

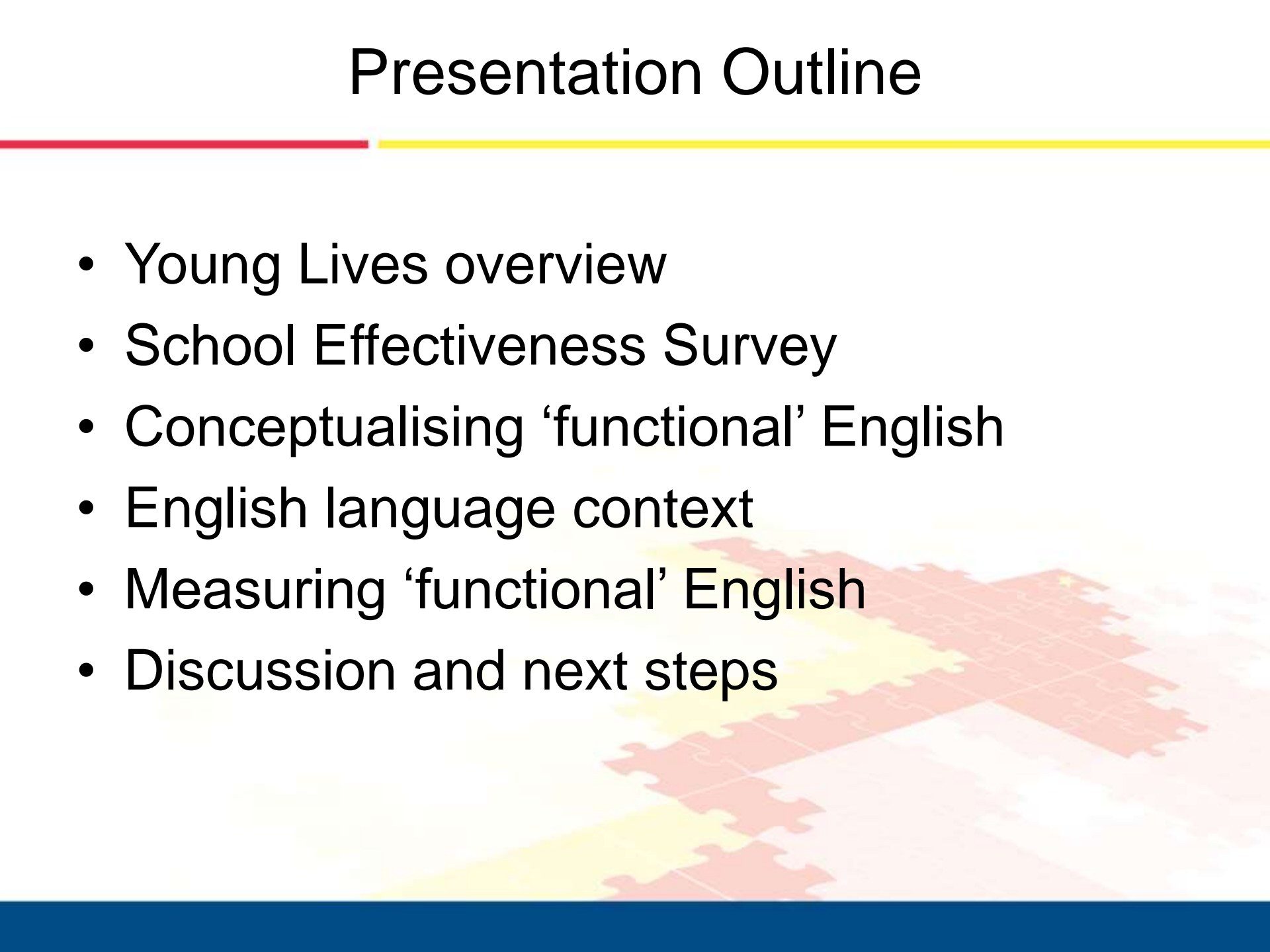
Assessing ‘functional English’ in Vietnam, India and Ethiopia

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Presentation Outline

- Young Lives overview
 - School Effectiveness Survey
 - Conceptualising 'functional' English
 - English language context
 - Measuring 'functional' English
 - Discussion and next steps
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Overview: Young Lives

