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## Exploring English as an Additional Language (EAL) Pedagogy in Key Stage One

**Fauzia Feisal Said**

Ba (Hons) Education Studies, University of East London, Student, [fauzia.said@yahoo.com](mailto:fauzia.said@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

As classrooms become increasingly diverse, the need for effective pedagogical strategies to support English as an Additional Language learners (EALs) in Key Stage 1 (KS1) is paramount. Here, the term EAL references EALs learning the English language and the methods of educators in this demographic. This study investigates the efficacy of EAL pedagogy in enhancing language development and academic achievement among KS1 learners in a multilingual and diverse school setting. Ten bilingual teachers and teaching assistants participated in a case study, providing insights into effective teaching strategies for EALs. Thematic analysis of the data revealed key findings, which were contextualised while ensuring participant anonymity. Findings indicate effective teaching strategies include creating an inclusive learning environment, scaffolding, differentiated instruction, multimodal teaching, collaborative learning, and holistic pupil assessment. Findings highlight parental involvement is a success for EAL learners. Ongoing professional development for educators is crucial to navigate the complexities of EAL pedagogy effectively. Through a mixture of teaching strategies, parental involvement, and teacher support, EALs can progress in social, linguistic and academic development. Ongoing training and support for educators is crucial in navigating EAL pedagogy in diverse settings, enhancing their self-efficacy, understanding, and knowledge.

**Key Words:** EAL, Bilingual, Multilingualism, inclusion



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## EAL' Definition

'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) has different broad meanings (Demie & Lewis, 2018). EAL refers to learning English as a second or additional language while simultaneously using a language other than English (Department for Education, 2020). Sutton (2024) further detailed that EAL includes learners from various linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. EAL also includes learners with different English proficiency levels while also learning subjects through English (Strand & Lindorf, 2020). EAL is also conceptualised as bilinguals – speaking two languages (Perumal et al., 2020) and multilingual –speaking more than two languages (Evans et al., 2020).

## 1. Introduction

Globally, classrooms are becoming increasingly multicultural and multilingual (Brooks et al., 2023). Language diversity is crucial in English society; we should not ask non-English speakers to give up their culture and languages in education (Vertovec, 2007). Research shows that the EAL population in England has grown significantly (Office for National Statistics, 2024). In 2022, 22% of primary pupils aged 5 to 16 and 18.1% of secondary school pupils used EAL (Sutton et al., 2023). Over 44% of London pupils speak 360+ languages (Statista, 2024), including Urdu, Arabic, French, Mandarin Chinese, and more. In comparison, around 25% of Australian schools learn EAL or dialect from 2000+ different ethnic backgrounds (Australian Curriculum, 2023).

England's ethnic diversity is reflected in its schools, necessitating specific pedagogical approaches to support learners' needs (Department for Education, 2021). KS1 includes children aged between five and seven years old, and in their first few years of primary school education (Years 1 and 2), a critical stage for nurturing foundational language skills (Early Childhood Education, 2021). The National Curriculum (2021) expects these children to have gained certain skills and understanding of key subjects. This points out the challenges EALs and educators face to address the learners' needs ensuring their successful integration without marginalising them (Heinrichs et al, 2023).

The Department for Education (202) expects EAL teaching to align with the National Curriculum (2014) standards in England, with no EAL-specific curriculum in place. Teachers must adapt their methods to meet the EAL's diverse needs, as mandated by (Teachers' Standard-5 (2021). The demographic of EALs in England is rapidly growing (Office for National Statistics, 2024) with over 975,238 enrolments in primary schools alone (School Census, 2021). This underscores the urgent need for educators to ensure the curriculum is accessible (Leung, 2016).In a new section, we start without indentation.

### 1.1. Research Aims and Questions

The research investigated EAL pedagogy in KS1 and aimed to address the research gap in tailored classroom practices for KS1 EALs, exploring the effective pedagogical approaches for improving their language and cognitive development in listening, writing, speaking, and reading.

As an EAL student, and a parent to three EAL children, the language, pedagogy, and cultural diversity module deeply resonated with me, and the inspiration drawn me to undertake this research. The study aims to provide meaningful answers to the research questions.

1. What are the effective teaching strategies and interventions to support EALs in their language and academic progress?
2. What are teachers' perspectives in collaboration with parents to support EALs in their language and academic progress?
3. What support do teachers have when they have EALs in the classroom?

## 2. Literature Review

*«EALs have a dual task at school: to learn English (language) and to learn through English»  
(The Bell Foundation, n.d.)».*

Educators face both challenges and benefits of utilising specific strategies and resources to teach EALs to develop their English as a language and the Curriculum through English (The Bell Foundation, n.d.). Here, EAL references both learners learning English and the methods of teaching this demographic. While there is a wealth of research investigating the attribution and root causes of underachievement among EALs, encompassing factors such as language proficiency, educational outcomes, assessments, and levels of English proficiency (Demie, 2018; Hutchinson, 2018; Department for Education, 2020), as well as the influence of the National Curriculum (Welply, 2022), bilingualism, and EAL pedagogy (Sutton, 2024), EAL policy and practice (Leung, 2021), and classroom support, it is essential to acknowledge that the term EAL oversimplifies the diversity of learners (Strand & Lindorff, 2021). Despite the extensive research on EALs, there remains a need for further investigation and expansion of EAL pedagogy in KS1 to ensure their social and linguistic development (Scott, 2021). The lack of pertinent literature underscores the profound marginalisation and exclusion experienced by EALs, highlighting the urgent need for more research into their experiences within English Education. This review explores recent empirical literature surrounding EAL pedagogy in KS1.

### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

Effective pedagogy for EALs in KS1 is grounded in sociocultural theory and language development paradigms, emphasising the importance of sociocultural contexts and preserving learners' home languages (Poehner & Lantolf, 2021). Drawing from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Cummins' language acquisition principles, educators use strategies like collaborative learning and scaffolding to assist EALs in the classroom (Nufraidah, 2018). Teachers serve as More Knowledgeable Others (MKO), providing scaffolding within learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Xi & Lantolf, 2021). The MKO refers to someone or something with a better understanding or a higher skill level regarding the task at hand (Sallehuddin, 2021). This approach supports social and cognitive development while facilitating their navigation of academic content and language learning tasks (Cherry, 2023). Integrating multiple theories offers a comprehensive framework for EAL learning, empowering teachers to customise instruction to meet individual learner needs (Leung, 2016).

