

Whole school universal language interventions as a means of recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic

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Bristol Conversations in Education

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Session Outline


1. Language inequalities in language learning
2. Context of provision
3. Supporting Spoken Language in the Classroom (SSLiC) Programme
4. SSLiC in Practice
5. Facilitating change





1. Language inequalities in language learning

Importance of oral language and inequalities in language learning



Why is oral language important?

Oral language skills underpin:

- Literacy – reading and writing
- Numeracy
- Access to the curriculum
- Socio-emotional functioning and behaviour

Most children enter school with speaking and listening skills that equip them to learn

But...



Who has trouble talking?

- Over 1 million children in the UK
 - Usually 2 or 3 children per class (www.ican.org.uk)
 - 7.6% have Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Differential disadvantage
 - Children from areas of social disadvantage – more than 30-50% of children at school entry (Locke et al., 2002)
 - Children where English is an additional language (Meschi et al., 2012, Dockrell et al. 2014)
 - Children with developmental delays and ‘other’ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- If not resolved by age 5 ½, at risk for long term low academic attainment (Stothard et al., 1998)

The most important factor in reaching the expected levels in English and maths at age 11 was children’s language skills at age five; more important than poverty or parental education.

Save the Children (2016) The Lost Boys



Inequalities in language development occur as a result of

1. Amount of exposure

- Caregivers from different SES backgrounds provide their children with substantially different amounts of oral language input

2. Variations in school exposure

- Differences in the amount of talk
- Differences in the quality of talk

3. Nature of exposure

- Social interaction
- Enriched linguistic input
- Type of language used





2. Context of provision

How are language needs supported and why does it matter?

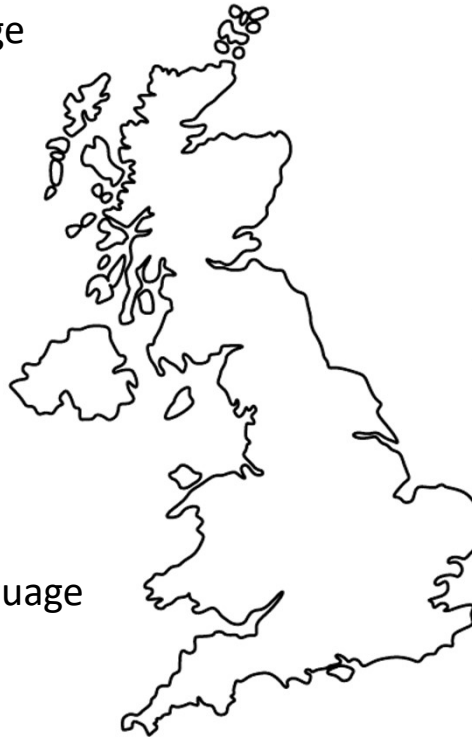


Context

The term SLCN is used within schools to describe a primary need of Speech, Language or Communication

SLCN is the most prevalent area of need in mainstream primary schools

Lack of emphasis on oral language and language development in Initial Teacher Training



School support

- SEN Support
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

- Tier 1 support: Universal – Support for all
- Tier 2 support: Targeted interventions, group work
- Tier 3 support: Specialised support

Whose responsibility are children with SLCN?

Why does this matter?

- **Poorer outcomes**
 - Educational achievement
 - Social development, behaviour/vulnerability (Bakopoulou & Dockrell, 2016; Cohen, 1998; Knox, 2003)
 - Mental health (Law et al., 2009)
 - Employability (Sir Michael Rake, 2010)
 - Criminality
- **SLT support tends to be focused on providing input at a Tier 2/3 level**
- **Local Authority support tends to be focused on providing input at a Tier 3 level**



Why does this matter (cont)?

- **Schools are increasingly expected to be providing *high quality* Tier 1 provision**
 - Variability amongst school staff of knowledge and understanding
 - Variability between geographical areas (Hutchinson, 2021; Lindsay et al. 2008; Lindsay & Strand, 2016)
- **Ever increasing evidence-base of effective interventions**
 - Very few are at a Tier 1, universal level
- **Schools request training and Professional Development**
 - Limited evidence of how PD and one-off training improves and impacts on practice



Why does it matter now even more?



