
EAL and Achievement: What does the research tell us?

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EAL: Making use of data and good practice to raise achievement
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Quotation

- OFSTED conclude that successful outcomes with EAL learners are seen where there is *“good use of attainment data and other assessment information for diagnosis of need, targeting support and monitoring the progress of individuals and groups”* (OFSTED, 2003, p31).
- These outcomes will be supported by having good data on the stage of fluency in English. *“It takes on average five to seven years to become fully competent in a second language, although individuals will vary in the speed with which they acquire this competence. Fluency in spoken English is usually achieved within two years, but the ability to read and understand more complex texts containing unfamiliar cultural references and to write the academic English needed for success in examinations takes much longer.”*
(OFSTED, *Inspecting English as an additional language*, 2001a, p.5.)

Outline

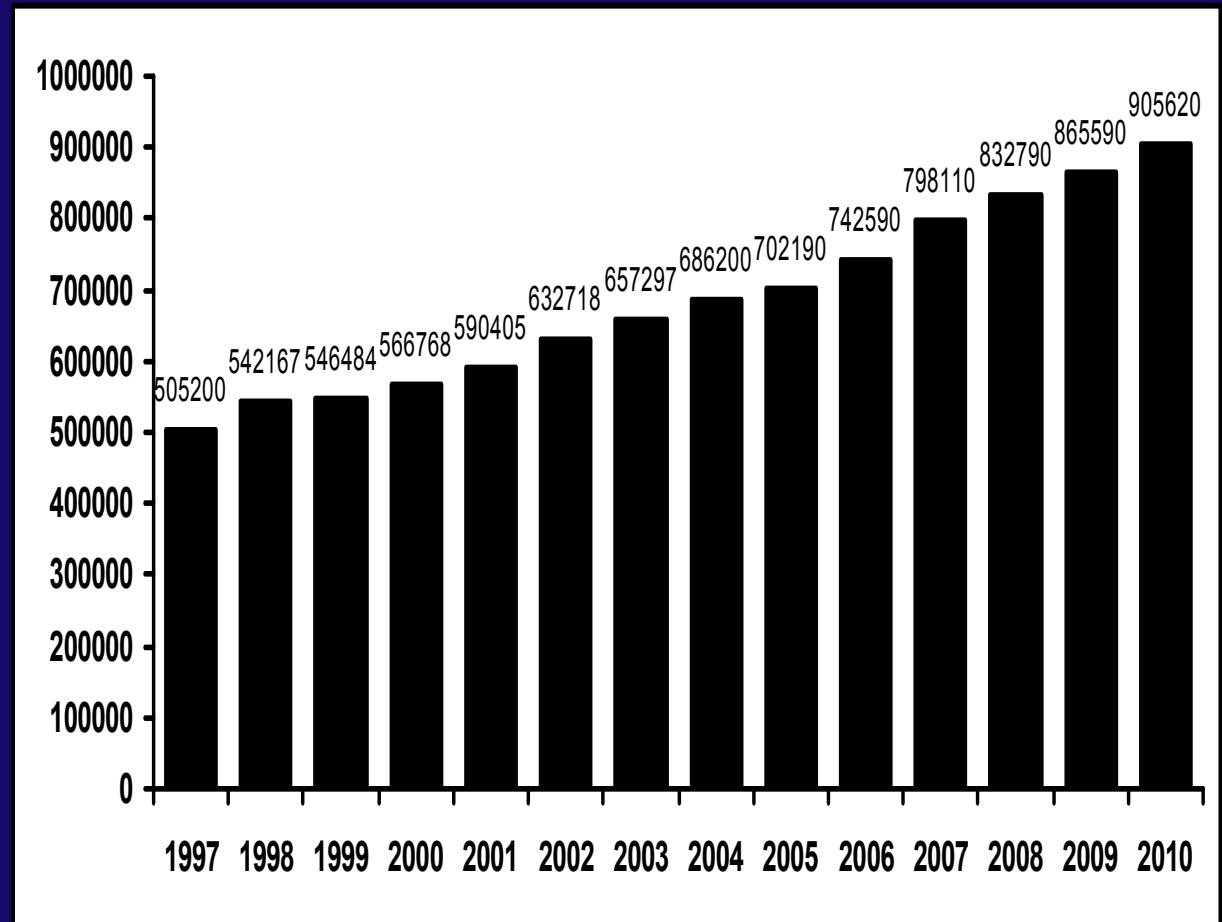
1. **Why English as an Additional Language (EAL) Matters?**
2. **EAL and Achievement: What does the research tell us?**
 - **Length of time needed for EAL pupils to acquire English fluency and its implications for resourcing**
 - **Stage of fluency in English and attainment**
3. **Conclusions**
 - **Policy implications**

What is EAL?

