**[Mollie Daphne]:** Now, there are six questions that identify key factors that can impact on language learning in the interview. So I'll run through some of these questions for you.

The question one is related to the languages that are spoken in the home. Most of the time parents will answer yes if they speak other languages in the home. But in some instances, you may need to dig deeper to understand how English is used in the home. For example, if an international student is living in an English-speaking home or you have a bilingual or multilingual family. In some circumstances, if English is already a dominant or significant language for the student, there needs to be informed exploration as to whether the student should undertake EAL learning. Other strategies and support may be more appropriate. But your questioning of languages used and the context that they are used in will help you to establish what the primary language is.

Question 2 refers to previous school attendance and learning. If a student has lived in more than one country you need to consider all the countries when recording answers or probing questions. And that information can be then used to determine the most appropriate pathway and/or to transition supports that that student may need.

Question 3 is in relation to literacy in home language or other languages. So it's important to understand that previous educational experiences of a student can impact on learning of English language. Some students will have experienced formal schooling, while others may have not. Some may have had interrupted formal schooling or some experiences of informal instruction. Language and literacy levels in the home language and other languages are likely to reflect the experience of formal schooling in the student's country of origin.

Question 4 relates to previous experiences of learning and using English. So it's important to determine the language of instruction the student has experienced, as well as the nature and extent of any previous learning or use of English. Previous learning of English can mean that the student already has some knowledge and skills in English, although this depends on how they have been taught and whether there has been a focus on speaking skills or in writing skills and grammar. When the student is not completely new to English, it may be necessary to use some EAL focus task to determine the extent of their prior learning of English and the most appropriate starting level or pathway for them.

Question 5 is knowing about their migration journey, so it's understanding how long that student has been in Australia and how they came to Australia. Knowing how long a student has been in Australia helps you to understand the nature and the transition they are making and how best to support them in their learning. A student with more than three years of residence in Australia may be beginning school for the first time or may have lived with a family or extended family whose main language is a language other than English. In these cases, a long period of residence does not preclude the student from being a beginner in terms of learning English. The school may need to use a range of speaking and listening and reading and viewing and writing tasks to determine the most suitable starting level fora student who's been in Australia for some time.

The final questions are related to previous experiences of formal schooling in Australia. So when a student has had prior experiences of Australian schools, information on the nature and experience is useful to determine the most appropriate way of supporting them. In cases where there has been good support but limited learning, it's worth exploring possible reasons for this situation, including any medical conditions or difficulties.....difficulties in adjusting to life in a new country, or attendance at school where some specific EAL instruction was not given. This language learning tool is an initial diagnostic tool. The development of an EAL student's learning and their use of English in the classroom and the school environment should be constantly and systematically monitored against the EAL curriculum to ensure they are located within appropriate pathways and making progress at appropriate levels.

Now, I'm just going to break down some samples for you of students' language progression .So these samples are, again, available on the VCAA website. But we'll go through them just to give you an idea of the type of language progression and the factors that may influence language progression for students enrolled in secondary contexts. We'll then move on to taking some questions.

So the first example is of a student who has entered in what we call a late immersion stage. So, that's entering into the secondary setting. They are on a pathway C because they're entering into a secondary context. They have begun schooling in Australia at the age of 14.They attended an English language centre for a term before entering Year 8 in term 4.The language progression considers the student's prior learning, their exposure to English, proficiency in English as they progress through curriculum areas. This student was assessed to be at a level C2 for writing, and a Level C1 for listening and speaking. With support by the end of Year 10, they were working at a C4 level in all modes, but moving... before moving into the VCE EAL subject. Their language progression is monitored as they partake in all curriculum areas available at their school. So you'll see on the side a list of factors that influence... or that can influence language learning that are considered when supporting this student in a secondary context.