4 country, dual-cohort study

12,000 children in 4 countries over 15 years

Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh & Telangana),
Peru, Vietnam

Two age cohorts in each country:

- 2,000 children born in 2001-02
- 1,000 children born in 1994-95

From infancy to parenthood

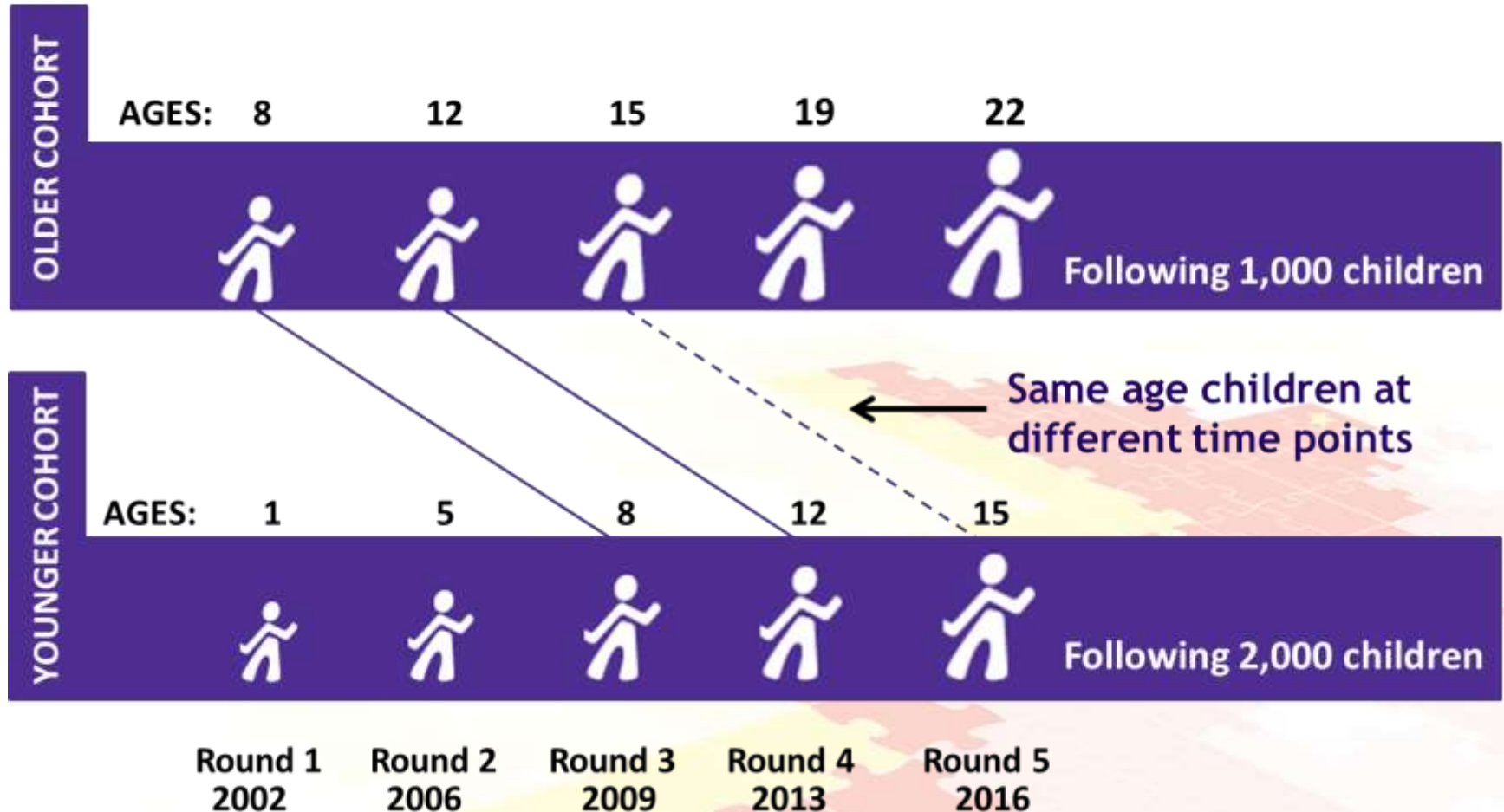
Pro-poor sample: 20 sites in each country -