- **English as an Additional Language (EAL) is the expression used in the UK to refer to the teaching of English to speakers of other languages.**
- **The term indicates that pupils may use two or more languages other than English in their every day lives; it also suggests that learning English should be viewed as adding to a pupil's language repertoire, rather than displacing languages acquired earlier.**

Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? Growing population

- There is a growing bilingual population in England
- The 2009 census indicated that over 905620 EAL pupils in England have a mother tongue other than English. This is about 16% of all primary pupils and 12% of secondary pupils (DfE, 2009)
- The proportion of EAL pupils in England has increased by 14% since 1997.
- Over 200 languages are spoken in England's schools



Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? Growing population

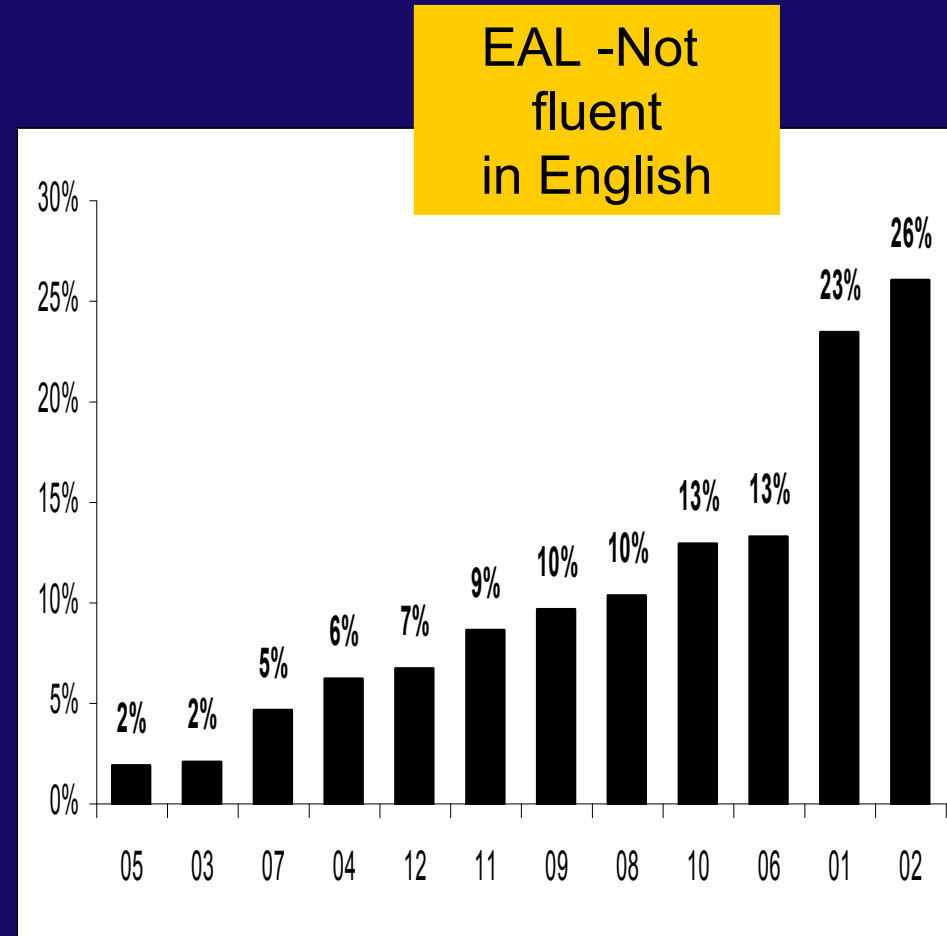
- 1. But EAL is very unevenly distributed In England:**
 - across the country the range is from 2% in the South West to 50% in Inner London;
 - over half of all EAL pupils are located in only 20 of the 150 England LEAs; and
 - while nearly three-quarters of schools have <5% EAL, a small number of schools (7%) have >40%.
- 2. Most of these children belong to well-established ethnic minority communities, and have been born and educated in the UK. Others are new immigrants and refugees**

Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? Language barrier

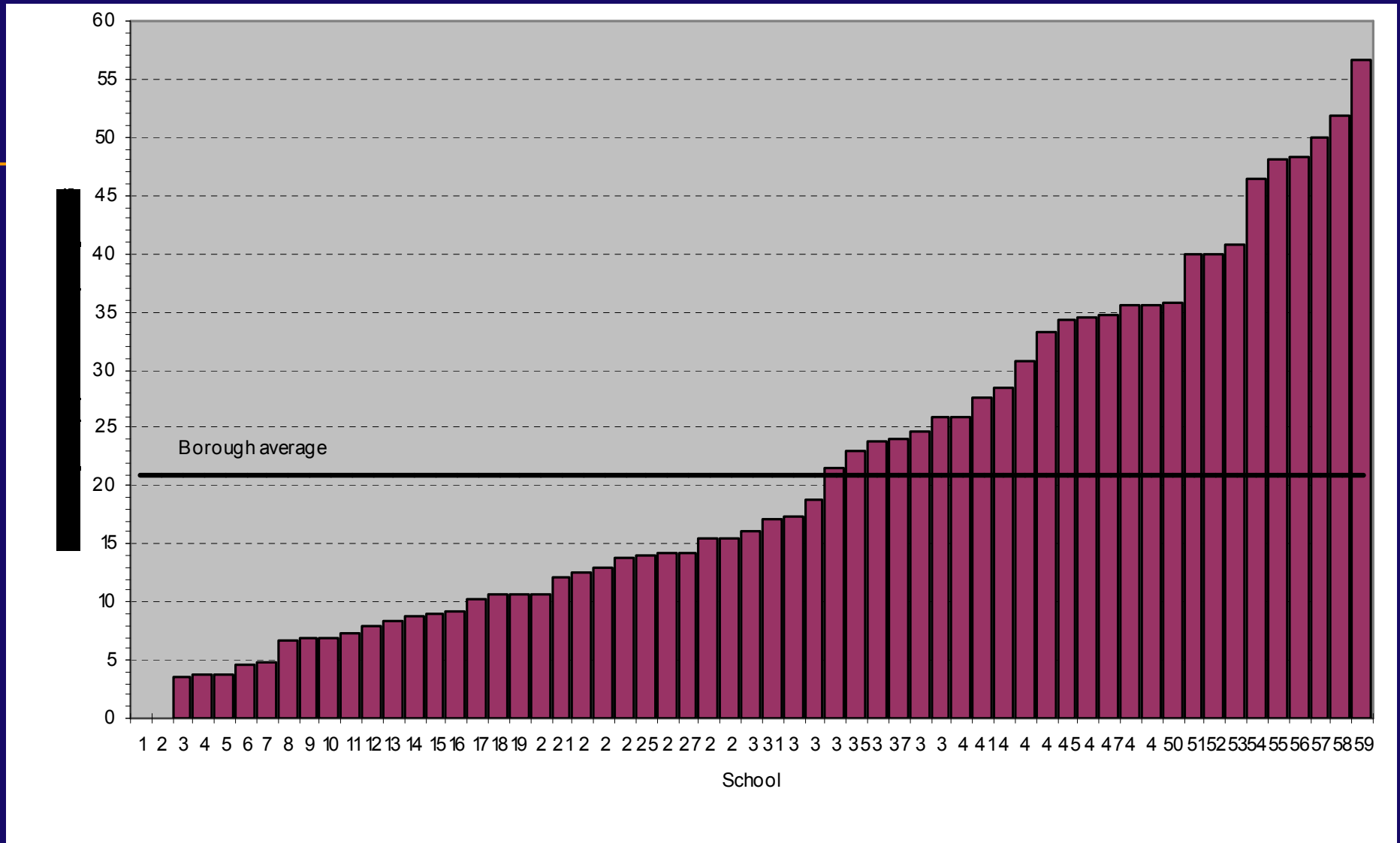
- There are 14475 EAL pupils in the LA or 47% of the school population. 51% of pupils in primary and 43% in Secondary are EAL pupils
- EAL pupils can vary from those who are complete beginners in learning English, to those who are fully fluent both in English and in their home language
- In the LA, about 6.2% are at stage 1 of English acquisition followed by 11% at stage 2, 13% at stage 3 and 17% at stage 4; 53% are English speakers
- 30% of EAL pupils in the LA are not fluent in English and needs additional targeted support
- Lambeth is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse LEA in England . 84% ethnic minorities- of these 24% are African, 18% Black Caribbean, 15% White British, 6% Portuguese, 6% White other, 5% mixed race and 5% Black others etc.
- 135 languages spoken at home. Of these 49 languages have more than 20 speakers.

Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? Language barrier-Secondary

- EAL pupils can vary from those who are complete beginners in learning English, to those who are fully fluent both in English and in their home language
- Approximately 43% in secondary are EAL pupils and 10% not fluent in English.
- Approximately 51% in Primary are EAL pupils and 38% not fluent in English.
- There is huge variation between schools on level of fluency in English. Secondary school recorded between 2% and 26% (see graph right)
- Primary- between 4% and 57%.