'Given that the academic gains associated with oral language are most pronounced for disadvantaged pupils, the development of oral language clearly matters now more than ever and should be a key plank in any strategy not just for recovery but also for 'building back' stronger and fairer.' (Speak for Change, Oracy APPG Interim Report 2021)

- Pupils from poorer backgrounds have suffered the most during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- School closures during lockdown have widened the language gap.
- Effects particularly pronounced in the early years and transition points.
- Some children's language has improved due to increased conversation at home, for many this will not be the case.
- High pupil absences, curriculum pressures, restricted classroom layouts.



3. Supporting Spoken Language in Classroom (SSLiC)



Supporting Spoken Language in the Classroom (SSLiC)

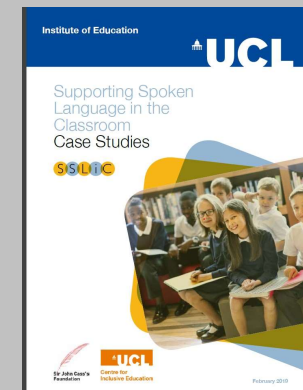
- Developed in 2016 at UCL Centre for Inclusive Education by Ioanna Bakopoulou and Joanna Vivash in collaboration with:
 - **Ioanna Bakopoulou and Julie Dockrell**, Better Communication Research Programme
 - **Gill Brackenbury and Karl Wall**, UCL Centre for Inclusive Education
 - **Rachel Rees** UCL MSc Speech Language Sciences team and **Peter Howell** UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences
- Influenced by and remains a part of the UCL Centre for Inclusive Education Knowledge Exchange Programmes (www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/ucl-centre-inclusive-education)

Supporting Spoken Language in Classroom (SSLiC) programme

- Aims:
 - To support the development of high quality, universal, language learning provision for all children.
 - To bring together school-based practitioners and researchers to investigate how the evidence base related to oral language might be applied to school settings.
 - We think we know '**what works**' but we don't know '**how it works**' in school settings

SSLiC pilot 2017-2018

- 10 primary schools in London and South East England took part in the SSLiC pilot in 2017-2018
- Funded by Sir John Cass's Foundation and part of UCL CIE Knowledge Exchange Programmes.
- The pilot was evaluated and **Case Studies** were written at the end of the pilot (Bakopoulou and Vivash, 2019).
- A research paper is currently in preparation (Bakopoulou, Vivash and Brackenbury).



SSLiC Bristol at the School of Education, UoB 2019-2021

2019-2020

- 5 primary schools in Bristol (October 2019 – May 2020)
- Funded by ESRC Impact Acceleration Fund administered by the University of Bristol.
- Delivered by an interdisciplinary team (Dr Ioanna Bakopoulou and Dr Yvonne Wren, Director of Bristol Speech and Language Therapy Research Unit).
- Evaluation was not completed due to Covid restrictions.

