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| **Transcript** |
| Gidday. I’m here to talk to you about an important issue that affects many of our Indigenous students. I’m sure you know that EAL/D refers to learners who have Standard Australian English as an additional language or dialect. |
| These learners need extra support because learning another language can be tricky, and learning the curriculum in another language can be **really** tricky. |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are EAL/D learners may speak a variety of languages other than Standard Australian English. It may be a traditional language, a Creole, or one of many, many Aboriginal English dialects. |
| These students and their families might not even consider themselves EAL/D learners, so it is not surprising then, that many are ‘invisible’ language learners in our classrooms. |
| Before colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland alone, spoke more than 100 different languages. |
| After colonisation, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were forcibly relocated to reserves. Speaking in their traditional languages was often banned, so people developed varieties of pidgin English – mixtures of traditional language and English - to communicate. Over time, these became the rich languages of the communities, which - although sometimes contain many English words - are in fact quite different to Standard Australian English. |
| Because of this history, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people don’t speak Standard Australian English as their first language – or 2nd or even 3rd - and, for some kids, school might be their first exposure to it. |
| So, across the state, our students come to school, with many different languages. In the past, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were made to feel ashamed of their language. Aboriginal English and Creoles were sometimes described as ‘bad English’ and widely disrespected. Today, we understand the value of these languages. |
| To best support Indigenous EAL/D students we need to work together to ensure they aren’t invisible and are proud of their languages and confident classroom learners. |
| To do this, we need to recognize and value their languages. Next, we engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners by explicitly teaching Standard Australian English and, finally, we support students’ connection to their heritage by learning about their culture and language. We call this 3 way strong. |
| To enact this approach we must identify our Indigenous EAL/D learners, either during enrolment or in the classroom, when we notice differences in the way the student is speaking, reading or writing. |
| Identifying Indigenous EAL/D students is not always easy because kids are great at code switching or changing their speech to suit their audience. Building strong classroom rapport can help teachers tune in to the different language backgrounds of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |
| Bandscales help us understand our students’ language strengths and what they need to learn next. Bandscales also allow us to monitor students’ language development over time so that we can provide targeted language instruction and celebrate their success. |
| Remember, learning a language is not easy and our students are being required to learn Standard Australian English at the same time they are learning the curriculum. |
| It takes time. It takes skillful teaching and, for young students, it involves more than just traditional methods of good ‘first teaching’. |
| So, the 3 key messages for schools are:  (1) acknowledge the fact that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students throughout Queensland do not speak Standard Australian English at home or in their community  (2) use Bandscale to help identify EAL/D students and to monitor their progress in learning English and  (3) successfully engage students by explicitly teaching Standard Australian English. |
| If you do, you’ll create confident code switchers who rapidly develop the language they need to succeed at school while remaining proud users of their home language. |
| END FRAME |