### 2.2. EAL Pedagogy in KS1

In the diverse educational landscape of England, tailored pedagogical approaches are essential for addressing the educational requirements of EALs (Cook, 2024). Effective EAL pedagogy supports language acquisition, academic progress, and socio-emotional stability (Kim et al., 2024). Brooks et al. (2023) emphasise the importance of establishing effective EAL pedagogy in diverse classrooms to assist learners in adapting to a new language and navigating curriculum content. EAL pedagogy provides customised instruction for EALs in diverse educational settings enhancing their language skills across subject areas and leading to academic achievements (Sutton, 2024). Overall, the research underscores the importance of inclusive learning environments and effective EAL pedagogy in promoting the academic success of EALs, emphasising the need for tailored approaches within the national curriculum (Freeman-Green et al., 2023).

### 2.3. Language Development

Effective teaching strategies for language development are crucial in KS1 for accessing the curriculum and social integration. Kim and Zagata (2024) highlight how word reading, spelling, comprehension, and writing depend on oral language and cognitive skills at varying stages of development. Effective EAL pedagogy, which incorporates learners' first languages, can significantly enhance their English language proficiency, which is essential for their academic and social success (Evans et al., 2020). This approach not only supports academic achievement but also helps prevent the «othering» of learners by promoting inclusion and understanding among peers (García & Wei, 2014). As EALs' language proficiency grows, they gain confidence in expressing their thoughts and opinions, enhancing their sense of belonging in the classroom community (Szymczyk et al., 2022). Language development is integral to intellectual growth and the acquisition of cognitive, emotional, and social skills (Weinert, 2022). However, further empirical studies, particularly focusing on EALs in KS1, are needed to deepen our understanding and inform effective practices.

### 2.4. The National Curriculum (NC)

The National Curriculum (2014) in England provides a structured educational framework for KS1, but it has been criticised for overlooking the needs of EALs (Strand & Lindorff, 2021). Critics argue that despite recognising the importance of English proficiency for foundational knowledge, the structured nature of the NC may inadvertently marginalise, exclude and 'othering' EALs, hindering their academic achievement and engagement (Welply, 2022). This oversight can lead to learning gaps, decreased academic performance, and frustration among EALs. The lack of formal recognition of EAL as a distinct subject within the NC further highlights the need to integrate EAL pedagogy into the national curriculum, especially in KS1 (Leung, 2019). Scholars advocate for decolonising the NC to promote inclusive environments and equity for marginalised communities (NASUWT, 2021). However, challenges such as the need for curriculum revision and extensive teacher training persist (Pak et al., 2020). In addition, educators face the challenges of embedding support for EALs within the NC framework, utilising multiple instructional strategies to enhance comprehension and engagement while adhering to curriculum standards (Rakap et al., 2023).

### 2.5. Effective Teaching Strategies

The increasing diversity of EALs in KS1 presents significant pedagogical challenges (Kostogriz, 2022). EALs encounter various challenges, including cultural adjustment issues and communication barriers, highlighting the need for linguistic support and culturally inclusive teaching practices (Juang & Schachner, 2020). Despite these challenges, mainstream classrooms often advocate for an English-only approach, overlooking the benefits of incorporating learners' first languages into instruction (Bratkovich, 2023) to enhance classroom learning (Evans et al., 2016). Effective EAL pedagogy should integrate differentiated instruction, scaffolding techniques, and culturally relevant content to bolster English proficiency (Sharples, 2021). Strategies like scaffolding have enhanced language learning engagement and comprehension (Cummins, 2021). Educators tailor teaching approaches to accommodate cultural differences and individual needs, demonstrating flexibility and adaptability in instructional methods (The Bell Foundation, n.d.). Integrating first language (L1) learning techniques promotes cognitive development and boosts learners' self-esteem, fostering greater engagement in the learning process (Chalmers, 2017).

### 2.5.1. Scaffolding

Scaffolding is crucial in supporting EALs as they develop their language abilities (Kurt, 2020). Scaffolding in teaching offers temporary support to learners, aiding understanding and skill development. It breaks learning into manageable sections, providing guidance and examples to foster independence. This tailored approach facilitates the EAL learning process and eventual autonomy (Taber, 2018; Queensland Government, 2020). Implementing scaffolding strategies that adapt to learners' evolving needs is challenging for educators (Kruiper et al., 2022). It also takes a lot of time and resources to authenticate and solidify language and learning progress for each learner (Dixon et al., 2020). Furthermore, implementing scaffolding strategies that adapt to learners' evolving needs is challenging for educators, as it takes a lot of time and resources to authenticate and solidify language and learning progress (Cherry, 2022). Despite these challenges, scaffolding strategies, such as visual aids, have enhanced engagement and motivation (Nufraidah, 2018; Kurt, 2020).

### 2.5.2. Collaborative Learning (CL)

Education traditionally focused on individualistic learning methods, but the increasing diversity among learner populations, especially in KS1, necessitates addressing the learning needs of EALs (British Council, 2016). CL, a constructivist pedagogy where learners learn from each other in small groups or pairs, offers a solution to this challenge (Alammary, 2020). It fosters problem-solving skills, communication abilities, and social interaction among EALs, facilitating language acquisition through peer interaction (Altarriba, & Basnight-Brown, 2022), aligning with Vygotsky's ZPD(1978) theory, which emphasises tasks that surpass learners' current abilities with guidance from more knowledgeable peers or adults (Zhou, 2020).

Despite its benefits, variability in learner backgrounds, teacher application of techniques, and research methods complicate its evaluation(Tare et al., 2022). Educators face challenges in managing diverse skill levels and language proficiencies, which require careful planning and resource allocation (Hossain, 2024). Effective strategies include providing a supportive environment, engaging tasks, and a culturally inclusive curriculum (Ahmed-Landeryou, 2023). CL promises academic growth, language acquisition, and social skills development for EALs (Van Geel et al., 2022). However, ongoing research, methodological refinement, and evaluation techniques are necessary to enhance their learning experience and promote social progression (Evans et al., 2020). More empirical research is needed to establish CL's efficacy for EALs in KS1.

### 2.5.3. Differentiated Instructions (DI)

Differentiated instruction (DI) is a pedagogical approach to meeting learners' diverse learning needs and styles. It involves various strategies, such as simplifying language, breaking down complex concepts, and facilitating interactive peer-to-peer learning (Cummins, 2023). Grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD theory, DI aims to bridge the gap between learners' current and potential development levels by providing appropriate support and guidance, thus enhancing learning effectiveness (Sun, 2023). Moreover, Vygotsky concept of the MKO (1978) suggests that learners benefit from guidance and support provided by peers, teachers, or technology. DI embodies this notion by creating opportunities for MKOs to scaffold learning effectively, facilitating optimal progression. Cummins' Quadrants Model complements these theories, illustrating the relationship between academic demands and contextual support and emphasising the importance of empowering learners within enriched contexts (Cummins, 2017). Educators utilise Cummins' Model to plan and tailor activities and tasks to learners' linguistic and learning needs. These approaches narrow the academic gap through contextual scaffolding and cognitive support (Cummins, 2021). Critics caution against oversimplifying language proficiency and equating academic language solely with test scores, highlighting the need for a more nuanced approach

(Berger, 2020; Ruegg et al., 2024). However, by adjusting pedagogical approaches based on individual needs, DI can effectively address learning hurdles and foster meaningful interaction with the curriculum.