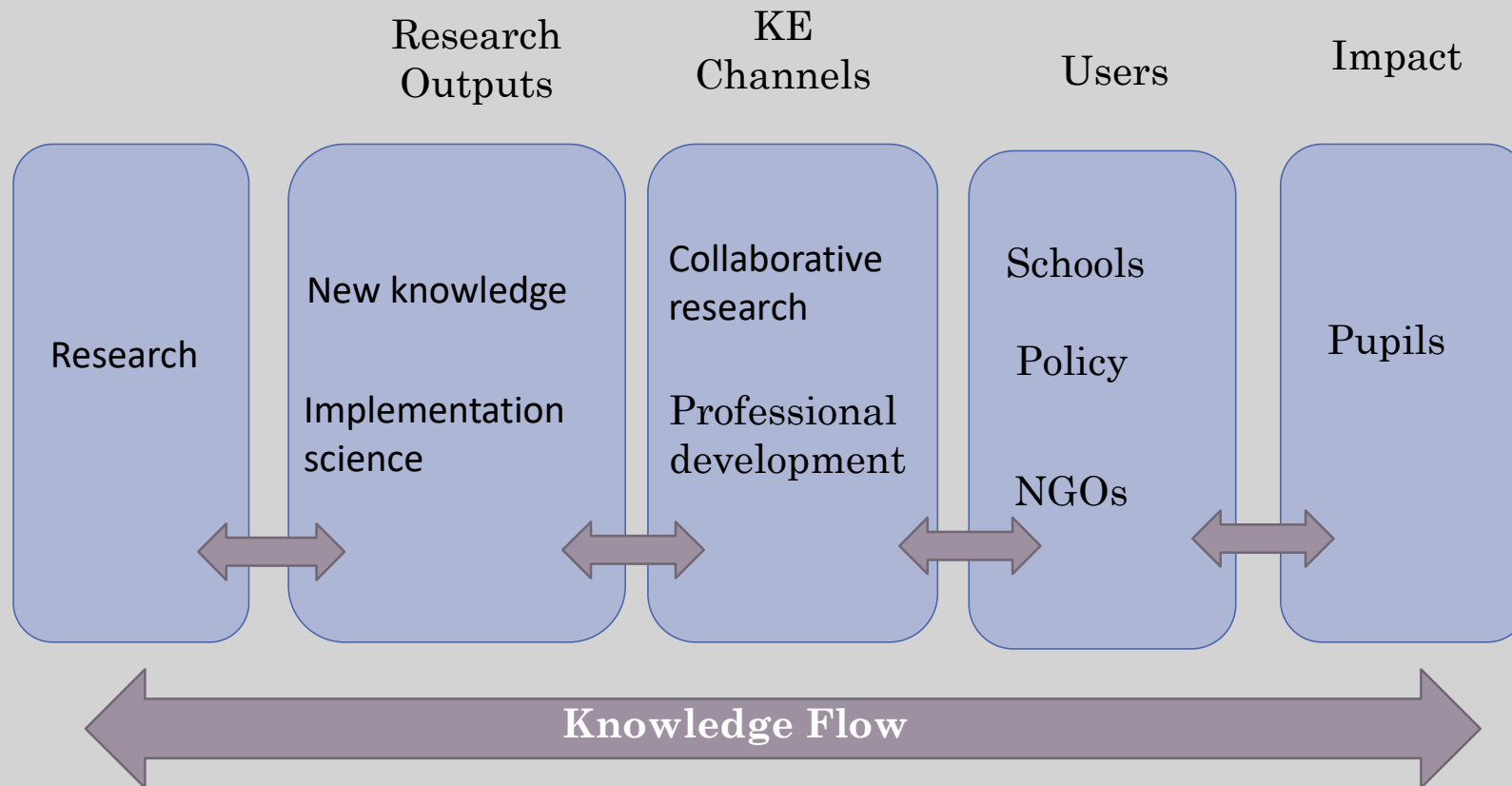
2020-2021

- 3 primary schools continued their work since September 2020.
- Focus of work: adapting practices to post-Covid.

