An investigation of approaches to the teaching and learning of English as a second language in early years settings.

A thesis submitted to the University of Bolton for the degree of Ph.D.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the many previous generations of my family, who had the ability to succeed at university but, were denied the opportunity. And in particular to my grandmother who fought fiercely for the emancipation and rights of women, taught me about justice and equality along with how to sing, laugh, and enjoy all that life has to offer.

To all of you.
Acknowledgements

Thank you to my wonderful children who have supported, cajoled, and encouraged me to continue to the end. And to my partner who has good humouredly supplied me with endless cups of tea, and often had to remind me that it was time to rest.

To my friends who have understood my lack of availability and frazzled appearance at times, and have come up with fun and creative ways of giving me ‘time out’.

The study would not have been possible without the kind permission of Headteachers and the willingness of staff to have me involved in the life of their schools; this has certainly included plenty of shared laughter. And to the children who have allowed me to participate in their learning experiences, in the way that only children can. Thank you.

And finally to my supervisor, David Kitchener, who has been a rock throughout these many years; always there to listen, challenge, and question me. And who by now has become an ‘expert in the art of tea making’. Heartfelt thanks David, and may you enjoy many more years on the allotment, though I’m still not convinced about the merits of Zorn or Joyce!
The author

The author is by background and training an early year professional with experience of teaching in primary, further, and higher education. After initial teacher training she left education and worked in housing management for ten years until the arrival of twins. Spending the next five years at home with her own children impressed on her the value and importance of those early formative years; consequently she returned to work in primary education. It was during her time there that the need for highly qualified and experienced early years staff became apparent and initiated the move to FE and later into HE. She currently holds a post as senior lecturer in early years.
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<td>RMS</td>
<td>Ruth Miskin Strategy</td>
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<td>SENCO</td>
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Abstract

The numbers of children in primary education (UK) who have English as a second or additional language is increasing, to the point that in some areas English speaking pupils are in the minority (Guardian 2013). How such children are being taught English language skills became the impetus for the research.

The focus of the study is on examining, the effectiveness of differing approaches to the teaching of English as a second language, the role of second language learner support, and the strategies used to communicate effectively with parents. This is a longitudinal study conducted over a three year period, as it follows a cohort of children from reception to year 2. In participation were 5 primary schools, 15 members of staff, around 150 children and 100 parents. The methodology involved the observation of children, and staff; interviews with staff; focus groups with parents; an analysis of national policy and literacy initiatives.

The findings revealed that across different schools the common feature was for the class teacher to take overall responsibility for the planning and implementation of strategies for teaching English. The role of support staff varied depending on the cultural make-up of the school. One significant difference was the extent to which creativity was employed in teaching; this was one factor that appeared to have the greatest impact on successful outcomes. The role of adult learner support was inconsistent, as was the opportunity for children to engage in peer tutoring with those who spoke English as their first language. All settings set out to establish strong links with parents, and acted in response to local needs.

The major implications of the study are on the need to address issues of cultural awareness, and specific second language teaching as part of both initial and in-
service training for teachers; the training of bi-lingual support workers needs to be more rigorous. One very clear aspect emerging from the study is the difference between schools and, therefore the educational experiences of children.

Declaration.

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
CHAPTER 1

History and background
1. Introduction

The purpose of the research is to investigate the role of bilingualism in primary education and determine the extent to which English is taught effectively as a second language. This will be done by examining the following areas:

- the teaching of English as an additional language in primary education, through an outline and evaluation of relevant historical and contemporary theoretical perspectives and debates

- whether children offered bi-lingual support progress in language skills at the same rate as those who are not

- through an analysis of the changes that have taken place in primary education since the introduction of the Primary National Strategy (2006).

The proposed study will investigate the teaching of English in primary school (reception to year two), by close examination of what is outlined in the present curriculum and how that is implemented in practice. Bhatti (1999) recognises that L2 children face three sorts of problem on entry to school: (i) approaching school work with the linguistic capacity they actually command, (ii) maintaining skill in mother-tongue, and (iii) acquiring sufficient English to be able to receive instruction positively. Appreciating that the ethnic diversity within individual schools may result in a varying range of strategies, the objective will be to identify a consistency of approach. One of the issues within this will be the role of bi-lingual support. The study will seek to identify its value in supporting children's development of L2 by questioning whether this approach is an appropriate model for young children to follow or, whether more appropriate methods could be advanced.
The study will identify and analyse the changes that have taken place in the teaching of English from the introduction of the National Curriculum (1989) to the Primary National (Literacy) Strategy (2006). It has to be recognised that this is a period of change not just educationally, but also within the wider society. Recent government figures show that in 2006, 21.9 per cent of UK primary children are from ethnic minorities and do not have English as their first language (BBC, 2008). This has raised concerns in education about the support needed in assisting children in L2. Smidt (2008) is of the opinion that current education policy is not in-line with societal changes, citing the current guidance (Language for all, 2006) which recommends the teaching of a modern European language at KS2 whilst paying scant attention to the languages that many children already bring into early years. For this reason the study will focus on a group of primary school children from reception to Y2, gathered from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, following the progress of their developing English skills. Recent government guidelines to practitioners (DfES, 2006) are aimed at addressing such issues within the classroom. It will be interesting to identify how effective such strategies are proving to be.

In addition, the objectives of the study will focus on:

1. An examination of the effectiveness of differing approaches to the teaching of English as a second language.

2. Examining the role of L2 learner support in the classroom.

3. Examine strategies of communication between school and parents.

The issue of L2 is identified throughout curriculum documents; the National Curriculum (1989) outlines such provision. Subsequent curricular developments
have continued by emphasising the need for quality teaching focused on continually increasing standards of literacy. The National Curriculum (2000) identified that EAL pupils were assessed differently to L1 pupils, with LEAs using up to 13 different stages in this process. An acknowledgment perhaps, that monitoring pupil’s progress on a national scale was ineffective. By contrast assessment for monolingual pupils was based specifically on National Curriculum scales, making national achievement attainable. Consequently, a common assessment framework was introduced to assess EAL pupils.

A consultation paper (QCA, 2003) directed attention at raising achievement for L2 pupils. Within this, one factor identified with low attainment was a lack of fluency in English. This was upheld by OFSTED (2003) with the suggestion that L2 pupils should continue with support for academic writing, even when fluent in oral English. The results of a pilot study (White, 2003) identified adequate teacher support as key to raising attainment for L2 pupils. Parker-Jenkins (1995) highlights the fact that teachers are required to work not only with culturally diverse groups of pupils, but also, parents from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. In response, The Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2006) issued specific guidance aimed at teaching and learning for bilingual children in the primary years, and concludes that since children are natural linguists the role of the teacher is crucial in ensuring that they become truly bilingual.

As indicated, a body of research in the areas of L2 development and bilingualism in schools exists, and is positive in identifying ways in which teachers should respond. There is also evidence (BBC, 2008) to suggest that the numbers of pupils with L2 continues to rise, thus making the problems more difficult for some schools, and more widespread for others nationally. The study intends to contribute to the subject area by questioning the approaches used in primary education, and seeking to identify which methods produce the best results. In turn this will inform the teaching and training of early years practitioners. By
identifying areas of weakness in the teaching programmes aimed at practitioners who support children’s language and literacy, it is intended to initiate improvement and development. This should bring about positive changes for both the practitioner and the children they teach.

The catalyst for the study was comments from practitioners that parents from different ethnic backgrounds held differing views about how their children should be taught English as a second language. Added to this, the researcher observed the increasing numbers of children in local schools from differing language groups, and the concerns expressed by staff about the best way to tackle what at times seemed to be an overwhelming problem in everyday practice.

The chapter now continues with an overview of educational legislation, changes to the curriculum and identified difficulties associated with language skills.

2. Historical perspectives.

(i) Legislation

Though English (Smidt, 2008) has become a global language, the UK has paradoxically become home to those from many countries who speak a multitude of different languages and dialects. In 2006, 21 per cent of the maintained primary school population were classified as belonging to a minority group. Such pupils are more likely to experience deprivation than white British pupils, especially Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African and Black Caribbean pupil; e.g. 70 per cent of Bangladeshi and almost 60 per cent of Pakistani and Black African pupils live in the 20 per cent most deprived postcodes area (DfES, 2006). This information is relevant to children in the study.
An overview of education since the 1944 Education Act reveals that there has been a series of reports into the achievements of L2 pupils (Carrington and Scott, 1989). Whilst attitudes have changed and continue to do so (to be discussed later in this chapter), a look back to the era of the *Plowden Report* (1976) reveals that the prevailing attitude of society then (Baker, 2006) considered immigrant children to be deprived because of poor home backgrounds, and their unfamiliarity with both British culture and the English language. This represents the view that such children are deficient and therefore problematic to the education system (Datta, 2000). Smidt (2008) suggests this in itself is divisive and serves only to add tension within society.

Whilst *Plowden* was not concerned with the examination of education for L2 speakers it does however provide a clear and useful indication of the educational thinking at that time. Kelly (2009) suggests there is a strong assertion here that equality of educational opportunity is compatible with a variety of educational opportunity. It was argued by Shipman (1971) that this was certainly not the case for all children, and in particular, those for whom English was a second language. This argument was taken up again by Warnock (1977) and echoed by Kelly (2009), that a genuine ‘entitlement to curriculum’ must not only be common to all, but be genuinely suited to all. It is clear that education at this time did not provide this. On the contrary, the solution as seen by the Government was to control immigration and at the same time, assimilate those immigrants resident in the country into the host culture (Carrington and Scott, 1989).

Within education this was to be achieved by LEAs putting a ceiling on the figure of 35 per cent immigrants per school (Baker, 2006). In addition, such children were to be segregated until they had achieved a required level of English and then re-admitted into mainstream schooling. Carrington (1981) argues that this intervention served to reinforce the belief that such children were a problem and
that this method of dispersal was to allay the fears of white parents. Despite its unpopularity this approach continued until 1976.

It was the publication of the *Bullock Report* in 1975 that saw a dramatic change in thinking and a significant shift of attitude in education. The emphasis was now on the recognition of the child’s first language as significant to their development. Respect for and maintenance of the first language was deemed to benefit children and educators were encouraged to know more about the languages and cultures of the children they taught (Mills, 2001). The report brought with it an explicit celebration of linguistic and cultural diversity (Sneddon, 2000) and introduced the notion of Britain as being a multicultural society. By 1981, Craft (1984) indicates that multicultural education had become the focus of educational debate. The *Rampton Report* of 1979 called for a systematic review of the curriculum in every school, regardless of its ethnic composition (Carrington and Scott, 1989).

The report defined multicultural education as one which drew on the experiences of the many cultures that made up British society and so broadened the horizons of every child (Willey, 1984b). Further reports published the same year by Little and Willey (cited in Carrington and Scott, 1989) revealed a considerable gap between policy and practice in schools. Professional attitudes in multiracial areas were positive towards multiculturalism in the curriculum, whereas professionals from areas with few ethnic minority pupils saw this to be of little relevance to their schools.

The period from 1981 to 1985 saw various attempts to surmount these difficulties, including improvements and reforms in teacher education (Lynch, 1986b). From the beginning to the mid-1980s most of what happened in schools and classrooms was left almost entirely to the discretion of the teacher, and whilst some teachers did seek to further their professional development, Barber (2001) is of the opinion that the profession at this time was generally uninformed.
The response to this was the establishment in the early 1980s of the Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE), which had a strict and detailed brief to review all courses for initial teacher education and to approve only those that conformed to specific criteria laid down by the Government (Kelly, 2009). These included:

- the establishment of teaching as all graduate profession
- all 4 year undergraduate courses leading to qualified teacher status to include at least 2 years devoted to the study of a curriculum subject
- the control of numbers entering the profession
- advisory committees to be established in all institutions that provided teacher training (Kelly, 2009 p.206).

This, in Alexander’s (2008) view saw the profession and its system of training move from that of being professionally uninformed to that of being prescriptively uninformed. He regards this abrupt intervention by politicians to be disparaging of the quality and competence of teachers and ignorant of the views held by those within the educational world. Kelly (2009) too, highlights the lack of political independence in either educational research or teacher education at this time. The impact of this on the training of teachers was the discouragement of questioning about education and curriculum: what would be taught was no longer a matter of choice but had been decided by Government. The only professional concern left was how to teach (Fisher, 1998).

Finally, in 1988, the Swann Report: ‘Education for all’ was published, which, according to Carrington and Scott (1989), gave unequivocal support to the ideology of pluralism. The report placed responsibility for its success on both the
minority and majority groups within society (Swann, 1985). The report called for schools to offer all pupils a full and balanced education that incorporated a global perspective. It was also clear that community languages should not be offered by the state through schools, but by communities on a private basis. A large part of the report was devoted to the social and economic factors surrounding issues of racism in British society (Gill et al, 1993).

The period of the 1980s saw much political activity, government policies, and an extensive economic and social restructuring in British society (ibid), though this was not experienced equally across the nation. There are claims (Troyna and Williams, 1986) that this had a massive negative impact on black communities. At the same time came an attempt to redefine the concept of ‘Britishness’. McCullough (2005) refers to such a concept as being based on the notion of commonality, of holding shared experiences, culture, language, and religion. He argues that it was this definition that shaped the political vision and educational renewal of the time and produced the framework for the National Curriculum. Kelly (2009) likewise believes that the most effective way of social control is through the education system hence the way to develop the concept of ‘Britishness’ is by the integration of such ‘ideals’ into the National Curriculum.

The *Kingman Report* of 1988 (Carrington and Scott, 1989) was the final catalyst to the introduction of educational changes in the form of an established pedagogy. Later that same year, the Education Reform Act (1988) saw the introduction of the first ever National Curriculum. This was part of a series of strategies designed to enable the restructuring of society (Whitty and Menter, 1989). It was a clearly-bounded curriculum which claimed to provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum and was to be the key to raising educational standards nationally. Enshrined within it is the declaration that all pupils, regardless of individual needs, and barriers to learning, have an entitlement to learning and the chance to succeed (National Curriculum, 1989). It was another three years before the needs of bilingual pupils were addressed and specific
guidance for supporting children learning a second language (L2) was issued. Gravelle (1996) suggests that since the National Curriculum provides only a framework of what to teach, provision for bilingual learners becomes piecemeal and tokenistic.

The revised National Curriculum (1999) removed the emphasis on citizenship and provided schools with the opportunity to develop equal opportunities issues more closely (Rose, 2005). The document clearly outlines the need to respond to pupils’ diverse learning needs and to overcoming any potential barriers.

Attitudes towards language, according to Smidt (2008) continually fluctuate in response to social issues, immigration trends, political will, and government finance. It was such concerns about levels of English language achievement that saw the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy in 1998; its specific aim was to raise literacy levels nationally. There is little evidence to suggest that, despite great efforts by teachers, this was a successful initiative. In 2000, the Nuffield Report ‘Languages the next generation’ was published and the following year the Languages National Steering Group was set up to develop a policy that would change perceptions, and raise general awareness of the importance for young people to acquire good language skills. This resulted in the document entitled ‘Languages for all: Languages for life’. Smidt (2008) holds the view that whilst this was a promising title the actual contents did not match, since it focused almost entirely on Key Stage 2, with little regard to the languages brought into education by younger children.

The Rose Review of 2006 looked into the teaching of early reading and became the evidence for a reviewed strategy for literacy (and numeracy). This became part of the Primary National Strategy introduced in 2006, which laid down the areas to be implemented and created a structure for teaching and learning. Its clear aim was to raise expectations for all children and ensure a broad and rich curriculum (Primary National Strategy, 2006).
The final stage of curriculum change was seen in 2008, when the Birth to Three Matters and the Foundation Stage Curriculum were incorporated into the New Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, thus offering a complete curriculum from 0-5 years that would ensure good practice for all children. Again, this has a clear component for communication, language and literacy that sets out achievable outcomes for children through their formative development. This is also the first time that a comprehensive curriculum covers children throughout their early educational years and, furthermore, includes all settings other than schools.

(ii) Historical developments of the curriculum

It is argued by Lewis and Wray (2000) that the comparison of literacy standards over time is inherently difficult because of the changing expectations and requirements of society. Kelly (2009) adds a further dimension with his view that education and politics are inextricably interwoven, so that curriculum issues cannot be discussed in a political vacuum.

The historical context of teaching English began with the Foster Act 1870 (Aldrich, 2003). Whilst there was no direct control of the curriculum, which was based loosely on the 3Rs, indirect control was maintained through a process of evaluation, and assessment. By the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century such annual assessment of pupils was abolished, and responsibility for education came to the LEAs. There is little evidence (Kelly, 2009) of any form of curriculum or even any suggestion of subjects to be taught. In primary and infant schools, as a result of the Hadow Reports (1926, 1931 and 1933) came the move from rote learning and instructional skills, to more active methods of teaching (Aldrich, 2003). This saw the beginning of progressive education in the UK. English was introduced with a recognisable structure and pedagogy; reading and writing were taught together (Halsey and Sylva, 1987).
The Education Act (1944) offered no curriculum directive except for including religious education and holding a daily act of worship (Aldrich, 2003).

The *Plowden Report* (1967) gave a new impetus in primary education towards a child-centred, ‘Piagetian’ approach (Donaldson, 1978). Whilst this may not have been very widespread in practice or as successful as intended (Kelly, 2009), there was, however, a clear shift in educational thinking. This is identified as being directed towards equality of opportunity for all pupils, and focusing on individual development, not in isolation from society but rather as a collective member (Edwards and Kelly, 1998:4). Bernstein (1967) also identified this shift towards open schools as part of an open society. Educational commentators have been in part cynical about *Plowden*, feeling that this was responsible for a decline in education (Scruton, 1987). Likewise, Kelly (2009) is of the opinion that changes to education prior to *Plowden* were concerned with a genuine desire to improve the quality of provision rather than merely a concern to win the approval of the electorate. However, the later *Bullock Report* (1975) continued to endorse the practice outlined by *Plowden* and continued its drive towards a child-centred philosophy (Scruton, 1987).

The period of the 1970s and 1980s saw an increasing move towards establishing greater control over the school curriculum (Lawton, 1980), leading to the Education Reform Act in 1988. The resulting National Curriculum was a subject based curriculum that had been determined by central government (Kelly, 2009). Along with this came a programme of national testing at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 years, and a base-line test for children aged 5. One of the core subjects identified was English; in the view of Boys and Spinks (2008), the introduction of pedagogy for the teaching of English was revolutionary. What was to be taught had been decided, whereas, how it was to be taught remained the teacher’s professional concern. This however, has seen subsequent political dictate in the areas of literacy (DfEE, 1999; QCA, 1999; DfES, 2004a; 2004b; 2005a).
Since a National Curriculum for children of statutory school age had been introduced, a further curriculum for children of pre-school age seemed an inevitable step (Nutbrown, 2006). What followed was a two-stage approach to education in the early years. The Foundation Stage Curriculum was introduced in 2000, this was a play-based curriculum for children aged 3 to 5 years of age, which had clear progressive goals, including those specifically for language and literacy that dovetailed with the National Curriculum. This was hailed as a triumph for common sense by many early years professionals who recognised the value of learning through play for younger children (Rumbold, 1990). This was followed by the development of the Foundation Stage Profile in 2003, devised for assessment and planning. The same year saw the introduction of practitioner guidance for the under 3s, the ‘Birth to Three Matters’. This provided a framework for appropriate learning experiences, and recognised the place and value of developing good language skills from an early age and focused on children becoming ‘skilful communicators’ (Squire, 2007). In addition, it identified effective practice for all those working with very young children. Since young children do not think in subjects but, in line with their development, learn in a holistic way, the early years curriculum was made up of experiences which valued the process of learning. It is how children learn, that is as important as what they learn (Brooker, 2008).

This legacy of underpinning the process of learning through play can be seen clearly in the work of Froebel, Montessori, Pestalozzi and McMillan (Nutbrown, 2006). The next phase of curriculum development was the incorporation of these two documents in the new Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in 2008. This was extended in England to cover children to the end of the reception year. The UK stands alone in Europe for starting children in formal education before the age of 5. A comparative study (European Commission, 2003 p.69) reveals the following figures relating to European countries:
15 have a school starting age of 6
9 have a school starting age of 7
1 has a school starting age of 4
only 4 countries have all 5 years olds in primary school.

The debate over early admission to school started back in 1905, when the idea was rejected by education inspectors, and nearly a century later the debate continued when the Early Years Curriculum Group of 1995 argued vociferously against it, an argument taken up by Dowling (1995) too. Despite the level of criticism against young children being in reception classes, figures reveal that in 1999, 57 per cent of all 4 year olds attended reception classes, and by 2006 the proportion of 3 and 4 years olds had risen to 64 per cent (Willan et al. 2008).

Whilst the introduction of the EYFS (2008) can be seen as a more positive step towards a child-friendly approach which recognises the continuum between care and education in the early years, it remains largely dependent on the skill of the practitioner and the type of setting, since not all children aged 3-5 are admitted to specific ‘Foundation Stage Units’. But, in reality, many are part of the reception class within the primary school, being taught by staff not specifically trained in early years.

There are many aspects associated with the term curriculum e.g. hidden, planned, received, formal, and informal, all of which are valid descriptors. Kelly (2009) discusses the term curriculum in recognition of its many meanings and numerous definitions. The curriculum is clearly more than a programme for teaching, or the content of a subject syllabus, since it fails to take account of any educational or moral dimensions. It is clear that pupils learn those things that are not overtly connected with the planning of any curriculum; not just what is said and done, but the way in which it is said and done. The underlying values, attitudes, and ethos of education and of educators themselves, which are not prescribed in any curriculum but which are however, evident in the organisation and management of educational settings are communicated to pupils discreetly
and, as such, are referred to as the ‘hidden’ curriculum. Kelly also highlights the
distinction between the official, planned curriculum, and that which is actually
received as the curriculum; this can be viewed as the difference between what is
laid down and the reality of the pupil’s experiences (Stenhouse, 1975).

Lastly the distinction between formal and informal recognises that within the
timetable, there are formal teaching activities and between these are those
informal activities that pupils are involved with; lunch, after school and
extracurricular events. Thus, the curriculum can be seen to be a broad, rather
than a narrow one, since it is clear that children are learning throughout all of this
and will remember some informal aspects, long after formal education is over
(Skinner, 1964). For the purpose of this study the term curriculum will be used in
a narrow sense as the content of a particular subject, in this case English.

Early years education is now widely regarded as a distinct phase in the care and
education of children, prior to the start of statutory education at five years of age.
For many children this will mean that they start in the reception class of a primary
school; others will be in a nursery class or a foundation stage unit before starting
in year 1, and commence learning through the National Curriculum. For children
up to 5 years of age there is the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
(EYFS), which was introduced in 2008. This has not only linked the provision for
0 to 3s and 3 to 5s, which was previously governed by different regulatory
standards, but has also integrated the National Care Standards that had
previously applied to non-educational settings. Effectively now, all those working
with under 5s share the same standards of care and the same curriculum (Kelly,
2009). The framework for establishing such a change was based around the
outcomes of Every Child Matters (2003) that had the clear intention to promote
areas of development and well-being. The five outcomes are:
- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve social and economic well-being

This later became enshrined in legislation that formed the Children Acts of 2004 and 2006; on the back of this the new EYFS became mandatory in 2008.