## 2.6. Assessment and Evaluation

The literature emphasises the critical role of accurate assessment in tracking the academic progress and language development of EALs in KS1 (Seitz, 2024). They noted the value of both formal assessments, like standardised tests, and informal methods, such as teacher observations and portfolio evaluations, for gaining insights into daily language use and progress (Strand & Lindorf, 2020). Challenges in assessment include limited resources, funding constraints, and the need for thorough induction processes for integrating EALs into the curriculum (Bruce, 2022). Additionally, distinguishing between disabilities and linguistic differences is vital for providing appropriate support to EALs (Trainor & Robertson, 2022). Ongoing policy development and inclusive teacher training are advocated to address these challenges and improve assessment practices (The Bell Foundation, 2022).

## 2.7. Parental Involvement

Recent literature underscores the importance of engaging parents of EALs in supporting learning outcomes and academic achievement. This is also acknowledged by recent literature (Ahmed et al., 2024). Collaborative partnerships between EAL parents and teachers are crucial for understanding individual learner needs (Evans et al., 2016). However, challenges such as incorrect assumptions about parental interest and persistent language barriers hinder effective collaboration (Stewart et al., 2022). Despite school initiatives, overcoming language barriers remains challenging and impacts children's outcomes (Wildomon et al., 2024). Educators must address assumptions about parental interest, as excessive involvement can negatively impact a child's academic performance (Crawford, 2021). More evidence is needed to identify effective approaches for disadvantaged families (The Bell Foundation, 2020), emphasising the importance of tailored strategies for diverse family backgrounds.

## 2.8. EAL Professional Development

English schools are home to learners from various linguistic backgrounds. 22% of all learners are considered EAL (The Bell Foundation, 2023). This contemporary landscape has necessitated the professional development of Teachers, and LSAs need professional development in providing EAL teaching in KS1. Evidence suggests that when appropriately trained, educators understand their learners' needs and implement effective support strategies that help them achieve academically (Ventista & Brown, 2023). These enable collaboration, sharing insights, and addressing challenges in teaching EALs. Professional development programs, such as workshops and seminars, offer practical strategies and cultural competency, enhancing teacher effectiveness and learner outcomes (Eden & Onyebuchi, 2024). However, many teachers lack more training and resources, leading to frustration and inadequate support for EALs (Shank, 2023). The Department for Education (2020) has announced new initiatives to improve training and development opportunities to enhance new teachers' pedagogical strategies and knowledge. This highlights the need for policies, funding, curriculum integration for EAL Education and continued professional development for educators who are already in practice (Ofsted, 2023).

## 2.9. Challenges and Gaps

The literature highlights the challenges of educators in effectively supporting EALs due to a lack of training. This is pointed out by several research (Leung, 2016; Strand & Lindorff, 2020). Teachers in diverse classrooms employ strategies driven by their commitment to learner success without established

frameworks (UNESCO, 2023). Despite the extensive research on EALs, there remains a need for further investigation and expansion of EAL pedagogy in KS1 (The Education Endowment Foundation, 2020; Markey et al., 2023); this case study explored EAL pedagogy in KS1 classrooms. Interviews with teachers and LSA's experiences to have a more comprehensive insight into the practice of teaching and learning for EALs in KS1.

### 3. Methodology

The methodological approach consisted of a case study in a multi-diverse school in East London. Interviews with ten bilingual teachers and LSAs across KS1 were triangulated to understand their experiences (see Table 1). A summary of the methodological framework is provided below:

#### 3.1. Qualitative Case Study

The methodological approach in this study delved into the intricacies of EAL pedagogy in KS1, involving ten bilingual teachers and LSAs in a diverse primary school setting. Through detailed case study methodology, the research aimed to understand the multifaceted realities of EAL education (Thomas, 2017). By interpreting participants' perspectives over time, the study uncovered new insights into real-life social interactions (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). Emphasising teachers' and LSAs' roles, the study aimed to understand their perspectives on effective teaching strategies, parental collaboration, and available support for EALs (McNaughton et al., 2021). The study's interpretive paradigm addressed three key research questions: (1) Effective teaching strategies and interventions for EALs' language and academic progress? (2) Teacher perspectives on parental collaboration to support EALs? (3) Support mechanisms available for teachers with EALs in their classrooms.

#### 3.2. Research Paradigm

This methodological approach adopts an interpretive framework to investigate educational complexities thoroughly. Unlike secondary qualitative approaches, it focuses on new data, emphasising the human element in defining truth and knowledge (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). Grounded in interpretivism, it explores the meanings derived from personal experiences, deepening our understanding of human behaviour within social contexts (Bell & Waters, 2018) and exploring the 'why' and 'how' of phenomena enriches comprehension of societal complexities (Tomaszewski et al., 2020), enhancing the accuracy of the findings (Brown, 2019). Researchers acknowledge biases and strive for reflexivity, recognising cultural and individual influences (Nasrin & Mahani, 2022). In this study, the interpretive paradigm illuminates the experiences and perspectives of teachers and LSAs in EAL pedagogy for KS1.

#### 3.3. Data Collection Method

Data collection tools, including interviews, observations, and focus groups, are crucial in research. In this study, interviews with the School EAL specialist, teachers, and teaching assistants provided comprehensive insights (Sahoo, 2022). The semi-structured approach allowed flexibility while maintaining focus on research questions (Patton, 1999), facilitating direct interaction and exploration of perspectives (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). Interviews offer rich, detailed data, enabling exploration of complex topics (Roos, 2022). Semi-structured interviews, lasting 30-40 minutes on average, were utilised to gather in-depth information (Thomas, 2017). Data triangulation enhanced credibility by collecting perspectives from different participants (Blatchford et al., 2021) with open-ended questions used to explore opinions and experiences (Weller et al., 2022). Data source triangulation with teachers and teaching assistants

gained different perspectives related to the same topic enhancing data credibility (Bans-Akutey, 2021). Interviews were conducted with teachers and teaching assistants from reception to year 2 to explore pedagogy, parental involvement, and related policies. The data tool was piloted with non-participants to ensure clarity and relevance of the tool (Malmqvist, et al., 2019). Interviews were conducted face-to-face or through MS Teams, ensuring confidentiality. Data were transcribed and analysed with 10 interviews completed and securely stored for analysis (Sahoo, 2022).

