Text of Stuart Scott's presentation for Inside Government conference:
Delivering Outstanding EAL Provision in Maintained Schools and Academies on 23rd February 2023
Numbers in () refer to powerpoint slides:
www.collaborativelearning.org/insidegovernmentpp.pdf

(1) Since I only have half an hour to talk to you today, I have planned to leave you with a goodly quantity of links to resources and further reading. I have, metaphorically speaking, squeezed a very large genie into a bottle. Inside Government are hosting links for you. In addition, I have posted a hyperlinked webpage, which will go live after the conference, containing this presentation together with links to all the activities, resources and websites that I have mentioned.
www.collaborativelearning.org/insidegovernment.html
 I have referred you to many colleagues' websites and hope that you will be able to use these articles and resources to present and explain to those in your school who have not been able to join us today. Effective empowerment of your EAL learners must be a whole school issue. I am very happy to be contacted by email to answer questions as well as clarify or follow up any concerns:
stuart.scott@collaborativelearning.org
I would also like to mention the EAL bilingual forum. (2) There has always been a strong spirit of cooperation among EAL teachers. It goes back to the time, not very long ago and certainly in my teaching career, when EAL teachers were told to "take that child out of my room!" Can I very strongly recommend that you join the forum. If you post any EAL question on the forum, you are almost certain to get a useful reply the same day. Currently the forum is hosted by NALDIC. https://naldic.org.uk/eal-bilingual

(3) I run a project:
www.collaborativelearning.org
that, for many years now, has developed and shared in-class activities and strategies that help to create classrooms that are EAL friendly, language conscious and, consequently, rich in talk. (4,5,6) These activities (7,8,9) were first developed and disseminated between schools where many languages were spoken and many of the pupils were learning English, while they were learning and surviving everything else. Above all, the project promotes the high value of teachers planning collaborative strategies collaboratively and is probably more a promoter of this process than of the product: the teaching activity. However, every new teaching activity suggests new ways in which its organisation can support other learning topics in other classroom environments. The project is not monetised and remains independent, lean and mean. Back in the 70s, it got a small handout from big oil, in the 80s was enthusiastically supported by the Inner London Education Authority and in the 90s received EU support with UK Dept of Education sponsorship. Until lockdown, it ran face-to-face development workshops often with the help of local authority minority ethnic achievement teams. We hope to get these started again soon, but we currently encourage online activity development.
www.collaborativelearning.org/workinprogress.html
 During lockdown we offered activities for parents and children at home to engage in curriculum conversations and have kept that page open:
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/dailyactivity.html

Although communicating online is like eating bread and cheese while face-to-face conversation is a five-course dinner, we have taken advantage of virtual platforms to extend our joint planning partnerships worldwide. For instance only last week an activity was tried out in London and Thunder Bay. Everyone is invited to join us to share ideas about making talk work creatively and accessibly in the classroom through our Work in Progress pages.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/workinprogress.html
and via our newsletter.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/newsletter.html

James Britton and Douglas Barnes' work underpins our view of teaching and learning: "learning floats on a sea of talk".
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/jamesbritton.html
Or, as Barbara Bleiman aptly puts it: "Education is conversation."
https://www.barbarableiman.com/

Conversation between teachers is just as important as conversation between the children they teach. Listening in to a conversation is almost as valuable as active participation. EAL learners need exposure to a lot of listening in. (10)

I remember an event very clearly, when, a very long time ago, we were testing out our first tentative collaborative activities in a school in Greenwich. Our students 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.
www.collaborativelearning.org/northpole.pdf

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. (11,12,13)

Probably the most important conversation in my teaching career was with Andrew Wilkinson, when I was teaching in Birmingham in the 60s. Andrew, who wrote 'Spoken English' coined the word "oracy". (14)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/conceptoforacy.pdf
He pointed out that talk was never one of the three 'R's' and that, although it was valued in 'public' schools as a preparation for a career in parliament, it was not promoted, maybe even discouraged, in the state sector where silence was golden.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/spokenenglishinschool.pdf