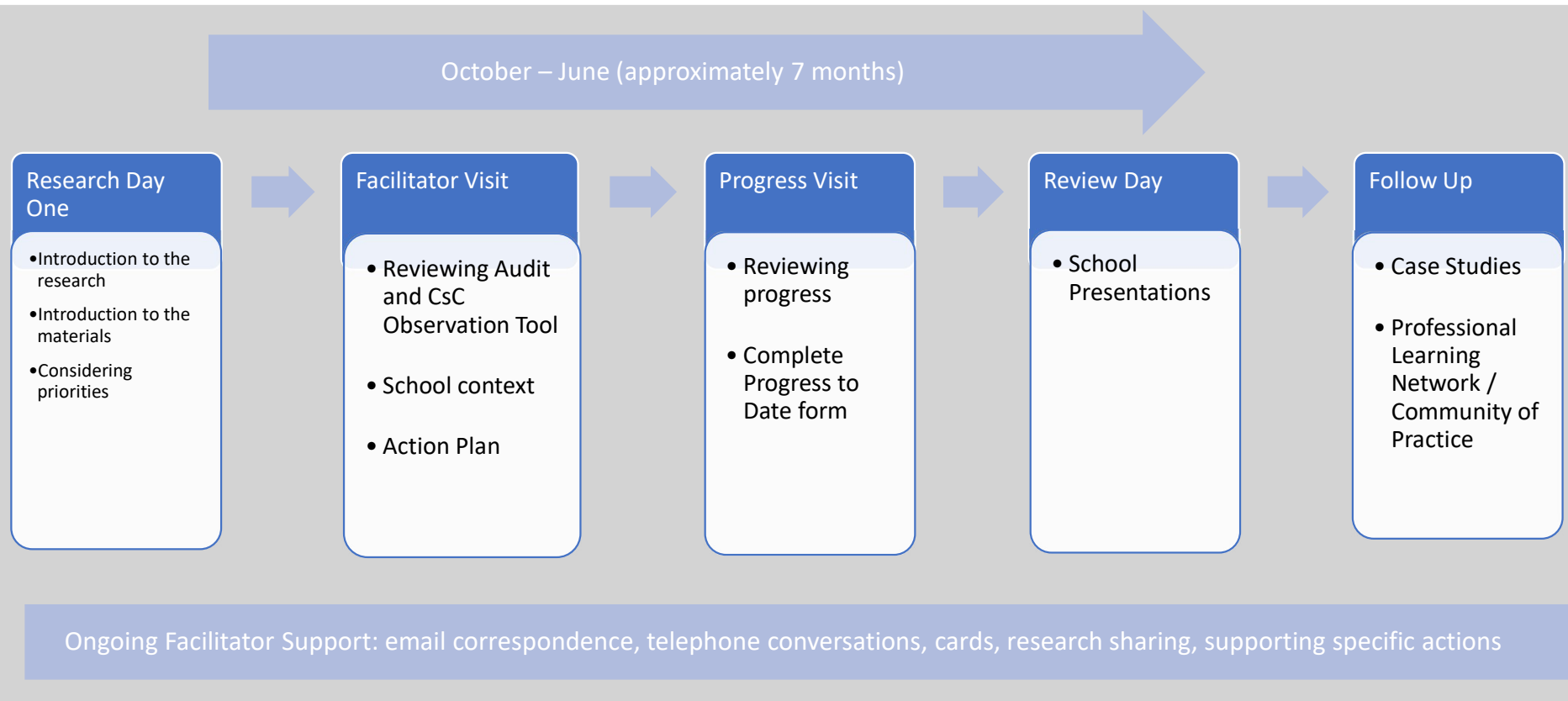


Change Theories and Frameworks: Knowledge Exchange (KE) Model

(Adapted from New South Innovation/ University of South Wales)



Structure of SSLiC



Change Theories and Frameworks: Kotter's 8 Step Model



Materials

- Handbook of Research Evidence
- Self-Assessment School Audit
- Communication Supporting Classroom (CsC) Observation Tool
- Action Plans
- 'Progress to Date' form

2012 BETTER COMMUNICATION RESEARCH PROGRAMME
 Developed by CsC Team:
 Dockrell, J. E., Bakopoulou, I., Law, J., Spencer, S. & Lindsay, G.

Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool

The Communication Trust
 Every child understood

Self-assessment audit of school practices in relation to Supporting Spoken Language in the Classroom (SSLiC)

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SUPPORTING SPOKEN LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

PROGRESS TO DATE FORM

The main purpose of the annual meeting between the school and the Institute is to support with writing a brief evaluation of the SSLiC project to date. We know that at the end of the project colleagues from other schools will be very keen to have advice on what to do in other schools so we are also writing a colleague report as a brief presentation (15 minutes) based on the content of the framework outlined below.

SSLiC aims in our setting (e.g. what changes, SSLiC domains)

Reasons (issues behind the changes we wanted to implement and actions)

When are we on the journey? (thinking, discussion, planning, action to date)

What have been the specific challenges to bringing about changes to date?

What has been the impact to date? (school, staff, pupils)

What are the next steps?

Key learning

Supporting Spoken Language in the Classroom (SSLiC)

Handbook for the SSLiC Programme

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UCL Institute of Education
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Supporting Spoken Language in the Classroom (SSLiC) Audit Overview
 William Patten Primary School

Domain and Indicators	A. Strong and well developed part of our work	B. Developing part of our work	C. Strong and well developed area of our work
Language Leadership			
Communication leader in SLN		X	
Communication leader in SLN		X	
School philosophy of oral language		X	
Staff Development and Training			
Training on oral language / SLN / communication		X	
Professional development activities		X	
Regular monitoring opportunities and peer observations		X	
Communication Supporting Classrooms			
Language Learning Opportunities		X	X
Language Learning Opportunities	X	X	
Identifying and Supporting SLiCN			
Staff are able to recognise and identify signs of SLiCN		X	X
Staff select evidence based / informed interventions		X	X
Staff are aware of how to seek additional support		X	X
Staff make referrals, are in place		X	X
Working with Others			
Information is regularly shared with parents and professionals		X	X
Opportunities to develop language at home		X	X
Opportunities to share children's work		X	X
Schools and organisations work together to promote language		X	X

