches

# What underpins an acronym such as "EAL/D"

English as an - Additional Language – and/or - dialect

A "Standard" form of English is being "added"; they are learning to read and write in English.

Australian English may be a students' 3rd or 4th language being learned. Their languages used can be derived from a home country, across different nations or here in Australia, indigenous languages and AUSLAN.

Australian English "added" to an existing local Aboriginal English/Koori English? Or to Filipino or Punjabi Englishes? Or ASL (American Sign Language)?

Languages are separate and should be kept that way (Garcia, 2009).



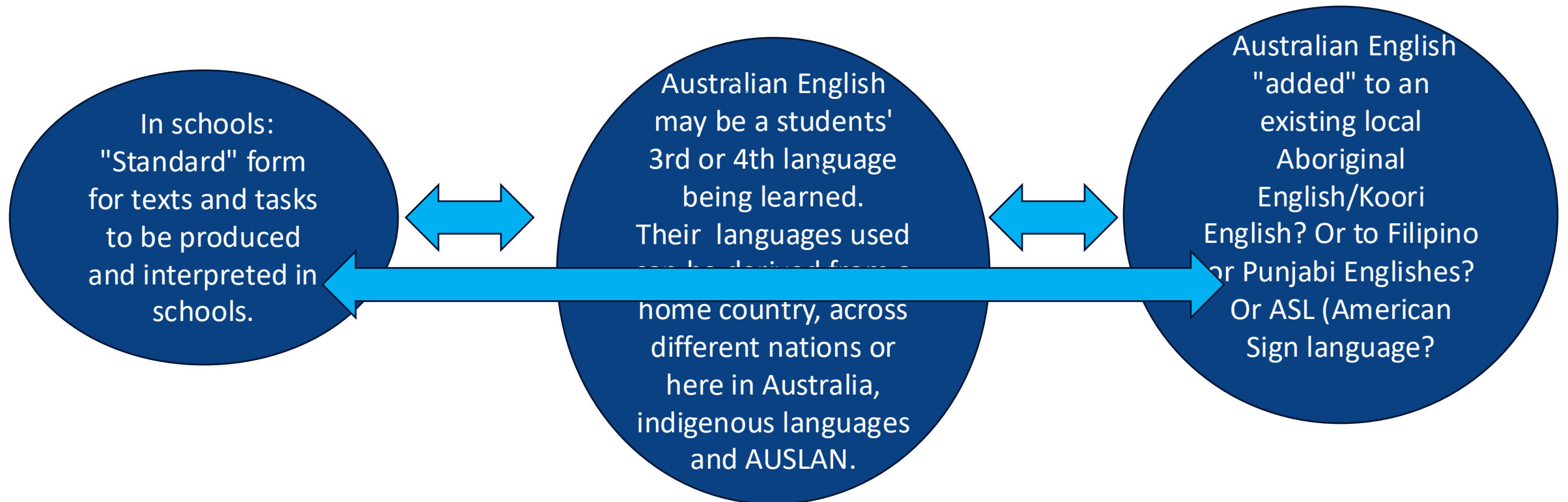
# The value of making connections, using all languages to learn

"The inclusion of plurilingual awareness in the curriculum acknowledges the value of competence in multiple languages.

A student who develops plurilingual awareness is able to *integrate* their knowledge of multiple languages in a way that *enriches their communication and learning in all languages*".

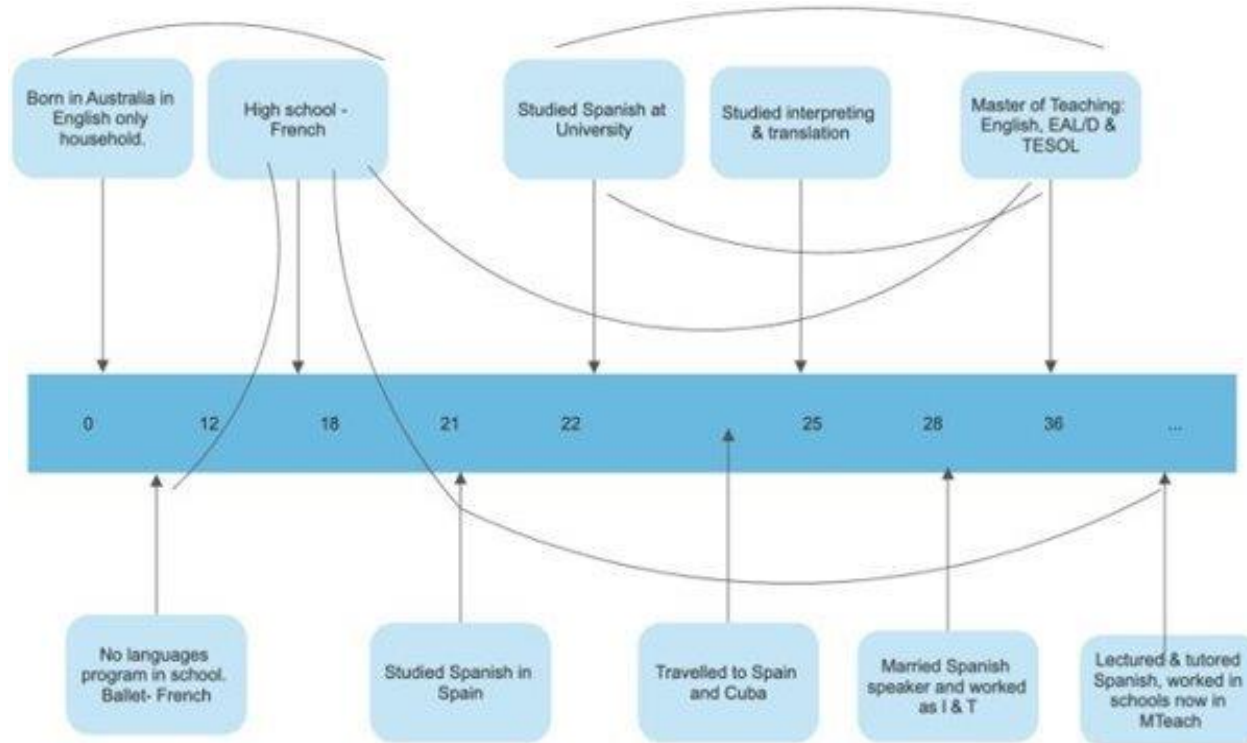
(VCAA, 2019)