There was a brief flowering for oracy (which still has a red wiggly line when you type it in Microsoft Word) in the late 1980's and early 1990s, but together with the Language in the

National Curriculum project, which celebrated language variety and dialect, the National Oracy Project was closed down by the government of the time for political reasons; since sadly there has been and still is political interference in education policy. We actually made a bid at the time to preserve the NOP resources, but this was refused. LINC resources were disseminated by samizdat by Ron Carter in Nottingham. We are now seeing a re-emergence of oracy with the support of Neil Mercer's Oracy Cambridge project.
https://oracycambridge.org/
There is also now an All Party Commons committee on oracy.
https://oracy.inparliament.uk/files
https://oracy.inparliament.uk/news

Maybe we should hold our breath. Valerie Coultas has written a lively history of talk (15) in education
https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203967416/constructive-talk-challenging-classrooms-valerie-coultas
which with her permission I will post here as soon as possible.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/coultas.pdf
I wrote a review in Teaching English
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/coultasreview.pdf

If this event had not been online, but was taking place in a room with space for small groups to interact, I would not be talking to you in this way. Instead, I would have set you a task around a curriculum topic, for instance: tracking the mood and feelings of Macbeth, (16)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/macbethfeelings.pdf
 examining the likelihood of survival for wild animals currently on the Red List, (17)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/animallifestyles.pdf
 discovering how good you are at estimating the answers to multiplication problems, (18)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/estimatingmultiplication.pdf
looking at the consequences of sewage discharge into a tributary of the Thames, (19) (This one is currently offline for development but here is the very first version.)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/dropofwater.pdf
 or looking at the future of the malaria vaccine. (20)
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/pushandpull.pdf

  These are just a small selection of curriculum tasks that the project has been working on recently. Some of these activities have been around for a long time; others are currently in development. All of them are being altered, tweaked and adapted to different classrooms, as I speak to you now, by colleagues around the world.

In our imaginary 'real space conference' you would have been organised into changing groups of twos, threes or fours. One of our principles is that pupils should get the chance to work with everyone else in the class. You would be helping each other to follow written or pictorial instructions. These would coax, gently force you into talking to each other, expressing opinions, sharing knowledge you already have or have just acquired, arguing gently for a point of view, disagreeing politely. Since you, as teachers, would be doing this as a teacher CPD exercise, I would encourage you to 'step out of the group and hover above' to consider the quantity and quality of talk that any particular activity generates. You might

be considering how your pupils new to English might be deployed in this kind of activity and whether more or less scaffolding might be necessary….

(21) But since we are currently online and in straightened circumstances, I am going to follow a very different route today. I am going to briefly look at the Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit,

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit

which describes itself as an accessible summary of education evidence or 'best bets' on what might work in your own context. If you want to buy a good washing machine you consult "Which"; if you want to establish the effective use of non-contact time you would be wise to look at the Toolkit. It is designed to support school leaders in making decisions about how to improve learning outcomes in the most effective and economical way. Any decision about how teachers spend non-contact time is likely to have an enormous impact on the culture of the school and its priorities. There has always been and will always be a shortage of both non-contact time and money. My aim is to point out those strands of EEF toolkit that will make a big difference for EAL pupils while at the same time benefitting every pupil. It's possible that strands that you may have already identified for your school are already making a difference for your EAL pupils. It is also important at this stage to emphasise that the Toolkit is designed to help you make a professional decision, but it does not do it for you. You are the professional making a professional judgment because you know your school. You must read their health warning!
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/using-the-toolkits

First let's look at the strands that I think might probably be damaging for your EAL pupils. Setting and streaming probably comes first.