Now, the next progression is again of a student who moves into a secondary context, but they have commenced school in primary school, so they were placed in a B pathway before being moved into the C pathway when they entered secondary. So this second example is for a student who entered in Year 6 after completing one year within an English centre. This student's journey is quite different in terms of disruption to prior schooling and limited formal schooling in their home languages, impacting the literacies that they could then draw on when learning English. When the student transitioned into secondary, they placed...they were placed onto a low C2 level, which informs the type of support needed to access the curriculum areas. They did very well in practical subjects, but required additional support in more intensive language areas where there was more abstract language involved.

So, understanding the pathway and the level that that student was on helps the classroom teacher to inform the type of scaffolds and language support that that student needed in order to access the different curriculum areas. The EAL curriculum can be used to understand how support students across the curriculum and, um...Sorry. Excuse me, understand how to support students across the curriculum to progress sin their language learning.

OK. So I think we're ready potentially for some questions.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** OK. Thank you, Mollie. We've had quite a few questions that have been answered in the question and answer box as we've been going. However, there have been a couple of quite common threads that keep coming up that I think we need further...a bit more elaboration on. So, Mollie, we've got a question from Fabiano. And... He's asking, as a teacher of mainstream English in the secondary setting, does this mean that he's teaching two stand-alone curricula in an English classroom? And I think we need to be really clear about what this actually means. So could you talk Fabiano through that, please?

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Yep, absolutely. So, you are teaching your mainstream English curriculum. If you're teaching an English subject, you're teaching the English curriculum. However, you now have access to an EAL curriculum which can help you to support the EAL learner that you have in your classroom depending on the level that they're at. So you're essentially using the EAL curriculum as a tool to differentiate and support that learner as they access your mainstream curriculum area. So you're not teaching two separate curriculums. You're teaching your curriculum but you're using the EAL curriculum to support the learners that you have within your classroom.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you. I think that's a really important point. We would really want you to all realise that we're not asking you to take on the burden of teaching another curriculum as such, combined with whatever else you're already teaching. We would like to see you using the curriculum that has been designed for EAL students to support those students and by doing it in a way that Mollie has just mentioned. So, thank you, Mollie. Another question, Mollie, that has come up a couple of times is...If a student can be different levels for different modes at the same time, and what does that in fact mean?

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Yep, sure. So, it is common and possible for students to be operating at different levels in different modes. So the one that we often see, obviously, is with speaking and listening and that's often a skill that develops faster than the reading and writing skills. So that student would be at a different level or maybe a higher level, so they might be at a C3 for their speaking and listening and then maybe a C1 for their reading and writing. Now, when it comes to reporting and assessing, which we're not really here to talk about that but I will mention that when it comes to reporting and assessing, we do not move students off a pathway until they have been moved off in all modes. So until you have determined that they are on par with the mainstream English curriculum or demands of your subject area, for all areas, so speaking and listening, reading and viewing and writing, we don't move them off. But it is very, very common and it's really important that you are aware of this in mainstream classrooms particularly. We talk about a concept called BICS and CALPS in EAL .So we have our basic interpersonal communication skills and they develop quite rapidly in terms of language. So that's where you often see students being able to sit and have conversations and participate in the schoolyard and different things. But that cognitive language, that language, particularly in a secondary setting - so, that really academic technical language of your subject area and the knowledge of written structures and so forth - can take longer to develop. So we refer to this as the cognitive academic language proficiency. The student may appear to be verbally really strong but they may also still need support in terms of their reading and writing.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you, Mollie. I'm getting a few other questions through now. So, Mollie, this question is from Basil and he asks, "How does length of exposure to English impact on the VCE seven-year cut-off?" Is this based on level of exposure or length of stay?" I can answer that one. (LAUGHS)

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Thank you. - That's a bit out of my...-

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Yeah. So, for those of you who teach VCE students in the EAL subjects, it's really important to note that units one and two are quite loose in their definition of EAL. And the schools determine who is an EAL student in Year 11. However, students who go into Year 12, units three and four EAL, if they are to be.....then they need to have been in the country for less than seven years. Now, it doesn't matter how much exposure to the language they've had since they've been here. They would still be eligible for VCE EAL, and that's a really important distinction to make. So as long as they make that criteria, regardless of if they've been put onto the mainstream English curriculum - say, for example, Year 10 - they are still eligible for every student when they get into Year 12. And it's all the better for them if they've had more exposure and developed more skills. OK. So the next one... Mollie. "Is there anything we can do for students who don't make it through the pathways before their seven years is up?"

