

Mini CPD session – ten minutes is long enough to digest this.

Collaborative Learning and EAL learners

In order to succeed as multilingual speakers, EAL learners need to feel secure, have confident social relations with their peers, plus frequent, repetitive, engaging and varied encounters with the language of the subjects they are studying. They need frequent opportunities to orally present ideas to others and listen to others presenting to them. They need time for sustained shared thinking.



Collaborative Learning Project

We are a teacher network. We develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

Early Years Citizenship Literacy
Music Science Geography
History Maths Language
Literature Technology



Collaborative Learning and EAL learners



I am Stuart Scott. I have been running the Collaborative Learning Project part-time since 1983. The project was funded, supported and promoted by the Inner London Education Authority for inner city mixed attainment classes until 1990 and since then has been a nonprofit: a developing and sharing network for teachers worldwide.

I have been fortunate enough to spend my career working with all ages, stages and subject areas: in nursery, primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities in the UK, in mainland Europe and in the United States. My main consuming interest in all these settings has always been the role of talk in learning, the ways in which we learn and the ways in which we learn new languages and the ways we learn from each other. I was early in my career persuaded that oracy was the key.



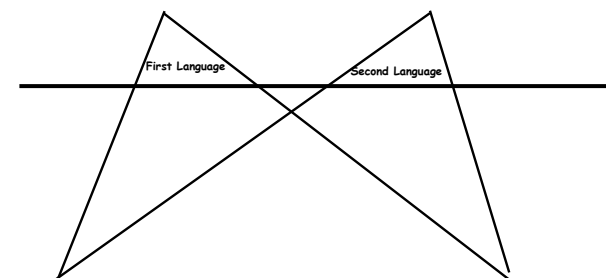
Link to Andrew Wilkinson on Oracy:
www.collaborativelearning.org/conceptoforacy.pdf

Research evidence increasingly confirms that being/ becoming multilingual does 'good things' to the brain. In fact, it is important for me to always remember and remind my monolingual colleagues, as an in-England-living English speaker, that monolingual speakers are in a minority across the world. It could be argued that it would be more constructive in the very long term to empower monolingual speakers to become multilingual than persuade multilingual speakers, as many of our EAL learners already are, to become monolingual English speakers.

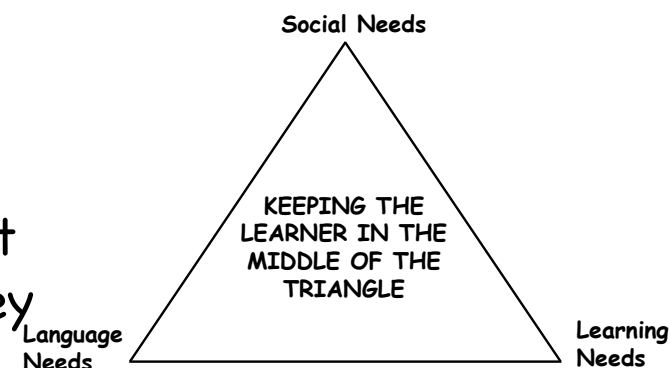
In order to succeed as multilingual speakers, EAL learners need to feel secure, have confident social relations with their peers, plus frequent, repetitive, engaging and varied encounters with the language of the subjects they are studying. They need frequent opportunities to orally present ideas to others and listen to others presenting to them. They need time for sustained shared thinking.

Then, and only then, we need to consider reading and writing. Speaking and listening should always come first!

Common Underlying Proficiency Iceberg



Sustaining proficiency in a first language supports the development of a second or third language.



Making classrooms sociable places increases opportunities for learning and acquiring. Education is conversation.

The kind of learning environment I am introducing to you here is extremely beneficial for all learners; where everything you do for EAL learners will improve the learning environment for everybody: a win, win situation!

More specifically, I have worked with colleagues at every age and stage to look for answers to the following questions:

What kind of classroom environments best support oracy development with subject learning for all learners?

Which of these environments will best support native speakers and EAL learners working and learning together?