Why EAL Matters? Language Barrier- Primary % pupils at fluency stages 1-3 by school



Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? Stages of English Fluency issues

1. There is no nationally agreed competency scale for EAL assessment. Many local variations with '*most LAs using a four stage system or the NASSEA system*' (South, 2003:34) or *QCA assessment for monolingual English speakers which confine EAL issues to English*' (QCA 2000).
2. The four stages used in Lambeth range from beginner to fluent:-
 - **Stage 1:** *New to English.* Beginner, needs support to operate in English.
 - **Stage 2 :** *Becoming familiar with English.* Bilingual English learners who can engage in all learning activities but whose spoken and/or written English clearly shows that English is not their first language. Considerable support is needed to access the curriculum.
 - **Stage 3 :** *Becoming confident as user of English.* Bilingual pupils whose oral and written English is progressing well. Only some support is needed.
 - **Stage 4:** *Fully fluent in English.*

Why English as Additional Language (EAL) Matters? No national EAL assessment systems

- There is no national data on stages of English acquisition. The DfE collects data on first language being other than English but this is not useful for performance analysis of EAL pupils.
- QCA 'A Language in Common' (2000) promoting QCA steps as an alternative (see box right).
- QCA steps provide two additional subdivisions at each of W & level 1 for speaking, listening, reading and writing, should support improved assessment, but limited (see next slide)

NC levels	QCA steps
Working towards level 1	Step 1 Step 2
1	Threshold Secure
2	2
3 etc..	3

EAL Research in Lambeth: Research Questions

Two overarching research questions for the Lambeth study include:

- **How long does it take to acquire English fluency for bilingual EAL pupils?**
- **What is the relationship between stage of English language acquisition and attainment?**

Methods: Data collection and Analysis

1. **Wide range of pupil background data collected: Stage of fluency in English; Sex, FSM entitlement, Ethnic group, SEN stage, Prior attainment at KS1**
2. **The study uses a four point levels of fluency in English assessment scale to indicate proficiency in English, ranging from beginner to fully fluent in English. The analysis proceeds in three steps, each associated with a particular research question.**
 1. **First, the EAL pupil level assessment data was used to analyse various forms of English proficiency as a function of length of exposure to English and attainment. Using longitudinal matched data of all year 10 EAL pupils in the LA who were fully fluent in English, we tracked backward, year by year, to establish how long each pupil was at a particular stage of English fluency and how long it took overall to become fully fluent from the time they were first assessed when they started school in the LA.**
 2. **Second, KS2 and GCSE statistical patterns of performance of EAL pupils were analysed by levels of fluency in English to illustrate differences in attainment.**
 3. **Third, detailed statistical analysis of students who completed KS2 and GCSE were carried out to analyse the association between stage of fluency in English and attainment using multiple regression methods.**

How long does it take to acquire English proficiency?

- One of the most commonly asked questions about the education of EAL Students not fluent in English are how long they need special language services, such as English as An Additional Language
- For pupils to have full access to curriculum, they need to be fluent in English. Local Authorities and schools have an obligation to provide appropriate services to EAL students to learn English.
- The Lambeth data shows that it takes on average 6 to 8 years to become fully competent in English.
- The UK findings is similar to that of North America and which shows it takes from 5-7 years to go from not knowing any English at all to being able to accomplish most academic tasks (Collier 1989; Cummins 1987, 1991, 1992).
- It makes more sense to set aside the eight years of primary and secondary schooling as a reasonable time frame for students to gain English proficiency.

How long does it take to acquire English proficiency?

Year 10 EAL Languages	Number of Years by Levels of Fluency in English			Stage 1 - 3	Number
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3		
Akan Twi- Fante	1.2	2.8	3.4	7.4	9
Albanian	1.7	2.7	3.3	7.7	3
Arabic	1.5	2.3	3.5	7.3	4
Bengali	1.8	3.5	2.6	7.9	10
Chinese	1	3.2	3.4	7.6	11
French	1	1.7	5.3	8	3
Lingala	1.3	2.8	4.5	8.6	4
Portuguese	1.6	2.8	3.2	7.6	30
Somali	2.2	3.3	2.3	7.8	6
Spanish	1.8	3.7	2.2	7.7	13
Turkish	1.5	1.8	4.5	7.8	4
Vietnamese	2	3.5	2.5	8	2
Yoruba	1.3	3	2.6	6.9	7
ALL	1.5 years	2.9 years	3.1 Years	7.5	124

The EAL factor and Educational Achievement: Research evidence

1. An important factor in pupil achievement is English fluency. For EAL pupils to have full access to curriculum, they need to be fluent in English.
2. Previous studies has shown that:
 - EAL pupils are underachieving
 - Somali, Bangladeshi and Portuguese pupils who achieved poor results were more likely to be relatively new to English (Demie 2001).