# Multilingualism is an integration of knowledge systems



(Cummins, 1991)

# Multimodal activity – Your language journey

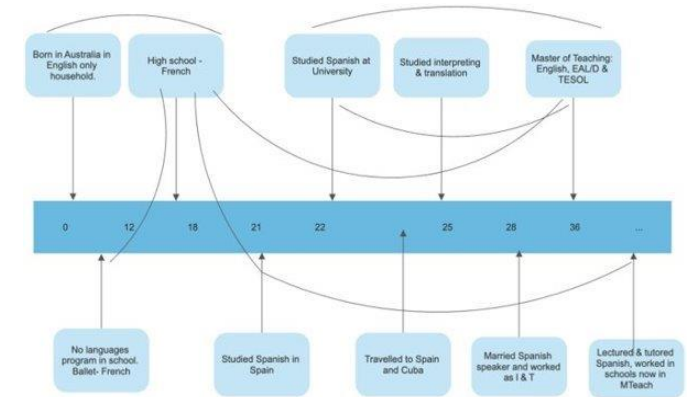


Individually, draw your own timeline, making 2-3 connections. (3-5 mins)

You could include:

- language you use in your hobbies
- languages learnt at school
- The learning across different Englishes you speak (Irish, Malaysian, Koorie, Greeklish, Chinglish, Aussie, Cockney etc.),
- languages used for travel or across jobs etc.

# Sharing your story

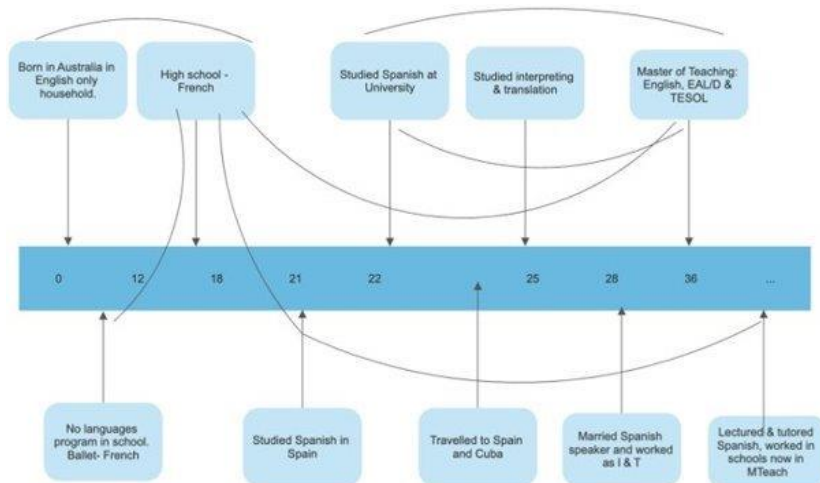


## In breakout rooms:

- Share your language learning timeline with your pair/group.
- Explain how languages you have learnt supported the learning of new languages or literacy skills eg to read/write/speak/listen.



# Reflection



1. How did this task support you to understand the rich but complex nature of language learning?
2. How might you use this in your educational setting to initiate more inclusive conversations about how all language learners rely on knowledges across multiple language systems to learn?
3. What might you need to highlight in terms of the specific differences in learning an "additional" language in a school setting?

Pop your ideas in the Chat or put your hand up!



# Initiating conversations about how language learning occurs – similarities and differences

## Important reminders to staff:

- Learning English for schooling can be difficult even for speakers of a variety of Englishes
- 2nd or additional language acquisition is not the same as first language acquisition (see DE and VCAA resources).