We believe that EAL-friendly collaborative learning is a strategy that benefits all learners. We believe it is a vital part of the learning process for EAL learners. It provides an environment where language can be learned while acquiring language by dipping into the sea of talk.



Our practical classroom responses to these questions have been shared for many years now, through the Collaborative Learning Project website:

www.collaborativelearning.org



Our website is the voice/showplace/hub of our teacher network which now spreads worldwide. We develop, we test out, we tweak and we share.

I would ideally hope to have half a day or more to gently familiarise/re-acquaint you with our activities and provide you with an opportunity to work with colleagues to develop your own versions. In this short 'virtual' session I have two aims:

If you are already familiar with our EAL friendly resources, I want to persuade you to revisit activities you have used and devise a new activity, preferably with a colleague, to try out in school and, we hope, eventually share on our network. We strongly believe that two planners creating together become more than twice as creative.

Creating empowering resources is in itself empowering for the teachers and probably still the most fruitful way to spend non-contact time in school. When schools make joint teacher lesson planning a priority; then the development of new ways of working that might be risky for individuals becomes empowering and much more rapid for everyone. I was part of the team developing and disseminating Partnership Teaching over twenty years ago.

www.collaborativelearning.org/partnershipteaching.pdf

If on the other hand, our work is new to you, I want to inspire you to browse through our website, hopefully choose an activity that you like the look of and may be able to use in the classroom, print it out and transform it into a paper/card classroom ready version. Then, please try it out on your pupils or colleagues.

Partnership Teaching has been shared and tweaked constantly. It is still influencing practice in many parts of the UK.

www.collaborativelearning.org/partnershipteaching.pdf



What do we consider to be collaborative learning? We used to be able to point you to the Toolkit summaries of the Education Endowment Foundation:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

The EEF might be described as an educational equivalent of a consumer magazine. It emerged about twenty years ago alongside the England pupil premium grant where schools were given money for targeted professional development for targeted pupils. In theory it is independent, but funded by the English government. The EEF toolkit identifies areas/strands for development that schools might decide to choose to include in their plans. The toolkit indicates the impact of each area on progress. They have also measured the degree of support that research has so far delivered for



EEF Learning Toolkit:
what works best and how
Pupil Premium is best
spent.

Innovation for a purpose 

1. Start from what we know
The toolkit and other resources of evidence provide a platform for professional dialogue. If not evidence then what...?

2. Put energy into evaluation
We need to keep increasing but be much smarter and select about the impact particularly for the most disadvantaged - bringing evidence not ideology to the system.

3. Sharing success - and failure!
We need to build greater trust right across the system and build on the evidence rather than the use of events that mask the need education of our children.

One to one tuition	£££££	★★★★★	+5 months
Homework (Secondary)	£££££	★★★☆☆	+5 months
Collaborative learning	£££££	★★★★★	+5 months
Oral language interventions	£££££	★★★★★	+5 months
Mastery learning	£££££	★★★☆☆	+5 months

any particular area. Absence or paucity of research does not always mean that a strand is less worthy. The reasons that education researchers undertake research is, unfortunately, not always closely linked to what teachers feel might be important. Research into the role of spoken language in education is fraught with difficulty in collecting data and interpreting it. Just think about the

impact you have on a small group talking together, if you interrupt without listening in for a while beforehand, and I hope you will see what I mean!

“Collaborative Learning” is an EEF strand, which, up to last July was a Toolkit development area that delivered high impact and which was well sustained by research. EEF kindly provided a weblink to our site and several other useful links to other sites for teachers looking to develop work in this area.

Now, their website has been revised/updated and their new ‘collaborative learning’ category seems to concentrate more on the social aspects of working in groups and, in our opinion, does not emphasise so much the linguistic advantages.

We hope this is a temporary blip (we have contacted them and wait for an answer), since we now feel a little like a globally warmed polar bear stranded on an ice floe splitting into three or even four parts.



The work we do now apparently influences impact in four or more of their areas/strands for development:

Collaborative Learning,
Oral Interventions,
Metacognition,
Feedback.