### 3.4. Sampling

The research employed purposeful and convenient sampling methods to ensure a diverse and representative sample of participants. This included teachers and LSAs supporting EALs in KS1 in a diverse, multicultural primary school in East London.

#### 3.4.1. Setting

The research was conducted in an East London primary school known for its diverse linguistic landscape, where 60% of the staff are multilingual, and learners speaking over 80 languages at home and in their community relevant to the research topic (School website). The school was purposefully selected for its diverse learner demographic (Campbell et al., 2020). The school's pupil body, comprising two-thirds of learners, includes new arrivals from Ukraine, China, Russia, and Syria, among others. With 95.8% of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds, 25.2% eligible for free school meals, and 19.4% classified as income-deprived (Office of National Statistics, 2021), the school received a 'good' rating from Ofsted in 2022. Gatekeeper consent was obtained for study participation.

#### 3.4.2. Participants

The study employed a convenient sampling method, selecting participants based on accessibility and alignment with research objectives (Cohen et al., 2017). Participants were recruited from a local school where the researcher volunteered, including ten bilingual teachers and teaching assistants with teaching experience ranging from four to eight years.

**Table 1** *Participants*

Participants' Role	Participants' Language Background	Participants' Code
EAL Specialist Lead	Jamaican Patois	EAL specialist Lead - <b>EALCO</b>
3 class teachers	Gujarati	Teachers - <b>Teach</b>
KS1 English Language Lead	Turkish	
1 Part time teacher across KS1	Ghanian	higher Teaching Learning Assistant - <b>HLTA</b>
2 Higher Learning support assistants	Pakistan	
- Phonics specialist across KS1	Urdu	Learning Support assistants - <b>LSA</b>
- Low set ability group across KS1	Punjab	
2 Learning support assistants across KS1	Bengali	
	Somali	
(Age Range: 27-57)	Arabic	
1 male and 9 females	Swahili	
	Hindi	
	Tamil	
	and English	

Transparent communication was ensured through information sheets detailing the study's purpose, and informed consent was obtained before scheduling interviews to minimise bias (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). Confidentiality measures were applied, including anonymising participant names and professions, in line with research guidelines enhancing confidentiality (British Educational Research Association, 2018).

### 3.5. Contribution to Knowledge

This study aims to collect data on EAL pedagogy, including educators' experiences, perspectives, and opinions, to inform future policy decisions and educational practices and benefit teachers and learners. The findings could shape and improve EAL pedagogy, making it more effective and inclusive for all learners.

### 3.6. Limitations

The findings from this small-scale study are limited in scope and by design.

**Bias in Interviews:** Mukherji and Albon (2018) highlight potential biases in qualitative research related to researcher influence and participant responses. Here, the researcher began interviews by focusing on curriculum deficiencies and educational expectations, which could bias responses and steer them towards a more positive outlook (Bhardwaj, 2019).

**Sampling Bias:** Convenience sampling may lead to bias. The involvement of a researcher in a school as a parent or volunteer may introduce bias through the Hawthorne effect (Emerson, 2021). This effect can lead participants to alter their responses due to the realisation of being observed, affecting their behaviour and impacting the credibility and validity of the study (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018).

**Limited Diversity:** Restricting participant selection to a single school may limit the diversity of perspectives and experiences, potentially overlooking valuable insights from educators in other educational settings (Staller, 2021).

**Risk of Homogeneity:** Participants recruited from the same school may share similar perspectives or approaches to EAL support, reducing the variability of responses and potentially skewing the findings (Fairhurst et al., 2020).

**Representation:** Although the case study provides valuable insights, caution is warranted against over-generalisation due to its reliance on a small-scale sample of educators (Priya, 2021). Additionally, the interpretivist paradigm may compromise objectivity due to the researcher's personal involvement and potential bias (Galdas, 2017).

**Data Validity and Reliability:** Using different data collection tools and triangulating data from different schools and participants could have improved the study's credibility, providing broader insights to present the study population (Campbell et al., 2020).

### 3.7. Data Analysis

The thematic analysis explored a specific aspect of EAL pedagogy, utilising richly descriptive data (Flick, 2022). This involved transcribing 120 A4 pages of audio-recorded interviews and meticulously cross-checking transcripts against original recordings for accuracy. Thematic analysis techniques were

applied to identify recurring themes aligned with the study's objectives, revealing patterns and insights relevant to the research question (Fransisco et al., 2023). This methodological approach facilitated the identification of recurring themes, fostering reliable interpretation (Naeem et al., 2023).

Ethical considerations were rigorously maintained, prioritising participants' anonymity and privacy rights (British Educational Research Association, 2018). Transparency in reporting ensures acknowledgement of any limitations or conflicts of interest (Social Research Association, 2021). Member checking validated the findings' accuracy and trustworthiness (Birt et al., 2016). Thematic analysis demanded high reflexivity and ethical diligence, ensuring the reliability of the interpretation, thus enabling a comprehensive exploration of qualitative data and yielding valuable insights into the research question (Nicolas, 2021).

The methodology outlines this research project's framework, methods, sampling strategy, and limitations. The next chapter covers ethical considerations for the case study

## 4. Ethical considerations

Qualitative researchers uphold ethical standards throughout their studies with respect and integrity (BERA, 2022). Ethical considerations include consent, preventing harm, anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, transparency, and voluntary participation (Thomas, 2017). The study underwent a thorough ethical review, ethical approval was granted by UEL's Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee (University of East London, 2021). This process highlights the researcher's ethical commitment and reinforces the study's integrity, building trust in the audience.

**Protection from harm** is a top priority in research (Hammersley & Traianou, 2015). The researcher ensured the safety and confidentiality of participants by taking proactive measures and promptly addressing any adverse events. Participants were assured their right to withdraw from the study without consequences, establishing trust and respect for the researcher's ethical research practice (Buchanan & Warwick, 2021).

**Gatekeeper consent**, a pivotal aspect of ethical research practice, involves obtaining permission from individuals or institutions controlling access to specific participants or resources (Andoh-Arthur, 2019). This step ensures ethical considerations, participant access, trust, data authenticity, and legal compliance (UK Statistics Authority, 2021). Researchers must provide comprehensive research study details, including potential risks, participant rights, and data handling protocols. Seeking gatekeeper consent not only upholds ethical standards but also enhances research validity and ensures legal compliance, making it an integral part of this research (UK Research Institute Office, 2023).