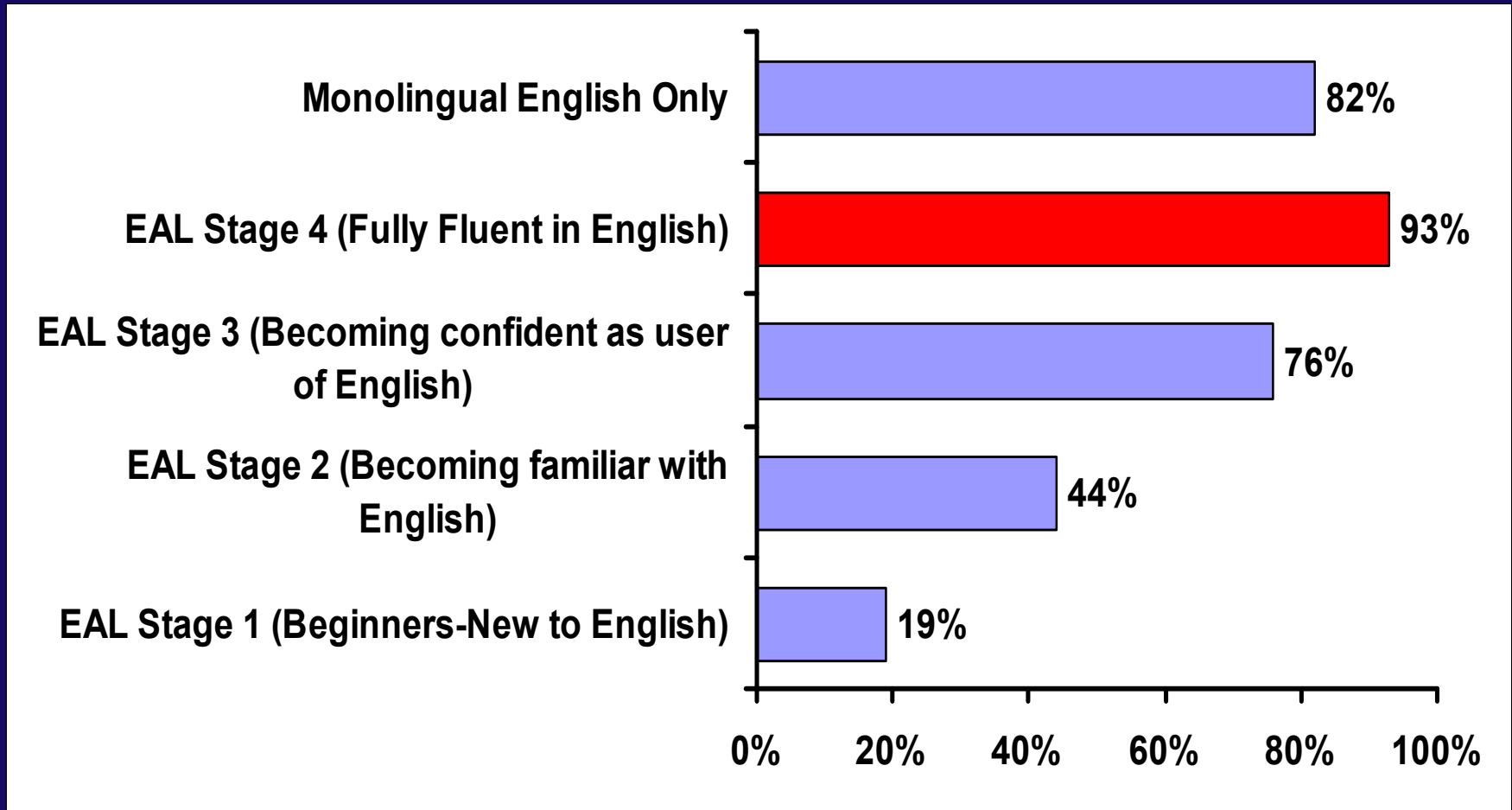
Distribution of pupils by stage of fluency in Lambeth

Stage of Fluency	Key Stage 2			GCSE		
	No. of pupils	% of all pupils	% of EAL pupils	No. of pupils	% of all pupils	% of EAL pupils
English Only	1232	50.4	-	914	56.5	-
1 Beginner	17	0.7	1.4	6	0.4	0.9
2 becoming familiar	135	5.5	11.1	25	1.5	3.6
3 becoming confident	478	19.6	39.4	140	8.7	19.9
4 fully fluent	582	23.8	48.0	533	32.9	75.7
Total	2444	100.0	100.0	1618	100.0	100.0