Maybe this makes what we do even more important?! Do take a look at their website and show your headteacher. It will prove very helpful if your school is revising its development plans.

Let's see how CL works in practice.

Collaborative learning strategies are carefully planned structures that generate predictable and purposeful talk. For instance, after children have heard the story "The Village that Vanished" read to them, they might be given the task of sorting a series of sentences summarising the main events in a activity devised by Steve Cooke.

At one level the talk generated is transactional.

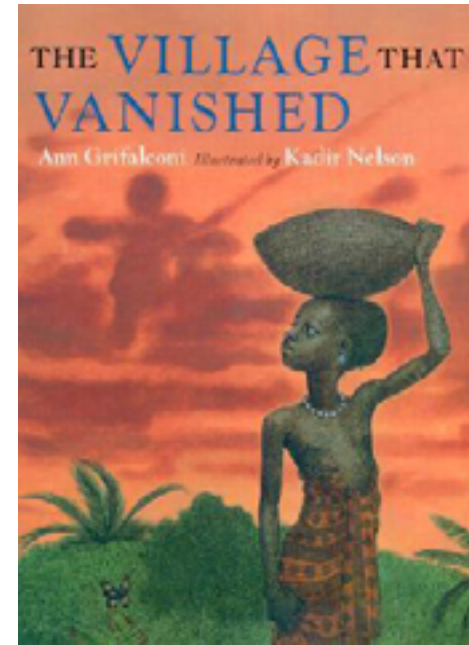
"I think that sentence comes third."

"No, it comes fourth."

"I think they buried their cooking pots before they took their houses apart"

"Does it go there or later?" etc.

This kind of transactional talk is often repetitive going over the same content in a variety of different ways.



www.collaborativelearning.org/villagethatvanished.pdf

Conversation like this in an understandable "concrete" context really benefits children new to English listening in. It is an invitation to participate as soon as they can.

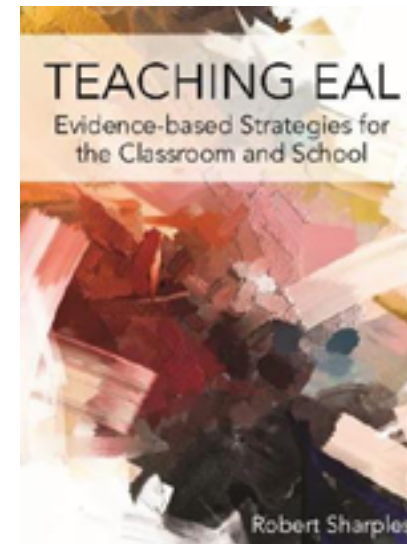
In the same conversation some children will be working at a 'higher' level – maybe questioning, hypothesising and clarifying:

“Why didn’t they take their cooking pots with them?”

“Maybe they could not carry them across the river safely.”

These conversations may not be so predictable. They push children into exploring new ideas using new language. So EAL learners have the opportunity to encounter new vocabulary and new structures.

It could be argued that in a collaborative learning environment EAL learners have the opportunity both to learn and acquire English. Robert Sharples in his new book, “Teaching EAL”, provides an excellent gloss on these complementary ways of developing fluent academic English: ‘learning’ introducing more language conscious explicit content, whereas ‘acquiring’ takes place while dipping into a rich sea of talk.



To a greater or lesser degree planners of collaborative activities have aimed to provide learning practice in particular language structures. The activity “If Animals” (made in Wales in Wrexham by a creative, lively EAL service which is sadly no more) provides a lot of opportunity to hear:

If is has...

If it is...

If it lives...

If it builds...

If it eats..

etc.

But at the same time provides masses of vocabulary: scales, beaks, talons, amphibian etc. etc. the meanings of which will be supported by picture cards and questioning group discussion:

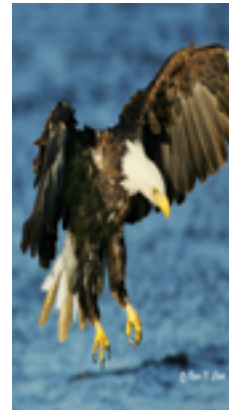
"What are talons?"