**The participation information sheet** included data recording, purpose, and usage, emphasising anonymisation and protection. The sheet was used before the interview to signify that the participants were informed and that consent was given to participate before the interview session (Ariffin, 2018).

Semi-structured interviews prioritise **informed consent**, confidentiality, and participant autonomy (UK Research Institute Office, 2023). Participants were briefed on their rights, with the option to withdraw (British Educational Research Association, 2018). Transparent communication about study objectives and roles fosters trust. Participants, sampled conveniently from the researcher's children's school, enhanced credibility (Bhardwaj, 2019). Interviews, conducted individually in private settings, ensured **confidentiality** and comfort, with contact details provided (Khan, 2015). Piloting data collection tools improved reliability, and data anonymisation protected privacy (Bolshaw & Josephidou, 2019).

The data triangulation method utilised teachers and LSAs within the same setting to examine the hypothesis, thus **minimising bias** (Galdas, 2017). This approach enhances the validity and reliability of findings by cross-verifying data from multiple sources, ultimately improving the quality and depth of the investigation and enhancing the richness and credibility of the research data (Mukherji & Albon, 2018)

**Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity** were prioritised in the research (Mukherji & Albon, 2018), with consent obtained for recording interviews and data securely stored for privacy (UK Statistics Authority, 2022). Anonymisation techniques, such as coding, protected participant identities during analysis (Data Protection Act, 2018). Measures like member-checking ensured data integrity (MacNaughton et al., 2019), with **transparency** maintained about data security (Data Protection Act, 2018). Thematic analysis ensured reliability by identifying similarities (Nicholas, 2023) alongside responsible data transcription and coding (Waeraas, 2022). Participant coding enhanced **anonymity** (Shawa, 2017), while member-checking validated data **accuracy** (Birt et al., 2016).

**Acknowledging biases and positionality** is crucial for researchers. As an EAL student and parent of three EAL children, I researched at my children's local school, offering unique insights (Bourke, 2014). Prioritising reflexivity and transparency helped mitigate potential biases (Frost, 2016), ensuring objectivity in the research findings. Upholding integrity and transparency principles promotes trustworthiness and credibility (MacNaughton et al., 2018; Mukherji & Albon, 2018).

**Beneficence** in research aims to maximise benefits for participants and the community, advocating for policy changes and empowering participants to drive positive change. This study on supporting EALs' academic performance informs my future career as an EAL specialist, enhancing educational outcomes through effective teaching strategies and resource allocation.

## 5. Findings and Discussions

This section presents the interim findings of a case study conducted in a multilingual and diverse school. The study involved ten bilingual teachers and teaching assistants to determine the effectiveness of EAL pedagogy in improving the language development and educational achievement of EALs in KS1. The collected data were thematically analysed, and themes were contextualised with existing literature while maintaining participant anonymity. The research identified several strategies that supported EALs' achievement and integration in the classroom.

*EALCO: "Challenges for EALs in KS1.....The foundations of all core subjects are taught predominantly in English.....hinders their language development and academic progression."*

### 5.1. Research Question 1:

To answer the first research question (RQ1), «What are the effective teaching strategies and interventions for supporting EALs in their language and academic progress?» The study findings suggest that several strategies can improve language development in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which are significant during KS1 in enhancing language skills and academic performance.

*EALCO: «Our school has a diverse learner population, with 80% EALs. All activities and lessons consider all learners.»*

*TEACH4: «Teaching EALs poses unique challenges in language acquisition while.....delivering a broad curriculum.»*

The analysis explores effective teaching strategies to aid EALs in their language development and academic success, as demonstrated by educators' correlation with RQ1.

### 5.1.1. Supportive Inclusive Learning Environment

Participants highlighted the importance of fostering a supportive, interactive, and inclusive learning environment, which aligns with effective language acquisition strategies (Welply, 2022; Akbar et al., 2023). This approach prioritises making learners feel comfortable and engaged, facilitating their language development journey. Embracing diversity is crucial (Amina et al., 2022), echoing Vygotsky's Social Constructivism theory (1978), underscoring social interaction's significance in learning Caingoy, 2023). Incorporating literature, music, art, and cultural traditions further enhances this inclusion (aligning with children's rights (UNCRC, 1989), the Equality Act (2010), and inclusion principles (UNESCO, 2015), while combating negative perceptions of multilingualism.

*LSA1: «Children were happy to use their first language in the classroom in various learning and social contexts.*

*TEACH6: «We have a language of the month for the whole school. We encourage learners to speak in class and talk about their country, cultures, and food, counting to 10.....flags..... history and landmarks. For example, Swahili is spoken in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Share Lake Victoria.*

Educators integrate culture into teaching practices, making learning more relatable; language practice outside the classroom is vital for enhancing English proficiency (Yol & Yoon, 2020). Participants encouraged learners to engage in extracurricular activities like drama or dancing clubs, which can help them practice English in real-life scenarios. This fosters language fluency and develops critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills (Buckley & Lee, 2021). Research shows that these strategies promote active participation and involvement in mixed-language friendship groups and enhance peer interaction, also proclaimed by Juang & Schachner (2020), thereby nurturing a sense of belonging (NASUWT, 2022; Brooks et al., 2023).

### 5.1.2. Scaffolding

Participants highlight scaffolding's effectiveness in improving language abilities for all learners. Bruner (1978) suggests that scaffolding simplifies tasks, enabling learners to focus on acquiring knowledge and refining skills (Kurt, 2020). Educators use modelling and peer coaching techniques to transition learners from conversational to academic language (Taber, 2018). Empirical evidence supports scaffolding's efficacy, leading to increased interaction, comprehension, and academic success, particularly for EALs (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020). Vygotsky's theory (1978) underscores the role of knowledgeable peers (MKOs) or teachers in structuring tasks for EALs (Abtahi, 2017). Teachers, as MKOs, customise instructions to authenticate and solidify language and learning progress, fostering inclusivity and personalised learning environments (Gu et al., 2018). Incorporating interaction aids like visual aids in language acquisition heightens engagement levels and boosts confidence (Mahan, 2020).

Critics caution that while scaffolding enhances learning, it may foster over-reliance on teachers, inhibiting independent problem-solving (Van de Pol et al., 2015). They suggest a delicate balance between teacher support and fostering students' problem-solving skills, ensuring scaffolding does not exceed learners' ZPD (Taber, 2018). The shift to adaptive teaching challenges traditional lesson planning, potentially affecting teacher well-being and student expectations (Aubin, 2022). However, despite these concerns, scaffolding proves beneficial, enhancing language acquisition for EALs, reducing academic risk, and promoting cognitive and social development for all learners.