This single framework document identifies the following six areas of learning:

1. Personal, social and emotional development
2. Communication, language and literacy
3. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
4. Knowledge and understanding of the world
5. Physical development
6. Creative development.

Throughout this framework the position and value of early years education is reinforced by focusing on the needs of the child, rather than the content of ‘subjects’ (EYFS, 2008). In recognition of the rapid development that occurs with children during the first five years, it adopts a holistic approach to this phase of learning. It should also be noted that to accompany this new curriculum was the development of the ‘early years professional’ (EYP), a new and distinctly different graduate who complies with the 39 national standards set to confer this status. A role that is significantly different to that of all other early years practitioners, and is in line with that of Qualified Teacher Status (Nurse, 2007). The introduction of such a role continues to highlight the importance of early years education and
that of the early years educator too. It remains the government's commitment to children and families that an EYP will be employed in all children's centres by 2010 and in all full day care settings by 2015 (CWDC, 2008).

Having established historically that two curriculum frameworks exist then, we need to establish what the expectations are for the teaching of English for each of these. This includes those aged 5 in reception classes, covered by the EYFS and those aged 6 and 7 years in Y1 and Y2 governed by the National Curriculum.

3. Identified difficulties

If bilingualism exists not only within individuals but is also both directly and indirectly interwoven into the politics of a nation (Baker, 2006) then bilingualism within education must be comprised by complex issues. As such, then, education is not merely concerned with curricular ideologies but is informed and underpinned by basic beliefs about minority languages, minority cultures, immigration, equality of opportunity, integration, and social cohesion. Policy makers and educationalists have a responsibility, then, not only to the children in their classrooms but also for progressing language skills (L2). Political perspective around bilingualism can be identified in three ways (Ruiz, 1984): language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource.

Discussions about bilingual education (Baker, 1997) and approaches to the teaching of English as L2 often focus on language as causing complications and difficulties with regard to operating in two languages. Linked to this is often the notion that perpetuating minority languages results in less integration, and more conflict between groups. Britain struggles periodically with its perception of social cohesion (Kingman, 1988) and along with this lies the idea that national unity
equates with uniformity (Baker, 2006). Therefore it is perceived that social cohesion can only be achieved when everyone speaks English; any other language being deemed to weaken such unity. Language itself is not usually the cause of conflict in society (Otheguy, 1982; Fishman, 1989) but rather issues of deprivation, and authoritarian attitudes. There is, then, a clear link in Britain between those L2 speaking communities and poverty, since employability is deemed to be on the basis of the level of English language skills achieved. The minority language, then, is often seen to be the cause of poverty, educational underachievement, and a lack of social inclusion and, as such, is identified as an obstacle to overcoming these. The solution to this is perceived to be dependent on the increase of L2 teaching (Baker, 2006).

The notion of language as a right is connected to basic human rights, such as choice, and freedom of expression. In Britain the emphasis is certainly on individual rather than group rights, with a general level of acceptance that minority language groups have the right to preserve their heritage language, and culture (Schmidt, 2008). Whilst this is socially acceptable, some writers (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1991; Stubbs, 1991; Trueba, 1991) sound a note of caution, believing that whilst this attitude is positive in its intention, it has no legislative basis.

In terms of being a resource, language can be viewed as a positive asset on both a personal and national level and so, is an enriching process in society. This has been seen in education with the increasing numbers of different foreign languages taught in secondary schools and, more recently, the introduction of some European languages in primary schools and also, to a limited extent, in nursery and primary settings too. The National Curriculum (2000) stipulates that languages such as Arabic, Bengali, Gujerati and Urdu can only be taught at secondary level if a higher division of language e.g. French, has been taught first.
It is argued, that in doing this a caste system of language is created which is predominantly Eurocentric and thus culturally discriminatory (Baker, 2006). In practice this mean that some languages spoken in the home (L1) become eroded, whilst others are actively taught from basics in school.

There is breadth of legislation that incorporates the concept of inclusion into all aspects of education. Those with particular relevance to this study are:

- standards for Q.T.S. require teachers to respect pupils' social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds (Griffin, 2008)

- The EYFS states that all providers have the responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference so that all children, regardless of language experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development (EYFS, 2008 p 76.)

- The National Curriculum asks specifically for high expectations and opportunities to be set for pupils from diverse linguistic backgrounds, and states that teachers should take specific action to help pupils develop their spoken and written English (National Curriculum, 1999).

In its widest sense inclusion can be defined as the drive towards maximal participation in and minimal exclusion from early years settings, schools, and society (Nutbrown and Clough, 2008).

Whilst the Government has shown its commitment to a philosophy of social inclusion through policies such as the National Childcare Strategy 1998, Sure Start 1998, and Every Child Matters 2003, there are some factors that do not
make this as simple or straightforward as may be implied. Sparkes (1999) identifies that for some parents and children, and this is pertinent to those in the study, their social exclusion is manifest through issues of poverty, poor English language skills, and low levels of literacy. Thus, whilst they may not have been deliberately excluded they have become ‘circumstantially’ excluded.

A study by Nutbrown and Clough (2004) identifies some areas of tension amongst early years practitioners, between their commitment to a policy of inclusion and the practicalities of how this is effectively implemented. Some of the issues identified are:

- a sense of despair at the size of the challenge they face with increasing numbers of children who do not/speak little English
- a lack of support from parents who themselves, have poor L2 literacy skills and/or differing views about the role of education and of educators
- confidence in their own abilities; few have had sufficient training in teaching those who are second-language speakers
- systems and structures that were not supportive of an inclusive environment; meaning they are unable to reach some of the parents they most need to
- a mis-match between what they believed should happen and their actual experiences; the obvious difficulty of how to ensure all children are included when communication itself is the crux of the problem.

All of this will be discussed in more depth in chapter 2.
Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief historical overview of legislation from 1944 to date, drawing particular attention to the issues relating to English as a second language. It recognises the changes in societal attitudes that have accompanied this up to the present situation where a commitment to inclusive education, and national curriculum framework now exist (this is discussed in chapter 2). Some of the difficulties associated with the issues of teaching English as a second language in primary education have been initially explored and are identified as follows:

- there is currently an increasing number of children in primary education for whom English is a second/subsequent language
- of this group, such children are more likely to live in areas of socio-economic deprivation, which can have a knock-on effect on educational achievement
- many of their parents have poor second language skills and low levels of literacy such that they are limited in the support they can provide
- all of this makes ‘working in partnership with parents’ difficult for practitioners to achieve
- attitudes to immigrant children have changed from the views held in the 1960s and 1970s that they were problematic to the education system, to the current acceptance that such diversity is a positive asset in education
- there have been reforms to teacher education
there have major reforms to the curriculum, with a continuum now from 0 – 16 years

repeated concerns over poor levels of literacy nationally have prompted specific language intervention programmes

the role of well-qualified practitioners has been recognised to be crucial to the learning and development of young children

language skills are linked to educational achievement and ultimately to employability

Chapter 2 will now provide a detailed overview of literature that discusses the topics of inclusion and diversity, and follows the factors shaping the development of teaching English as a second language. It includes a theoretical perspective of second language development based around the work of Chomsky, Skinner, and Krashen. It then identifies the curriculum content and context for the teaching and learning of English, along with strategies for effective teaching and learning. It finally looks to the role of play in successful language development and how this can be further enhanced by creating a positive learning environment.
CHAPTER 2

Review of literature
**Introduction**

This chapter provides a detailed overview of literature discussing the topics of inclusion and diversity and, follows the factors shaping the development of teaching English as a second language. It includes a theoretical perspective of language acquisition and development based on the work of Chomsky, Skinner, and Krashen. It continues by identifying the curriculum content and context for the teaching and learning of English along with strategies for effective teaching and learning. It finally looks to the role of play in such language development and how this can be further enhanced by creating a positive learning environment.

**Policies and principles of multiculturalism.**

Smidt (2008) highlights the fact, that whilst multiculturalism is the norm throughout the world, it is the UK that labels itself a multicultural society yet regards those speaking English as an additional language as being ‘odd’. This is echoed by Siraj-Blatchford (1994a) who states that over 70 per cent of the world’s population speaks more than one language. Recognising that English is the language of the majority of UK citizens and additionally, a recognised universal language (Mills, 2000), Smidt's comment may reveal something of the prejudice and misconception associated with children learning L2.

Britain, in common with most EU countries, has seen education become multiracial as its society has become increasingly multi-ethnic. Education policy has seen the shift from assimilation and integration to multicultural and anti-racist. Carrington and Scott (1989, p.152) suggest the following phrases are identifiable in educational policy: laissez-faire, assimilation, integration, cultural pluralism, and anti-racism, each of which will be examined in turn.

**Laissez-faire**

The economic difficulties expressed by post-war Britain tended to underplay the social and cultural implications of immigration; the same was true in education. With the passing of the first Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962 came the introduction of ‘race relations’ (Sivanandan, 1976).
Assimilation
From here onwards policies were implemented directed towards achieving the goal of assimilation. The underpinning assumption was that racial harmony depended on the elimination of cultural barriers between the majority and minority groups in society. The implication was that immigrants, whilst respecting their own traditions, should suppress them (Kirp, 1979). Linguistic diversity was perceived as an obstacle to such assimilation and so, basic English teaching was provided (ESL) for bilingual pupils. A major intervention from the Department for Education and Science saw the introduction of a pamphlet, *English for Immigrants* in 1963 (Curtis and Pettigrew, 2009). Children arriving in Britain with little or no English were pressurised to adopt the language as quickly as possible as their means of communication so that they did not present a challenge to teachers or peers. Rattansi (1992) argues that the teaching of English was in fact a metaphor for enforced assimilation.

Integration
From 1966 onwards a new perspective was to be seen, celebrating unity through diversity, which began to displace assimilation (Rose, 1969). It was argued (Troyna and Williams, 1986) that this was seen more in political rhetoric than actual educational practice. Whilst much was done to inform teachers, in the view of Lynch (1986a), the preoccupation with cultural differences served only to reinforce inaccuracy and stereotypes, rather than diminish them. Despite growing concerns about low attainment levels amongst immigrant children (Tomlinson, 1982), the Department for Education and Science continued with the view that the educational needs of ethnic minority children were essentially no different, from those of other groups in society. Any reference to ‘difference’ was not linked to the needs of language or educational attainment, but was framed in terms of ‘special assistance’ or ‘special need’ (Rex, 1989). The suggestion was that young black Britons were amongst those requiring assistance in a manner comparable to children who at that time were regarded as ‘backward’ (Curtis and Pettigrew, 2009). This remained unchallenged until the publication of the Rampton Report in 1979 (Carrington and Scott, 1989).
Cultural Pluralism
The urban disorders of 1980 and 1981 forced a change of attitude whereby it was argued that, since British society was a multicultural, multiracial one, the curriculum then should reflect a sympathetic understanding of such differences. Multicultural education became the focus of debate, advocating a positive approach to cultural differences and the need to combat curricular ethnocentrism (Craft, 1984). This culminated in the Swann Report (1985) which acknowledged that the education system did not support the needs of multicultural Britain, but that schools may in fact present a ‘hostile’ environment for ethnic minority children (Curtis and Pettigrew, 2009). As a result of this, a clear recommendation was that racism at both institutional and individual levels should be considered openly with efforts made to counter it.

Anti-racism
The recommendations made by Swann prompted criticism from the anti-racists. Opinions were divided between those who saw multicultural education as a form of compensation, and those who saw it as a means of social control (Stone, 1981; Mullard, 1982). Troyna and Williams (1986) argued that multicultural education should start with the individual, not the institution. Alternatively, Lynch (1987) believes that it is the role of the school to recognise and respond to the needs of such children, and so enable the reform of policies and procedures within education. Connor (1972) argues strongly that intervention aimed at increasing pupil’s awareness of other cultures may in fact achieve the opposite, by reinforcing group identity and solidarity.

Multiculturalism is now clearly enshrined as part of our current curriculum. The National Curriculum recommends that teachers should have high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including pupils from all social, and cultural backgrounds, and those from different ethnic groups, including refugees, asylum seekers, and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds (NC, 2000).
There is a widespread concern about the rising number of bilingual pupils in schools. Recent articles (NAHT, 2008) reveal that English is now a foreign language for 40 per cent of primary school children in London, with figures rising nationally by over 1 per cent per year (BBC, 2008). This correlates directly with immigration trends particularly in the EU (The Guardian, 2008). This has resulted in an increased awareness by LEAs and schools for the need to increase and maintain standards of achievement for all pupils (Gravelle, 2006). The *Aim High* agenda introduced in 2003 was an initial response to the situation. Its agenda was concerned with enabling all children to fulfil their potential and commented on the issue of those children who were falling behind in language attainment, with a renewed emphasis on providing suitable support.

National data DfES (2006) for primary school pupils calculate the minority ethnic profile as follows (see table 2.1 on following page).
Table 2.1 The percentage of pupils from each minority ethnic group in maintained primary school. (January, 2006) (Figures based on Fig.1 page 8 of ‘Ethnicity and Education’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Percentage figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travellers of Irish heritage</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy/Roma</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other white background</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and black Caribbean</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and black African</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Asian</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other mixed background</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other Asian background</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other black background</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other ethnic group</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest minority ethnic group is the Pakistani group, which accounts for 3.3 per cent of pupils followed by White other at 2.6 per cent, and Black African at 2.5 per cent. The proportion of ethnic pupils in maintained primary schools in 2006 was 20.6 per cent compared to 19.3 per cent in 2005, and 18.3 per cent in 2004.

In addition to changes in the make-up of ethnic groups the UK’s indigenous population has an increasingly high mean age (Lutz, 1999). The distinctive factor for Britain is the high levels of lone-parent families, and high child poverty. Furthermore, Britain has 46 per cent of children in lone-parent families living in poverty (ibid). The period from 1980 to 1990 was a period of rapid change also in employment patterns and economic climate. The growing government concern over groups deemed to be excluded from the mainstream of society and the
impact this was having children and families, was to move responsibility for all early childhood services into the education system (Moss 1999). Its response in 1998 was the launch of the first ever National Childcare Strategy (NCS) as an integrated service. One of its aims was ‘inclusion’ with specific target groups; lone-parents, low-income families, and those in rural areas (Pugh, 2005). The NCS also saw the introduction of Sure Start in 1989 as a means of early intervention and family support.

If inclusion, then, is ensuring that everyone is included in society, regardless of diversity (Squire, 2007) this must then apply equally to those pupils for whom English is a second language. Moore (2005) argues that whilst there has been a gradual progression from physical isolation and exclusion of such pupils to physical inclusion, there persists a symbolic exclusion within education still.

For those teachers working with bilingual pupils there remains unresolved issues; whether or not L1 should be encouraged and actively maintained by schools, to what extent such pupils should have L2 support or, if total immersion into the new language is the best practice. (The researcher has encountered all of this; through classroom observations and during discussion with teaching staff. see Chapter 4 on results).

Inclusion
The concept of inclusion has changed and widened since it was introduced as part of the NCS in 1989. It was a means of including those groups deemed to be excluded from mainstream education and society, such as one-parents, families with disabled children, those living in rural communities, and those in areas of social deprivation. Whilst the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is the government’s response to the inclusion of children with special educational needs and provides support to childcare settings up to 2011, there is a wider responsibility on all childcare/educational settings to have a written policy that is effectively implemented to ensure equality of opportunity for all children (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005). It is intended that all settings will promote equality
of opportunity and celebrate the unique skills and abilities of each child, whilst focusing on how individual potential is to be recognised and developed. Inclusion, therefore, is not optional, but rather is a mandatory requirement since children have a defined entitlement and all settings have a legal responsibility to provide this (Inclusion Development Programme, 2008). Whilst recognising that the inclusion ideology is clearly enshrined in government policy and that settings show their increasing commitment to the principle, for it to be truly effective funding needs to be commensurate providing necessary physical and human resources (Pugh, 2005).

Diversity

Complementary to inclusion is the recognition of diversity, for if everyone is included, then in recognising their individuality we recognise their diversity too. All settings will also have a written policy which therefore recognises the diversity of the setting associated with special needs, gender, ethnicity, and class. Such policies should include provision for planning, resources, staffing and training, taking into account practices that do not disadvantage any particular group.

Staff need to be adequately trained to cope with the complex, and sometimes difficult situations that arise from working with parents from different cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds. It is suggested, that not all early years training prepares practitioners adequately to meet the needs of children and families from diverse backgrounds (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005) (this aspect is identified also in chapter 4). With reference to linguistic differences it is clear that by valuing all languages, we validate those languages spoken by the community and families within the setting (Siraj-Blatchford, 1994a).

There is a need for the curriculum to support diversity and since in early years in particular learning is facilitated through play, then this should be reflected in the resources and materials provided in the environment (these will be identified later in the observations made by the researcher, see chapter 4 on results).
Policy and practice

Having established that both inclusion and diversity are the accepted ideology, and that settings have the responsibility for the effective implementation of policies, how then are these multicultural and equity perspectives reflected in practice? A culturally responsive curriculum and staff who both respect and understand the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the children and families in their care can make a positive difference (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2000).

It is important that children grow up with the ability to retain their L1 and home culture, having a sense of pride in their gender, ethnicity, and class whilst adapting confidently to their new culture and L2. It is suggested by Pugh (2005) that any curriculum for early years should include the following:

- foster children’s self-esteem
- acknowledge the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all children
- actively maintain and develop children’s L1/home language
- promote the teaching of English as an additional language
- value bilingualism as an asset
- value what boys and girls can do equally
- support families in their efforts to maintain their languages and cultures
- foster an awareness of diversity in class, gender, ability and culture
- promote respect for similarity and difference
- challenge bias and prejudice
- promote a sense of fairness
- promote principles of inclusion and equity
- support the participation of parents in children’s learning (p.60).

This list will provide a benchmark for comparison with the curriculum observed by the researcher (see chapter on 4 results).
FACTORS SHAPING ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Language acquisition

Much has been written and researched on the subject of language acquisition, from the innate reasoning theory suggested by Chomsky (1979), to the environmental influences that Skinner proposes (1957). The discussion surrounds the issues of whether children are taught language, or if it is simply added onto cognition (Fodor, 1975). Whorf (1956) suggests that our understanding comes from our particular language, so that those of different languages see the world in different ways. This would suggest that language acquisition is about learning to think, not just learning to talk; this is an interesting concept when looking at the acquisition of L2. However, virtually all modern cognitive scientists, according to Pinker (1994a), disregard Whorf's ideas about language.

It is clear that babies can think before they can talk. Piaget (1926) refers to this period of cognitive development as the sensori-motor period, when children communicate through movement. A further claim of cognitive psychologists is that children think not just in words, but in images too (Bruner, 1983). The development from enactive and iconic modes to symbolic ones is clearly seen in children’s development of language: from spoken thought to reading and written forms. Pinker (1994a) asserts that it is almost impossible for children to learn a language without non-linguistic cognitive machinery being in place. This is in line with the view held by Chomsky (1979), who recognizes that since adult language is complex and children as they mature will gradually develop this complex adult-form of language then, there must be a capacity within the child that is capable of achieving this. Chomsky refers to this ‘cognitive machinery’ as the language acquisition device. However, there must inevitably be input before there can be output, as Chomsky’s sensitive period hypothesis would confirm. This will have some impact on how language is taught both as L1 and L2, since the amount of input and an approach which is age appropriate need to be considered. Newport
et al (1977) likewise point to the importance of age in the successful acquisition of language. L1 is usually well developed by the age of four and guaranteed by the age of six; though it is rare that this will occur after puberty. There is a strong case then for L2 acquisition to start with children as young as possible.

Wells (1986) suggests that the acquisition of language starts with the acquisition of sound patterns. It is clear that unborn children can identify the mother’s voice and familiar music, both of which have a soothing effect after birth; another early indicator of the acquisition of sound patterns. Around the first birthday, babies start to produce words (Ingram, 1989) though they have clearly understood them before this time. There is currently a growing interest and practice in early years for babies to be taught to use Makaton from around the age of nine months, in order for them to signal their needs to their carers, while they are still at the pre-linguistic stage of development. Although Makaton was originally used for children with learning disabilities, its benefits are also being used to advantage with younger children, regardless of ability. The curriculum guidance (EYFS, 2008) at this stage is for children to become skillful and competent communicators, and this includes the linking of sounds to physical movements. This enables practitioners and parents to reinforce the gestures made, by speaking the correct word, and so further reinforces the development of expressive language. This provides a strong link to the work of Skinner in relation to the role of parents/carers in the acquisition and development of children’s language.

There is evidence to suggest that children’s early language formation reflects the language that is being acquired (Pinker, 1984; Ingram, 1989). Experiments by Hirsh-Pasekt and Golinkoff (1991) suggest that children also understand the order of words to be S (subject) V (verb) O (object). Slobin (1992) is of the view that by the age of four children will have acquired all parts of spoken language.
Normal human speech follows a pattern of timing, stress, and melody, referred to as prosody. When language is directed to young children these prosodic features becomes exaggerated (Shaffer, 1977). Fernald (1992) identifies such patterns as widespread in language communities, suggesting that this may well be universal. Babies prefer to listen to such prosaic speech which may be artificially heightened by parents/carers/practitioners as part of their normal social interaction (Hirsh-Prasek et al, 1987). Children do not hear sentences in isolation, but rather in a context. For this reason television is not a good medium for children to acquire language from (Barkham, 2009). It is through social interaction that children begin to understand, and use language proficiently (Schlesinger, 1971; Macnamara, 1982).

The recent *Rose Report* (2008) highlighted the need for children to develop language through speaking and listening and recommended this should become an extended part of current literacy teaching in primary education. Zimmerman (2007) also stresses the importance of listening, believing that it is this that stimulates cognition, and encourages the mind to paint pictures of the words that are heard. This focus on speaking and listening then, provides further indicators towards the value that input and prosody play in the acquisition and development of language.

Baker (1997 p.97) summarises the issues surrounding the acquisition of a second language by identifying the individual learner, the element of the language being learned, and the conditions in which this is being presented. This highlights the breadth of what is happening for the actual learner (see table 2.2 on the following page).
Table 2.2 Issues surrounding the acquisition of a second language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aptitude for L2 learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes to language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much?</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency for everyday communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar for tests/exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What conditions?</td>
<td>Situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal classroom learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible individual learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different teaching strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identity
Identity, according to Smidt (2003), is socially created through a series of complex interactions, negotiations and relationships, which are mediated by language. Whilst language alone does not define our identity, it is none the less seen as a symbol of our identity; language and identity are therefore inextricably linked. Baker (2006) highlights the fact that identity changes according to context, enabling us to create and adopt multiple identities.