SSLiC Action Plan and Record Sheet

William Patten Primary School - Bridging the gap between SaLT input and classroom practice

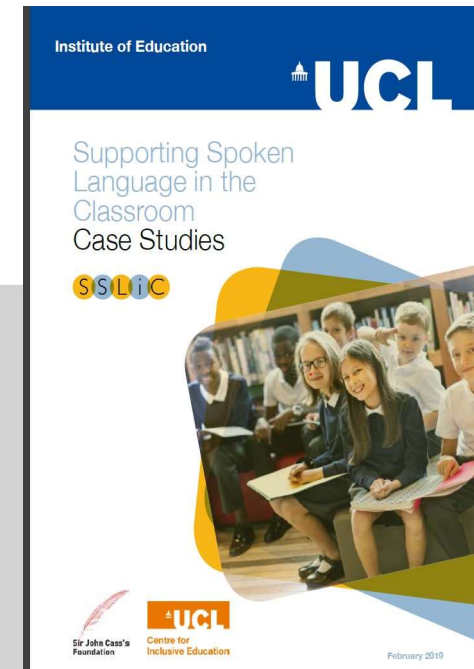
Domain	What is the aim/change we want to see?	SMART Goal	Actions to complete the goal	Timeline	What will be the success criteria? How do we know this has been achieved?	How will this be measured?	Was the goal achieved?	
4. Identifying and Supporting SLiCN	For SaLT input to include identified, needed, or classroom strategy recommendations: (a) in reports (b) in programmes, to be explicitly embedded within identified classroom practices as part of high quality teaching	(a) Teachers identify, needed, or classroom strategy recommendations from SaLT are mapped onto the SaLT reports (b) Teachers have reviewed, reflected upon and evaluated the strategies used making modifications where necessary	• SENCO to complete a mapping exercise whereby recommendations from SaLT are mapped onto the SaLT reports • Identify 10 key strategies and produce a poster to be displayed in classrooms • Offer modelling from reports	• Jan 2018 • Jan 2018	(a) The 10 key strategies will be observed in lesson observations (b) Teachers using the strategies will have reviewed, reflected upon and evaluated the strategies used making modifications where necessary	The SaLT will be used to identify use of strategies	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Much better A little better As expected Partially achieved Same as baseline Worse Same as baseline Worse
5. Working with others		(c) Teachers are familiar with the content of SaLT programmes and interventions at a staff meeting	• Staff are introduced to the different SaLT programmes and interventions at a staff meeting	• Dec 2017	At the Spring term parents evening, teachers complete a questionnaire following	Parents will be asked to complete a questionnaire following	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Much better A little better As expected Partially achieved