"What is a producer?"

"How does an animal without lungs breathe?"

Teachers have the opportunity when monitoring these kinds of classroom interactions to be in a good position to hold back, hover, listen at an unobtrusive distance, to check engagement, take notes on the quality of individual contributions or make thoughtful interventions if necessary to answer tricky questions or clarify mini confusions. When you are fortunate enough to have an extra colleague with you, then the conversations that arise in joint observation can really

help you assess progress and devise new ways to promote future interactions.



a vulture

If it has a shell,
collect 2
counters.

If it is a
bird,
collect 1
counter.

If it lives in
water,
collect 1
counter.



a spider

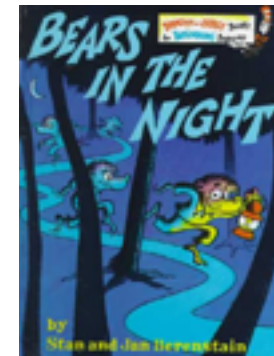
I remember an event very clearly, when, a very long time ago, we were testing out our first tentative collaborative activities. Our children were studying the Inuit and the Arctic. They had animal picture cards which needed to be sorted on a Venn diagram: animals that live all the time in the Arctic, animals that never live in the Arctic and animals that travel between the Arctic and warmer regions.

In a group of four eleven year olds there was a child who had just arrived in the class and the country. She watched the children move the animal cards; she listened to the other children. Her eyes darted to and fro. After a while she picked up a card from the “only Arctic” pile and moved it to the centre of the Venn nodding, pointing and smiling. The other children then discussed the move and after a while agreed with her. The

newcomer had understood the context from the clues in the visual, tactile representation of the idea and within this supportive group had the confidence to put forward an opinion long before confident language use had developed.

The “Village that Vanished” activity involves sorting and sequencing in order to revisit and remember the events in a story. Many of our activities are planned by breaking down the content and devising a way in which it can through joint decision-making be built up again.

Take a look at our ‘Bears in the Night’ activity.

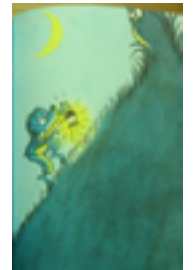


The story is broken down and there are sets of cards with and without text and text alone for matching and sequencing. There is plenty of opportunity here for discussion about what happens before and after; plenty of opportunity to play pairs games with different sets of cards. We have also provided pictures for cutting out and turning into storyprops/finger puppets so that in role children can tell the story to each other. This activity was planned for a setting where children could freely choose to return to the card activities after they had listened to the story. The only missing item here is a track game. There are lots of examples from other stories in our Early Years section and we have also devised a little booklet on making track games.

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/bearsinthenight.pdf>



out the window



up spook hill



back in bed



between the rocks

Track Games in the Early Years



<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/tracks.pdf>

We would encourage you to run storyprops and game making workshops yourselves and persuade parents to join you. Knitting and sewing props workshops work extremely well because parents can turn out to be the best practitioners.

Our mini books (we have a mini book on making mini books!) are very popular too. These sessions often provide a busy environment when parents may feel confident to discuss other issues in the language of choice.

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/minibooks.pdf>



What do you think of our Runaway Peas?



www.collaborativelearning.org/runawaypea.pdf



Here's a recent trackgame on Superworm and a Connect 3 game produced by a parent workshop and shared on our website.