Rampton (1995) refers to this flexibility as ‘language crossing’, where children use phrases from the language of their peers. If, we are not born with identity (Gross, 2006), then we must construct it for ourselves. Children begin to construct their identities from birth based on their experiences, and as a result of their interactions. Argyle (1983) recognizes three major factors influencing the development of identity as being: (i) the reaction of others (ii) comparison with others and (iii) social roles. These categories apply equally to all children, however for those children acquiring L2, may be particularly poignant.
Young children are concerned with how adults and significant others view them. On starting school that number of significant adults increases to then include teachers, teaching assistants, and peers. Gross (2006), claims that it is the child’s perception of others’ reactions that makes an important contribution to how children comes to perceive themselves. Smidt (2008) agrees with this by explaining that children see themselves as part of a group sharing a culture. It is the way that the group is perceived and identified that will be crucial to the identity that children construct. Children will feel different if they speak a language different from the majority. Those children who encounter few or predominantly negative images of themselves, and/or their peer group, may suffer damage to the process of establishing identity. The attitudes of educators towards L2 children are therefore important as part of this process of creating a positive identity.

One way in which children form a picture of their own identity is by comparison with others (Bannister and Agnew, 1976). Children see themselves as part of a group sharing a culture; the ways in which they and other members of that group are perceived and represented will be crucial to their developing sense of identity and worth. For children who are speakers of other languages, members of other cultures and different from the rest, the reaction of those around them and, in particular their peers will impact on their self-esteem. To aid children in developing a positive self-image access to positive role models from their own ethnic and racial group is clearly needed. Research by Perry and Furkawa (1980) showed that ‘own race models’ can be important for minority learners and were deemed to have positive outcomes in reading for all cultural groups.

Whilst this comparison takes place naturally, it is important that practitioners set realistic and achievable goals for children and promote positive self-esteem. Fleer (1996) acknowledges that this may set a challenge for settings where staff themselves may be predominantly from a white, female, middle-class, Eurocentric group. Where the children in a setting are from a diverse ethnic background there is a need to develop a greater ethnic diversity amongst the
staff too, since children also need positive adult models to compare themselves against (MacNaughton and Williams, 2009).

An important feature of constructing identity, according to Mead (1934, cited in Gross, 2002) is role-taking. Children’s pretend play is an invaluable element of this, since play not only enables young children to enact such roles but also allows them to imitate the language that accompanies this. It is, again, this aspect of identifying others that provides the child with a sense of self-identity.

Connolly (1998) refers to the many ‘discourses’ that combine in complex ways to shape and influence the identities that children form; specifically to race, religion, gender, age, and class; which are relevant to the children in the study. He comments that each of these discourses influences both the social environment and the sense of identity (aspects illuminated on in the results, chapter 4).

Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke (2005) also conclude that identity formation is a complex process that is never completed. By identifying the same ‘discourses’ as Connolly (1998) in the formation of identity, they point to the role of the early years practitioner as important in this process. To ignore the importance of identity formation in children in all its complexity, is to ignore the child’s individuality.

Concerning L2 and becoming bilingual, Gravelle (1996) points out that the way in which children acquire L2 may affect the view they have of themselves and their L1. How such children see and define themselves may also be affected by the attitudes of others (educators and peers) towards their L2 skills:

‘to be told, whether directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, that your language and the language of your parents, of your home and of your friends is non-functional in school is to negate your sense of self’ (Cummins and Swain, 1986, p.107).
Developing a strong sense of identity involves knowing the maternal language (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981) and contributes to a strong sense of self and positive self-esteem. To deny language in education is to deny an intrinsic part of the learner too (Gravelle, 1996). The metaphor of a kaleidoscope is used to highlight the many facets that comprise identity (Hall, 1992), and the differences that make up the individual. The importance of recognizing individual identity therefore has implications for practice, and requires practitioners to be active in planning for, supporting and developing individual children’s identities as masterful learners of a broad and balanced curriculum (Siraj-Blatchford, 1998). For L2 speakers acquiring and developing their English language skills a more individualised approach may be required, which incorporates many opportunities to learn language, sometimes with other speakers of their first language, sometimes learning from speakers of the English language, and also having the opportunity to teach others about their own language (Smidt, 2008).

**Home and community**

Children begin learning to be members of their own culture from birth and are exposed to culturally appropriate ways of behaving. These include personal behaviour (e.g. posture, gestures) and interactional behaviour (e.g. non-verbal communication, rules and acceptable modes of behaviour). Whilst some aspects of culture are visible (e.g. food, celebration), others, such as child-rearing and expectations within families are not. Child-rearing practices often differ and may be based on beliefs about gender, personal characteristics, what children need, and how they should be handled. Since within the early years environment many different cultures operate, which includes a range of diverse ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. For some settings, particularly those which are predominantly White British in culture, understanding the diverse cultural needs of others is becoming an increasingly complex issue (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005). This is now reflected in the curriculum (EYFS, 2007) which now considers what is appropriate developmentally, individually, and culturally. Early years practice is increasingly reflecting the diverse cultures of the families represented to them (Gonzales-Mena, 1998).
It is essential, then, for early years practitioners to understand the conflict that may be faced by those children coming from diverse cultural backgrounds (see recommendations chapter 6). Gonzales-Mena (1998) identifies the issues of independence and interdependence and the priorities that different cultural groups may give to these. This aspect of conflict, between independence and inter-dependence is of particular interest, since there is a clear emphasis on independence within the early years curriculum. Children have two major tasks to achieve in their socialization, that of becoming an independent individual whilst at the same time establishing relationships with others. Culture may clearly affect the way that this is approached (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005).

The examples given (ibid) to highlight the difference between these two tasks are that the individual is autonomous and so has responsibility for developing to their best of their ability, and become part of a larger group. In this view, personal fulfillment and achievement are important. Alternatively, the individual is seen not as an individual but rather, as one who is connected by a network of relationships. The opposite view is held here, that it is the obligation to others that is more important than personal fulfillment.

Children may experience conflict between the expectations of the home/culture and the establishment/wider society, since L2 speakers may perceive their obligation to parents/family as more important than their obligation to school. There may, therefore, be a pressure on the individual to continue L1, particularly in the home rather than progress their rate of L2 acquisition. In turn, this may present aspects of conflict for practitioners between their own pedagogy of respect for and working in collaboration with parents, and the expectations of the setting, which is, for L2 speakers to become proficient in English language skills. The conflict arises with parents who may be perceived as not encouraging or, at worst, slowing down their children’s rate of language development (see chapter 4 on results).
Home culture and language

Most bio-cultural children learn English (as L2) in order to interact within the school setting, and as part of their integration into the wider community. Thus by moving into such a new context they now have contact with other influences, such as those of the school and the culture of education itself. This will result in interaction with a range of both adults and children from backgrounds, and experiences different to their own. With reference to identity, as previously described, children as a result of this widening social contact will now increase an understanding of both themselves, and their families.

Children entering such new environments may be encountering an unfamiliar world with different language and cultural practices than those they are used to. English (their L2) is the primary means of communication and the experiences of the children are unlikely to have been experienced by many of the staff. The emphasis on literacy and language development is dominant in early years, with staff taking the lead and encouraging speaking and listening in the children. All of this may bear little resemblance to the language spoken or used in the home environment. The attitude held by educators (Smidt, 2008) is often negative towards other languages and dialects. This deficit view, of the language of other groups, such as bilinguals, non-standard English, and the working class is an important issue for educators if children are to achieve. The difference between the language spoken by educators and that spoken by some children (Bernstein, 1961; Tough, 1985) could be significant. ‘Educators’ are seen to use an ‘elaborate code’ of speech, in terms of sentence length, structure and vocabulary, use of questions, recall and prediction, and subject. By contrast, the groups identified above are seen to use a ‘restricted code,’ which is observed to have the opposite use of speech; short sentences, limited vocabulary, use of statements and lacking in description and discussion. When added to the issues of culture and home language, what emerges clearly is a complex environment for the young L2 learner. Trudgill (1980) discusses this not in terms of codes, but rather of styles of spoken language, and identifies the wide range covered by the English language as moving from the very informal to the very formal. Whilst he
agrees with Labov (1972) that all speakers have a repertoire of styles, which they can consciously change, he is also quick to point out that some languages, in fact, do not have this repertoire so that some speakers need to switch language in order to express themselves appropriately. This is not the case for native English speakers. However, for young children who speak a first language which may have a limited repertoire of styles e.g. Urdu, to be then taught by and in English with its many variations of style a confusing situation may arise. Such children may not able to express themselves appropriately in their L1, because of its restricted styles and yet, are not proficient enough to do this in L2 either because of its many and unfamiliar styles.

Another factor in the use of English as L2 is that the form used by children is not necessarily akin to accepted ‘standard’ English (Labov, 1970). Children may use non-standard speech when communicating with each other with a tendency to use slang, text-speak, and attribute new meaning to words e.g. wicked now means good (Smidt, 2008). Research by Tizard and Hughes (1984) compared the use of language in families with that used by teachers. It was found that language in the home was based on genuine interactions that was suited to learning and revolved around making sense of the world. By contrast, there was no genuine exchange of dialogue between teachers and children, but rather a tendency to ask questions whilst expecting a particular answer (Refer to chapter 5 on findings for an analysis of this relationship). The effect of such constant questioning on children who are in the process of acquiring L2 may cause them to become self-conscious, lose self-esteem, and ultimately withdraw from answering. This results in a perceived failure of language in such groups of children.

Having recognised that children live in complex cultural worlds (Proust, 2005) it is also true that children are able to adapt both their language, and behaviour according to which ‘world’ they are in. Since, both language and culture change then the child’s world must be regarded as a changing one (Hall, 1992). This aspect of change is seen not as fragmented, but as part of the developing self-
identity (Smidt, 2008). This concept of children having simultaneous worlds (Kenner, 2003) can be applied fairly to those children growing with one or more language from birth/early years who spend their time in multicultural and multilingual environments. However, whilst this may be true in the home with parents who want their children to learn English, some parents have concerns about the loss of ‘mother-tongue’ and culture. The same can be observed in early years settings.

Parents and parental involvement
Early years educators have always held firmly to the belief that parents are the prime educators in children’s lives, drawing on the pioneering work of such educators as Pestalozzi, Froebel and McMillan (Nurse, 2008). The practice they developed is now firmly enshrined in legislation, starting with the Children Act, 1989, and underpins both educational policy and practice. Though successive governments have aimed to increase parental choice and partnership, and schools continue to make progress in this direction, it is not always achievable to include and engage all parents. In particular, minority ethnic, single and working-class parents, and families are often the groups less involved in their children’s formal education (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005).

Lareau (1989) suggests the link between working-class parents and schools is one of separation rather than interconnectedness where the working-class and ethnic minority parents put their trust in the professional judgment, believing and accepting that they know best and therefore do not intervene. Ironically this can sometimes be misunderstood by staff as indicating a lack of interest by such parents, who may then be perceived to have abdicated their parental responsibility to the school. A further complication for the ethnic minority parents is their lack of English skills, and the possible negative attitudes held by staff towards this apparent ‘deficit’.

In response, Gilkes (1989) sees that parents have to firstly feel supported, helped, and valued before they can reciprocate in any form of partnership. For
some parents and, in particular the ethnic minority groups, this is a very wide gulf that may be difficult to overcome because of the many complex issues involved. For some parents, their own negative experiences of education make any involvement difficult to achieve. What is particularly relevant to this study is the impact that parental involvement can have on children’s language development and literacy progress. Harrison (1988) and Spreadbury (1995) conducted research amongst working-class and ethnic minority groups, and identified one major factor as being whether the mother regularly heard the child read, rather than the mother’s competence in language or the child’s IQ rating. A recent study for the National Literacy Trust (Bonci, 2009) concluded that the greatest impact on children’s language development was the level of maternal education. Research conducted by Harrison and James (1990) stated that staff involvement in the home made a positive impact on reading. All of this suggests the importance of educators and parents working together.

Five types of parental involvement are seen as important (Epstein and Dauber, 1991 p.74)

> Parenting skills, child development and home environment
> Communication from school to home
> Parents as volunteers in school
> Involvement in learning activities at home
> Decision making, leadership and governance.

Long (1992 p.168) sees this in three categories:

- peripheral involvement i.e. fundraising and photocopying
- collaboration – limited educational tasks e.g. home reading
- partnership – a co-operative parent/teacher/child venture
There is a clear correlation between successful parental involvement and partnership, and better outcomes for children \textit{(ibid)}. Feinstein (2004) identifies the most important underlying influence on children’s attainments to be parental education and recognizes clearly, the need for schools and parents to engage in enhancing this.

**Culture**

In accepting that home culture can be an influence in L2 acquisition and development, three elements can be identified that contribute to culture itself and which present themselves as pillars on which that culture is built. These are the state, ethnicity, and religion (Baumann, 1999).

The state has its own culture which influences its people. In this study the ‘state’ is Western European with its recent history of democracy. Within this, are those from other states, which form different cultural identities. (The impact of this difference will be discussed as part of the results.) The dominant cultures identified in the study are those from South Asia, predominantly immigrants from Pakistan and India. There are also those from Africa, particularly those with refugee and asylum status, and those from Eastern Europe who tend to be economic migrants. Whilst the impact of culture on families occurs through its beliefs, values, and parenting practices, parents world-wide share some fundamental goals for their children. These can be identified as a desire to keep their children safe and healthy, develop skills for surviving financially, and maintain the positive values respected by their own culture. Longer term goals are seen to include marriage, tertiary education, a successful occupation, developing self-respect, respect for others, honesty, and caring (CASA, 2009). (These issues will be examined further through the parent forum. See chapter 4 on results).

Ethnicity is not based on genetics or heritage but on an identity, resulting partly from socialization, which includes the skills, behaviours, and attitudes that are
learned from within the family. Children starting school from a home culture which is different to that of the majority may therefore, bring with them values and experiences that may contradict those that they encounter in the school environment. It is suggested, that children from the indigenous population are more likely to have values and social learning conventions that match those expected by school and, as such arrive at school better equipped for learning than children from minority groups (Tizard and Hughes, 1984; Moore, 1999).

Religion confers on its members a sense of morality and an ideology that influences the thinking and behaviour of the group (Harrison, 1990). The major religions identified in the study are Christianity and Islam. Research figures available for 2006 (DfES, 2006) reveal the following concerning the importance of religion in pupils’ lives (these are for the age range 5-16, but include the age group of children in the study). (See table 2.3, figures are given in percentages).

### Table 2.3 The importance of religion in pupils’ lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>No importance</th>
<th>Some importance</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils said they were Muslim and the vast majority said that religion was very important to them. In contrast, 55 per cent of White British pupils said they were Christian, a large proportion (62 per cent) said religion had no/some importance in their lives.

Baumann (1999) defines this view of culture as the collective heritage of a group with ideas and practices that shape both the individual, and the collective lives of
all its members. For practitioners working with parents from a culture different to the majority of the setting/community there are obvious challenges to be overcome. The subtleties of language (L1 and L2), as Valdes (1996) points out, often imply differences in meaning. Parents recognize their own role in teaching their children (i.e. bringing them up) and also regard the teaching (i.e. educating them) as being the responsibility of the professional. When applied to the teaching and learning of L2, parents from some cultures may therefore deem this to be the responsibility of the school and not the home (Adair and Tobin, 1989).

Whilst many parents from the indigenous English population know what is expected of them as prime educators, and this can be seen in the way some children are prepared for school (e.g. being taught the alphabet and writing their own names), parents from other cultures often regard this to be the role of the professional educator and, as such, may not prepare their children in this way. Cultural differences become apparent here with regard to who may have to delineate these two worlds (Valdes, 1996). This identifies a deeper complexity (Moraga, 1983) in the psychological and socio-cultural nature of working with parents in a multicultural environment.

This cultural aspect of family (Rogoff, 2003) needs to recognized and understood since it impacts on the developing child. Some cultures may encourage children to be part of the adult life of their community whilst others see childhood as a separate state and, as such children are more distanced from the adults within their community. Brooker (2002) also highlights how the expectations of family towards schooling and education may vary across cultures, in that the expectations of settings may not accord with those of the family.

Gender

Research has consistently shown that girls and boys spend their time differently in early years settings (Davies and Brenner, 1994; MacNaughton, 2001). Boys tend to spend more time in higher levels of physical activity and in less socially stable groups, while girls tend to become involved in activities less physical in nature, develop language skills more easily and have more positive social
relationships. Featherstone and Clarke (2009) point to the fact that, in boys, brain
development in those areas supporting fine motor skills is slower than it is in
girls. This may offer some explanation to why boys are happier to use gross
motor skills involved in much of their large physical activity, whilst girls develop
writing skills earlier and so progress in their literacy at a quicker rate than boys. It
is suggested, that at 6 to 7 years of age boys can be 12 months less developed
mentally than girls in their fine motor co-ordination (Biddulph, 2007). For
teachers working with this age group, then, it is necessary to actively engage
boys so that this gap is lessened and they are more actively engaged in the
process of developing literacy. The national data from the EYFS profile for 2004-
6 suggested that boys were underachieving more than girls across all areas of
learning (DfCSF, 2007). In response to this identified need to support learning for
boys, guidance was issued to EYFS practitioners (DfCSF, 2007) setting out clear
guidance and good practice.

Since, it is clear that children will identify with images of people like themselves
(MacNaughton and Williams, 2009), it is important that stories should represent
diversity. Staff, therefore, need to be alert to elements such as; clothing, setting,
characters, language, and storyline in order that children have their own gender
stereotypes challenged possibly by images unlike themselves, and that both girls
and boys are encouraged to become positive readers (Davies, 2003). The same
applies to challenging both the racial and cultural stereotypes presented to
children, in order that children developing L2 skills are actively engaged in the
literacy process.

Two issues emerging concerning gender issues are that girls tend to perform
less well at problem-solving when working in mixed-gender groups (Parkin, 1991;
Holmes-Lonergan, 2003), since they tend to deal with differences through verbal
reasoning and negotiation, whereas, boys generally adopt a more aggressive
solution. For this reason staff may need to work with single gender groups for
some activities, to accommodate this period of development (MacNaughton,
2000).
The other issue concerns the reasons why staff give attention to children. Dobbs et al (2004) identify that boys generally receive attention for their misbehaviour and are otherwise given more commands. By comparison, girls receive more positive interactions from staff, with a tendency to be praised for very little effort. One other factor identified is that boys and girls play together more cooperatively when a member of staff is close by. This serves to highlight the importance of adult involvement in early years generally, and for language development in particular. Since children arrive in settings having some sense of identity formed from within the home and background culture, there may, for those from a male-dominant culture, be a sense of either male superiority or female deference. Patterson and Bigler (2006) suggest strongly that gender and gender behaviour are learned through adult reinforcement. There is considerable evidence (MacNaughton, 2006) from all cultures that boys and girls try to undermine each other when they move into areas traditionally associated with the other gender. This intolerance may be exacerbated further by cultural influences.

THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Definitions of second language acquisition

The sequence of L2 acquisition, regardless of the language and the learning environment follows a natural and almost invariant order of development: simple vocabulary, basic syntax, simple sentences, complex sentences (Ellis, 1985). This follows a fairly universal sequence of language acquisition (Lee and Das Gupta, 2001). The order in which language is learned may be different to the sequence in terms of specific details e.g. grammar and vocabulary. The rate of development and level of proficiency of the L2 learner may vary widely depending on situational factors. Differences in attitude, motivation, learning strategy, and personality will affect the rate of individual acquisition and proficiency (Ellis, 1985). Becoming functionally bilingual, according to Cummins (1994), is influenced by the extent to which L1 has developed. There is a
suggestion that where the L1 is less well-developed or where it has been replaced by L2, the development of that L2 may become impeded. For this reason (Brown, 2007) it is seen as good practice in the UK to support children’s home language in order to help them learn English as quickly as possible. This is regarded to be a positive asset in fostering the linguistic, religious, and cultural identities of ethnic cultural groups. Ellis (1985) suggests the components determining the effective acquisition of L2: input, learner differences, learner processes, and linguistic output.

Linguistic input is concerned with the type of L2 input received by the learner when listening and reading, whether this is strictly controlled by the teacher with learning presented in small sequenced chunks (Bruner, 1983) or the teacher creating the environment in which children can actively engage with language (Chomsky, 1979). Learning a language is not a simple process, particularly for those children who are learning a second language; for this reason children need to be exposed to a rich variety of linguistic input. It is clear that young children tune into the sounds and patterns of the language that they hear; the more that interpersonal language is exchanged the greater the encouragement for the child. One important aspect is, however, that the input must be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the learner with strategies and tactics that are clearly appropriate and meaningful.

The input of language learning in classrooms needs to rich and varied and will differ according to the language composition of the particular classroom (Fillmore, 1982). In classrooms with large numbers of L2 learners the tendency is for directed teacher input, whereas, by contrast classrooms comprising L2 learners and native speakers tend to utilize a more open organisational approach. In addition to this is the role of other staff in supporting children’s language, which may involve speaking to children in their mother-tongue, and/or translating what the teacher is saying. Fillmore suggests that in classes with large numbers of L2 learners the teacher is more effective in controlling the input,
otherwise children tend to talk to each other in their L1 and as such are not practicing L2. Those classes with mixed numbers of L1 and L2 speakers adopted the more flexible approach in order for children to learn from each other too (ibid). This may suggest that a strong correlation exists between the teaching style adopted and the language composition of the classroom (see chapter 4 on results for a detailed analysis).

It is not enough to look just at language input and L2 output without some regard to the internal processes taking place. The input received by learners is sifted, processed and organized, and whilst this is not easily observed it is helpful for the teacher to determine what is taking place in order to facilitate learning. One learner method suggested by Tarone (1980) has three stages: firstly the ways in which the learner processes L2 input e.g. memory; secondly, how the learner attempts to use L2 and, thirdly, how the learner actually communicates with others even though there is some lack of proficiency in L2 skills.

With reference to memory, Smidt (2008) points out that bilingual children may have difficulty in recall unless objects and cues are present, since their first language may not hold the same meaning or representation and because of their limited experiences. In terms of how children attempt to use L2 it must be remembered that all language is language, and for young children there may be a tendency to switch words and phrases from each of their languages. This does not suggest confusion or inadequacy but, rather, that the child is working out which style and language is appropriate in which situation. This is akin to the view held by Chomsky (1979) of the innate human ability to learn languages, mirroring his theory of there being a Language Acquisition Device.