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/setting-and-streaming

The EEF point out that pupils are grouped not by ability, but by prior attainment and that "misallocation is a particular problem for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds". EAL pupils often arrive mid term and there is usually only space for them in lower sets. EAL pupils need every opportunity to hear and be involved in rich and varied conversations and this does not happen in lower sets. In many schools movement between sets is difficult and unlikely to occur.

Within class attainment grouping is more commonly practised in primary than in secondary, but where pupils are allowed to sit where they want when they want, any race and gender issues will immediately appear.

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/within-class-attainment-grouping

All the pupils who speak a particular language will be together. The best seating policy for EAL pupils (and probably for the whole school, since if it is a school policy it can be easier to implement) is one of variable grouping: that every pupil will get the opportunity to work constructively with every other pupil at some time in the school day.

On the positive side the EEF Toolkit rates the impact of Feedback, Collaborative Learning, Metacognition and Self-Regulation, Oral language Interventions, Peer Tutoring highly and where these are in place EAL pupils thrive too. These strands all require speaking and listening. Other high impact strands such as Phonics and Reading Comprehension are more challenging for EAL pupils and there is evidence that cooperative EAL pupils can learn to read and recite without understanding very much at all.

It may be a good idea to turn all this on its head and suggest that where EAL pupils thrive then you are probably getting it right for all other pupils.

Moving from the giddy heights of planning how best to spend the Pupil Premium; what are my top tips for raising the attainment of EAL learners.

(22) 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.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/cpdactivitiespage.pdf

One very successful collaborative learning strategy, which is very EAL friendly, involves turning every pupil into an expert on one small piece of information. Each child then has no choice, but to communicate this information in their own words to the others because they are the only person in the room with that specific knowledge.

(23) Here is an example from "Dales Children" which looks at the inhabitants of Swaledale, North Yorkshire in the late eighteenth century and used with Year 7 and 8.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/daleschildren.pdf

"My name is Christopher but I am called Kit. It is 1832 and I live in Gunnerside near the head of Swaledale. I am 9 years old and I work for miners who bring lead ore out of the hillside. My job is to break up the rock and crush it into small pieces, I use a flat hammer called a bucker, and where I work is called a dressing floor. The finely-crushed rock is washed and the pieces containing lead, which is heavy, fall to the bottom and the lighter pieces which are just rock float away. It is important that I do the job properly because my mother is a widow and very poor, and the pennies I earn help feed us"

This information is unique to the child who receives it. Every other child has a different biography: from the child who cleans out the lead flue pipes to the child who is a boarder at Richmond School whose classmate is Lewis Carroll. Pupils might initially work in pairs to prepare to present their character in role to two other pupils. The four may then refine their

presentation to introduce each other to the whole class. "My friend Ned is at school in Richmond and one of his friends has told him a story about a girl who goes down a rabbit hole!"

We have role cards online for a wide variety of characters animate and inanimate. If this inspires you to produce a similar set for a topic near to your heart and on the exam syllabus, please send it to us. We will send it round the world for you. Recently the number of new activities in secondary subjects has diminished which might indicate that the opportunities to make them and use them are diminishing too. The data evidence indicates this too.

At this point it may be time for questions, in which case I will stop here, but if I have been speedy or you need time before formulating questions, there is time to look at Information Gap activities.

(24} I will now look briefly at an activity on Migration and Vulnerable Children used in citizenship classes.
http://www.collaborativelearning.org/migrantchildren.pdf
In this case three separate texts are written related to the topic:
Wasil's journey to Calais from Afghanistan.
Kindertransport refugee, Alf Dubs' new law (2017) for UK to accept unaccompanied migrant children.
The story of Nicholas Winton and Kindertransport.

A third of the class work on each text and begin to fill in a question sheet.
The class then jigsaws and forms groups of three. Each group member has worked on a different story. The threes work together to complete the questions. They would then be encouraged to think of other questions they may have to share.

Thank you for your attention. If any of your questions don't get answered today. I will answer them on this follow up page.