- selected to reflect country diversity, rural-urban, livelihoods, ethnicity; roughly equal numbers of boys and girls



Visualising the Household data

Qualitative nested sample and surveys of children in their schools



School Effectiveness Surveys

Primary school effectiveness surveys:
implemented in Ethiopia and Vietnam

School effectiveness:

- 'Value-added' of one year of school
- Cognitive tests at beginning and end of school year, with link items
- Background instruments and psychosocial measures to contextualise learning progress

Secondary school surveys: currently taking
place in Ethiopia, India and Vietnam



Conceptualising ‘functional’ English

First time Young Lives has looked at English in multiple countries:

- Policy demand
- Global relevance
- Transferable skill

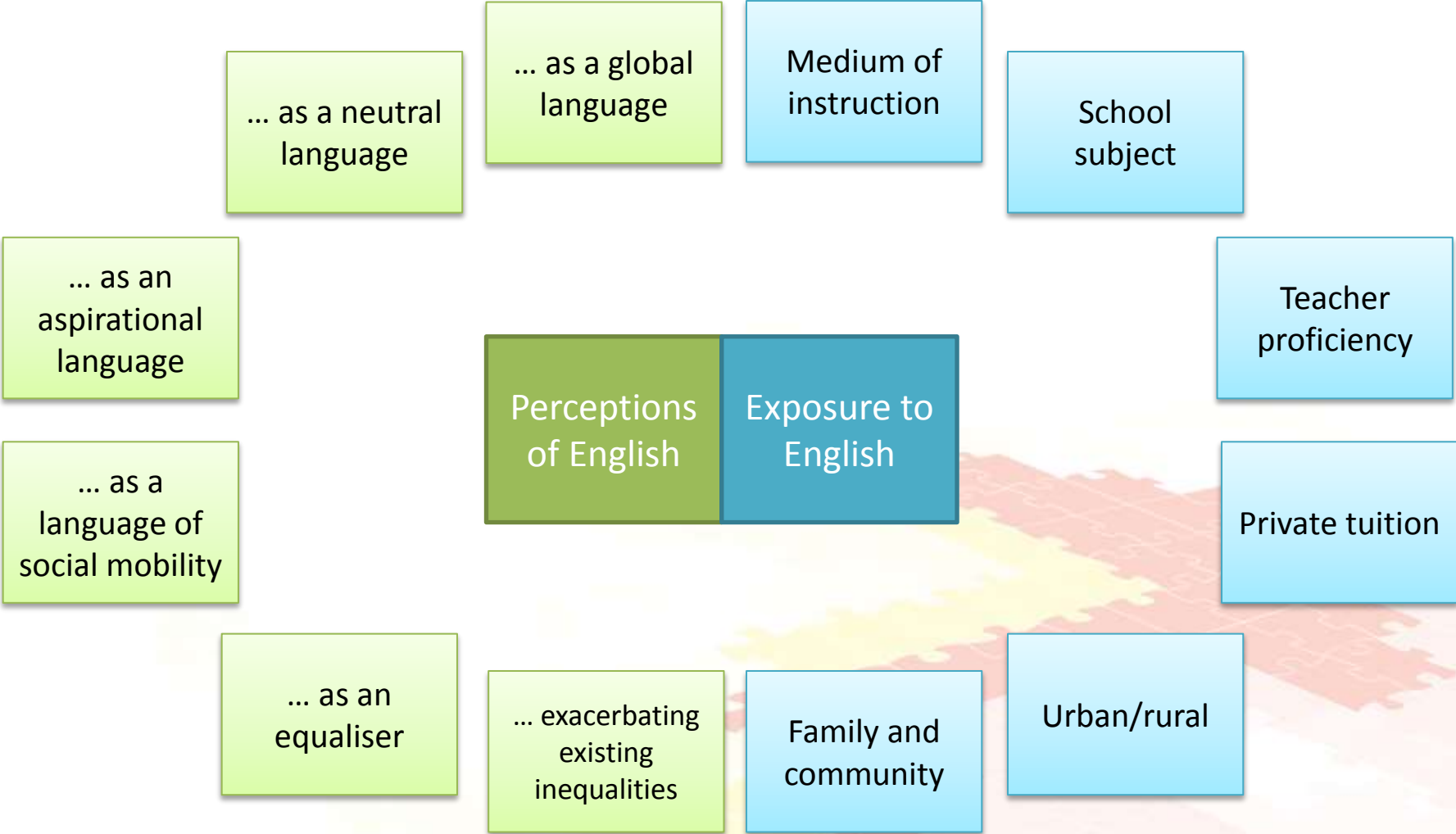
Conceptualising our area of interest as **functional English**:

“application of [...] skills in purposeful contexts and scenarios that reflect real-life situations” (OFQUAL 2011: 10)

Different purposes for learning English - what does success look like?

Multiple choice test, items graded against CEFR common reference levels

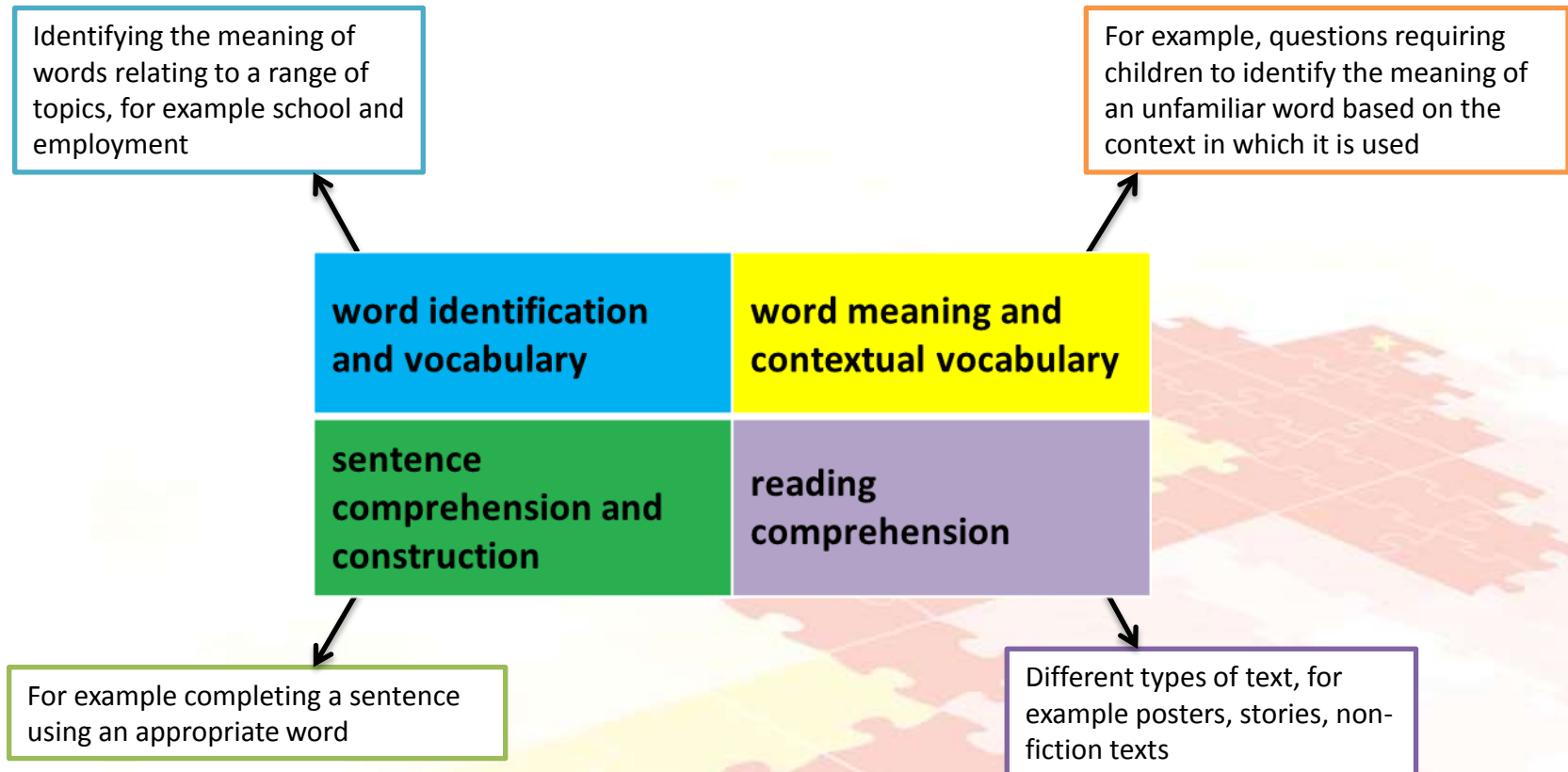
English language context in study countries