Ellis (1985) sees the language proficiency of learners as being: (i) evolutionary rather than fixed and (ii) variable depending on the context in which learning takes place. Learners need the opportunity to engage in meaningful spoken exchanges in both the classroom and the community, since it is in the conveying of meaning that children will learn about the structure and form of L2 (Swain,
Whilst understanding language may be a passive occurrence (receptive learning), oral proficiency will only develop when L2 is practiced in a meaningful context. Children are more likely to want to express themselves in an environment where their ideas are valued and respected, and where they know that staff will listen to them. There needs to be as much opportunity for children to speak in the classroom situation to develop their spoken skills as there is to learn to read by reading, and to write by writing (Baker, 1997). Such skills are further enhanced as children develop their spoken skills in a wider context, such as at home, and in the community.

Becoming bilingual has, in Lambert’s view (1974), an effect on the self-esteem and ego, since it enables the learner to interact more ably with a different language group and therefore a wider cultural group too. This would suggest that, for children becoming bilingual there involves an element of ‘enculturation’, whereby they may develop different aspirations, world views, values, and beliefs. This may be a cause of cultural conflict both for the individual and the family/community and could in turn have a negative impact on the development of L2 skills. He continues this argument by looking at the development of L2 in two alternative ways: additive or subtractive. In the former, the acquisition of L2 is achieved with little or no pressure to replace or reduce L1 and, as such, is seen to add to language skills (Landry et al., 1991). In contrast, the latter, results from pressure to replace or demote L1 and can be deemed to have detracted from bilingual skills acquisition. In the second instance this may be accompanied by a lowering of self-esteem, loss of cultural identity, and possibly, alienation from society. These factors are even more important when working with young children who are still forming their sense of identity.

In terms of ability and aptitude to acquire L2, there is some academic debate around children’s general ability in terms of intelligence (Baker, 1988) and their specific aptitude towards language skills (Oller and Perkins, 1978). This might suggest that the more intelligent children are, the more likely they are to become proficient in their language skills. Whilst there may be some links in terms of
academic achievement, this is less so with reference to everyday language skills (Cummins, 1984) as the work of Chomsky would also confirm (Gross, 2000). It has to be acknowledged that there may be some relation between general academic ability and the rate and success of L2 acquisition, though according to Ellis (1985) there is no evidence that intelligence affects the route of L2 acquisition, in sequence and order. There is clearly a difference between L2 learning in the formal classroom environment rather than L2 proficiency in a natural communicative situation (Krashen, 1981).

In terms of motivation for acquiring L2, Baker (1992) identifies the following: cultural, economic, social, vocational, integrative, self-esteem, and self-actualisation. Learners want to belong and be part of the group; it is this need to belong and develop identity that will be the positive motivator for this integrative motivation (Baker, 1997). For others, economic and educational factors act as the motivator, seen as instrumental motivation (ibid). For children then, both these elements are taking place, the need to belong and be the same as others, and the desire to achieve academic success. The individual’s motives (Yatim, 1988) are often a subtle mix of the two.

Theories of second language acquisition

The work of Skinner in terms of children’s language development is also relevant (applied to children acquiring L2) since it is concerned with imitation, reinforcement, and reward. Put simply, children repeat what they hear: the correct sounds are reinforced by the adult who, at the same time, ignores incorrect sounds and rewards the child with praise for their good efforts. Skinner therefore regards the role of the adult as crucial in the successful development of children’s language (Smidt, 2008). This clearly corresponds to the learning environment and the quality of practitioner input in directing and guiding children learning L2. Young L2 learners need to hear good models of English language being spoken and have their efforts recognised.
Early communication with young children not only lays the foundations for language, intellectual, and social development but, also for a way of life. The pattern of gestures, talk and underlying values are also being conveyed by the non-verbal characteristics of communication. Children learn that communication is face-to-face, uses gestures, and facial expressions along with the pace, pitch, and tone of voice that conveys its emotional content. The expertise of early years practitioners then, is to respond sensitively to the communications of young children, whether this is in English or another language, and in so doing lay the foundations for continued language acquisition and development.

The unique language that young children create, provides evidence that children are born with an innate ability to understand and produce appropriate and meaningful language. Additionally, this points to the fact that language is not merely about communication and socializing but, also about thought and memory. Those children then, who are learning English as an additional language, need to have the time and space to develop such thought and memory at their own pace, rather than be pressured into communicating and socializing in a language that they are not yet comfortable with.

Chomsky (1975) looked at the individual in the context of the environment and suggested that language is genetically determined. He regards children as potentially competent users of language from birth since they have the innate response to process language. Though, he also stressed that there are certain critical periods for language to be developed and that the ability to do so beyond puberty generally diminishes (Whitehead, 2006). This might suggest, then, that for children acquiring L2, the sooner they are exposed to this the better the outcomes will be. Chomsky, highlights the fact that children not only make mistakes as a natural part of developing their language proficiency, but, also correct themselves, this confirms that they are making sense of what they hear and working out what to say. This can be seen clearly in L2 speakers who may
switch language in order to express themselves, and may also make grammatical errors.

Since Chomsky believed children to be programmed for language, he saw no reason for direct language teaching, but rather that children should be immersed in an environment where language was constantly used and where adults used correct forms; by so doing, he felt that children would pick up the correct forms of language. If, such direct teaching is less effective than supporting children in their acquisition of language then this has significant implications for early years practitioners, to develop and provide an environment that fully supports language development. Such an environment needs to be a rich one that facilitates children in every way to develop, extend, and play with language. Practitioners need to guide, assist, interact with, and support children in-line with their developmental needs, since oral language is the critical foundation on which reading and writing is built, if they are to become fully literate.

The model discussed by Schumann (1978) is essentially concerned with the L2 learner adapting to a new culture, with the L2 identified as one aspect of that culture. In this the relationship between the L1 community of the learner and the L2 community is essential to the successful acquisition of that second language. The extent to which the learner becomes part of the new culture and language group determines the degree to which the L2 is acquired. The social factors that facilitate this are identified by Schumann (1978) as:

- the perceived equality between the two language groups; the greater the distance between these, the less the chance of L2 learning
- both groups desire assimilation into the learner’s social group
- both groups expect the L2 group to share the social facilities of the L1 group
- the L2 group is small and can be assimilated into the L1 group
- the extent to which the L2s group’s culture is congruent and similar to that of the L1 group
- the extent to which both groups have positive attitudes and expectations of each other
- the extent to which L2 learner groups expect to stay with the L1 group for a longer rather than a shorter period of time (e.g. economic migrants).

Other factors identified (ibid) are psychological factors important in the development of L2. These include: possible language confusion when using L2, stress, anxiety, culture shock, degree of motivation, and level of self-consciousness. When social/psychological distances are great then learners may lack progress in L2 acquisition; alternatively, when such factors are positive the transition to L2 may occur with relative ease. Interestingly, Schumann identifies ‘pidginization’ (as a simplified form of a language) as a characteristic of early second language acquisition but also points out that again, where social/psychological distances are great, this will occur at a societal/community level. This may prove relevant to the findings of the study in terms of the forms of English being acquired that may deviate from the norm (see chapter 4). In this model of L2 acquisition, language is seen to have three broad functions: for communication, integration, and expression. It is language that aids the transmission of information, aids the affiliation to the social group and allows the transmission of feelings and ideas. Initially L2 learners will use their language for basic communication. Those who become proficient will more easily form part of the social group and gradually will achieve an expressive use of that language too.

The accommodation theory (Giles and Byrne, 1982) is concerned with social differences between groups: the in-group (the L1 social group) and the out-group (the L2 community). Whilst the relationship between groupings is seen as fluid and changing, there is also the identification of a subordinate (L1) and dominant group (L2).

Second language learners fall into the subordinate group and are perceived to have the following characteristics:
do not see themselves as just a member of the L1 group that is separate from 
the L2 group

- do not regard their ethnic group as inferior to the dominant group
- perceive their ethnic group to have a lower status to the dominant group
- see their ethnic boundaries as 'soft and open' rather than 'hard and closed'
- hold adequate status within their ethnic group (e.g. employment, gender, 
power, and religion). (Giles and Byrne, 1982 p.35)

According to this theory, a person less likely to acquire a second language may 
have a strong identification with their own group, make insecure comparisons 
with the dominant group, regard their L1 as having a high status and perceive the 
boundaries between their L1 and the L2 group as being separate and rigid. 
Whilst this does not explain how children acquire a second language it cannot be 
ignored since children are part of their own L1 community and will often adopt the 
beliefs and attitudes of the adults around them, who may well fall into these 
categories. Such cultural influence needs to be addressed in terms of children's 
progress. Whilst this theory is not without criticism (Williams, 1992), mainly 
because of its tendency to downplay any level of conflict, discrimination or 
frustration experienced by minority language groups, its’ particular strength 
(Baker, 1988) is the acknowledgment of ethnic identity in L2 acquisition.

The most widely held theory of L2 acquisition is that of Krashen (1977, 1981, 
This monitor model consists of five hypotheses: acquisition learning hypothesis, 
natural order hypothesis, monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis, and affective filter 
hypothesis.

The acquisition learning hypothesis for Krashen is the distinction between 
acquisition and learning. Acquisition is seen as the subconscious process that 
occurs naturally from informal communication where the language is a means 
and not the focus or intended outcome. In comparison, learning occurs in a more
formal situation where language is purposefully taught, thus making it a conscious process. To Krashen, the former relies on unconscious feelings about what is correct and appropriate, whilst the latter involves conscious thinking about the rules of language. The distinction between acquisition and learning in the context of the classroom will impact on the teaching methods and approaches to L2 learning. For young children who are still learning L1, a blend of both the formal instructive and informal acquisition methods is deemed most appropriate (Smidt, 2008).

The natural order hypothesis suggests that grammar is acquired in a predictable order, irrespective of which L2 is being learned. Chomsky likewise recognises that children are adept at working out the rules of grammar and start by saying things correctly through imitating what they hear adults and fluent speakers saying. They then move on and start to make apparent mistakes by applying the rules to all situations; by ‘over-generalising’ the rules they hear (Smidt, 2008). Children continue to work out patterns and rules logically as they progress into fluent speech.

The monitor hypothesis is the suggestion that there is a self-corrective element to speech whereby there is pressure to speak correctly, and when the appropriate rules are known the speaker will edit the output of their speech. There is certainly evidence of this for children developing L1 who, as part of the learning process, make grammatical errors and then will correct themselves (Whitehead, 2006).

The input hypothesis proposes that when learners are exposed to grammatical features slightly beyond their current level these are then acquired. It is this input provided in a supportive and meaningful context that enables learners to understand naturally. To Krashen, then, L2 emerges as a process of understanding the input rather than as a result of direct teaching.

The affective filter hypothesis is concerned with factors that may influence the rate and success of L2 acquisition. It is suggested that there is filter that
determines how much the individual will learn in both formal and informal contexts. The filter comprises such factors as attitude to language, motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. Those learners with positive attitudes and self-confidence will have a low filter and efficient L2 learning. Conversely, those with less positive attitudes and high anxiety will have a high filter and, consequently, less efficient L2 learning will occur.

Critics of Krashen’s monitor model point to the fact that it is difficult to test and does not really explain the cognitive processes underlying the acquisition and learning of L2 (Larsen-Freeman, 1983). The suggestion of a critical faculty that creates an awareness of correct communication also is brought into question (Morrison and Low, 1983) along with Krashen’s failure to explain the variables between the individual in L2 learning (Ellis, 1985). However, in terms of language acquisition it should be recognized that this is not an exact science but rather, a complex process in which the innate ability of the individual (Chomsky, 1979) and the social environment (Skinner, 1957) play a part that cannot be separated, but rather work together constructively.

The separate underlying proficiency model theory held by Cummins (1980) perceives the two languages as operating separately and with a restricted capacity for those languages to be stored. This is described as a weighing scale that is held in balance so that the L2 increases as the L1 decreases. Whilst this may appear logical, the evidence, according to Cummins (1977), suggests that once children have achieved a certain level of L2 competence, positive cognitive consequences can result. It is also clear that the brain holds a capacity for language development in both hemispheres. Baker (1997) is clear that lessons learned in one language can be readily transferred to other languages.

The common underlying proficiency model (Cummins, 1980 p.96) suggests bilingualism be viewed as two ‘icebergs’ that are separate above the surface; thus the two languages are different in their outward appearance. However, underneath the surface these two are fused so that the two languages do not
function separately, but rather through the same central processing system responsible for language development. From this theory of bilingualism it can be seen that:

- whilst a child may own more than one language, there is only one source of thought
- there is an innate capacity to store more than one language therefore children can function in two (or more) languages with ease
- information processing skills and educational attainment can be developed successfully through one language as much as two, since both channels feed the same central processor
- the language used by children in the classroom needs to be sufficiently developed to process the cognitive learning that takes place
- speaking, listening, reading, and writing in L1 or L2 help the cognitive process to develop, however, if children are made to operate in a language that is insufficiently developed then the cognitive process will not function at its best
- where there is pressure to replace L1 with L2 both cognitive function and academic achievement can be affected negatively.

It would appear from this that children achieve better results when they are allowed the time and space to develop L2 naturally, rather than at a rate which may force the transition at an unrealistic pace.

Studies by Dawe (1983) and Clarkson (1992) suggest that as children move towards balanced bilingualism there are greater cognitive benefits. The threshold theory (Toukomaa and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977) is seen as a level of language competence that has consequences for the child. At the first stage children have a level of competence in both L1 and L2 that is fairly inadequate, especially in comparison with their peers. Where a low level of competence exists in both languages children will not cope well in the classroom, and therefore their ability to process information will suffer. At the second stage will be those children with age appropriate competence in one language but not in both. Such children are
seen to be proficient in their L1, but not yet in L2. As such this partly bilingual child will be slightly different in cognitive skills from the monolingual child at stage one. At the third stage are children who have age appropriate competences in both L1 and L2, the balanced bilingual. Such children will be able to handle the curriculum in either language, and as such can be deemed to have an advantage cognitively over children at the other two stages identified. The threshold theory may suggest that minority language children who are taught through a second language will fail to develop sufficient competence in L2. Furthermore, a low level of proficiency in English will limit their ability to access the curriculum, with poor academic achievement ultimately resulting.

The developmental interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1978) suggests that a child’s L2 competence is dependent partly on the level of L1 competence. The more that L1 is developed the easier it will be to develop L2. When the L1 is at a low stage of development then it will be more difficult to achieve L2. Cummins (1984) sees the essential element for successful L2 education as being dependent on a common underlying proficiency being well developed. In order to succeed, a child’s language-cognitive skills need to be sufficiently well-developed to cope with the curriculum of the classroom. This underlying ability may be in L1, L2, or in both, simultaneously. For Cummins, it may take five to seven years for children to develop a full range of L2 skills, which compares favourably with the eight years suggested by Hakta and D’Andrea (1992).

It has been established that children need to hear a language in order to learn it, and that they will learn whichever language they are exposed to. So, what is the process of acquiring L2, since for most children (including those in this study), English as L2 is secondary to their L1. It is clear then that for children to acquire English as their second language they must be exposed to a clear model if they are to become proficient bilingual speakers. Such children, according to Maratsos (1974a) will have acquired a grammar the same as that spoken by their parents, and which may have a different structure to that of English.
Since language is regarded as vital for thinking and learning (Vygotsky, 1986) then it is clear that children learn language from others in their culture and society, and it is from this language that children will develop concepts (Smidt, 2008). Speech becomes a tool for thinking and so the words that children say inform us of their thinking. Piaget (1926) believed that language mirrored what was in the mind. Many young children think ‘out-loud’; this ‘ego-centric’ speech, according to Gardener (1993) becomes internalised as verbal thinking. Datta (2000) looks at the significance of this inner speech for bilingual learners. She describes verbal thinking as talk, which validates thought. L2 speakers, having developed this in L1, will need time to develop this in L2. This will necessitate having many opportunities for listening to the structures, patterns, and prosody of their new language, without this there may be a gap in their ability to use such inner speech in L2.

For this reason, Datta further highlights that L2 learners should be given activities which allow them to wallow in language, playing with sounds, rhyme, pattern, intonation, pitch, and pace. What is visible is the production of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, what remains unseen is the thinking process involved. For this reason, Cummins believes the language that children use in the classroom must be sufficiently well developed for them to be cognitively challenged, without which children will perform at a lower standard.

A study by Skutnabb-Kangast and Toukomaa (1988) with Finnish migrants to Sweden showed that, when the children were educated in their L1, they were as successful as their Swedish peers. Once forced to learn in Swedish they began to fail. They concluded that without the maintenance of L1 the children spoke neither language fully, and so, fell behind in cognitive development and educational performance.

Kenner and Kress (2003) point to the fact that all children live in simultaneous worlds, which can be seen in their many social roles. In each context it is suggested that they have different experiences, uses, and styles of language.
(L1). For L2 children there are many more choices to be made. For such children, Smidt (2008) claims, there is a greater wealth of metalinguistic and metacognitive skills and strategies to call upon.

Many children in our primary schools are learning English as L2, having already learned at least one other language. Datta (2002) argues that children learning English as L2 should learn it as an additional tool, and not to replace L1. She believes that forcing the pace of English (L2) and changing the use of L1 causes a displacement (subtractive bilingualism), thus causing a gap in the meaning and schema of language and, perhaps more importantly, in the self-image and confidence of the child too (Schmidt, 2008). Krashen (1982) is of the view that L2 learners have the advantage of their existing L1 experiences to draw on, and that it does not interfere with L2 production. Evidence for this he claimed was the ease with which children switched from L1 to L2. Alternatively, Dulay et al (1982) regard L2 as an independent language system which should be distinct from L1, whilst Cummins (1984) sees L1 to be both significant and important in the acquisition of L2. The existing cognitive development and linguistic experiences of bilingual learners contributes to the control and direction they have in L2 learning. Collier (1989) supports this view, accepting that fluency in L1 will enable smoother transition to L2.

The discussion so far has concentrated on the acquisition of L2 as oral communication. For children in primary education the expectation is for them to be fluent in all aspects of literacy by the end of KS1. It must be recognised that whilst writing is the symbolic representation of speech, literacy will develop in the normal pattern for language development, i.e. listen/speak/read and write. Writing, for the L2 speaker, is difficult and will require extended support to reach a proficient academic level. Brown (1998) acknowledges this, since writing, unlike speech, is less spontaneous, provides a more permanent record and has its own conventions and style.
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Strategies for teaching and learning

What children bring with them to the classroom in terms of their previous learning is a crucial starting point for the teacher, as Moore (1999) explains, bilingual children do not come to the classroom ‘cold’, they already know a lot. It is this reservoir of knowledge, experience and understanding that can provide a meaningful context on which the teacher can build (Robson, 1995). Curriculum tasks for bilingual children need to have the following considerations (Smidt, 2007 p.45):

- what the task requires of the child
- the form of presentation needs to be meaningful to the child
- the child’s language proficiencies
- the child’s previous cultural and educational experiences and knowledge
- an appropriate form of summative and formative assessment.

The following table illustrates the cognitive demands and contextual support in the classroom.

Table 2.4 Cognitive demands and contextual support in the classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COGNITIVELY DEMANDING</th>
<th>CONTEXT EMBEDDED</th>
<th>CONTEXT REDUCED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explaining and justifying</td>
<td>Make own books based on own spoken or written stories</td>
<td>Describe stories heard or seen on TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution seeking</td>
<td>Talk about today’s weather</td>
<td>Listening to a story or a poem on cassette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatising stories</td>
<td>Greeting someone</td>
<td>Reciting a nursery rhyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role playing</td>
<td>Simple measuring skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving instructions</td>
<td>Reflecting on feelings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss ways that language is written: styles and conventions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relate new information to existing knowledge</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read a book and discuss contents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening to news</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

COGNITIVELY UNDEMANDING (Baker, 2006 p.218)
Viewing these two dimensions can be a valuable way of determining appropriate ways of identifying effective teaching strategies for bilingual children.

**Defining bilingual education and the approaches in primary education.**

Bilingual education in Baker’s view (1997) is an illusion on two counts. Firstly, it is claimed that bilingual education has existed in some form for over 5,000 years, when viewed as a characteristic of early human society (Lewis, 1981). Secondly, is the concept that bilingual education should not be isolated from its historical roots as part of the framework of social, economic, cultural, and political influences (Paulston, 1992b). Bilingual education, according to Cazden and Snow (1992a), is a simple label for a complex phenomenon.

Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke (2005) recognise that young children have the potential to develop bilingually at an early age. Two types of L2 acquisition have been identified, (i) simultaneous acquisition and (ii) successful acquisition. The former (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke) occurs when children experience two languages from birth, the latter describing those children becoming L2 after L1 is partly established. (This applies to the majority of the children in this study, who acquire L1 at home and L2 on entering early years settings, regardless of their country of birth.)

The staff working with young children in primary education settings, have to decide on which approach to teaching L2 is most appropriate to use. Other considerations are in meeting the requirements of the curriculum, the wishes of parents, and the individual needs of the children. Siraj-Blatchford (1994a) argues that the use of L1 alongside L2 will uphold the confidence of the children. Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) regard the maintenance of L1 as the bedrock for continued cognitive development. There is evidence (Milne and Clarke, 1993)
that knowing more than one language increases the flexibility of children’s thinking.

Though we have a national curriculum, the strategies used by teachers and early years practitioners are flexible and interpreted often in response to local issues and needs (Kenner, 2004b). (This has been identified in the schools participating in the study.) Baker (2006) recognises that schools and nurseries are complex organisations which cannot meet the needs and expectations of all pupils and parents. Whilst acknowledging that supporting L1 helps in the learning process of L2 (Smidt, 2008), it is not a practical reality that all children can be taught in L1.

Approaches to teaching English as L2 have been identified (Cummins, 2000) as following the following styles:

- the transitional approach whereby L1 is used in early years as educational support until pupils are effective in L2 (Gravelle, 1996)
- the transmission approach, where the teacher is responsible for directive input in English
- the transformative approach which enables pupils to use L1 in order to make sense of learning.

The transitional approach, according to Baker (2006), is based on the need for assimilation since it allows a temporary period of time for the L2 learner to use their L1, until they acquire some level of L2 proficiency that enables their progression into mainstream L2 teaching and learning. Whilst children do clearly need to function in the language of the majority, it must also be recognized that this period of transition will take longer for some children than for others.
In the transmission approach the teacher speaks in the majority language (in this study this is English), whilst another member of staff (usually a bi-lingual teaching assistant) will translate as necessary both for the teacher, and the children into minority languages. This is appropriate for classrooms with a majority of L2 children or where there are a number of children with the same L1. This too becomes a period of transition as children are actively encouraged by someone who identifies with their home language and culture and who may therefore be more sensitive to the needs of young L2 learners. The bilingual performer becomes the promoter here of the transition from L1 to L2 and likewise for assimilation into the majority culture (Baker, 2006), yet achieves this from within the minority cultural group.