4. SSLiC in Practice

SSLiC in Practice: Case Studies

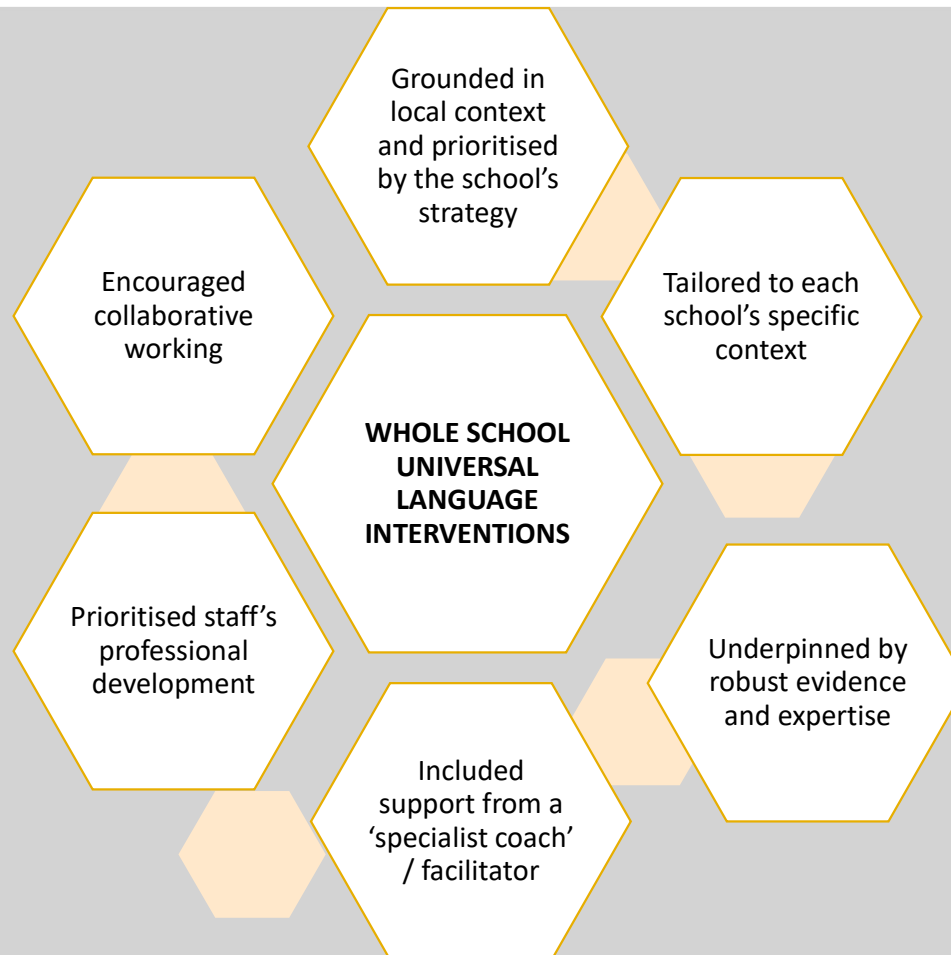
- Case Study 1
 - Bridging the Gap Between Speech and Language Therapy and Classroom Practice
- Case Study 2
 - Working collaboratively with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of language
- Case Study 3
 - Supporting professional development through the use of communication buddies
- Case Study 4
 - Increasing school staff's knowledge in identifying communication needs and recognising the natural progression of EAL acquisition
- Case Study 5
 - Increasing Opportunities for Quality Spoken Interactions Across the School