**[Mollie Daphne]:** So, I'm guessing by that question you mean, for students who aren't...So they're still on an EAL pathway at Year 10,but are ineligible for VCE?- is that the question? What can you do to...-

**[Kellie Heintz]:** I'm not quite sure. Geoff, could you just clarify, please, and then I can make sure...I think, Mollie, the question is about, what do we do if a student isn't off the EAL pathway by the end of Year 10?

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Yep, OK. So if they're eligible, you would hopefully, if your school runs EAL, you would move them into an EAL subject. If they weren't eligible, it would be a school-based decision but there are some flexible learning opportunities that you might be able to explore to give some additional time and support. Of course there are flexible opportunities in terms of VCAL and different pathways, so you'd be looking with that student and their family to find what would be a most suitable pathway to continue education. But schools do a range of things depending on the decisions that they are able to make. So yeah, it would be a school-based decision. But you would be investigating what flexible learning you could be incorporating into your school.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you, Mollie. I'm now getting to a couple of questions about VCE, so I will respond to those. The first question is from Deborah. "Will the VCAA be changing the units one and two English to have in our pathway to reinforce listening tasks?" In answer to that question, Deborah, we're currently, in reviewing units one, two, three and four of English and EAL. That's currently under review. With the COVID-19 crisis that we're in at the moment, our review has been stalled somewhat. But there is a very.....close attention to detail about the place of EAL and the way that it sits as a twin subject in the VCE English study design. So at the moment you'll need to progress as you are, but the review, which has not been completed yet, may present us with difficulties for our EAL students. And may I assure you that all of these possibilities are currently being investigated. In answer to the question about bridging EAL units one and two, bridging EAL units one and two have just been reviewed. So next year will be the new updated study design for bridging EAL.

I have a question from..."Can you please explain how students become eligible for the VCE EAL exam if one student arrives at year five...?" OK. It doesn't matter what pathways EAL students are put on from F to 10. What matters with the VCE exam is the number of units the student has been in the country, the language that the student speaks at home, if the student has had interruptions to their education, what language the education was in the home country, whether or not there's experience of transitions in refugee camps, there are a range of factors that impact on the eligibility status of the student. So...From F to 10 does not really have a lot of bearing on eligibility at Year 12. The actual criteria at Year 12 is different.

OK. I've got a question here from...I've got a question here from Eileen, and this has been really a vexed kind of area for some teachers. "How can we encourage teachers not to stop our EAL students from speaking their second language in class settings where it may be helpful to learn?" Many teachers want to enforce a requirement that only English is spoken in the class. Mollie, would you be able to talk about plurilingualism there?

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Yeah, absolutely. OK. So ...I'm not gonna try to answer how you will enforce this in your school but it is a strand now within the curriculum where we have recognised the value in languages, particularly first languages, for learning.

So it is used as a learning tool. So the curriculum gives you some strategies that you can apply. It could be things like using translators or using bilingual texts or using allowing students to use dictionaries or allowing students to talk in first language about concepts. And it's all about using that language to aid learning .It's a tool to support learning .There is also a lot of rote learning that happens when students are comparing language systems, when they're making comparisons between meanings of words or grammar structures within different language systems. And all of that aids and supports the learning of the content and also the learning of English as an additional language. So it is a strand, it is a tool for you to use. It isn't assessed, per se, but it is a way for you to support their learning. So if you're in the role where you need to encourage schools to do this, it is an encouragement from the point of view that it is a learning tool.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you, Mollie. We have a question from Carlos. "What would be the minimum..." Sorry, it's just off my screen. I've lost the actual question. Someone else must be answering it. Apologies for that. There seems to be a couple more questions here. Oh, good. Thank you. Carlos's question has arrived in my box here. "What would be the minimum level that a student should reach depending on their year level? For instance, for a Year 7 across learning areas, when could they be transferred to the English curriculum?"