The transformative approach allows the use of the minority language for young L2 learners as a means of induction into the school environment and for instruction with the use of bilingual interpretation for staff. This is often used where the cohort majority is the minority language group. It is deemed to allow both languages to develop concurrently and so aid overall language confidence (Smidt, 2008). The majority language is however, clearly present in the curriculum and will increase in varying proportions as the year progresses, since the ultimate aim has to be that all children will become language proficient in L2 since it remains the language for teaching, learning, and assessment.

In terms of applying Krashen’s model to the classroom it can be argued that the goal of language teaching must be to supply understandable input in order for children to acquire L2 easily. The level of teaching must therefore be delivered at a level understandable by the L2 learner. This implies that a simplified, comprehensible level of L2 is spoken in order to effectively facilitate L2 for young children. Teaching must also be in the context of real life situations, so that confidence in communication is promoted and thus prepares the learner to move with ease between the classroom and the outside world (Baker, 1988). Another feature of this would be the ethos of the classroom, which allows children to be relaxed, and practice at their own rate of development. Whilst some rules of
grammar need to be encouraged this would again be in a simple format, with some gentle correction towards the rule, but without impacting negatively on confidence. From this Krashen refers to a natural approach to L2 learning in the classroom as being one where communication skills are all important. He proposes that listening should precede speaking; speaking and writing will emerge when the speaker is ready and should not be forced. The role of the teacher here is to keep affective filters low by encouraging positive attitudes, high levels of motivation, and low anxiety. Krashen maintains that it is acquisition, rather than formal learning that it is central to good language learning (Krashen and Terrell 1983.)

In general UK schools adopt a monolingual approach (Smidt, 2008) where children are taught in English (L2) but may use L1 as described in the above approaches. This depends on the particular establishment, since national policy concerning education must always be interpreted to respond at a local level to the particular needs of catchment area profiles.

The use of bilingual staff (both teacher and teaching assistants) is regarded as being invaluable in this process of acquiring L2 (Cunningham, 2000). Such staff are paired with monolingual staff and repeat in L1 what has been said in L2. This translation approach (Datta, 2000) has become popular as the numbers of non-English speaking children have continued to rise throughout this decade. Curtis (1992) saw translation as valuable in encouraging L1 and recommends peer tutoring from experienced bilingual children.

It is now common practice for bilingual staff to speak in English, and only use other languages when absolutely necessary to children and as a means of communicating with parents. This has been driven by the needs of practitioners feeling overwhelmed by how to teach children from such diverse cultures, and who ultimately will be assessed in English. Gravelle (1996) believes that whilst schools assert that bilingualism is an asset, in practice children are often regarded as a homogenous group, and those who are different are either ignored
or given ‘easy work’. Whilst this may be a valid comment it also does not alleviate the pedagogic difficulties faced by many practitioners. Whitehead (2006), claims that many children in early years are bilingual or in the process of acquiring L2. Research by Barratt-Pugh (1994) and Brooker (2002) confirms this degree of linguistic variety as usual for many young children. Educators need to realise that good practice for monolingual children, is also good practice for bilingual children, too (Mills and Mills, 1993).

The wide use of resources that appeal to as many of the senses as possible is not only considered good practice, as the pioneering work of Froebel, Montessori, McMillan demonstrates (Smidt, 2008) but is also something that current writers are agreed on (Datta, 2000: Kenner, 2000: Whitehead, 2006). For this reason, the use of the following resources, are widely recommended (Whitehead, 2006, p 88) (see table 2.5 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music, songs and rhymes</th>
<th>Drama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book-making</td>
<td>Collaborative games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppets</td>
<td>Props</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Dual text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical instruments</td>
<td>Collaborative games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5 Recommended resources to support children’s language development

The use of such resources allows children to play with language, and use language as they play. Throughout this they are developing sensitivity to rhyme, pattern, and melody along with phonological and alphabetical awareness, and bibliographic skills. McArthur (1995) suggests that children are ‘wired’ for word play and that using a wide range of resources is a positive and creative way to develop this connection. Playing with language is intellectually stimulating, which, when accompanied by colourful resources, makes for fun and enjoyable learning, thus laying good foundations for literacy and language development (Whitehead, 2003). The use of resources is therefore seen to be an effective way of encouraging linguistic creativity across a wide range of functions and situations.
If learning a new language is about making sense of a ‘new world’ (Gregory, 1996) then practitioners need to be positive in their approach to teaching English as L2. Recent guidance (Primary National Strategy, 2006) has provided support for the teacher of bilingual children in primary years. It contains a specific EAL (English as an Additional Language) pedagogy based on the work of Cummins (2000) and Collier and Thomas (1997) and underpinned by the previous work of Vygotsky, Bruner and Maslow (Gross, 2000). The document specifically recognises the length of time needed for the competent transfer from L1 to L2 as being on average five to seven years; that is for speech up to 2 years and for reading and writing, much longer. Again, there is a clear acknowledgment that children’s fluency in English as L2 may mask their lack of cognitive ability. The approaches to teaching recommended by the document are:

- direct teaching: learn new skills and acquire new knowledge
- cognitive teaching: process information based on concepts, test hypothesis, think creatively
- social models: collaboration and peer learning, group problem solving

It recognises that bilingual learners face two tasks; the need to learn English, and the need to learn the content of the curriculum. Recognising the difficulties faced by practitioners, Kenner (2004b) and Baker (2006) suggest the following principles as a sympathetic model: that the context in which children learn a new language should be a social one, utilising peer models of fluent English which is a powerful way of learning, and, a recognition that the need to belong and be accepted is what children want; they simply wish to be like others around them.

Whilst the four basic language skills are important in the development of any language, Baker (1997) believes that language must be taught in the context of its culture, since language and culture are intertwined. Developing such ‘cultural
environments’ alongside the language being learned (i.e. English as L2) is essential for a healthy development of the language.

For this reason the overarching approach to L2 learning is seen as firmly interactionalist. This approach is a communicative one that relies on real interpersonal communication taking place, and where social and personal transactions actively occur. Many teachers use a broad, comprehensive, and inclusive approach to literacy development in order to develop all round language skills. Teaching strategies (Hudelson, 1994 p 27) can be seen in three modes: general, reading, and writing (see table 2.6 below).

Table 2.6 Modes of teaching strategies used in literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a literate environment</td>
<td>Use predictable books.</td>
<td>Use personal narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage collaborative learning</td>
<td>Read aloud to children daily</td>
<td>Use dialogic writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish literacy across the curriculum</td>
<td>Encourage and promote children’s responses to</td>
<td>Use a variety of different purposes for writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>what they read</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-selected reading for pleasure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will provide a useful comparison to the methods observed by the researcher.

A National Curriculum

The arguments in favour of a common curricular framework can be identified for four viewpoints (Kelly 2009): philosophical, sociological, balanced, and political.

(i) Philosophical. This is concerned with the notion that some types of knowledge have a superior status to others and as such are included into the curriculum.
(ii) Sociological. This regards the task of the school to be that of transmitting the culture of society. The curriculum therefore conveys what is deemed to be the worthwhile aspects of that culture to all its pupils.
(iii) Balanced. The National Curriculum declares itself to be a broad and balanced curriculum. This suggests that it must be viewed and planned as a whole and not in pieces. The issue of balance is a difficult one, particularly when the curriculum is viewed in its wider context e.g. it’s sociological aspects. Suffice to say here that for many pupils it is very unbalanced (Boys and Spinks, 2008) and is better illustrated in terms of the juggler, rather than the scientist (Kelly, 2009).

(iv) Political. Kelly (2009) questions what education is for rather than what it is; whether it is for individual success, or economic and commercial success on a national level.

The National Curriculum, as of 2008, covers children from the end of reception (R) to 16 years of age; the age of compulsory education and is divided into four key stages (KS) this covers the following age grouping though there is some element of overlap:

KS 1   5 – 7  
KS 2   7 - 11 
KS 3   11 - 14 
KS 4   14 – 16 

and, contains the following subjects.

Table 2.7 National Curriculum subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE subjects</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation subjects</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology (ICT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design and Technology (DT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the purpose of this study English at KS1 will be the focus. The programme of study for English as a distinct subject is divided into (i) speaking and listening and (ii) reading and writing. During this period (KS1) pupils learn to speak confidently, and listen to the views of others. They begin to read, and write independently, and enthusiastically. Language is used to explore both their own experiences and imaginary worlds (see appendix 2 and chapter 4 on results).

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The ethos underpinning the EYFS has been influenced by the ‘Te Whaariki’ (TW) developed in New Zealand. This was based on traditional Maori ideas about child development and intended to reflect equally, the rights of groups in society and to reflect this in culturally appropriate environments. The TW curriculum has five dispositions: well-being, belonging, contributing, communicating, and exploring. The equivalent is a child who is strong, empowered, and ready to learn (Peters, 2007).

Whilst the central aim of the EYFS is to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters it has five key procedures to ensure this is achieved. These are:

- to set the standards for the learning and development of all children
- a commitment to cultural diversity and anti-discriminatory practice
- to bridge the gap between parents and childhood settings
- the embedding of the principle of ‘educare’, so that there is consistency rather than distinction between education and care
- a procedure for on-going observation and assessment.

(Palaiologou, 2010 p. 11-12).
The EYFS (UK) has been established along very similar lines to that of the ‘Te Whaariki’; this is reflected in its four key principles (see table 2.8 below).

Table 2.8 EYFS principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EYFS Principle</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A unique child</td>
<td>Recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The focus is on development, inclusion, safety, health and well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive relationships</td>
<td>Describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents/key person. The focus is on respect, partnership with parents, supporting learning and the role of the key person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling environments</td>
<td>Explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning. The focus is on observation, assessment and planning, support for every child, the learning environment and the wider context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and development</td>
<td>Recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected. (EYFS, 2008, p. 9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The curriculum is made up of six area of learning as previously identified.)

The EYFS emphasises that communication is important not only to the development of children’s social skills, but also in developing listening skills as the basis of their literacy development. It clearly outlines that language is a process, and the learning of a language is a social process that is facilitated by interaction with others.

Literacy in the early years is not confined to the ability to read and write using the conventions of the English language, but is extended to the idea that it is a competence that enables individuals to function independently and flexibly. Literacy then is viewed as a whole process which is acknowledged and integrated throughout all daily activities (Harste et al, 1984). Hillerich (1976)
identifies a literate child as one who is competent in communication skills which enable them to function, appropriate to age, independently of society, and with a potential for movement in society. In the context of early years education this is illustrated by the practice of having pictures/silhouettes/objects to accompany words. This common feature is one that supports, facilitates, and respects children’s development. This type of contextualised learning also provides children with the opportunity to engage in literacy. There is a recognition that in early years, reading and writing develop simultaneously, as they emerge from oral language development. Children’s initial attempts at reading, often unconventional are usually based on pictures, and in writing resemble scribble; as such this is usually described as being ‘emergent literacy’ (Whitehead, 2003).

The main competencies of this emergent literacy are identified by Whitehurst (1998, p. 34) to be:

- awareness of language
- conventions of print
- emergent writing
- phonological awareness
- graphemes
- phoneme-grapheme correspondence
- attitudes such as interest in interacting with books
- environments such as; shared book reading, alphabet play, and treasure baskets.

In recognition that language is a process that develops alongside and often overlaps with every other aspect of development, the area of learning for CLL is subdivided into smaller categories for age, as follows:
0-11 months
8-20 months
16-26 months
22-30 months
30-50 months
40-60 months

Each category identifies the levels of skills, knowledge, and understanding that children can be expected to achieve during these periods of learning. These categories however, are not intended to be viewed as rigid milestones for achievement but, rather, identify the range of abilities that children may have acquired. The element of overlap acknowledges the varying rates at which children can develop language skills. The EYFS (2008) clearly recognises that children are individuals who will develop at their own pace, and as such the principle of a ‘unique child’ is one that underpins the whole curriculum for early years.

The communication, language and literacy (CLL) component of the EYFS divides language into the following categories:

- Language for communication
- Language for thinking
- Linking sounds and letters
- Reading
- Writing
- Handwriting.

(Full details of the EYFS curriculum guidance for CLL can be seen in appendix 1).

The assessment goals outlined for each of the six categories are those used for gathering data for the study (see chapter 4 on results).
The aim of the two curricular frameworks, the EYFS and the NC, is that there should be a seamless divide. The learning outcomes at the end of the EYFS are intended to be the starting point for teaching and learning at KS1 of the NC. In seeing the relationship then between the two curricular frameworks a continuum of content can be established, as shown in table 2.9 below.

Table 2.9 A comparison between the EYFS and National Curriculum components for literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EYFS 0 – 5</th>
<th>National Curriculum 5 – 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language for communication</td>
<td>Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language for thinking</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking sounds and letters</td>
<td>Strategies for information, literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Language structure and variation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing sounds and letters</td>
<td>Writing: composition, planning and drafting, punctuation, spelling,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwriting</td>
<td>Handwriting; presentation, standard English, language structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see appendix 1)</td>
<td>(see appendix 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that there is a progression from the informality of the early years play based element, to the formal instruction of the National Curriculum, culminating originally in national testing at the end of KS1 (this stopped with effect from 2010).

The emphasis in early years is on the process of learning, and not its product. The ethos puts the focus firmly on children enjoying and being enthusiastic about learning, developing independence, and social skills, alongside acquiring the attitudes and dispositions of a learner (Moyles and Robinson, 2002). The process
of learning is best served through children’s natural way of learning; that is, through play and exploration.

The EYFS is concerned with ensuring a high quality education developed from a high quality curriculum. Moyles (2005), states that this is about celebrating who children are, rather than striving to make them become something else. This clear emphasis on the child as an individual means that staff need to know children well in order to set appropriate challenges. Staff also need to be knowledgeable about the ways that young children learn best, in order to promote them as skilful learners (Merry, 1998). Young children are active enthusiastic learners who need to be nurtured and supported, as they are involved in their learning, and the formation of relationships (Bruce, 1991). It is the responsibility of the professionals working in early years to enable the exploration of the learning process with children, and so enable their learning to be made in a meaningful context (Webber, 1999).

There is compelling evidence from the work of Piaget and Vygotsky (Curtis and Pettigrew, 2009) that play is central not only to children’s learning but to healthy development too. Their work highlighted play to be the ideal space in which children could acquire new skills, and test out their abilities through their social interaction. Moyles (2005) also identifies play as being vital in the development of social, emotional, and physical as well as cognitive abilities. Studies by Hall (1999, 2000) suggest that play enables children to co-operate in learning about literacy. Through play children become motivated, try to work together, are willing to listen to each other, resolve their differences, and try to make sense of the world. Since language clearly maintains an important role in the functions of play it is essential that in early years children are given a wealth of opportunities to use language in the form of play (Palaiologou, 2010).
There are many different types of play that children progress through, all of which are important to language development (see table 2.10 below).

Table 2.10 Types of play in relation to language development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of play</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Links to language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensori-motor</td>
<td>To control and use the body, fine motor skills</td>
<td>Handwriting/reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend</td>
<td>Learn about roles, norms and customs</td>
<td>Imagination/storytelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conventions/speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Become more accomplished with speech</td>
<td>Spoken rules, Listening, grammar,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitary</td>
<td>To occupy oneself</td>
<td>Imaginative, decision-making, developing own ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>To interact with others</td>
<td>Speaking and listening dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>To develop co-ordination and physical skills</td>
<td>Handwriting/reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free-play</td>
<td>Become more independent and autonomous</td>
<td>Make decisions, develop ideas,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough and tumble</td>
<td>Learn how to deal with conflict</td>
<td>Negotiating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-dramatic</td>
<td>Take on the role of others</td>
<td>Enact, speaking/listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic/fantasy</td>
<td>Develop imagination and cope with fears</td>
<td>Imaginative stories, drama, story-telling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Curtis and Pettigrew, 2008 p 106).

Language and play (Whitehead, 2003) share similar characteristics, since both use symbols to represent ideas, feelings, and experiences and both are innate. She maintains that children are more likely to become enthusiastically literate if their play with the sounds and meanings of language is taken seriously in the early years.

Two aspects become apparent within the framework of the EYFS: learning through play, and the role of the teacher in supporting young children in the learning process. *The Rose Review* (2008) recommended yet more training in
play-based teaching and learning for primary teachers in line with the proposed extension of the EYFS to the end of KS1.

The EYFS sets out clearly both the content for CLL and also the pedagogy by which such learning should be implemented. It is implicit that practitioners should include the following areas: positive relationships, enabling environments, and learning and development.

The clear principles underpinning the pedagogy of the EYFS are explicitly that to be effective, early years education should have the following (Nuttbrown, 2006):

- a relevant curriculum
- practitioners who understand how young children learn and can implement that curriculum effectively
- practitioners who understand the rapid holistic development of the under 5s
- ensure that children feel included, secure and valued
- build on what children already know
- does not exclude/disadvantage children because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, SEN, disability, gender or ability
- promotes partnership with parents
- be carefully structured
- provide activities that are both adult-led and child-initiated
- practitioners should observe and respond to children appropriately
- a learning environment that is well planned and well organised
- the level of care and education provided should be of equally high quality

(QCA, 2000 p.70).

All of this is now enshrined in the EYFS of 2008.

Since the EYFS recognises that each child is unique and has differing rates of development (DCSF, 2008) it is clear that children in early years should not be
excluded or disadvantaged because of their home language. This raises the question for practitioners as to how they approach the teaching and learning of English as a second language, in the early years. Palaiologou (2010) suggest this is achieved through adapting actual practice to meet the diverse needs of children, by recognising the variations of socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds alongside those of, personality and preference.

**The learning environment**

It is the learning environment itself that provides the basis on which teaching and learning take place. It is important then to have in this arena places where children who are bilingual can play alongside others, without always having to use language for their interactions (MacNaughton and Williams, 2009). This presents a non-threatening environment in which children are confident to develop their L2 skills (Epinosa, 2005). The careful positioning of picture prompts, and cards can also support those children learning English as L2 in making requests and decisions.

Displaying artefacts from the various cultures represented by the children in the setting allows them to both share their own culture, whilst at the same time learn about the culture of others. It also contributes to a sense of belonging and being valued (Ramsey, 2004). In addition to this, Rogoff (2003) suggests that staff should introduce tools and utensils from other cultures, and allow children to demonstrate to others how they are used. It is further suggested that since children observe adults in what they do, and how they interact, then such demonstrations can also be a useful teaching technique for teaching children in diverse contexts.

In settings where there is a diverse cultural mix teachers can facilitate a sense of welcome and belonging by providing symbols, sounds, and language throughout the environment. Children who can recognise their cultural identity being
reflected in the classroom will have both their culture, and their individual identity affirmed (Adler-Matoba, 2001).

Since the role of teachers working within early years has already been identified as vital to the learning of children. The way in which teachers use their time is equally important, and needs to be monitored if children are to receive the message that they are all valued (MacNaughton and Williams, 2009). In particular where there are differences in the ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of staff and children, it is important that staff organise their time to effectively support respectful relationships. By unintentionally spending superficial time with individuals, or particular groups staff may reinforce the idea that some children are of less importance than others (Howes and Shivers, 2006). Because children gain a sense of their cultural and racial identity through their social interactions, it is important that they develop positive images of themselves and their cultural group. The support and reassurances given by staff can be particularly important for those L2 children who are making a great effort to learn.

In developing social interaction and building friendships it is clear that children do learn from their peers. However, it is also important to recognise that this can have both a positive and negative impact on learning for some children. Children who may be struggling to read aloud do better in groups of similar abilities, whereas, oracy benefits from a flexible ability group, where individuals are both challenged and can learn from more able peers (Sloane, 2007). It is suggested, that children as L2 learners are also best supported in such a group, since it creates the opportunity for clear peer models and the space to express themselves (Reutzel and Smith, 2004).

It has already been recognised that children’s expressive language is influenced by the age and stage of their development. It is also further influenced by the context in which they express that language. Environments that value children’s ideas, and where staff take the time to listen are those in which children feel
comfortable with their emerging language skills and want to express themselves freely.

Ebbeck (1991) claims that staff tend to spend time unequally, tending to work with ‘talkative’ children rather than quiet children. Since many L2 speakers go through a ‘silent period’ (Clarke, 1992) this can result in them spending less time with the children who would benefit most from their input. Recent research (Gilbertson and Bluck, 2006) suggests that allowing a child to respond in their own time when learning English as L2 is important in successfully acquiring phonic awareness. Supporting the potential of children with L2 is clearly the responsibility of staff. This is formally identified in government policy throughout the curriculum framework. The EYFS emphasises the importance of staff recognising the benefits to children of speaking more than one language (QCA, 2000), whilst the NC clearly outlines the provision made in supporting L2 speakers (NC, 2000).

In recognition of the fact that increasing numbers of children are entering EYFS with English as L2, the Primary National Strategy (2007), Supporting Children’s Learning English as an additional language, sets out guidance for teachers in providing specific support to these children. The document identified the fact that those L2 children who have poor learning outcomes at the end of the EYFS are often, those with the least experience of the EYFS setting. Some are newly arrived, whilst others have stayed at home because parents have not engaged with educational settings. Whatever the reason, the reality is that practitioners are faced with a wide span of abilities, ages, stages, and degrees of receptive and expressive language skills. The document places a clear duty on L.E.A.s to address gaps in achievement levels between different groups of children. The paper Ethnicity and Education (2006) reported amongst its key findings that pupils from White Other, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African, and Black Other performed consistently below the average for pupils on every score on the EYFS outcomes for assessment. It recommended that improvements should be achieved through:
- planned and delivered training and support for staff
- accessible information to all families and particularly those in most need of support
- a policy for community cohesion and engagement.

The underpinning philosophy of the document recognises firstly, the need to build on children’s existing knowledge about language and secondly, to appreciate the impact of attitudes held towards them personally, to their culture, language, religion, and ethnicity on their learning and emerging identity. The document highlights the value of observation to assess individual needs followed by the scaffolding and modelling of language, and then planned interventions. It is also clear in stating that there are no magic answers in supporting children learning English as L2.

Guidance indicates that for those children who are working significantly below the level of their class the learning objectives should be set as closely to those for the majority as is possible. In addition, those children who are learning English as an additional language must be given support that enables access to all aspects of the curriculum content. The challenge is to develop their cognitive skills on a level consistent with their peers as they are developing their language. Those children (L2) who need more support than others are to be identified quickly, and receive early intervention to help them maintain their progress. Teachers and practitioners (Palaiologou, 2010) will need to take into account the language that children will need to produce, either oral or written, in order to demonstrate their success in attaining specific learning outcomes.

It should be noted that there has been a significant shift of terminology in recent documents; children who are not native English speakers are now referred to as
English as an Additional Language (EAL) speakers, rather than as second
language speakers (L2).