### 5.1.3. Differentiated instructions.

The study findings underscored the significance of employing differentiated instruction (DI) across lesson plans, activities, and tasks in classrooms catering to diverse learners. DI involves adapting teaching methods and curriculum to address the individual needs of each learner (Pozas et al., 2020). This tailored approach is particularly critical for EALs with varying linguistic backgrounds and proficiency levels, as a 'one-size-fits-all' approach risks leaving some learners behind (Joseph, 2016). Research suggests that DI can effectively enhance language acquisition by aligning learning activities with each individual's language proficiency (Dunn & Iwaniec, 2022), leading to improved understanding and increased engagement (Cummins, 2023). This approach promotes independent thinking and problem-solving skills by operating within the ZPD, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), fostering a well-rounded learning experience (Tullis & Goldstone, 2020). The analysis indicates that educators utilise DI to provide appropriate support and challenge for learners, facilitate language acquisition through scaffolded learning experiences, and enhance their engagement and motivation.

According to Cummins' Quadrant model, differentiated instruction (DI) involves adapting course content to meet learners' diverse cognitive, academic, and linguistic needs across speaking, listening, reading, and writing domains (Cummins, 2023). Participants affirmed the distinction between everyday spoken English fluency (BICS) and academic language proficiency (CALP), emphasising the importance of personalised and practical learning to promote inclusivity and improve outcomes (Coelho, 2016; Cummins, 2023). Moreover, employing DI helps bridge the academic gap, fostering cognitive and language development while integrating diverse teaching methods such as technology integration (Cummins, 2022). Research highlights the significance of listening to learners' perspectives and voices in understanding their needs, which are linked to their well-being, social inclusion (Pozas et al., 2021), and limited academic self-concept (Moallemi, 2024). Additionally, this approach influences educational policies and practices related to mainstreaming and inclusion (Perumal et al., 2020). The analysis indicates that DI is an effective teaching strategy addressing the research question.

### 5.1.4. Multimodal strategies

Research findings reveal that participants acknowledge the pivotal role of technology in modern education, particularly in supporting EALs and shaping innovative teaching strategies. Multimodal learning approaches, incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic stimuli, were emphasised by participants as enriching comprehension and fostering learner motivation. Participants highlighted the effectiveness of dynamic tools such as videos, music, and interactive games in reinforcing vocabulary retention, and also appointed out in recent literature (Lo, 2024; Hossain, 2024). Moreover, participants underscored the significance of technology, including interactive apps and online resources, in enhancing language acquisition and engagement (Getenet & Tualaulelei, 2023). Participants detail how their teaching methodologies and resources cater to EALs, utilising technology integration in school and accessible at home. Collaborative efforts from organisations like The Bell Foundation were recognised for providing valuable resources and academic programs to support EALs, as acknowledged by participants. Participants highlighted the effectiveness of dynamic tools such as videos, music, and interactive games in reinforcing vocabulary retention (Hossain, 2024). Collaborative efforts from organisations like The Bell Foundation were recognised for providing valuable resources and academic programs to support EALs, as acknowledged by participants.

In modern education, technology is vital for supporting EALs and shaping teaching strategies. Findings highlight how interactive apps, online resources, and educational games engage learners in multisensory experiences, enhancing language acquisition (Getenet & Tualaulelei, 2023). Studies show that educational tools like apps and multimedia presentations offer interactive language practice, aiding vocabulary, and grammar acquisition, thus shaping teaching approaches to be more dynamic

and interactive, enhancing learners' engagement (Shadiev & Wang, 2022; Rintaningrum, 2023). Virtual platforms extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom, enabling direct teacher interactions and facilitating personalised learning experiences (The Bell Foundation, n.d.). However, studies indicate that due to access barriers due to socioeconomic factors (Jones & Wang, 2022), 25% of EALs are from disadvantaged families (National Pupil Database, 2018). This underscores the importance of government support to ensure equitable access to technology for all EALs.

### 5.1.5. Collaborative Learning

All participants underscored the significance of collaborative learning and its integration into classroom practices with all learners. Drawing from the Language Interdependence theory (García & Wei, 2014), educators frequently pair EALs with more proficient peers to engage in collaborative problem-solving within mainstream classrooms. This comprehensive approach fosters a deep understanding of sentence structure, grammar, and vocabulary among all learners. Additionally, modelling exemplary writing through examples provides visual guidance, aiding EALs in refining their writing abilities (Cox et al., 2019). Aligned with ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978), EALs participate in peer interactions to discuss ideas, with language models scaffolding their learning by introducing new language concepts. For newly arrived EALs, effectively implementing this strategy can accelerate language proficiency by fostering learner interaction.

Active engagement in dialogic or repeated interactive reading further enhances understanding of complex language structures and expands vocabulary (National Institute for Literacy, 2008). The efficacy of the 'Thinking Together' strategy, wherein educators facilitate 'Exploratory Talk', has been demonstrated in various studies (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020), supporting learners' cognitive and social development while promoting language acquisition (The Education Hub, 2020). Critics might argue that collaborative learning could promote dependence on peers and compromise individual learning. However, Webb (1996) reports that the benefits of this strategy for EALs far outweigh the potential drawbacks. The cross-fertilisation of ideas grants EALs a robust foundation to build their language proficiency. Interactive activities, such as group discussions and peer support, actively engage EALs, encouraging language usage and fostering inclusive learning environments (National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum, 2017).

*TEACH5: «We use talk frames to scaffold pupils' language to move towards the written forms..... Talk partners are used extensively to enable pupils to discuss and interact.....EALs can be exposed more to the language and pick on the vocabulary.*

*LSA1: «I use a lot of vocabulary repetition and visuals, too; we rehearse the questions, model the sentence, repeat the words, and repeat them to their talk partners.»*

### 5.1.6. Effective and holistic pupil assessment

Participants declared that formative assessment is critical to effective language learning strategies. Assessing EALs in KS1 is vital but challenging. The school has a regular assessment to monitor the progress of newly arrived. After two weeks of the silent period, LSAs pointed out that children are given additional assessments; LSAs for language proficiency scales evaluate reading, writing, and spoken language skills (Department for Education, 2020). Teachers use assessment data to set targets, group students by ability, and track progress to maintain high expectations.