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Yep. OK. So you...There's two tools that you've got. You've got your curriculum to understand what students are demonstrating at different levels, and you've also got the reporting tool which is a tool to obviously report and feedback on how they're progressing in terms of language. Making decisions about moving them off the pathway is made based on looking at a range of assessment, looking at a range of samples of language from across modes, and matching that or looking at what they're demonstrating against the English standards of that particular year level. So you're deciding...You're making a decision as to when they're matching the language demand of the year level they're in, and that will determine when you can move them off a pathway. So you have a couple of tools. You can use the curriculum to see what they're demonstrating but you also have that reporting tool. We stress in our system that it's really important to look at a range of work samples when you're making that decision and also obviously to moderate with other teachers to make a decision about that student and their language progression.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you, Mollie. One thing to note about the curriculum is that you are not provided with exit points in the documentation we've provided you. That's a deliberate decision because the decision to move a student from a pathway into the mainstream curriculum is up for the discretion of the teacher - the professional judgement that you have as someone who is working with that student to determine when that student would be ready to move off the EAL curriculum. That is up to individual schools and the way that you operate and also to the needs of the particular student you're working with. I think...

**[Mollie Daphne]:** Sorry, Kelly, just to add, I think in a secondary context as well it is important to monitor those students. You may move them off the pathway but as the language demands increase as they go up year levels in curriculum areas, it is a good idea to monitor how they are meeting the demands of different subject areas in terms of language as well.

**[Kellie Heintz]:** Thank you, Mollie. I have a couple more questions here that relate to VCE. And I'd like to thank Sheila and Lelang for those questions. "Are there specific EAL VCAL units or EAL..." I've just jumped again. Sorry. "Or EAL units for EAL students?" It's quite difficult to explain that, really, 6 to 10 curriculum is quite separate to the way the VCE is structured. And as I've mentioned before, we are doing VCE EAL and English. Part of that is through the lens of "How can we put forward our EAL students more effectively?" Because at the moment we acknowledge there are gaps occurring within the senior years of EAL. There are no specific VCAL EAL units. However, many EAL students will go on to complete the literacy units within the VCAL certificate. But at the moment there really is a bit of a gap between the students who have a strong and competent proficiency in English and what they can access and those who are coming in as much older English language learners. So again, that is something that is currently being reviewed, but at the moment the current situation for senior EAL students is that they can do English/EAL in VCE or do the VCAL certificate.

OK. I think we might have reached the end of the questions, unless there's anything out there... that we haven't responded to. Please know that we are currently working with all of our colleagues in the different sectors to devise different resources and support mechanisms for your ...working with the implementation of the curriculum. We really understand that this has come at a challenging time for you but we hope that you can see now that this is something that you should be doing as part of a differentiation process and it's not something that should be adding a great deal of extra labour. What it should be doing is adding access to our students, which is good teaching.

So I would like to thank our panel members who have been supporting us in answering questions. I mention Anna-Lise. And I would also like to thank Mollie for her presentation and for all of her expertise that she shared this afternoon. Please stay safe. We hope to be meeting with you again, and please just remember there are some other sessions coming up in the weeks that you might like to access. And as I said at the start of the session, the PowerPoint and the recording will be available for you to read once it has been reviewed and edited and transcribed. And so keep an eye out for that in our standard communication documents such as bulletins, etc.

So, thank you all and have a good evening.

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