The guidance for teaching literacy is concerned with a careful blend of
approaches that provide direct teaching, good support, and set challenges for
thought. A balance between adult-led and child-initiated activity is now advised
not only at the EYFS stage, but throughout the primary phase. Good literacy
teaching (PNS, 2006) requires a broad repertoire of teaching and organisational
approaches, since some methods are better suited to promote particular learning
and outcomes (PNS, 2006). (See table 2.11 on following page).
Table 2.11 Effective practice for developing literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The role of the practitioner</th>
<th>Meaningful interaction</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Close observation leading to effective and structured planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop some background knowledge of home languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modelling language structure and vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of open-ended questioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective incidental dialogue/self-dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Careful enunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition and confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allow children time to think and respond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping and organisation of learning opportunities</th>
<th>Interactive group activities for peer opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age appropriate groupings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children should not be withdrawn to learn English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop opportunities for rich language across all areas of learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-hand experience and daily routine</th>
<th>Learning in a meaningful context eg: cooking, visit to local shops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Routines e.g. weather in words and pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual guides to routines and sequences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Use of auditory discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of adult-initiated and child-led</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guessing games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Simple songs, rhymes, refrains, chants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditory discrimination and pattern/rythmn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stories and books</th>
<th>Traditional and new from all cultures.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of pictures, puppets, photos, props and artefacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Story-telling, story-sacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Like all children, those who are learning English as L2 will thrive in an environment where practice is excellent. Key factors relating to L2 speakers being successful in their acquisition of language are, the inclusive attitude and ethos set by managers and leaders and displayed by all practitioners, plus a genuine understanding that bilingualism is an asset, an active approach to reflective practice, and adherence to the principles that every child matters (PNS, 2007 p. 235 - 238). The principles it lays down for effective practice can be seen in table 2.11 some of which is an extension of those resources previously identified in table 2.5.

An overview of assessment

Pupil assessment is essential for effective teaching since all teachers will, either consciously or unconsciously, be continually assessing their pupils in an informal way. Assessing the level of pupil achievement allows the teacher to ascertain what has been learned, and what direction is needed for further development.

Developing an understanding of the complexities of assessment is not only the essence of good teaching but is an essential teacher skill (Kelly, 2009). For education purposes assessment is deemed to be used for a range of purposes: (i) as a means of quality control (ii) to maintain or raise standards (iii) to collate data for curriculum evaluation and so improve quality of provision (iv) as a form of extrinsic motivation and (v) to diagnose the educational needs of individual pupils and so plan an individual curriculum programme (Eisner, 1993 pp.57 - 59).

For assessment to be effective it is important that the form of the assessment is matched to its purpose and also that the purpose of the assessment is clear (Kelly, 2009). The major purpose of assessment identified by the TEAT Report (1988) and incorporated into the National Curriculum are (see table 2.12 on following page).
Table 2.12 Types of assessment. (DfES, 1988, para.23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of assessment</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative</td>
<td>So that the positive achievement of a pupil may be recognised and discussed and the appropriate next steps may be planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic</td>
<td>Through which learning difficulties may be scrutinised and classified so that appropriate remedial help and guidance can be provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative</td>
<td>For the recording of the overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>By means of which some aspects of the work of a school/LEA or other discrete part of the education service can be assessed and/or reported upon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The report firmly recommended that the basis for all national testing should be formative (DfES, 1988; para. 27). However, the political decision was that such testing at all stages should be summative (Kelly, 2009). Kelly argues strongly that summative accounts are of little value to parents since they offer no intent of future support. Black (1993) agrees that this offers too simplistic a viewpoint, and relates only to a common notion of what all pupils must learn. In order to progress beyond this approach other more sophisticated styles of assessment need to be explored such as those suggested by Kelly (2009) as follows:

**Styles of assessment**

(a) Criterion referenced (CR) and norm-referenced (NR) assessment.

With the CR style of assessment the measurement used derives from the knowledge to be assimilated. Each subject of the NC has attainment targets
based on the components of the specific curriculum content. Children are thus tested against these targets. (The attainments targets for English can be seen in appendix 2.) In NR, the measurement used is the average level of performance achieved by children at that given age. The comparison here is between pupils of similar ages, rather than subject targets and individual achievement. (The expected level of attainment for children aged 7 is level 2.)

It would seem apparent though that the distinction between these two is difficult if not impossible to make since, as Kelly (1992) argues, attainment targets cannot be set without reference to what may be considered norms of attainment. Conversely, norms cannot be established without reference to levels of attainment within subject areas.

(b) Ipsative assessment.

The criterion used is the individual’s own previous levels of attainment. Pupils are therefore not assessed against subject attainment targets or their peers, but against their own previous achievements. (It is current practice for class teachers to have assessed children’s individual progress and a record of this is sent to parents along with the results of the SATs tests.) This presents a developmental style of assessment since it provides a clear view of where, and how, children are making progress. It has been argued that the notion of progress through levels presented by the NC implies an ipsative approach rather than the summative one it implements (Nuttall, 1989).

(c) Profiling

This is a system that depends largely on teacher assessment, ipsative assessment, some elements of pupil self-assessment, and partly on testing. The intention of profiling is that it provides a holistic view of the pupil which is formative in order to provide a guide to the pupil, parents, and teacher. The underpinning principle is therefore a dynamic rather than a static view of learning.
(Torrance, 1989). Interestingly, this is the method of assessment used in the EYFS.

Carr *et al.* (2005) offer an interesting insight about the ways in which assessment is carried out. Their view suggests that when children are listened to, the power balance tips towards the child, whereas the current assessment practice, which implies that the adult has a pre-set agenda tips the power balance dramatically towards the adult. Brooker (2008) holds a similar view that listening and assessment share a common purpose; to give children control of their learning and enable them to manage new challenges.

Assessment in the early years begins with simple record-keeping that provides a holistic view of individual children’s well-being. As children develop they are assessed increasingly against normative expectations. The EYFS now provides a structure for observing children’s development in four areas. At the end point of transition from R to Y1 (EYFS to NC), children’s numerical scores on the Foundation Stage Profile are recorded for each of the six areas of learning. From Y1 it is the NC expectations for each subject area that becomes the mode of assessment. Brooker (2008) argues that the increasing formalisation of assessment requirements has impacted on children. Since in her view the setting of ‘tasks’ that will produce evidence of children’s knowledge, skills, and understanding has developed in children the notion of there being a right and wrong answer. In terms of their developing identity they may therefore view themselves, as people who get things right, or wrong. This may be particularly true for those children who are learning, or struggling to learn English as a second language.

Whilst early years has always been concerned with the holistic development of children and planned accordingly, Bennet (2006) argues that as early years education becomes more ‘schoolified’ assessment is less about the child, and more about demonstrating that the teacher and the school are performing well. Drummond (2003) holds a similar view that the assessment carried out for the child’s best interests will not be adequate for the inspectors.
The transition from EYFS to Y1 began a slow shift from broad early learning goals (ELGs) to narrowly defined learning outcomes (LOs) and ultimately, in Y2 to national testing in the form of SATs. Pressure from teachers and teaching unions has lead to the SATs for children aged 7 being stopped with effect from September 2010 in favour of more teacher-led assessment. That this was ever the case is to Kelly (2009) a total absurdity for similar reasons as offered by Brooker (2008); that in doing so not only do we identify children as underachievers, but that they too identify themselves as such.

Assessment of children with English as a second language

The legal framework and set of standards for assessment apply to all children. Therefore children who are L2 speakers are assessed against the same criteria as those who are monolingual English speakers. Although the guidelines for the NC (1989) recognised that pupils with limited experience of English should be assessed in their mother-tongue, little practical advice was available until 1996. A report for SCAA acknowledged the problems and issues surrounding pupils acquiring L2 and suggested using NC programmes of study and resources to meet identified needs.

Achievement in the NC assumes mastery of the English language and L2 children are expected to reach the same levels of attainment as their monolingual peers. L2 speakers may still be developing fluency at the age of 7 in tasks set in L1, as so may well appear to be underachieving. The expected level of achievement is set nationally at level 2, with some children achieving L3 at this age (David, 2005).

The publication of Pedagogy and Personalisation’ (2007) was a clear attempt to teach with a pedagogy that combined all previous national strategies. It was designed to enable teachers to personalise learning in ways that are appropriate to the ages and abilities (including L2 speakers) of their pupils, considering also the context of the learners, and the needs of the subject.
In the decade following the *Swann Report* many issues surrounding educational pluralism became more apparent and perhaps better understood; however, the question of race and equality of opportunity according to Gillborn and Gipps (1996), fell from the prominent position they once held. Yet what is also apparent, is that the differences in the age structures of minority communities are such that the number and proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds will continue to grow. It is estimated that by the year 2020 the minority population will have doubled (Runnymede Trust, 1994). Issues then of ethnic diversity, the effective acquisition and development of English as a second language and educational achievement cannot be ignored.

The current practice of the EYFS is to document individual children’s learning progress through a portfolio of observations made by practitioners along with photos, drawings, written commentary involving children’s interests, involvement, persistence, and collaboration, to which the next stages of planning are added. Both children and parents are invited to contribute to this record and this is passed on to the next phase of learning/setting/teacher.

How much of this will be incorporated as new practice in place of the SATs remains to be seen, though there is some pressure from early years researchers to continue this in some format, as continuing good practice (Cowie and Carr, 2004; Brooker, 2008). One of the obvious difficulties is the difference of pedagogy, training, experience, and understanding between teachers who are trained specifically for their own curriculum area of either EYFS or NC. Those who are familiar, competent, and confident with the profiling system will naturally favour it, whilst those who are now leaving the system of SATs, which may be the only mode of assessment they know will need to adopt a flexible attitude towards other forms of assessment. This would imply that a need for training in this area is required.

This chapter has identified and discussed legislation in relation to L2 children from 1944 to date and charts some of the changing attitudes in society that have both prompted and accommodated this. There is recognition of the factors that
shape the acquisition of English as L2 accompanied by a discussion of this from a theoretical perspective. It follows the historical development of curriculum frameworks relating to English as L2, including the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1989 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in 2008. This includes a discussion of teaching and learning that identifies clearly the role of the practitioner and the learning environment as key factors in the successful acquisition of English as L2. There is an overview of assessment techniques in relation to the curriculum which questions whether those currently used are fit for purpose.

The chapter acknowledges that the issues surrounding the acquisition of English as L2 are linked to levels of immigration and whilst this impacts on society as a whole, its particular impact is on education and on the need to identify the best and most appropriate ways of teaching English.

Conclusion

The chapter concludes by recognising that there is no magic solution to the successful teaching and learning of English as a second language.

The key points of the chapter are highlighted below:

- a series of reports from 1944 to date have identified concerns about the achievement of L2 pupils in attaining successful mastery of the English language

- issues of ‘Britishness’ and national identity are linked to rising numbers of non-English speakers and the curriculum has been used in response to this to set standards and maintain acceptable levels of attainment in English

- concerns over early intervention as a means of raising educational standards (including those of L2 children) have initiated the introduction of the EYFS with a return to play-based learning
there is a strong recognition that play and language development are mutually beneficial to all children and it is currently recommended that such approaches be continued to the end of primary education in order to be of particular benefit to L2 speakers

teaching and learning needs to address the many factors that influence and impact on L2 acquisition

for assessment to be effective it needs to be fit for purpose

there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the successful teaching and learning of English as L2

teachers need to adopt a broad based pedagogy appropriate to the teaching of English as L2 and to L2 children across all elements of the curriculum
CHAPTER 3

Research methodology
1. Introduction

The preceding chapter explored an outline of the teaching of English as a second language in primary school through an identification and evaluation of relevant historical and contemporary theoretical perspectives and debates.

To briefly outline the introduction of chapter 1, the purpose of the study was to investigate the approaches to the teaching and learning of English as a second language in early years settings.

The study now moves forward to outline and discuss the merits of the data collection methods adopted. Five methods of data collection were employed; observations of children, observations of staff, informal interviews with staff, focus groups with parents, and, an analysis of guidance and literacy strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection mode</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observations of children</td>
<td>September 2008 – July 2011. 6 observations per year per school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations of staff</td>
<td>September 2008 – July 2011. 6 per year per school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal interviews with staff</td>
<td>September 2008 – July 2011. 6 per school per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups with parents</td>
<td>September 2008 – July 2011. 3 per school per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual analysis</td>
<td>September 2008 to July 2009 EYFS/ELGs to end of R. BLAST programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 2009 to July 2010 NC/NPS to end of Y1. Ruth Miskin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 2010 to July 2011 NC/NPS to end of Y2. Ruth Miskin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The quality of any piece of research, Morrison (1993) claims, stands or falls not only on the appropriate methodology but also the suitability of the sampling strategy employed. The factors of time and accessibility govern all research and so from the outset the size of the population to be studied needs to be determined. Judgements concerning a suitable sample (Cohen et al, 2008) focus around four key factors; sample size, the representativeness of the sample, access to the sample, and the sampling strategy to be used. Whilst there is much discussion about the appropriate size of any sample (Borg and Gall, 1979; Ross and Rust, 1997; Gorard, 2003) there is some consensus (Cohen et al, 2008) that with both quantitative and qualitative data the important requirement is that the sample is representative of the population from which it is drawn. However, with reference to qualitative studies, which this study falls predominantly into, Gall et al (2007) suggest that researchers select a sample that suits the purpose of the study and that is convenient. The setting up of research is a balancing act, which according to Cohen et al (2008), requires the harmonising of planned possibilities with workable coherent practice. Since the research methodology used in this study adopted a longitudinal in-depth ethnographic approach the researcher deemed the choice of data collection methods used to be appropriate to the methodological stance.

Such convenience factors are often matters of location, access, and familiarity. All of these factors did influence the sample choice of the study. Since the researcher worked in the same collegiate town that the schools were located in, and because of the nature of her work, she had regular access to such schools and was familiar with the Headteachers and teaching staff. All of this enhanced her access to the created sample, sometimes referred to as a ‘convenience sample’. There is some acceptance that using a convenience
sample is a better option than not being able to conduct a study at all (Cohen et al, 2008).

The sample group in the study included a cohort of children aged 5 – 7 years drawn from 5 primary schools from differing socio-economic backgrounds across the town; these were representative of schools across the borough. The demographic profile was based on figures for September 2008 and acknowledged that differences may occur in annual intake. The figures showed that out of a total group of 150 children:

1. 22% were white British
2. 43% were black British
3. 17% were white European
4. 18% were black African.

Further sub-groups were identified as follows:

From group 2, 33% did not have English as their first language
From group 3, 17% were economic migrants who had English as a second/subsequent language
From group 4, 17% had asylum/refugee status and did not have English as a second language.

The group of children selected represented a wide variety of backgrounds. It was also recognised that they would have varying levels of pre-school experiences, different familial, cultural and traditional backgrounds. The total sample figure was 150 children, along with 15 members of staff who were to be their class teachers across the 3 year period of study.
The study was longitudinal in nature and tracked the progress of a group of children entering primary school (R) in September 2008 through to the end of key stage 1 (Y2) in July 2011. This involved collecting data from the sample at differing points in time in order to track continuity or changes. Singer and Willet (2003) regard longitudinal research as difficult to implement, though essential for exploring issues of human development. Longitudinal studies have (Gorard, 2001) the potential for rich data collection that can trace changes over a period of time with great accuracy. This was clearly the intention of the study as it followed a cohort of children over a three year period through their primary education. Since longitudinal data can (Ruspini, 2002 p.71) provide ‘satisfactory answers to questions concerning the dynamics and determinants of individual behaviour’.

The study followed the ‘panel study’ approach of longitudinal research whereby the sample surveyed at the beginning was the same sample involved in each subsequent collection of data (Gall et al, 2007). Since the same individuals were repeatedly measured over time it allowed for specific individuals to be identified along with any possible reasons attached to their growth/attainment. According to Gall et al (2007) this approach has the distinct advantage of identifying who is changing and in what way, and allows for the exploration of why.

The strengths and weaknesses of longitudinal studies are identified (Cohen et al, 2008 ch. 9) as: (see Table 3.2, following page)
Table 3.2: The strengths and weakness of longitudinal studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enables individual level analysis to be performed.</td>
<td>Small measurement errors may be compounded over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies carried out on human growth and development are able to identify typical patterns of development.</td>
<td>The tests and retests of individuals may result in ‘conditioning’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies carried out in schools provide longitudinal records that derive in part from the known fallibility of any single test or assessment.</td>
<td>Participants mature at different rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time scale allows researcher greater opportunity to observe trends and distinguish real changes from chance occurrences.</td>
<td>Time consuming; the researcher is obliged to wait for growth data to accumulate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicates the influence of biological factors over time e.g. human development, environmental influences and their interactions.</td>
<td>Sample mortality; subjects may drop out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables causal analysis to be undertaken.</td>
<td>Control effect; repeated interviewing may result in an undesired and confusing effect on the actions or attitudes of those under study and influence their behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time series studies in longitudinal research permits individual and group profiles to be examined over time and development, indicating similarities between individuals and groups in respect of given variables.</td>
<td>Can suffer from the interaction of biological, environmental and intervention influences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables diachronic analysis where same individuals are compared over time.</td>
<td>In education studies changes that occur in pupils, staff, teaching methods and policies may result in difficulties of organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathers data contemporaneously rather than retrospectively.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economical, in that a picture of the sample is built up over time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling errors reduced as the study remains with the same sample over time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enables clear recommendations for intervention to be made.</td>
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</table>
In considering the weaknesses associated with longitudinal studies the researcher sought to overcome these in the following ways:

- Data was collected three times during each year so that any measurement errors could be identified early and remedied. Data was collated, analysed, and presented at the end of each academic year.

- The ‘testing’ of individuals was the same as that carried out by class teachers and was done so under the normal class routine and environment. Children were therefore no more aware of any such test than they would normally be.

- Whilst participants do mature at different rates there are accepted ‘norms’ of development within which the majority of children are expected to be performing. For this reason a record was made of children’s birth dates and gender. The researcher recognised that boys and girls often mature at different rates in some aspects of their holistic development.

- The researcher deemed the time factor to be a benefit not a drawback since it enabled a clear picture to emerge.

- Whilst it is accepted that some participants may drop out, it is unusual for this to be the case with children during their primary years of compulsory education, since by its nature they must be there. Those leaving the study were due to re-location.

- In accepting the control effect, the researcher had adopted an informal interview approach with classroom teachers who understand fully the nature of the study. This enabled a situation where the sharing of pedagogy and discussion of ideas could be exchanged. Since the researcher is also a teacher with early years experience there was an element of shared ideology.
that supported the progress of children and sought to identify how this could be best facilitated.

- The factors of biological, environmental and interventional influences have been recognised and discussed in chapter 2.

- It was accepted that changes may well take place with pupils and staff and again this is why a time series approach was adopted. Changes in teaching methods and policies have been identified and discussed in chapter 2.

Having established the longitudinal nature of the study, the purpose of each data collection method will now be explained.

2. Observations of children

Children were observed in the classroom environment and were identified against the Early Learning Goals for Communication, Language and Literacy from the EYFS curriculum in the reception year (see appendix 2) and against Learning Outcomes for English from the NC for years 1 and 2 (see appendix 3). This provided a record of on-going assessment and an overall view of attainment at the end of each academic year.

The distinct feature of observation is that of allowing the researcher to collect ‘live’ data in a naturally occurring situation (Cohen et al, 2008) and by doing so to look directly at what is happening in situ rather than relying on second-hand accounts. The information could have simply been collected from the teachers’ own assessments of the children’s progress. However, the researcher chose to
collect authentic data by observing children directly against the set criteria for attainment in literacy. The process was the same across each year group, however, the assessment criteria changed according to the curricular framework being used. This being the EYFS for reception and the National Curriculum (N.C.) for years 1 and 2 (these can be found in appendix 1 and 2 respectively).

A feature of observation is that it enables the researcher to look at what is actually happening rather than what may be expected to be happening (Robson, 2002). In terms of children reaching particular targets of learning there may be assumptions about what they ‘can do,’ which are only clearly identified through means of observation. For this reason observation is an inherent part of assessment within the EYFS and is recommended to continue across the early primary years. At present there is a tendency to replace this with formative and summative teacher-based assessments once children move into the N.C. (as discussed in chapter 2).

The evidence being observed was that provided by the assessment criteria from the curriculum. This provided a structure to the observation method since the researcher knew in advance what to look for. It also allowed for the presence, incidence, and frequency of the elements being observed in one school to be recorded and also to be compared against those of the other participating schools. In addition, it allowed a prepared observation schedule to be created so that observations were recorded at the time of occurrence rather than at a later date.

When conducting research involving children it is important and appropriate to listen to the voices of the children on issues that concern them (McNaughton et al, 2001). The researcher was, however, already aware of the need for caution and sensitivity, especially with younger children who as part of their social development often display the wish to please adults and therefore may give answers accordingly (Hughes and Greive, 1981). Spencer and Flin (1990)
consider that limitations to children as competent participants are generally as a result of the limitations of the researcher. For this reason the researcher adopted a non-threatening approach by removing her official badge and sitting on small child-sized chairs alongside and on the same level as the children. She also dressed in the style set by the class teacher that was neither so formal as to be officious or too informal to be regarded as unprofessional.

A participant observer technique was adopted by the researcher whereby she was seated at work tables, playing, and painting alongside the children and participating in their activities (EYFS), allowing conversation to flow naturally. For children at key stage 1 (N.C.) this was accommodated by moving around the ability group tables that children were working at. The use of play and resources as tools to support language development has been discussed in chapter 2.

The researcher was able to build up relationships with the children as the research progressed over the length of the study. She was also able to draw on her experience of early years practice and communication skills when working closely with the children.

Participant observation was deemed to be particularly suitable since the researcher’s prime interest was in gathering detailed information over a period of time and recording what was happening whilst taking an active role in the situation. In the school environment the researcher role was similar to that of other professionals in the classroom who work alongside children to record levels of attainment. By staying in the situation over a long period of time (Cohen et al, 2008) the researcher not only becomes immersed in the context but can identify the salient features that emerge and therefore present a more holistic view of interrelated factors as they develop.

For these reasons the observations took the following format:
- working with small groups of children (focus on individual attainment was recorded)

- all sessions took place during the morning literacy times

- all observations took place in the context of the classroom environment since this presented a non-threatening environment for the children

- the researcher adopted a participant role in line with the role of the teacher

- children were encouraged to interact with each other as is the normal practice in literacy sessions

- at the beginning of the first observed session the researcher was informally introduced as a visitor to the class with children being informed that she would be working with some of them during the morning. This is the usually accepted protocol in primary classrooms. The researcher also wore a visitor badge to assure the children that her presence and role was legitimate.