*EALCO: «For newly arrived learners, a standard pack with visuals and simple words, like a picture dictionary, can be used to assess their language proficiency and knowledge.»*

*LSA1: «We communicate using visual prompts keys to aid communication within their first days. For example, hello, thank you, water, food, toilet.»*

Combining formal and informal assessment methods is crucial for accurately measuring progress and proficiency levels (Seitz, 2024). While standardised tests offer valuable data, informal assessments provide insights into daily language use and developmental progress (Strand & Lindorf, 2020). Limited funding may hinder support for EALs' diverse developmental contexts (Educational Policy Institute, 2018), emphasising the need for comprehensive induction and assessment processes to effectively integrate EALs into the curriculum. Strategies like performance-based assessments and observations accommodate diverse learning styles (Bruce, 2022). Differentiating between disabilities and linguistic differences is essential for providing appropriate support to EALs, highlighting the importance of teacher training programs (The Bell Foundation, 2022). This research underscores a strong focus on inclusion, with participants emphasising careful assessment to provide appropriate provisions and ensure progress for all learners.

*TEACH2: «Learners who fall behind receive extra interventions and temporarily withdraw from classes without missing their actual learning to ensure they progress at the expected level.*

*HLTA2: «We have after-school clubs that offer maths, reading, writing, and phonics interventions for newly arrived and low-ability group learners.»*

Feedback on language abilities aids learners in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers provide personalised feedback on writing and speaking, addressing grammar, pronunciation, and language usage (Clement, 2023), allowing learners to focus on specific development areas and enhance language growth (Yang et al., 2021). Whether verbal or non-verbal, feedback acknowledges learners' efforts, motivating continued learning (The Bell Foundation, 2017). Allocating time for individualised feedback is crucial to support EALs (The Bell Foundation, 2017). Participants acknowledged their role in promoting EALs' academic success, stressing the significance of high-quality teaching for effective language development.

## 5.2. Research Question 2

To answer RQ2. «What are teachers' perspectives on working with parents to support EALs in their language and academic progress?» The data analysis highlighted the crucial role of parental involvement in enhancing EALs' academic success, aligning with previous research (Sharma, 2021). While parental engagement is essential for all children (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022), parents of EALs often face underrepresentation and communication barriers in schools (Stewart et al., 2022). Nevertheless, despite these challenges, the school effectively engaged parents in their children's academic and cultural contexts.

*EALCO: "The role of parental involvement in accelerating the development of EALs skills and literacy abilities in KS1 cannot be understated."*

### 5.2.1. Collaboration and communication

Effective collaboration among EAL parents, learners, and teachers is crucial for successful educational outcomes, addressing diverse academic, social, emotional, and cultural needs (Sharma, 2021). However, excessive parental involvement can lead to pressure and controlling behaviour, negatively impacting academic performance (Obradović, 2021). To foster balanced involvement, participants detailed the school involvement by offerings offering various avenues such as meetings, governance opportunities, volunteering, and ESOL workshops, promoting a sense of belonging among parents (Epstein, 2016). Participant elaborated:

*TEACH2: «Parental collaboration, communication, and coordination are continuous processes for the success of all learners. Without them, there is no success.»*

Kantova (2024) asserts that parental support is vital for children's language acquisition and academic success, echoed by participants. Engaging parents enhances language development and literacy skills (Stanford, 2023), predicting communication proficiency (Open Access Government, 2019). Encouraging parental involvement in schoolwork, joint reading, and creating language-rich home environments promotes academic achievement and literacy inclusivity (Ahmed et al., 2024), leading to higher learner achievement, engagement, and motivation (Yulianti et al., 2022).

### 5.2.2. Cultural Understanding

Participants emphasised the importance of embracing diversity within the school environment, which is evident across websites and in the demographics of learners and staff (Schmid & Garrels, 2021; Sharma, 2021). Collaboration among parents, teachers, and the school community fosters respect and appreciation for different cultures (Griffiths, 2021), which is crucial for supporting the academic success and overall well-being of EALs (Murphy et al., 2021). Collaborative events like International Week involve parents, children, and staff, showcasing cultural heritage and promoting cultural understanding within the school community (Sharma, 2021). This collaboration enhances various academic, social, emotional, and cultural aspects of EALs' learning (Griffiths, 2021).

### 5.2.3. Parent-Teacher Partnership

The study emphasises the pivotal role of parental involvement in sustaining the academic success and social development of EALs. However, parental engagement for EAL students in KS1 faces challenges, mainly due to communication barriers (Oxley et al., 2022). EAL parents are often underrepresented in school activities, requiring targeted support (Antony-Newman, 2019) to ensure academic success (Schmid & Garrels, 2021). Tailored approaches are necessary, especially for disadvantaged families (Education Endowment Foundation, 2024). Implementing culturally sensitive communication channels and parent support programs fosters community and engagement (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020), creating an inclusive environment for all parents to participate in their child's education. Participants disclosed the following:

*TEACH4: «Parental involvement is 100% success for all learners.... Improving attendance and behaviour....»*

*EALCO: «We involve parents in volunteering, school events, and sports days. We also have a parent-teacher race annually.»*

#### 5.2.4. Home-School Communication

Effective communication between schools and parents is crucial for sharing information about children's progress and learning needs. Education World (2023) indicates that effective communication enhances parental involvement, improving children's academic performance, behaviour, and attendance (Yulianti et al., 2022). Teachers actively encourage and facilitate parental involvement in decision-making processes, providing access to family resources and school support (Schmid & Garrels, 2021). This collaboration emphasises the essential role of home-school communication in supporting academic success. Quotes from participants are as follows:

*HLTA1: «Parents are involved in every aspect of their children's school life. We support parents by sending letters home and making them accessible online in different languages».*

*TEACH4: "Parents are involved through meetings and workshops on well-being, online safety, reading, and maths."*

Parental involvement for EALs in KS1 faces challenges due to communication and language barriers (Oxley et al., 2022). EAL parents are under-represented in school activities, requiring targeted support (Antony-Newman, 2019). Overcoming these obstacles is vital to promote positive parental involvement and academic success of EALs (Schmid & Garrels, 2021). However, improving parental engagement is necessary, especially for disadvantaged families and parents of EAL children (Education Endowment Foundation, 2024), facing unique challenges such as staff assumptions and language barriers (Evans et al., 2020). The study suggests that schools can create an inclusive environment to encourage parental involvement in their child's education through collaboration and communication, which aligns with the literature studies that answer the research question.

### 5.3. Research Question 3

To answer RQ 3, «What support do teachers have when they have EALs in the classroom?» Data analysis revealed that a lack of ongoing training, policies, and limited time creates challenges for educators in providing effective EAL pedagogy for KS1. In English education, multilingual schools are centres of multiculturalism with learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Department for Education, 2019). KS1 teachers face unique challenges and opportunities in navigating this diversity. Educators highlight the challenges in ensuring inclusion and providing effective pedagogy for EALs in large classroom sizes. Classroom inclusion strategies for EALs revolve around promoting language development, social interaction, and cultural integration (Evans et al., 2020).