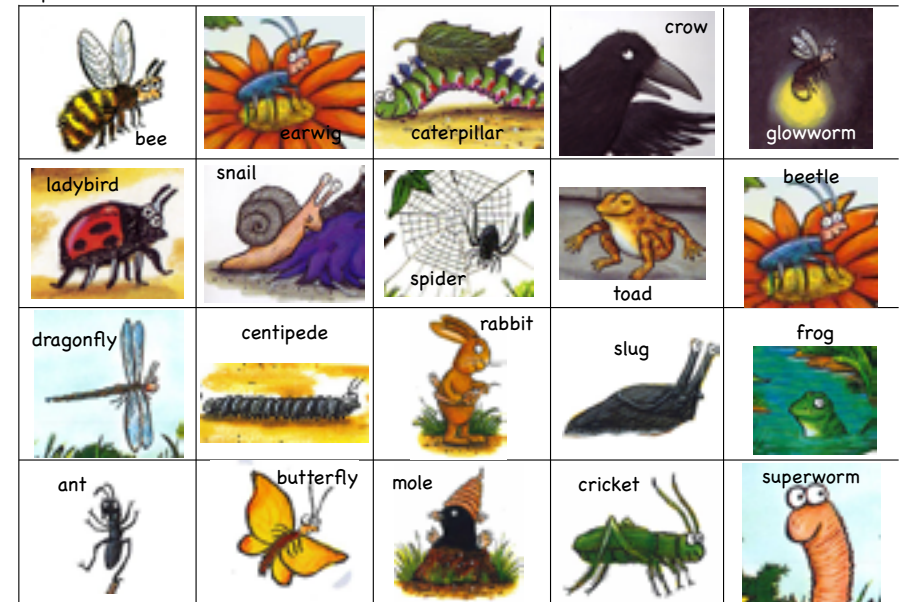
This work in early years is designed to create confident, questioning independent learners. Some have remarked that quite often the busy and purposeful autonomy of the nursery classroom gets replaced in later years by dependency where children might have to ask to be allowed to sharpen a pencil.

Collaborative activities for older children employ the same strategies as our early years activities. We find games an excellent way of developing and extending subject specific vocabulary.

Superworm Track Game



Superworm Connect Three Board



One very successful collaborative learning strategy involves turning every child into an expert on one small piece of information. Each child then has to communicate this information in their own words to the others because they are probably the only person in the room with that knowledge.

In “Viking Artefacts” which we tried out recently with Year 3 and 5 every child in the class ‘becomes’ an historical item such as amber, whale blubber, hack silver or the great wagon that guided Viking ships. We encourage children to read their information, maybe do a little more research and then present themselves in the role of the artefact in their own words to one other child.

“Hello! I am the Great Wagon. I am a group of stars that show seafarers where to steer.”

The other child does the same for their artefact.

“I am a longhouse in Iceland. I am made of wood and covered with grass turves. All the Viking family and all their animals live in me”.

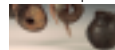
These two children then go to meet another pair, let’s say the loom and a quernstone, for four introductions. This time the longhouse introduces the great wagon to the others and the quernstone introduces the loom.

“Hello. Would you like to meet my friend the loom? He can be found in the longhouse in the winter but goes outside in the summer. His Viking slave is weaving a shawl from strands of flax.”



Loom
Every longhouse had a wooden loom like this modern replica. They were used for making long strips of woven cloth. These cloths were joined together to make sails for ships and clothing.

These clay loomweights were found in Jorvik.



Beserker



This is a carved walrus ivory chesspiece was found in Lewis in the Hebrides. It represents a beserker: a champion fearless warrior who did not wear armour. Here he is biting his shield and looking very fierce.



Viking Longhouse
This is a replica of a Viking longhouse in Iceland. It is built of stones and wood and covered with grass turves. It is a copy of a farm at Stoeng which was buried under volcanic ash.

Runestone



Runestones were set up to celebrate a place, a person or an event. They have a short message written in runes. Runes are easy to carve in stone because they are all in straight lines.

Since you have up to thirty, depending on the size of your class, different artefacts there is a variety of ways in which you can take it from here. Groups of four could present each other to the whole class. The aim here is to build enough confidence in each child to be able to present to the whole of the rest of their class.

The Abolition Role Play activity

www.collaborativelearning.org/abolitionroleplay.pdf is a more complex way of organising role play and information gap. Here the class is divided into five groups that work on planning a presentation in turn to the other four. They are able to plan their presentation in a supportive group environment before presenting individually to four other children who then take turns to present.

Former Slaves: Olaudah Equiano.

Look at the information below to help you with your role.

Many former slaves realised that the most powerful argument against slavery was their own life story. Many were taught to read and write English by their masters and wrote autobiographies which had a huge impact on the people who read them.