Measuring functional English

Context specific application of English skills:

- What do 15 year old in these three countries need to use English for now and in the future



Functional English cognitive test

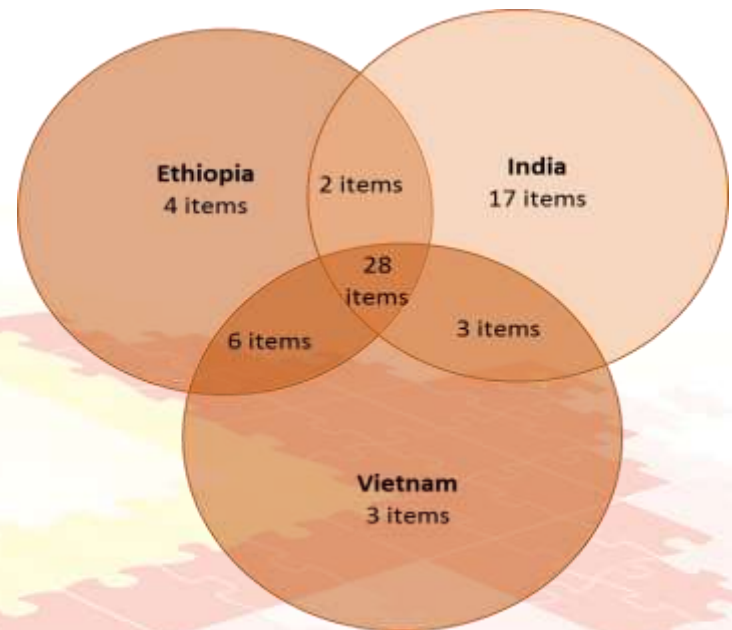
Priorities for English assessment:

- Finely graded test scores in each country
 - Balance of domains different to suit each country
- Ability to compare learning across countries
 - Common items on a common scale

Item selection:

- Qualitative pre-pilots
- Large-scale pilots to identify ‘floor’ and ‘ceiling’ effects
- Classical Test Theory and 2-PL Item Response Theory (IRT): difficulty, ‘fit’, distractors

English assessment common items, Wave 1



Identification of common items

Choose the word to complete the sentence correctly for the picture.



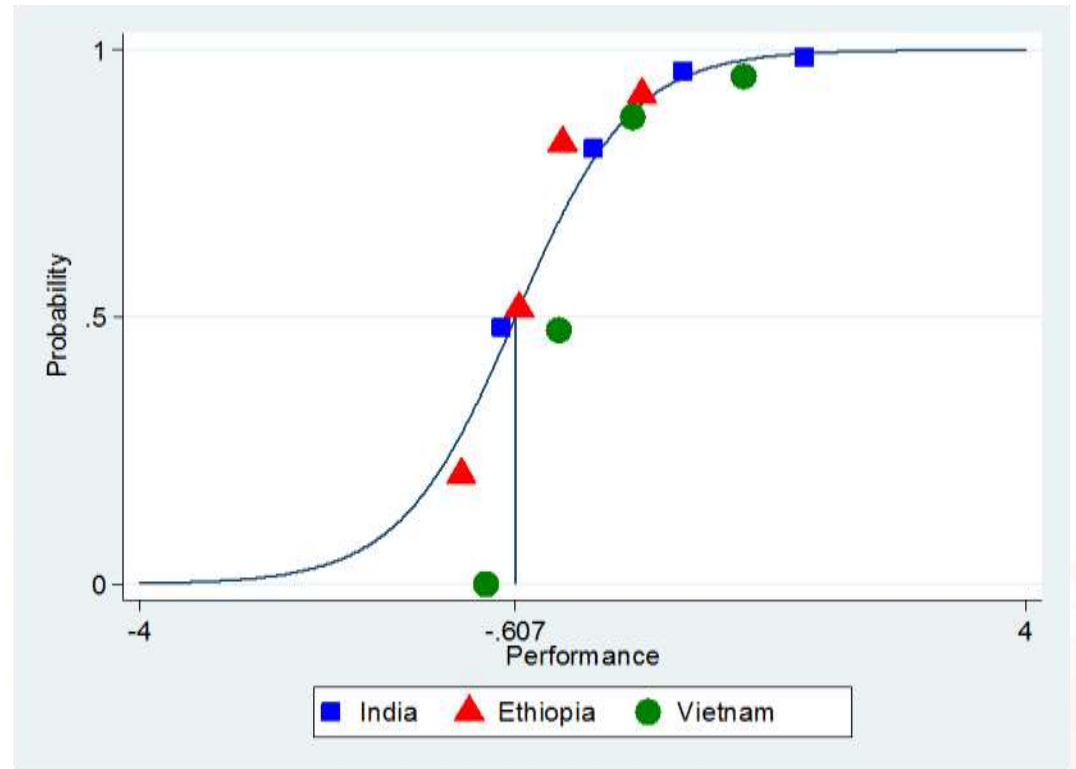
The boy is hiding _____ the table.