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

**Victorian Curriculum**  
Foundation–10

Home Overview **Curriculum** Levels

## English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Introduction Pathway A: Early immersion Pathway B: Mid immersion Pathway C: Late immersion

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Home > EAL curriculum and program planning

## EAL curriculum and program planning

The Victorian Curriculum F-10 EAL provides a comprehensive framework for supporting English as an Additional Language (EAL) in Victorian schools.

# 2 key threshold concepts (Land & Meyer, 2020)

1. **A linguistic repertoire** – that EAL students' know and use all language(s) and literacy practices to interpret and communicate at any time.

(Garcia, 2009; Busch, 2013)

2. **Language Interdependence Hypothesis** – students actively use their Common Underlying Language Proficiency to learn. Cognition is not separated into an "other" language brain and then an English brain.

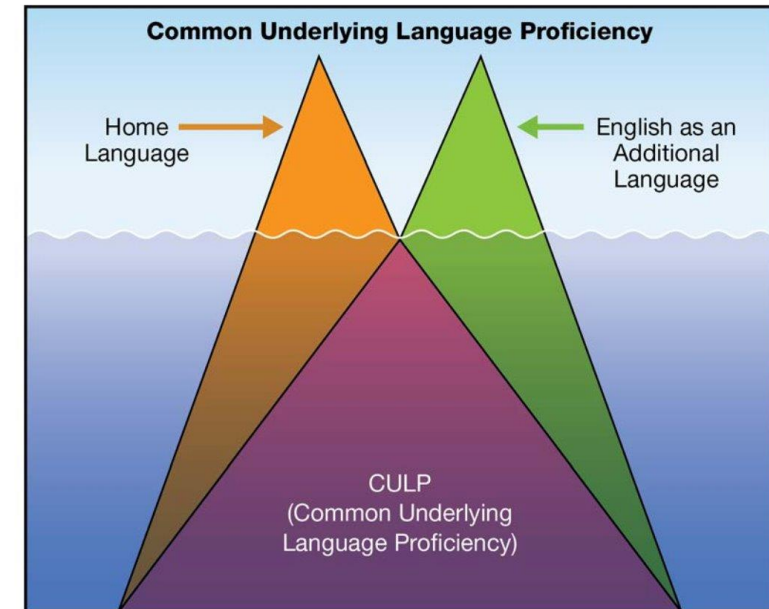
(Cummins, 1991; 2005)

Neuroscience confirms this

(del Maschio & Abutelebi, 2018).

However, when not valued or drawn upon it can impact academic achievement and wellbeing

(Choi & Slaughter, 2021; Cross, Dwarte & Slaughter, 2022; Cummins, 2005; Moloney et. al 2024)<sup>11</sup>



© Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In California State Department of Education (Ed.). *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework*. (pp. 3-49). Los Angeles: National Dissemination and Assessment Center.

# Previous research findings: The implications

## Teacher 2

- Seeing herself as "monolingual" (assumed absence of language knowledge) was an impediment for her to teach inclusively in schools with her multilingual students.
- Once she did the timeline task with her students though, she saw herself as having her own linguistic repertoire. In combination with a reading activity, she then went on to teach more inclusively in her classes.

(Edwards & Ahn, 2023)

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## Rethinking English in Education: The Paradoxes of Labelling the “Other”

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### ABSTRACT

Research into how to support student teachers to work with diverse school students frequently uses a narrow, Anglocentric lens based on binary language speaker labels. This lens limits understandings of the complex factors impacting any individual's ability to teach inclusively. Given the increases in diversity in the tertiary sector, we therefore sought to explore four teacher educators' perceptions of two inclusive literacy activities they taught that drew on their students' rich knowledge in, and of, English to understand multilingual classrooms. An experiential checklist was employed to thematically analyse the psychological and sociocultural classroom experiences together with Bourdieu's habitus and field theories with key findings revealing key aspects in activity design both affirmed and challenged some participants' thinking. However, critical in disrupting deficit binaries that position us all as “others” was the need to understand how staff and students see themselves as English language speakers.

# Current findings: The implications for all EAL & migrant students

## Student 2

By not having their plurilingual abilities recognized and "made available" in early schooling they:

- saw themselves as different and as less compared to their English-speaking peers as a child
- this contributed to them still seeing themselves as different to their Australian, English-speaking peers.

Students 2 and 3 - When their plurilingual abilities were recognized in class in 2023 they:

- could see ways to draw on their own and their school students' language knowledges for their school classrooms (it was a "superpower" - Student 3).

(Unpublished, 2024)



# Supporting a multilingual stance in your school

The task and theories could be a starting point to then develop a broader inclusive multilingual stance:

**Allow:** we allow students to use their home language in class if they need to and are encouraged to speak their language in the community domain.

**Maintain:** as teachers we actively provide opportunities for EAL learners to use their home languages for different purposes.

**Foster/affirm:** multilingualism is a part of school and used in class. All languages are incorporated into the classroom because they are a resource for learning.

(Adapted from de Jong, 2018; Turner et al. 2019)



# Q & A



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