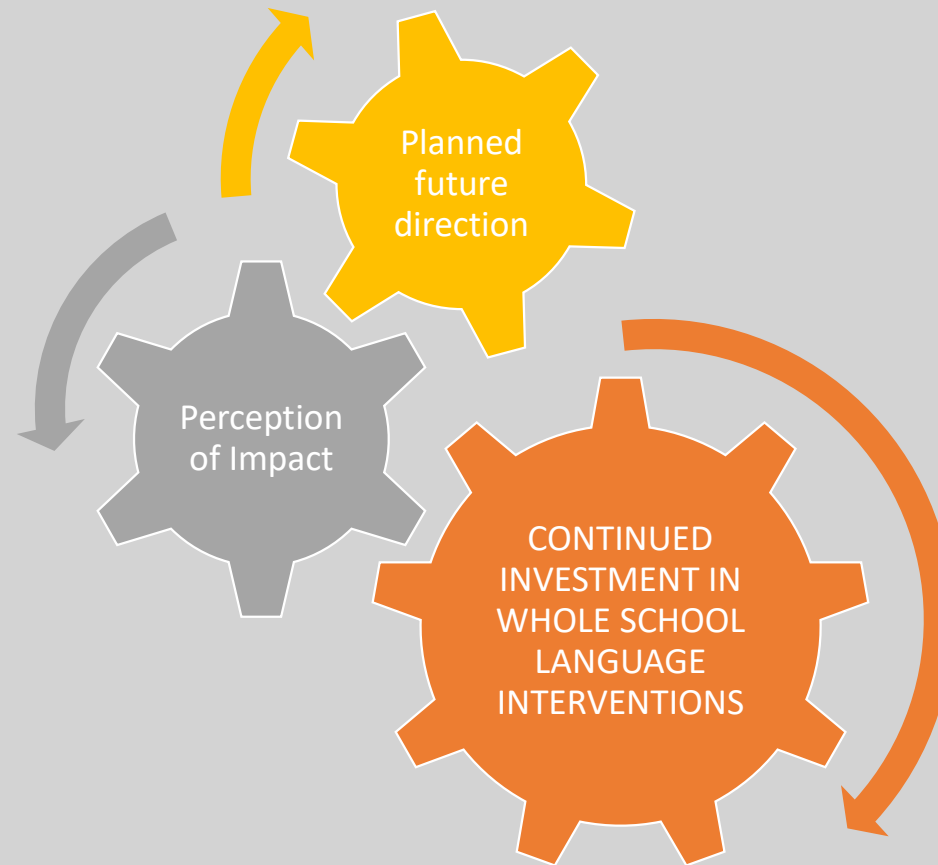


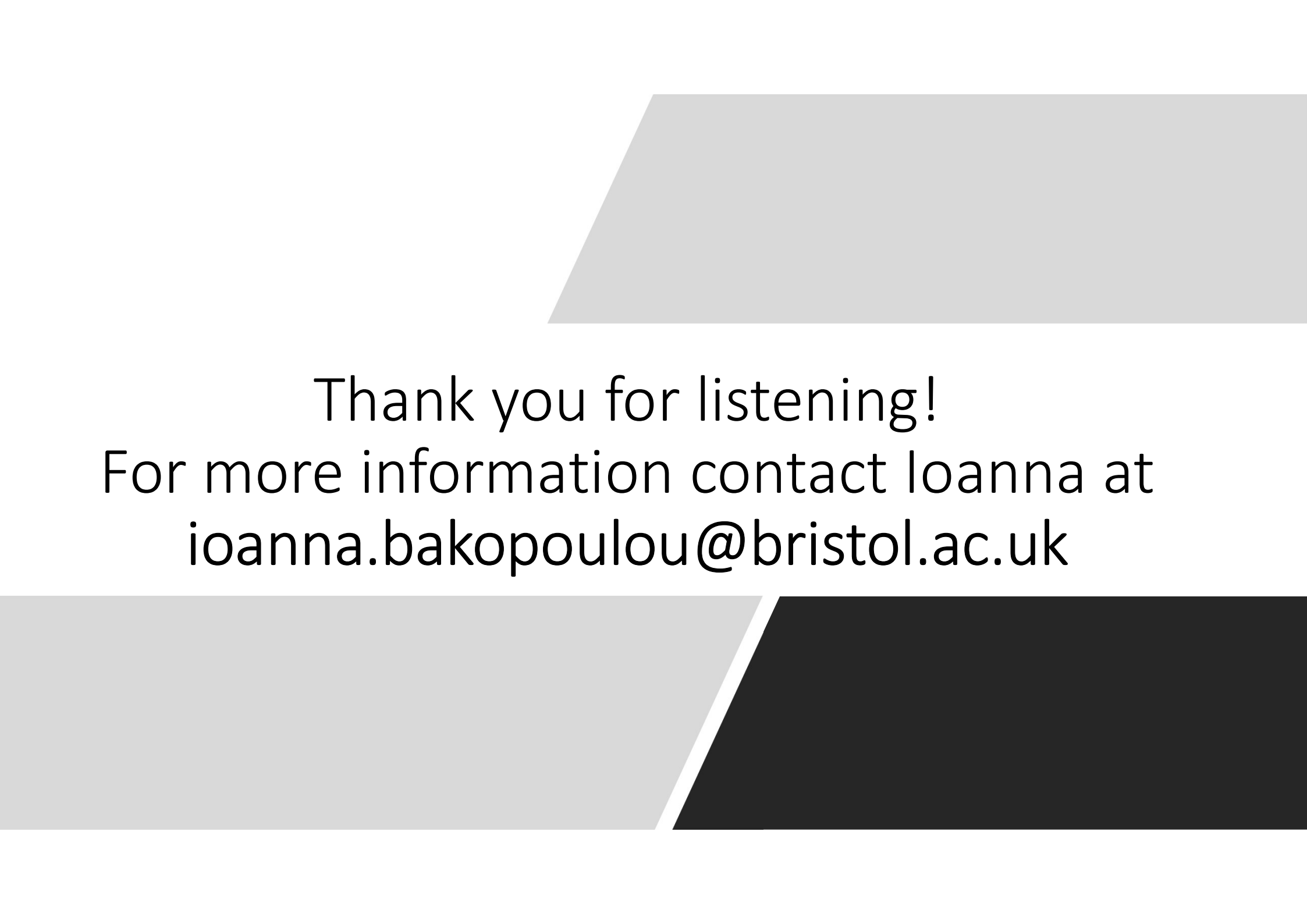
5. Facilitating Change

Factors affecting implementation of universal language interventions



Factors affecting continued investment in the implementation of universal language interventions in schools





Thank you for listening!
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