- A. before B. behind
C. above D. under

CEFR Level: A1

Skill: Sentence construction and comprehension

% correct: Ethiopia 62%, India 81%, Vietnam 57%



Identification of common items

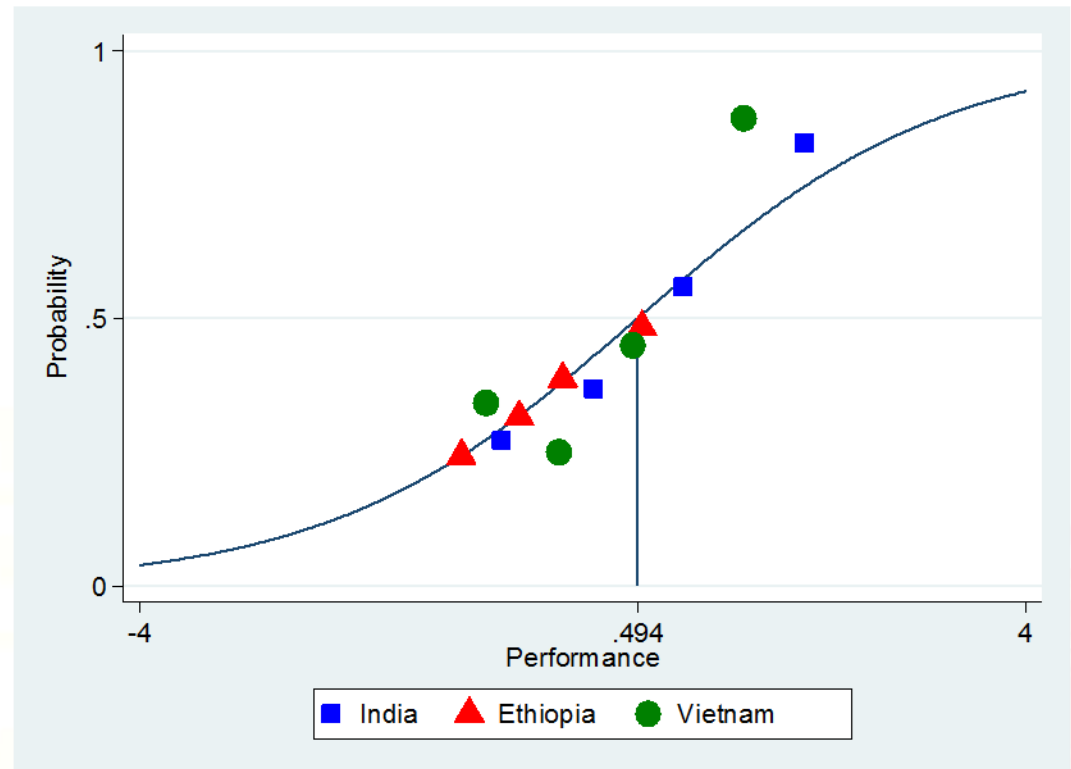
What do you need to do to participate in the contest?*

- A. Write a joke
- B. Write a poem
- C. Write a story
- D. Write an essay

CEFR Level: B1

Skill: Reading Comprehension

% correct: Ethiopia 36%, India 51%,
Vietnam 48%



*based on a poster giving details of a poetry contest for school children

Country-specific items

Choose the correct word for the picture.