All of this corresponded to suggestions made by Patton (1990) that the researcher should enter and understand the situation being observed. The information as recorded in an observation format presents qualitative data, however, since the children’s achievements were also collated in a tabular format there is an additional element of quantitative data presented.
3. Observations of staff and ethical considerations

The staff were observed in their normal classroom environment during the planned routine literacy/English sessions. This was to identify what teaching programmes were used, how they were implemented and managed, what range of teaching methods were employed, and what resources were utilised. In addition to this, interactions and interpersonal communications between staff and children, and, children and peers were recorded.

The researcher was aware from the outset of the sensitivity associated with educational research and the need to be acutely aware how delicate observing other professionals can be, since it can be deemed to pose a threat to those involved in the process (Lee, 1993). For this reason Morrison (2006) identifies the conduct of the educational researcher as hinging on interpersonal relations, local politics and micro-politics.

Since the study was conducted in the same town that the researcher teaches, the need to recognise such sensitivities and respond appropriately was made all the more acute. There was a need to establish a basis for mutual professional regard and respect. It is normal practice that in order to be effective, professionals working in early years (Willan et al, 2008) understand collaborative practice and work positively with those from different professional perspectives. There is a consensus of opinion about a multi-professional approach derived from the Children Act (2004), the Childcare Act (2006) and the EYFS (2008), which strongly recommends the effective sharing of relevant information in order to improve outcomes for children (Siraj-Blatchford, 2007). It was made clear that the aim of the study was in the realms of improving outcomes for children who are L2 speakers. On the basis of this, access was initiated and research methodologies were outlined.
Cohen et al (2008) highlight the need for the design of a research project to be balanced with a regard for such sensitivities by anticipating what trade-offs may be needed. There was clearly a need to develop and maintain good interpersonal relations which may necessitate continual negotiation, the delicate shaping and sustaining of relationships, setbacks, modification and compromise. The first point of contact was with the Headteachers of the participating schools to discuss access and permission. The researcher also insisted for the above reasons that individual class teachers were happy to consent to the study rather than have that decision made for them. The study did not start until an assurance was given that such negotiation and permission had been given by all participating staff, all of whom are female. This line of gaining access is similar to that suggested by Walford (2001).

Once this had been established introductions were then made with individual class teachers prior to the start of the data collection in the classroom. This was to set the tone of the interpersonal, interactional, communicative and emotional aspects of both the classroom observations and the informal interviews that would also take place. The researcher wished to establish a good rapport as a firm basis for the study.

The observations took place under the same conditions as those for the children but were not conducted in the same sessions. Prior to the start of each lesson a copy of the lesson plan was handed to the researcher so that the aim and objectives were clearly established, this acted as a guide to what was the intended flow of the lesson. The researcher sat on a small chair to be unobtrusive and positioned herself where she could both see and hear clearly. Since a relationship had already been established with the children her presence was accepted generally, with little interruption.

The evidence collected was not about facts e.g. numbers or matched to a set, but was concerned with:
- approaches to teaching
- implementation of policies
- class practices
- use of resources
- interactions with L2 children

These were recorded in a narrative format under the headings identified above. A consideration had been made over the use of tape-recording and transcript to accompany this. However, primary classroom are noisy places where teachers circulate amongst groups of children and so a clear record of what is said by who can be difficult to establish, this was therefore decided against.

Field notes were recorded as quickly as possible during the observed sessions and enabled the researcher to identify the following (Morrison, 1993 p.80):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The physical setting</th>
<th>The physical classroom environment and how it supports both literacy in general and L2 learners specifically.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The human setting</td>
<td>The teacher, teaching assistants, special support assistants, in the context of the class group and the number of L2 pupils and how this is managed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interactional setting</td>
<td>The interactions taking place; formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal and non-verbal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘programme’ setting</td>
<td>The resources and their organisation, pedagogic styles, the curriculum and its organisation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The field notes took the following format (some of which is outlined in Cohen et al, 2008 p.405):

- Quick jotting of key words/notes/symbols e.g. T=teacher, TA=teaching assistant, C=child.

- These were then transcribed and written out fully later the same day to minimise the effect of memory loss.

- The descriptions once written formed a comprehensive account of what happened

- Pen portraits of participants

- Reconstructions of conversations

- A description of the physical environment where events took place

- A description of events, interactions, activities, and resources

Other elements included were:

- Context maps of the physical environment to indicate the location of resources and how they were used e.g. the role-play area, book corner, and where children were grouped

- Sociometric diagrams indicating interactions between staff and children/children and children
All of this conforms to the recommended format for observations as suggested by Moyles (2002 p.181) that should include:

- the physical and contextual setting
- the numbers and roles of participants
- the time of day
- the layout of the room
- a chronology of events and any critical incidents that occur.

In reflecting on the field notes the researcher was able to analyse what had been observed and identify any problems or issues that occurred. These were used as the basis for the informal interviews and allowed any points of clarification to be used as a starting point.

The researcher was aware of the risk of bias when carrying out observations, such as those issues suggested by Shaughnessy *et al* (2003 p.116 -7):

- selective attention – what is actually being observed
- reactivity – participants may change their behaviour if they know they are being observed
- attention deficit – events can be missed
- the problem of inference – observations record only what happened

In order to eliminate as much bias as possible the following steps were taken:
1. By writing a clear aim at the top of the notebook of what was to be observed and categorising notes as they were made.

2. Observation is a normal and natural event for children in early years therefore it becomes an acceptable everyday practice in their learning environment. Staff, likewise are used to having a range of other adults/professionals in the classroom and are comfortable in working as part of a team. This has been identified in chapter 2. The researcher simply became another adult in the classroom and made every effort to blend in.

3. Since early years teaching involves delivering small chunks of learning, there is shift of emphasis and/or movement every 15/20 minutes which helped the researcher to keep focused.

4. The triangulation of methods will allow other evidence to infer reasons, intentions, causes, and purposes alongside what was observed.

At the end of each observed session the researcher and the class teacher sat down over a cup of tea to chat through the previous session and any issues that had been identified by either party. This also allowed the opportunity for any misunderstanding or misinterpretation to be corrected. As always, at the end of every session the researcher expressed her thanks to staff and, where appropriate, to the children too.

In line with the suggestion of Loftland (1971), once the observation was written up two copies were made: one as a record of the data and the other for
manipulation and analysis (for the cutting and pasting of data) e.g. recording what staff said.

4. Informal interviews of staff

These were held following the observations to allow staff time to reflect, review and evaluate on the effectiveness of the session in order to plan for the next stage of learning for individuals. This provided an opportunity to explain and discuss what they had done, how it had been done, and why things had been done a particular way. Additionally, any difficulties were identified and decisions made as to how they would be overcome. This is a normal aspect of reflective practice which for the purpose of the study the researcher became a participant.

The interview technique was used since it is regarded to be a flexible tool for collecting data and because it utilises a multi-sensory approach involving verbal, non-verbal, spoken and auditory. Kvale (1996) regards the interview to be an ‘inter-view’, that is an interchange of views between two people on a topic of mutual interest. This was the exact purpose the researcher had in mind. Dyer (1995) stresses that whilst such an interchange may well take place the interview is more than a conversation since it has a specific purpose.

The concepts of an interview can be seen to be according to Kitwood (1977), purely the transfer of information, a transaction that may be inevitably biased or a social encounter in which the participants make sense of their social worlds. Whilst being aware of such ideas about the nature of interviews, the researcher was clear that they would be conducted as a social encounter that would facilitate the display of knowledge (Barker and Johnson, 1998). In order to promote this exchange, the researcher took note of the recommendations of Woods (1986, p.58) that ethnographic interviews should:
- establish trust and promote a sense of a common pursuit
- display curiosity by sharing a desire to learn, to listen and to discover
- be natural so that respondents share their thoughts unaffected by the interviewer.

The researcher shares the view of Evans (2002, p. 20) that the researcher is as much a learner as those who form the subject matter of the research. This was a view that was shared freely with the teaching staff participating in the study.

The purpose of the interviews was to gather information along with opinions and thoughts. It is by gaining access to what is inside a person’s thinking (Tuckman, 1972) that enables the possibility for the researcher to measure what a person knows, values and believes. This approach was also used to validate the other methods adopted and to follow up any unexpected results (Kerlinger, 1986) from the observations.

It has been established that the interview method was used because of its unique nature, of being a two-way conversation initiated by the researcher, for the specific purpose of obtaining relevant information, and focuses on a particular content. It is an unusual method (Cannell and Kahn, 1968) in the sense it involves direct verbal interaction between researcher and respondents.

The interview method (Cohen et al, 2008) has features in common with questionnaires however, it has the distinct advantage of the researcher being able to clarify any misunderstandings and establish meanings. Furthermore it can be conducted at a level of literacy and pace commensurate to that of the respondents. Its clear disadvantage is that it can be prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the researcher.
On balance, the researcher regards the relative merits of this method to be:

- the personal need to collect data
- provides opportunities for personalisation
- extensive opportunities for asking
- opportunities for probing
- enables large amounts of data to be collected
- can restrict the number of respondents
- good response rate
- researcher needs to code data

(Tuckman, 1972).

Oppenheim (1992) suggests that interviews favourably encourage greater respondent involvement which in turn increases the motivation factor, this also allows for difficult questions to be handled more positively.

There are a range of interview types identified by several writers, such as Le Compte and Preissle (1993) who refer to the standardised, in-depth, ethnographic, lifelong, elite, and focus types. To these, Bogdan and Biklen (1992) add semi-structured, and group interviews, whilst Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify the structured interview and Oppenheim (1992) the exploratory
interview. Patton (1980) completes this by outlining four further types to be; informal conversational, guide approach, open-ended, and closed interviews. Regardless of the actual type chosen by the researcher, Tuckman (1972) views the interview to be a distinctive research technique that serves three main purposes; to gather information, to either test hypotheses, or provide an interpretation and as being particularly useful when used in conjunction with other research methods.

Kvale (1996, p. 256) argues that the form of the interview should be fit for purpose and suggests that the key characteristics for the researcher wanting to conduct quantitative interviews should be based on the following:

- engage, understand, and interpret the key features in the life-world of the participants
- use natural language to gather and understand qualitative knowledge
- be able to reveal and explore the nuances described by participants
- elicit descriptions of specific situations and actions rather than generalities
- be deliberately open to new data and phenomena rather than being too prescriptive
- focus on specific ideas and themes i.e. have direction but avoid being too pre-structured
- accept the ambiguity and contradictions of situations where they occur in participants
.accept that the interview may provoke new insights and changes in the participants themselves

.regard interviews as an interpersonal encounter

.be a positive and enriching experience for all participants

The researcher decided to adopt the unstructured interview approach as discussed in Cohen et al (2008), since it presented an open and informal situation that enabled both the researcher and the participants to have a greater degree of flexibility and freedom. Whilst the research purpose directs the question, the sequence and wording lie with the researcher, despite the apparent ‘casual approach’ this still requires some element of planning (Kerlinger, 1986).

This informal conversation approach according to Patton (1980), relies entirely on questions arising spontaneously as part of the natural interaction between participants. This occurs particularly as part of on-going observation, thus the interviews are built on, and emerge from, observations and can be matched to individual participants and varying circumstances. For this reason the interviews always followed the observations conducted in the classroom.

The researcher recognised that whilst this approach yielded many strengths, the possible downside, could be that different information may be collected from different participants, since questions would be in response to the individual. If questions did not arise naturally, the researcher needed to introduce these in order to obtain a degree of comparability.

When planning the interview procedure the researcher made the following considerations in line with those recommended by Gall et al (2007): thematising, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying, and reporting.
The interview process followed a reflective pathway that led the respondents to reflect on the experiences they had just encountered (Schon, 1983) in the lesson considering what they had done, how it had been done and possible reasons why. Some of this was in-line with the existing lesson plan, some of this was in response to actions, reactions, and situations that may not have been planned for, but simply unfolded and therefore required an immediate response. This aspect of reflective practice is considered central to effective practice and provides sound evidence for further planning (Colloby, 2008).

Although the style adopted was an informal one the researcher was aware of the need to keep focus and drew on the suggestions of Kvale (1996) concerning the process of questioning. Some of this included:

- introducing a topic
- following-up on a topic or idea
- probing for further information or response
- asking respondents to specify and give examples
- ask directly for information
- ask indirectly for information
- interpreting respondent’s replies

The researcher continued to make notes as a continuation of the observation records since the interview was exactly that; a follow-on activity. The written notes took the same format as the observation field notes and used the same coding system. Questions were given in an open-ended style in order to maintain
flexibility, this also allowed the researcher to probe issues in greater depth and pursue more specific answers. Any misunderstandings were easily remedied and both a free exchange of knowledge and shared understanding were encouraged.

The transcribing stage of interviews is regarded by Cohen et al (2008) to be a crucial step since it has the potential for data to be lost or distorted. Whilst available options can include the use of audio or video recording (Morrison, 1993) neither of these were particularly appropriate to the classroom environment and so the researcher continued to make written notes. Kvale (1996) discusses the problem surrounding transcribing in relation to translation i.e. information is translated from the oral and interpersonal mode to the written format. The process inevitably decontextualises information from the dynamics of the interview situation which is live, social, and fluid into a written source which is static and permanent. Scheurich (1995) suggests however, that even the conventions of written language are open to interpretation so that what is recorded is never as solid as when it was actually spoken. The researcher was aware of such cautions with regard to interview data and, for this reason, adopted a range of data collection methods.

Following the collection of data the next stage involved its analysis. This stage needs to be progressive and thorough in order to reduce the large amount of data collected into a manageable format (Huberman, 1994). For this reason the data was coded into the following categories (some of which are suggested in Cohen et al, 2008) as a guide:
This use of coding can be defined as the translation of question responses and information into specific categories for the purpose of analysis (Kerlinger, 1970). In deciding on these categories the researcher needed to read through interviews to identify themes and patterns, determine meanings and develop clear categories into which data could be collated prior to analysis. Evans (2002) describes this process as that of sorting data according to the commonalities that are shared into categories. It is this organisational process that makes sense out of the data. Evans continues in the belief that for the researcher aiming to reach some depth of analysis, this categorisation is probably the most challenging
aspect of any study (the elements of analysis and reporting will be dealt with in the following chapter.)

5. Focus groups with parents

It became apparent following the initial interviews with staff that some of the issues arising about children acquiring English as L2 were around the attitudes and approaches to working positively with the parents. In order to represent the parent voice, the researcher therefore quickly introduced focus groups as a means of relating with, and listening to, parents’ views, attitudes, and beliefs about education and their children learning English as L2. Permission was sought from Headteachers for this to be accommodated in the school environment and is in line with the legal requirement (*Every Child Matters*, 2006) for schools to work co-operatively in supporting parents.

The focus group approach was decided on in order to generate interaction within the group and gather a collective rather than an individual approach (Morgan, 1988). Focus groups are identified as a form of group interview (Cohen *et al.*, 2008) where the interaction lies within the group rather than between the researcher and the participants (Morgan, 1988) albeit that the topic for discussion is provided by the researcher.

One advantage of this method lies with the potential for discussion to develop and so yield a wider range of responses (Watts and Ebut, 1987) than individual interviews. As with all interview types there is also the added practical advantage of organisation, having a pre-arranged group with minimal disruption. The advantage of having multiple respondents present allows for a cross-check of information and therefore provides a more reliable record (Cohen *et al.*, 2008). This may also become a disadvantage where dominant respondents may
antagonise or intimidate more reticent members of the group (Arksey and Knight, 1999).

The researcher was also aware that because the focus groups took place on the school premises respondents may offer a ‘public line of response’ rather than a more honest and personal reply. Assuming or fearing that responses may ‘get back’ to staff or saying what they think the researcher wants to hear. A further consideration for the researcher was how to code the responses (Lewis, 1992).

Focus groups according to Cohen et al (2008) are contrived since they bring together specifically chosen people to discuss a given theme. The researcher recognised this but chose it because it was an effective use of time that produced a large amount of data.

Additionally, since there is both a clear and well established rationale and legal basis for working in partnership with parents the researcher had a strong basis for adopting this approach. Hurst and Joseph (2003) recognise that the business of school life does not make it easy for parents and practitioners to share their intentions and perspectives with each other. It was further envisaged that this approach would enable parents to do this, and it was made clear that they had permission from the Head-teachers to do so openly, and without redress.

All of the schools involved in the study were actively seeking to work positively with parents and develop good practice which was deemed to be (Whalley, 1997) inclusive, participative, respectful, and meaningful. The respondents were aware of this and happily gave their consent. Once permission had been obtained access to parents was made through existing relationships the researcher had with teaching assistants. All of these were bi-lingual speakers themselves and were therefore able to use their language skills when communicating/ translating/ clarifying issues with other members of the group, and with the researcher.
Focus groups were established in each of the participating schools and met once each term. This was in order to provide a balanced view across all schools, and a comparative view between groups (Morgan, 1988).

The average group size was ten; this provided sufficient intra-group dynamics without becoming fragmented and difficult to manage. Whilst the majority of participants were female, at least one male contributed in all of the sessions. Participants were also representative of the cultural make-up of the individual schools; the majority were of South Asian origin with those from Eastern Europe and Africa also present. This was important in order that groups remained representative of the population of the study (Cohen et al., 2008). Anderson (2000) sees the advantage of focus groups as allowing topics to be addressed in a comfortable environment. The researcher was able to use either the staff room or parents’ room to conduct the interviews, a place that was familiar and non-threatening to group members, and where there would be no interruptions. Recognising the cultural context of the interviews, that the participants were from non-English speaking backgrounds, and generally from socially deprived backgrounds, with low levels of education, the researcher followed a question framework as suggested by Knigers (1998) comprising of an opening, introductory transition, and lastly key questions. This was to ensure that the group did not lapse into social discussion but rather maintain the focus. For the same considerations, the researcher aimed to keep interviews to one hour when possible. Each interview was recorded with permission, the recorder being placed in the centre of the room with participants sitting around it. The following questions were raised initially:

- What do you think is good about the school?
- What has helped your child to settle in?
- How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?
- How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?
- Is there anything you feel would help your child’s learning?
- What would you like to see your child achieve?

Participants were encouraged to take turns in answering and not cut others out, prompt each other to contribute, and let them finish what they had to say. These points are regarded by Wisker (2001) to be essential in establishing ground rules for such group interviews.

The researcher was aware that silence and dominance could have been two inhibiting factors to discussion and so to ease this, a quick seating map was made at the outset so that individuals could either be invited to comment, or prompted to allow others to do so. Some of this was aided also with bi-lingual support. Interaction is seen as a crucial feature of focus group interviews (Kitzinger, 1994). Initially participation was slow but as group members became more confident in the situation, realised that the researcher valued their contributions (Wisker, 2001), and that they had the full support of the Head teacher, participants became more forthcoming, honest, and open in their responses. The format employed was akin to that described by Wilson (1992):

- a small group
- led by trained researcher/facilitator/mediator
- of 1 to 2 hours
- an opportunity to discuss selected topics
- having a non-threatening environment
- promotes the exploration of participants perceptions, attitudes, feelings and ideas
- there is encouragement to utilise group interaction

Whilst using a recorder allows the benefit (Bell, 1993) of checking what has been said, the researcher also recognised that the process of transcribing text is time-consuming (McNiff et al, 1999). Since participants should be allowed to verify what has been recorded during interviews (Bell, 1993) the researcher offered both tape and transcripts to all participants, though all declined.

In adopting the group forum approach the researcher had to address the following considerations (Cohen et al, 2008):

- how to divide attention thus enabling everyone to speak
- should everyone be asked to respond to a question
- how to handle those who may become angry
- should named individuals be asked questions
- how to handle a range of very different responses to the same question
With such group interviews however, the unit of analysis is the view of the whole group, and not the individuals within it that is the key to its success (Knight, 1999). The researcher was keen to get to the deeper attitudes and perceptions of the participants in a way that left them free from bias. The format therefore mirrored the focused interview approach suggested by Menton et al (1956):

- all participants are known to be involved in a particular situation; those in the study all had English as a second language and were parents of children who also had English as second language

- elements of the situation that the researcher deems significant have been previously analysed; this had been done via observations of children, interviews with staff and textual analysis

- using this as a basis, a guide to the interview is drawn up

- the interview focuses on the subjective experiences of the respondents; in this case their parental experiences of children learning English as a second language

It is suggested by Cohen et al (2008) that this will enable the researcher to:

- establish the objective and therefore reduce the task

- distinguish objective facts from subjective definitions

- become familiar with the objective situation and so recognise silences, distortions, blockings and avoidances and thus be prepared to explore their implications.
One other factor that the researcher was aware of surrounded the sensitivity of parents discussing their own children. Whilst it has been established that working with parents is indeed considered effective practice in early years, the researcher needed to distinguish between the subjective, and objective nature of responses made by parents. There was clearly a need to use appropriate yet jargon-free language that would encourage individuals to contribute, and share their particular experiences. This was achieved largely with the co-operation of the bi-lingual support workers for which the researcher was extremely thankful.

The bi-lingual support workers proved vital in accessing deeper responses from parents, this was enabled because they were:

- of the same ethnic/cultural background and so the element of cultural reciprocity became the bridge to success
- had existing relationships with the parents because they were known to support their children
- spoke the same first language and so were able to ask more searching questions as prompted by the researcher
- made it clear that in order to maintain confidentiality they could not answer any individual queries in the focus group, but would do so at a later date
- constantly reminded participants that I was a ‘guest’ to the school such that rudeness would not be tolerated

The researcher also reminded the groups at the start of each session that both she and the bi-lingual support workers were bound by professional confidentiality and that individual comments made would remain anonymous. It was further explained, that it was an expectation of the group that all its members would
show the same level of respect for each other, by not discussing personal
comments with those from outside the group. A reminder was also given that
participants were there strictly by free consent and as such could withdraw at any
time if they chose to do so. This however was not the case, all participants
continued throughout and in fact expressed their feeling of being accepted,
respected, and valued by the process.

All of this enabled the researcher to proceed with the focus group interviews and
achieve successful outcomes, and also, to continuously evaluate the interview
whilst it was progressing.

6. Analysis of guidance and literacy strategies

The focus of assessment draws on the E.L.G.s and L.O.s of the curriculum
frameworks for literacy and English. These frameworks however provide only a
guide for what should be taught, and what levels children should reach, the ‘how’
is left to the individual schools and staff to decide, based on the needs of
particular cohorts of children. Chapter 2 indicated that apart from the National
Curriculum frameworks, the EYFS and N.C., a range of policies and initiatives
aimed at raising standards of English and providing support for L2 learners have
been implemented. The textual analysis was therefore concerned with reviewing
the ‘how’ of teaching English as a second language in primary education.

In recognising that documents are written for a purpose, agenda, and audience
though not necessarily for research purposes (Cohen et al, 2008) it must be
recognised that they do provide a visible record of the subject under study (Prior,
2003). They must therefore be considered in conjunction with other factors and
for this reason, have been included as one means of data collection along with
the others stated. Those documents included are all in the public domain (Cohen et al, 2008).