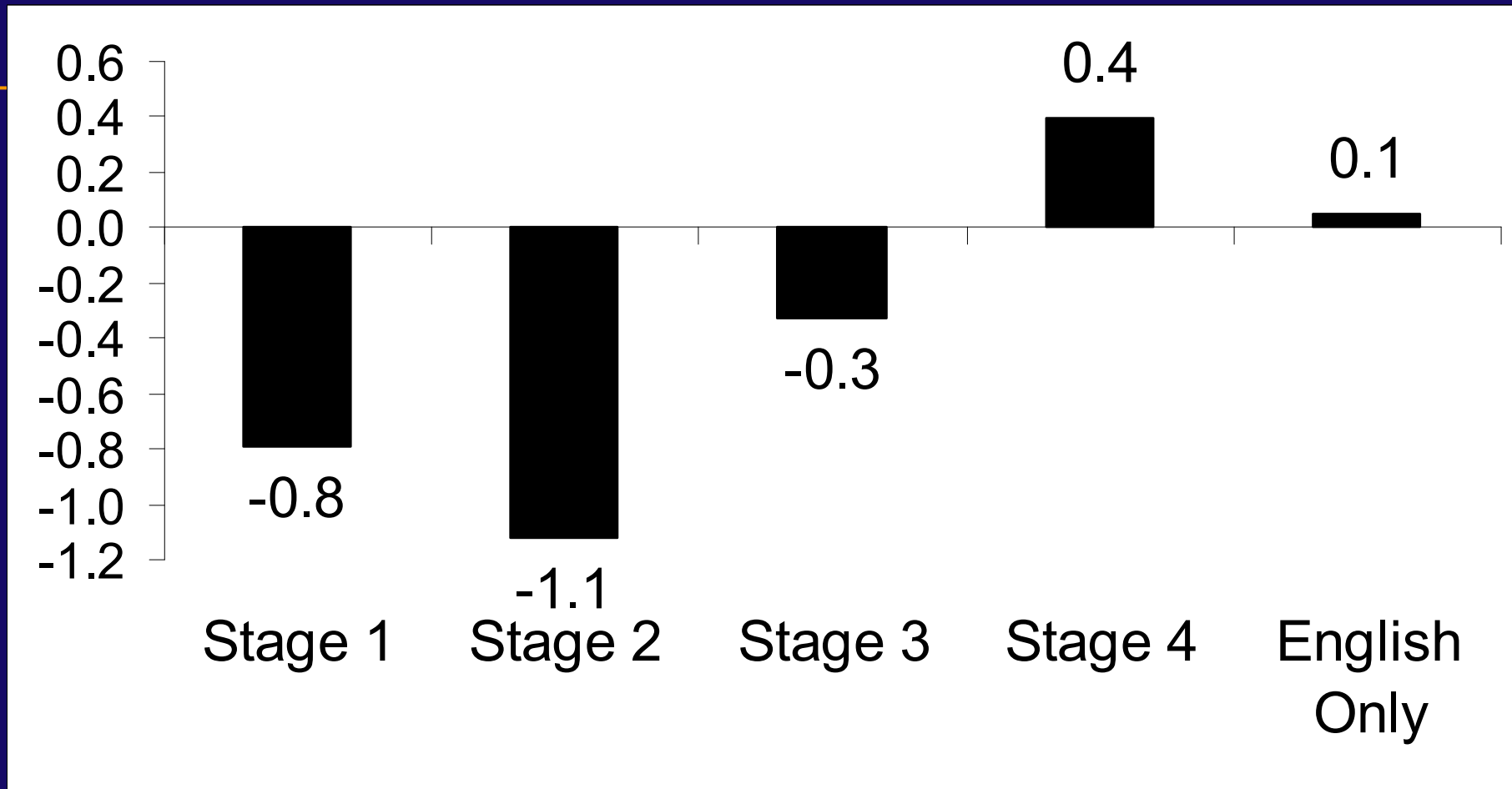
KS2 and GCSE Attainment by Stages of English acquisition

Stages of English acquisition	KS2 Level 4+ 2009	GCSE (5+A*- C) 2009
EAL Stage 1 - <i>Beginners-New to English</i>	19%	0%
EAL Stage 2 - <i>Becoming familiar with English</i>	44%	50%
EAL Stage 3 - <i>Becoming confident as user of English</i>	76%	62%
EAL Stage 4 - <i>Fully Fluent in English</i>	93%	86%
Monolingual English Only	82%	70%
EAL Stage 1-3 (Non Fluent)	67%	59%
All Pupils	81%	73%

EAL KS2 Performance by Levels of Fluency in English (Level 4+)