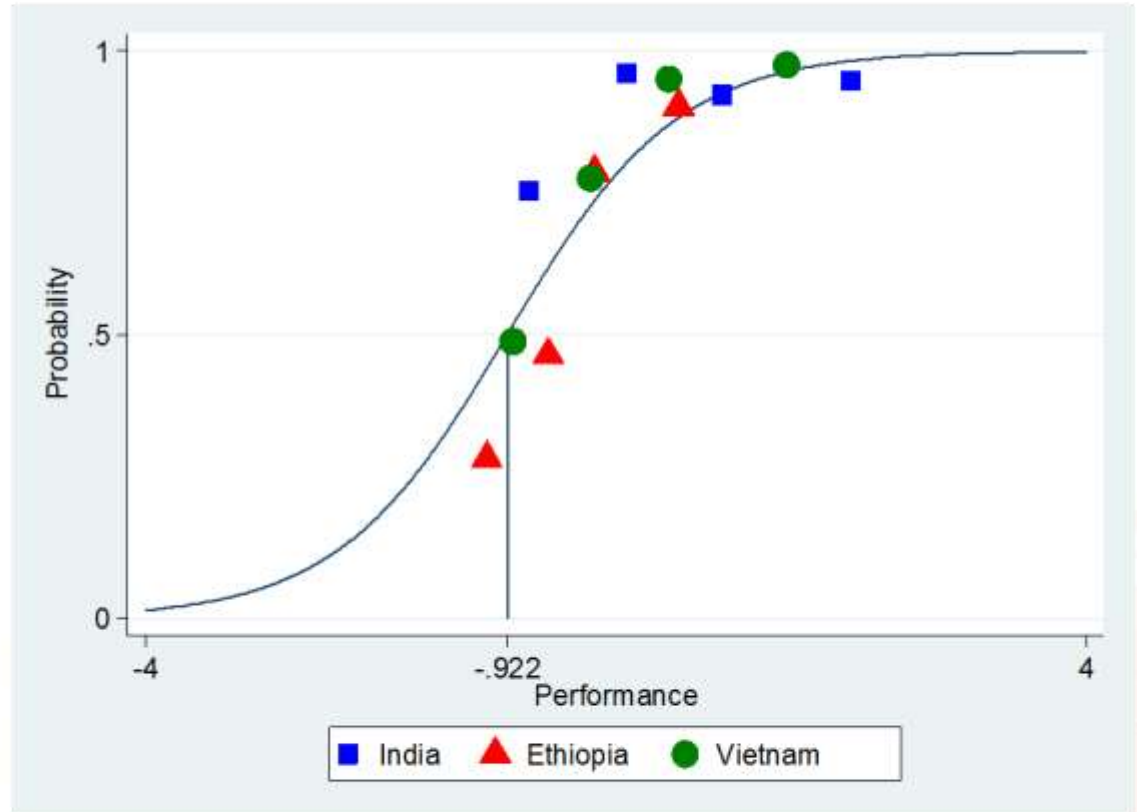


- A. face B. teeth
C. tongue D. lips

CEFR Level: A1

Skill: Word identification

% correct: Ethiopia 61%, India 90%,
Vietnam 80%



Analysis Opportunities & Next Steps

School effectiveness design will allow us to consider:

- Progress students make over the course of one academic year;
- Types of functional English skills gained over one year of schooling;
- In-school and out-of-school factors associated with levels of progress;
- English as an ‘equaliser’ or ‘divider’.

Cognitive test design will support new insights into:

- ‘Meaningful’ learning: do students have grade-appropriate knowledge and can they apply it in less familiar contexts?
- Transferable skills: to what extent do students have the functional English language which they are perceived to require by this stage of schooling?

Common items will enable cross-country comparison

Survey will build upon extensive existing Young Lives longitudinal data from household survey and previous school surveys

Thanks for listening!

Any questions or comments?

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