#### 5.3.1. Professional development

In today's world of diverse languages, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) initiatives need to focus on empowering educators and LSAs to navigate the diverse linguistic landscape. This is particularly important in EAL teaching, which covers the process of learners acquiring English and the pedagogical approaches used to facilitate this process. Ongoing CPD is pivotal in facilitating academic success for EALs (Cummins, 2021). Hence, inclusive language teaching sessions in teacher training programs cater to diverse linguistic backgrounds (Lucas & Villegas, 2008) and cultivate a multicultural, inclusive classroom ambience (UNESCO, 2022). Educators can create an inclusive learning environment that encourages all students to thrive, regardless of their linguistic heritage or identity.

LSAs are essential in supporting EAL teaching by providing one-to-one and small-group learning sessions, aiding in lesson preparation, maintaining tidiness in classrooms, and accompanying classes on school trips (Department for Education, 2019). To enhance their contribution, LSAs must have the necessary skills for EAL teaching, which can be achieved through their CPD (Strand & Lindorff, 2021). This ensures that their support strategies align with the teachers, providing learners with a consistent learning experience.

The EALCO recommends using the National Language Development in the Curriculum and The Bell Foundation resources for EAL lesson planning and assessment. There is a need for continued EAL pedagogy development due to the lack of training and support for educators in diverse schools, as seen in research findings and the Ofsted press release (2023). Quotes from the data are as follows:

*TEACH3: «Supporting EALs effectively is crucial for their academic success. Yet it is a field marked by complexity, variability, and considerable challenges».*

Ventista and Brown (2023) stress the need for ongoing professional development for teachers to adapt to changes in education. Kaandiko and Kingsbury (2023) highlight the need for teachers to adjust to curriculum and policy changes. Njenga (2022) emphasises how CPD enhances teaching strategies and boosts teacher self-efficacy (British Council, 2024). CPD fosters reflection and growth (Tyagi & Misra, 2021), which is crucial for KS1 teachers supporting EALs, aligning with existing research.

Participants highlighted the need for more recent post-pandemic training to address learning loss (The Bell Foundation 2021). Time constraints in large, diverse classrooms create inequalities and marginalisation. Educators seek professional development opportunities, but inadequate training and heavy workloads hinder progress (Ofsted, 2023). Tailored teaching practices significantly improve EALs' performance (Leung, 2016), yet unclear policies pose challenges (Teachers in England, 2018; Towers et al., 2023). Government action is essential. The Department for Education could review the curriculum to include EAL-specific content and introduce government-funded professional development programs focused on EAL pedagogy. Local schools can develop specific EAL policies, including smaller class sizes, additional support from specialists, and training (Demie, 2018). Local funding can provide tailored resources like bilingual dictionaries. Collaboration among policymakers, educators, parents, and communities is essential (Teacher Standard, 2021). English schools must prioritise EAL support, particularly in KS1. Both national and local governments must commit to effective policies and funding for educator training and resources.

In conclusion, the research findings highlight the pivotal role of supporting teachers in enhancing the academic achievement of EALs through the effective implementation of various strategies. The case study school emerged as a beacon of success in fostering a culturally responsive environment, employing a multitude of strategies in teaching and learning aimed at EAL inclusion and diversity promotion. Notably, the school's adept integration and collaboration with parents stood out as a significant factor contributing to the success of these learners acknowledged by the participant on the positive impact of the comprehensive support provided on the academic and linguistic progress of EALs. underscores a commitment to cater to the needs of all learners, irrespective of their backgrounds or requirements, thereby ensuring equitable progress for every child. In the words of one teacher:

*TEACH5: «We are teachers for all, whether EAL or SEN, irrespective of their background or individual need. We ensure all children progress equally at the expected level.*

## 6. Conclusions

This case study delves into the academic and language progress of EALs in a diverse school serving KS1. It investigates three main research questions, inviting educators to share their insights: What teaching strategies effectively support EALs in language and academic progress? How do teachers view collaboration with parents to support EALs? What support do teachers receive when teaching EALs in the classroom?

The study involved interviews conducted with EAL specialists, KS1 English leads, HLTAs and LSAs underscoring a concerted effort towards this goal for enhancing academic and language progression, views on parental involvement, and classroom support. The findings emphasised the significance of innovative teaching, parental engagement, and professional development in EAL education. The study identifies a range of effective teaching strategies for EALs in KS1, such as multimodal approaches, differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and collaborative learning. These methods create an inclusive learning environment, showcasing their effectiveness and fostering EALs' academic and language development aligning with Vygotsky's ZPD and MKO, and Cummins' language learning theories. Collaboration between the school and educators has proven to improve language proficiency and curriculum access for EALs, fostering trust and support for all learners and demonstrating high-quality pedagogy. The case study concludes that with a mixture of teaching strategies, parental involvement in professional development is crucial for an effective EAL pedagogy, particularly for EALs in KS1. These approaches enhance the social, linguistic and academic progression of EALs. This research underscores the potential for positive change in EAL education.

### 6.1. Study Limitations

While insightful, this case study on effective EAL pedagogies in KS1 could benefit from broader research across diverse school settings. It would enhance its scope by incorporating factors like cultural background and socioeconomic status, along with multiple schools and diverse data collection methods. However, the limited representation of a single school and a small participant pool may limit the generalisability of the findings. This case study recommends the following:

### 6.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, several collaborative recommendations can be made to further support EALs in KS1:

#### 6.2.1. Prioritise Professional Development

Teacher training is essential for professional growth. Workshops, seminars, and certifications in EAL equip educators with skills to support EALs, implement research-based teaching strategies, and create engaging lesson plans. Professional development should emphasise culturally responsive teaching practices, and language acquisition strategies, and empower educators to enhance their well-being through stress management and work-life balance strategies.

#### 6.2.2. Promoting Home Language

While English acquisition is crucial for EALs, nurturing their home language is equally vital. Mainstream education's monolingual approach often overlooks EALs' linguistic diversity, leading to exclusion, which can boost children's pride and self-confidence. Incorporating home languages strengthens parent-teacher partnerships, enabling more meaningful communication and collaboration.

### 6.2.3. Conduct Further Research

This study has laid the groundwork for understanding in EAL pedagogy. More research is needed to better understand EAL pedagogy and inform future policies and initiatives. Classroom-based action research and large-scale case studies involving multiple schools are crucial for advancing EAL pedagogy in KS1.

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The author declared no potential conflicts of interest to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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