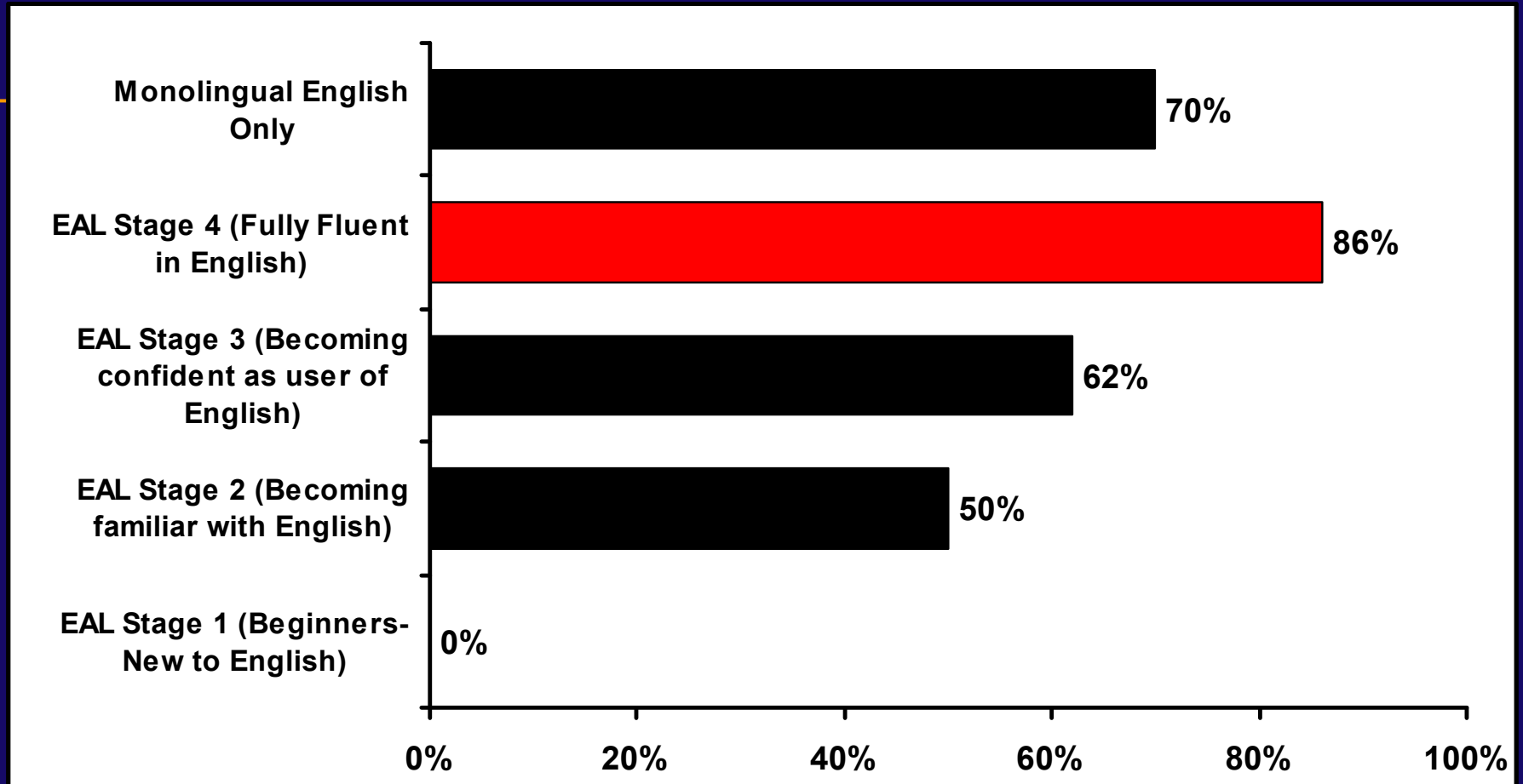


Standardised KS2 total point score for KS2 by stage of English fluency

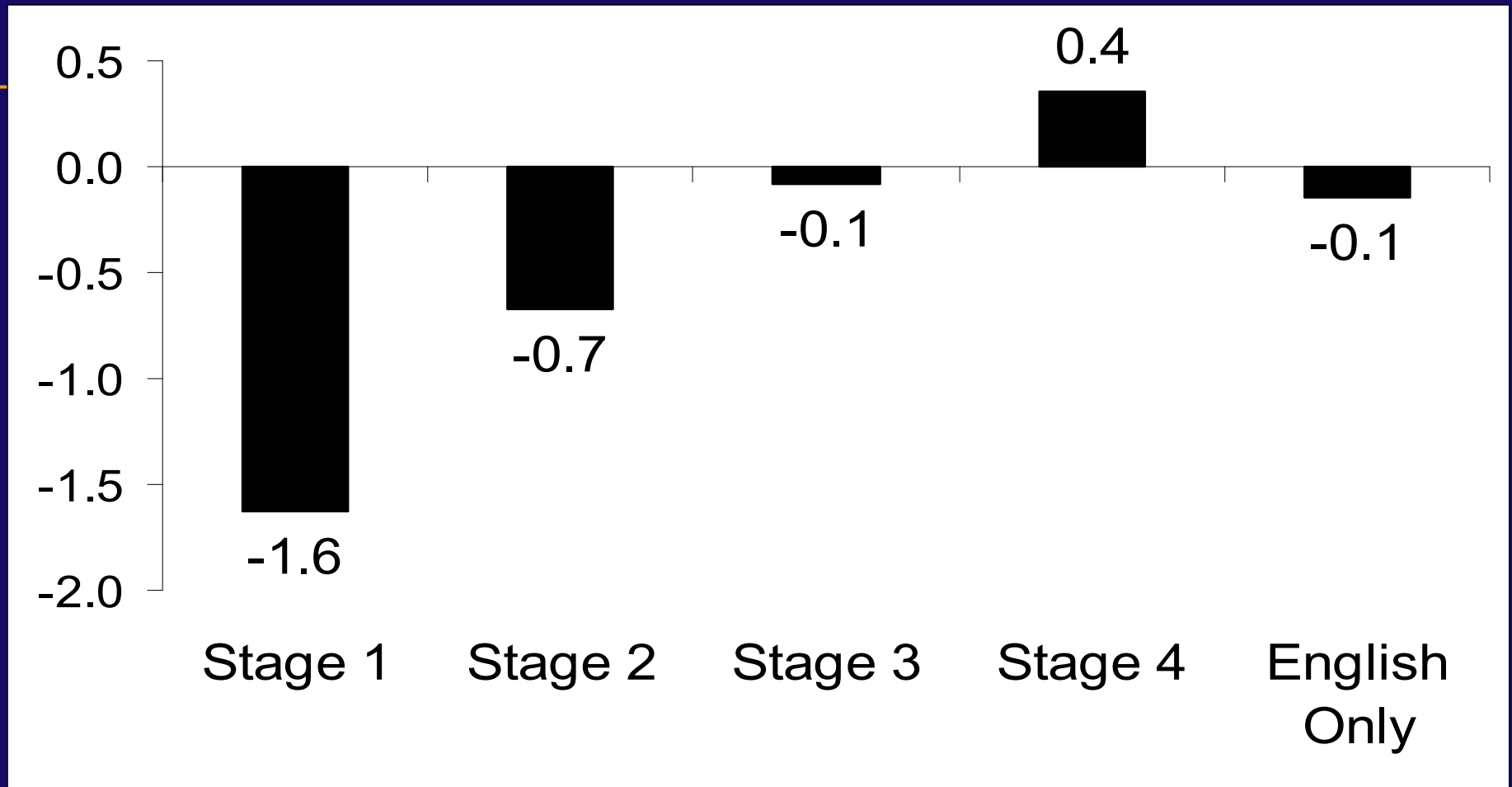


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EAL GCSE Performance by Levels of Fluency in English (5+A*-C)



Standardised GCSE total point score for GCSE by stage of English fluency



Conclusion 1

The study revealed that:

- 48% EAL pupils. Of these 51% of pupils in primary schools and 43% in secondary schools were classed as EAL pupils.
- 30% of Lambeth pupils are classified as not fully fluent in English
- It takes about 6 to 8 years on average for EAL pupils to acquire academic English proficiency.
- However, the speed of English language acquisition varies between stages of levels of English. On average pupils are classified at stage 1 (beginner) about a year and a half, before moving to becoming familiar with English (stage 2) where they typically remain for about three years. It takes about another three years at stage 3 (becoming confident in English) before they can then be classified as fully fluent.

Conclusions 2

- The Lambeth study confirms that there is a strong relationship between stages of fluency in English and attainment. The percentage of pupils attaining 5+A*-C increased as stage of proficiency in English increased.
- The association between early stages of fluency and GCSE score remains significant after adjustment for factors such as age, sex, mobility, FSM eligibility and stage of SEN.
- Pupils in the early stages of English acquisition perform at very low levels. EAL pupils at stage 2 (Not fluent) achieved 17% 5+A*-C compared with 44% of English only speakers.
- Bilingual pupils who are fully fluent in English perform better than English only speakers. There is an 18% achievement gap.

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Policy Implications

- We would argue that language barriers remain the key factor affecting the performance of EAL pupils in English schools.
- However, the findings that EAL pupils who are fully fluent in English perform better than English only speakers offer much encouragement for policy-makers. They demonstrate that once the disadvantage of language is overcome, it is possible to attain high levels of achievement for all key stages.
- This underlines the importance of additional targeted support for EAL pupils to improve their levels of fluency in English. More needs to be done to help English learners to achieve education equality with monolingual English speakers in the classroom.
- This requires additional funding and qualified EAL teachers to enable pupils to achieve a level of fluency in English necessary to access the national curriculum.

End of Presentation - Thank You

QUESTIONS?

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