You are Olaudah Equiano, a former slave, taken from Africa aged 11 in 1756. One of your masters named you Gustavus Vassa. You learned to read and write, and bought your freedom for £40 in 1766. You became a sailor and travelled all over the world.

"When I returned to England I worked with campaigners like Granville Sharp to help slaves who had escaped from their owners but had then been recaptured in England.

I wrote my autobiography in 1789, "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Gustavus Vassa". I travelled all over the country for five years, speaking at public meetings, with the help of friends such as Thomas Clarkson. Tens of thousands of people read my book or heard me speak, and I convinced many people to join the campaign for the abolition of slavery."

Unfortunately Olaudah Equiano never saw the end of slavery because he died in 1797, 10 years before the abolition act was passed.



This is an extract from Olaudah Equiano's autobiography, describing the conditions on the slave ships:

"The air soon became unfit for breathing, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died. This wretched situation was made worse by the chains. The shrieks of women, and the groaning of the dying, created a scene of horror almost unbelievable. Three desperate slaves tried to kill themselves by jumping overboard. Two drowned, the other was captured and beaten unmercifully. When I refused to eat, I too was beaten"

MARY PRINCE was born in 1788 to a slave family in Bermuda. She suffered terrible treatment as a slave. She became the first woman to present an anti-slavery petition to the government. She was also the first black woman to publish her autobiography in 1831. She wrote about slaves like her who were still suffering through bad treatment and illness on the plantations in America, even though the slave trade had been abolished in Britain.

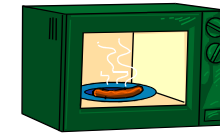
Steve Cooke has contributed an enormous number of collaborative activities to the project and written a short guide to making them.

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/clbooklet.pdf>

I will finish this virtual presentation by looking at one of Steve's activities "The Wilsons" tracking 'after 1945' history through domestic appliances. Children work in groups of four. They sort gas stoves, twin tubs, transistor radios and walkpersons on to a timeline using clues. Each member of the group has a set of clues, but each set is different so they have to work together to solve the timeline. This activity has been tweaked to teach a wide variety of topics but so far it has not been updated yet.

Clue Sheet 1

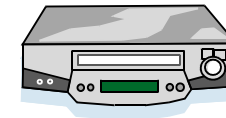
Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got a gas cooker in 1950.



microwave oven

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got a washing machine three years before they got the black and white television.

John and Kathy got a microwave oven in 1985.



video player

John and Kathy got a mobile phone ten years after they got the microwave oven.



stereo record player

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got a colour television two years after they got the stereo record player.

Clue Sheet.4

Mr and Mrs. Wilson got a black and white television two years after they got the electric kettle.

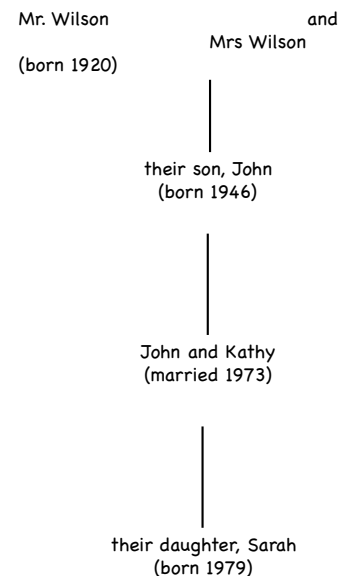
John and Kathy got a CD player three years after they got a video player.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got a personal computer in 1994.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got a vacuum cleaner the year before they got the fridge.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson got an electric kettle eight years before they got the food mixer.

The Wilson Family



<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/thewilsons.pdf>

I have tried in this short session to give you a taste of collaborative learning. I have organized it so that you can return to it on line and find all the links to the activities I have described. I hope you will go further to explore the website and further than that to produce and try out your own collaborative activities. The final stage is to share what you have produced with others. The activities are time consuming to produce, but once you have made your own, you will find using and adapting others' activities fairly straightforward. I think you will also find the process one of the most rewarding forms of CPD.