Top 10 Research Priorities for EAL

This Top 10 list of EAL research priorities were generated through an extensive consultation with users of EAL research in project funded by BAAL (the British Association of Applied Linguistics) and carried out by the Applied Linguistics Research Group in the Department of Education at the University of Oxford. Learn more about how this list of priorities was arrived at here: ealsp.wordpress.com.

1. What is the impact of inclusion teaching vs pull out teaching for EAL learners’ English language development? Does this vary with age, time spent learning English, and/or stage of English language development? If so, in what ways?

2. What are effective strategies for subject teachers to use to combine English language teaching and curriculum content teaching?

3. In the context of mainstream British-model education systems, what approaches to supporting new to English pupils are most effective? In particular, what are effective approaches to maximising the potential of late entry new to English pupils’, and how can intellectual challenge be maintained for all new to English pupils?

4. What are effective strategies for building on social language proficiency to develop and maintain proficiency in subject- or genre-specific academic language proficiency?

5. What are effective/reliable ways to identify Special Educational Needs and Disability in EAL learners, that differ from normal and expected language learning needs?

6. What are effective ways to adapt instruction and assessment for EAL learners with different Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

7. What are the effects of explicit (formalised) instruction vs implicit (immersive) exposure to English on the learners’ proficiency and progress?

8. How can EAL learners, including those without the English necessary to articulate pastoral needs or emotional wellbeing, be best supported in their socioemotional development?

9. What are the characteristics of their educational experiences that EAL learners consider most beneficial for their learning of English language and curriculum content?

10. What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners? This includes, but is not limited to, sub-questions such as: In schools that are successful in supporting EAL learners in the mainstream, who takes responsibility, how is cross disciplinary consistency maintained, how are resources allocated, how is information about EAL learners communicated to staff, and so on?