The documents reviewed were curriculum documents/guidance/policies and were selected on the basis that they provided the fulcrum of what was under study. In discussing the term ‘text’ Gall et al (2001) hold this to be any message that can be read. In terms of educational text then, those selected by the researcher were clearly acceptable and pertinent.

Texts for the purpose of the study are concerned with educational practices which Ong (1958) insists are not there by accident but exist as a natural result of history, some of which has been discussed in chapter 2. Freebody (2004) takes up the argument concerning the analysis of texts with reference to contemporary education practices, public education assessments, and public education activities.

Firstly, in terms of education practices, such texts e.g. curriculum documents, are concerned with the provision of learning and achievement (Olson, 1977). Secondly, text relates to the administration of formal education e.g. policy documents, syllabus outlines, and legislation. Thus formal education is mandated through texts. And, lastly the relationship between education practices and legal requirements on one hand and the needs of the individual learner, and of communities on the other is co-ordinated through texts e.g. Every Child Matters (2003). Freebody (2004), playfully suggests that educational texts generally tell a truth, which to the learner may appear to be, the truth. The role of the researcher then with reference to Gall et al (2001) was to provide interpretation of such text.

The text analysed in the study can be seen (Freebody, 2004) as a communication concerning the knowledge, disposition, and values required in
primary education and, from an interactionalist viewpoint as providing a platform for a range of educational activities. Smith (1999) shares the view of Freebody that contemporary educational practice is in fact saturated with texts which are often used as:

- learning resources in schools
- to define and regulate educational practice and arrangements
- embody the understanding of education and communities
- set out the purpose, content and consequences of educational activities
- establish education policies
- provide guidelines for teaching
- provide frameworks for assessment

Freebody (2004) critically questions how some educational texts have gained such significance, and why, they are in everyday use as an ideological platform for educational activity. Some of this discourse has been covered previously in chapter 2.

The specific texts being analysed were: The National Curriculum (N.C.), The New Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS), The Primary National Strategy (PNS), The Ruth Miskin Strategy (RMS), BLAST, School policies, documents and records, and Every Child Matters (ECM).
7. Ethical considerations

Educational research can by its very nature be regarded as a sensitive area to study. Regardless of the purpose, focus, methodology, and outcome, Morrison (2006) sees the act of research itself to be a sensitive matter. Such sensitivity can be identified by the following elements that are relevant to this study (Lee, 1993; Arditti, 2002; Chambers, 2003):

- potential consequences for participants
- consequences for institutions
- contents e.g. race, religion, family styles
- potential sanctions e.g. incrimination
- cultural and cross-cultural factors e.g. differing cultural views on education
- fear of scrutiny and exposure e.g. individual staff, parents.

Given the issue under study and potential sensitivities the researcher needed to give careful consideration to the planning and process of the study with regard to the subject matter, and the participant groups i.e. Headteachers, class-teachers, teaching assistants, parents, and children.

The researcher believed an important factor in the study beyond the collection and analysis of data was the interpersonal relationships involved. Walford (2001), also recognises that gaining access and becoming accepted may be a slow
process, but one, that is crucial to the ultimate successful outcome of such research.

For this reason the researcher drew on her contacts and existing professional relationships as an initial opening. Lee (1993) and Morrison (2006) refer to this as ‘networking’ and recognise, that not only is it widely used as a technique for establishing a basis for study, but, that it is particularly popular in penetrating organisations such as schools.

Having decided on this approach the researcher followed the 4-step process suggested by Walford (2001): approach, interest, desire, and sale. The initial approach was made through friends, students and colleagues and was followed up by a telephone call to arrange an interview with Headteachers (interest). During these discussions a letter outlining the intent and purpose of the study was handed out as a record of what was proposed (desire). Once permission had been given the researcher requested a second interview at a later date, to enable Headteachers to discuss with and gain permission from the individual staff who would be participating (sale). The researcher had made it clear that the study would not start until all participants were happy to give their own consent. At these second interviews all permission was assured and the researcher was shown around the schools to meet informally with staff. Since schools are held to be in ‘loco-parentus’ it was not necessary to seek direct permission from parents. (Permission to conduct the research was also given via the scrutiny of the University of Bolton Research Ethics Committee)

After initial observation/interviews with staff it became clear that the parent voice was needed. The researcher obtained permission from Headteachers to form parent focus groups who would meet on the school premises; this was less difficult than was first envisaged since staff were keen to further strengthen their existing policy of working effectively with parents. The participants were again drawn together through the networking process.
Whilst observations it is claimed (Cohen et al, 2008) are non-interventionalist there are still ethical considerations to be made. The subjects in this study, both children and staff knew that they were being observed and had given permission for this before-hand.

Whilst the researcher recognised that the presence of the observer may influence what is being observed, she took every precaution to be as inconspicuous as possible and become a natural part of the daily routine. Since observation is in fact a normal part of early years practice it could be argued that children and staff have become desensitised to the presence of any observer.

The ethical dimensions of interviewing can be seen as: informed consent, confidentiality, and consequences. Informed consent had been sought and obtained via the Headteacher and an assurance on the part of all participants was assured. The researcher did informally check with individual staff that they were in fact happy to contribute, recognising that any participant doing so under sufferance would make interpersonal relationships very difficult to establish and develop. Once the initial observation/interviews had taken place both the researcher and the respondents felt more at ease with each other and a clear working relationship was established. This was particularly enhanced by the researcher’s willingness to defer to the knowledge, expertise, and experiences of the class teachers.

The researcher was aware that during the course of the interviews and particularly as relationships developed that staff were more willing to share openly and honestly e.g. about aspects of management/leadership, relationships with parents, cultural differences/difficulties, professional disagreements about aspects of policy, pedagogy, and practice. Simons and Usher (2000) refer to this as the inextricable link between politics and ethics. Lee (1993) suggests that some participants may deliberately test the researcher by sharing such views.
The researcher maintained an ethical rather than political stance, being mindful of the focus of the study.

8. Validity and reliability

Validity is seen to be the important key to effective research and is a clear requirement for both quantitative and qualitative studies. With reference to the qualitative paradigm, Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that validity is not the ability to replicate, but rather that clear research purposes are explained. Winter (2000) suggests that validity may therefore be addressed through the honesty, richness, scope, and depth of the data that is collected, along with the extent of triangulation, and the objectivity of the researcher.

The validity of quantitative data can be improved (ibid) through careful sampling and the appropriate treatment of data. Since it is impossible (Cohen et al, 2008) for research to be 100% valid it should be viewed rather as a matter of degree (Gronlund, 1981). Thus the researcher seeks to minimise invalidity and maximise validity. Wisker (2001) regards the effective choice of data collection methods to be a key to this whilst Freebody (2004), holds the view that it is the meticulous way in which the research process is carried out that has the most direct impact on validity.

Mishler (1990) and Maxwell (1992) suggest that the term ‘understanding’ is a more suitable term than validity when conducting qualitative research. The suggestion (Agar, 1993) is that, in qualitative research it is the personal involvement and in-depth responses of individual participants that secures a level of validity and reliability. Silverman (1993) argues conversely, that whilst this may produce interesting results, validity and reliability require far more vigour on the part of the researcher.
In addressing the internal validity of the study the researcher looked to the suggestions of Lincoln and Guba (1985) by:

- prolonged engagement in the field – the study covered a 3 year period
- persistent observation – again revisiting the same cohort over the length of the study
- triangulation – using a range of methods and sources as already discussed
- peer debriefing, by exposing oneself to a objective peer in a manner akin to cross-examination to test honesty, and identify the next stage in the study; this was fulfilled by regular meetings/discussions with a supervising tutor
- member checking: respondent validations to correct errors, summarise findings and add further information; the interviews with staff that were held following observations met this aspect, since the two-way discussions that were held allowed the researcher to check for meanings and interpretations, summarise findings, and add any further interpretations that came to light.

The external validity (Cohen et al, 2008) is the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population. Eisenhart and Howe (1992) discuss this in terms of how typical the research situation is; the setting and participants, comparison groups and how this can be translated into different situations i.e. how typical were the schools, staff and children in this study and how well could this information be translated to for example a neighbouring Authority.

Being aware of the importance of validity, the researcher deemed triangulation to be an appropriate tool and effective way of demonstrating this (Gorard and
Taylor, 2004). The use of such multiples of data collection provided the study with more than one viewpoint, and enabled the use of both quantitative and qualitative data. The methods adopted also provided a contrast e.g. observation, interviews, and textual analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) regard triangulation to be an effective check on data which therefore increases its credibility. Triangulation (Cohen et al., 2008) can be seen as a bridge into reliability.

Reliability, according to Bell (1984) assumes that a procedure produces similar results on all occasions under constant conditions. Wisker (2001) however, considers this to be the extent to which a study could be replicated using the same activities with the same kind of group. Cohen et al. (2008) regard the term reliability to be different in quantitative studies than it is in qualitative studies. The former is concerned with the measure of dependability, replicability, and consistency, whilst the latter is concerning credibility, confirmability, and trustworthiness.

The element of quantitative data in the study was concerned with the numbers of children reaching set targets of attainment. The instrument used for this was the nationally agreed targets of the EYFS (appendix p.1) and N.C. (appendix p. 2). The outcomes identified by the researcher are then compared against national figures for children of the same age. Thus reliability is deemed to be predictable, consistent, and replicable (Cooper and Scheindler, 2001). The reliability of the qualitative data can be regarded as the fit between the data recorded by the researcher, and what actually occurs in the research setting (Kvale, 1996).

To promote the reliability of the study, the researcher used the same reflective format for all interviews with staff in all 5 schools. The observations of children, and staff, always took place in the morning literacy session; the researcher however, recognised that the time of day can influence children’s behaviour and level of participation.
The researcher also recognised potential issues of tension between validity and reliability e.g. the more structure the researcher puts on an interview in order to increase validity, the less open the respondents may be, thus reducing the level of reliability. To accommodate this she considered the suggestion of Kitwood (1977) that the solution to such problems lies with ‘judicious compromise’.

The majority of the study lies in the qualitative paradigm with some element of quantitative data. Such a combination is welcomed by Silverman (1985) since it presents a variety of interpretation. The researcher believed the strength of the methodology lay in the use of triangulation and range of data collection methodologies adopted (Walliman, 2005) and, regarded that by incorporating different forms of data collection the validity of the research had been increased. The researcher was aware of her own values, preconceptions, and interests, and so had consciously sought to remain a ‘neutral conduit’ (Scott and Usher, 1999).

To conclude the chapter then the study was concerned with the acquisition and development of English as a second language by young children in their primary years. A range of research methods have been applied each of which the researcher has found to be enlightening and enjoyable in a different way, though predominantly because it has plunged her back into her own early years background which she remains passionate about.

The one clear aim throughout the study has been to throw useful light on effective teaching. Indeed, Evans (2002, p.228) raise the questions, ‘What use is educational research if it does not inform and impact upon what goes on in schools?’

The chapter is now concluded and the researcher would confer with the view of Dewey (1929 b), since she is an educator too, that educational research should not simply be research on education, and educators, but should also involve
educators themselves. A role that the researcher believes she has fulfilled during the study.

The next chapter will present and guide through the results of the study, which recognises that completing ethnographic study on an aspect of culture is a major undertaking (Gall et al, 2007).
CHAPTER 5

Discussion of results
Introduction

This chapter presents a school-by-school discussion of the results from chapter 4, drawing particular attention to teaching and interaction with L2 children, classroom practices, and the use of resources. It furthermore, presents graphs (drawn from numerical data in chapter 4) that illustrate the different elements of literacy for all 5 schools by year group, and results for the end of EYFS, and KS 1. This allows for a clear comparison across all participating school to be made. The views of parents and staff are discussed as a means of identifying underlying values and attitudes, and additionally serve to triangulate the data collected.

SCHOOL 1

Teaching here is identified across all year groups to be direct and draws on the strengths of a dialogic approach. Whilst the teacher takes the lead, particularly at the start and end of each session, staff work in a co-operative manner to ensure effective delivery. The progression from play-based learning in reception to formal learning in year 2 is again clear to see, and as such meets the requirements of the curriculum. English is used at all times with the provision of bi-lingual support in reception year alone, and then only for those of Asian languages i.e. Urdu and Bengali, with the intention of acting as translator solely for parents. There is a very strong emphasis on reading e.g. the use of dual language books, the introduction of paired reading with Y6 pupils and direct input from the local librarian. The emphasis on the use of English is perhaps driven by the very strong views of the staff about the ‘need’ to integrate. Kabuto (2011) suggests that where there is such emphasis on speaking, reading and writing in English, children are enabled to ‘talk the talk of school’. This approach is accompanied by a persistent determination that children can do well; an additional factor is also the inability to provide for the language needs of the 35 different languages spoken by children here. A link to the ‘Every Child Matters’ agenda (2003) could be suggested here, whereby if all children matter it would seem improper to meet the language needs of only some. Again, in line with this thinking the ‘day-of-the-month’ was introduced to foster greater understanding and respect for the many language backgrounds housed in this school, rather than
focus on the few, and, additionally to further value the role of all parents. It is by recognising and valuing the interconnected nature of a child’s cultural and daily experiences (Brofenbrenner, 1979) in such obvious ways, that their learning and identity can be strengthened; the observable outcome being more positive.

The results indicate that children in reception make good progress in speaking and listening, this rate of oral proficiency is sustained throughout KS1. The majority of children are also achieving level 2 in all aspects of English by the end of KS1. It may appear that the drive to use English only in this setting has been a positive contributing factor to this outcome. An additionally interesting point worth raising here (Moje and Luke, 2009), is that children themselves recognise that language is a tool for inclusion or exclusion; as such these children may be seen to be opting for inclusion.

SCHOOL 2

Teaching strategies here range from direct to very direct, with an emphasis on explanation, exposition, and demonstration; there is also a lot of shared and interactive learning taking place. All teaching is conducted in English with no bilingual support at any stage of the curriculum, although spoken language is often supported by the use of pictures and drawings. The BLAST programme was introduced originally for children in the reception year, to encourage children to act as communicators through the use of language games. This process of enculturation is regarded to be the most effective means of developing language (Hughes and Westgate, 1997). Its’ success (as assessed by staff) in promoting confidence in speaking and listening is also supported by the results, which show that children in reception achieve a higher rate of progress in all aspects of literacy apart from reading. This may be linked to low levels of parental literacy skills in view of the impoverished catchment area of this school. For this reason the school works actively to support parents themselves, this good practice recognises the importance of working in partnership (Basford and Hodson, 2011). Where, by strengthening the home learning environment the attitudes of children are ultimately strengthened too.
The successful outcomes established from the implementation of BLAST has lead to the programme being extended in Y2 for those L2 still struggling. In order to actively promote overall literacy, this school has also adopted many creative resources e.g. the use of music, and visual timetables, writing tables that encourage creativity through a wide range of colourful stationery, writing back-packs, pink stationery for girls, and ‘secret writing spaces’ accommodated in dens and tents. The environment is literacy rich with different fonts, styles, languages, and genres represented. Kabuto (2011) recognises that children use ‘physical tools’ i.e. the resources they have to hand in order to express and extend thoughts and, as a means of developing effective communication.

The results show that by the end of KS1 the majority of children are firmly at level 2 for speaking and listening, this may be a strong indicator that the early levels of confidence developed in reception have continued. Progress in reading shows improvement with writing being the weakest area. However, overall results for children achieving level 2 at the end of KS1 are higher in this school than the rest. This may be perceived to be as a direct result of the BLAST programme, though the implementation of highly creative resources deserves to be acknowledged.

SCHOOL 3

An interesting feature here is the adoption initially of a key-worker system as a means of establishing strong links with parents. Based on the principal of secure attachment, this role is further strengthened by the work of Fonagy (1997) and practitioner guidance from the EYFS (DCSF, 2008). There is also a strong emphasis from the start on children’s autonomy e.g. self-registration, music signals, and visual timetable; all of this supports children in making their own choices. It is this element of ‘empowerment’ (Siraj-Blatchford, 2007) drawn on the work of Vygotsky (2004) that is seen to challenge and foster strong thinking skills in children. The results for the end of reception show that children’s progress across all aspects of literacy is fairly even, which may suggest that the strong element of parental support added to high levels of child autonomy, provide a strong basis for learning and development.
Teaching progresses from being instructive with lots of child-initiated activity, to a linear approach and into a formal style. However, to accommodate the transition from EYFS to National Curriculum staff took a gradual approach across Y1; this was considered to be in the best interest of the children. There is a strong emphasis on reading with practices such as, the 40 minute guided reading sessions in Y2. Other creative approaches to developing literacy skills can be seen in the introduction of ‘hot-seating’, and the 5-minute-box; inter-active whiteboards are used for most lessons. English is spoken at all times and there in no bi-lingual support offered.

The results show that at the end of KS1 the majority of children are achieving level 2 in speaking and listening, whilst for reading and writing the majority are working towards rather than achieving level 2. This result is consistent across Y1 and Y2 and may suggest that whilst the ‘transition period’ did initially aid children in personal and social development it may need to be reviewed so that there is greater emphasis on reading and writing sooner, rather than waiting until Y2.

**SCHOOL 4**

Children in this cohort are all EAL and so bi-lingual support is provided throughout the foundation stage and KS1, whilst this can be seen to demonstrate a commitment to the needs of the children and, an opportunity to foster cross-cultural understanding (Tabors, 2004) this is seen more practically by staff, as a means of communicating with parents. The results for the end of reception show levels of literacy are low across all aspects, though it has to be recognised that for the vast majority of children this is their first encounter with education, being separated from mum, and learning another language. The role of the BLA is therefore very important in settling children in and could be compared to that of the ‘key-worker’ (from school 3) since this is the triangulation point between children, staff, and parents. It must also be recognised that the transition into education for these children is also a transition from the unique culture of the home, and community, which is entirely Asian in origin, and relies almost exclusively on the home language.
Whilst there are several staff in classrooms it is always the teacher who takes the lead in English, the BLA may offer language support when needed. The school may here be perceived to be adopting the additive approach (Weber and Horner, 2012), where the home language is maintained along with the speedy acquisition of English. The teaching style is observed to be a direct one though this is generally accompanied by the use of pictures, symbols, and labels. Such techniques, though generally associated with younger children, do enable teachers to communicate with children who may have little spoken language to offer, and reduce frustration (Tabors, 2004). The emphasis is on social and personal development along with, an emphasis on English skills. Targets are displayed on the walls to enable informal and incidental assessment to occur daily. As children progress in their English skills, strategies aimed at encouraging this are introduced e.g. daily shared reading. There is an emphasis on speaking and listening with clear and precise pronunciation for which the talking-shop and talk-time have been developed. This is deemed to be linked closely with the systematic teaching of phonics rather than a concern over 'accented' rather than 'standard' English (Block, 2008). As children progress towards the end of KS1 there is a push also towards not using L1, rather an increased dependence on the use of English, the BLA is expected at this stage to use L1 on a need-to basis only.

By the end of KS1 the results show that the majority of children are achieving level 2 in speaking and listening, this would suggest that the resources and activities aimed specifically at this area are being effective. Levels for reading show the majority to be at level 1/working towards level 2, and for writing the spread varies from working towards level 1/ level 1/working towards level 2; for both of these targets it is the minority who achieve level 2. The overall results for all schools at the end of KS1 show this school to be lower than the rest. It would appear that the creative emphasis given to speaking and listening is effective and would suggest perhaps, that a similar approach to both reading and writing may have a significant impact also.
SCHOOL 5

This school cohort is likewise 100% EAL and bi-lingual support is again offered to the end of KS1. Whilst this is deemed to be an English speaking school, it is in fact only the staff who are English speaking, with the teaching staff being mono-lingual English. The children on starting school and, a majority of the parents too have little or no English. English could be perceived then to be the minority language of the school, with children acquiring bilingual skills only as they progress through the school, since they are generally not being raised in a bi-lingual home environment. The role of the BLA is important here as a starting point for communication (Baldock, 2010). This school is not unique in having a minority group as its majority (see school 4); there are two points to consider here (i) that whilst this group share a common language/dialect it is non-the-less culturally diverse and (ii) that there is an important need to foster an appreciation of white British culture (Baldock, 2010).

The results for the end of reception show that whilst overall levels of progress in literacy are low compared to other schools, they are also fairly even. All teaching is in English and is lead by the teacher; the pattern here is for the teacher to deliver and then the BLA to translate. Whilst teaching is identified as being dialogic and very direct, a linear approach is adopted at the start of Y1. Classroom are clearly managed and organised with vocabulary, pictures, and labels displayed in dual languages, with English first. This is clearly intended to facilitate the development of English yet, it has been suggested (Whitehead, 2010) that this, however unintended may send messages about the status and values of these languages.

There is a lot of music and song utilised as a means of developing the rhythm, and pace of language. Since all children start by learning the sounds of a language, this is seen to be a meaningful way of establishing the repertoire of sounds needed for emergent spoken English (Halliday, 1975). Morning sessions are structured, in line with the demands of the curriculum, whilst the afternoon sessions are more collaborative with, for example the use of structured and role play to encourage speaking and listening. This provides children with lots of opportunity to play with language and is seen furthermore to be a bridge to writing (Whitehead, 2010). The
results for the end of KS1 show the majority of children to be achieving level 2 in speaking and listening, a suggestion perhaps, that this approach is effective.

There is a strong emphasis too on writing, with the introduction of the ‘talking-table’ and on reading for which daily reading session are timetabled, this is often lead by the local librarian. Results for these two target areas show, for writing, the range is spread from working towards level 1/ level 1/working towards level 2, with a minority achieving level 2. For reading, a similar range is apparent again, with the minority achieving level 2. Whilst the results are lower than most school they are better than school 4, which is very similar in make-up. This may be as a result of the differences in approach, it is clear that school 5 has taken a more creative stance towards developing literacy.

Table 5.1 Results for CLL for all schools at the end of reception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Communication &amp; Thinking</th>
<th>Sounds &amp; Letters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>school 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst it is apparent that the play-based approach to learning of the EYFS is practiced in all settings, the results for schools 4 and 5 at the end of reception year are lower than the other three. The main differences being the percentages of EAL children, with schools 4 and 5 being exclusively EAL, and the corresponding levels of parental literacy skills with again, schools 4 and 5 having a high percentage of parents who themselves have little English and low levels of educational attainment.
In general, the home languages represented here are predominantly oral, with few parents able to read/write; children are therefore only subject to an oral pattern of speech and do not have the opportunity to establish a range of language skills that incorporates an awareness of how those sounds look, and are formed. In terms of Bruner’s approach to language development (Bruner, 1983) they may appear to be lacking the iconic and symbolic stages until they encounter formal education. Kabuto (2011), regards children to use three languages; for instruction, in the community, and in the home. It is clear that in these two schools, the language of the home and community are not that used for instruction, which may offer some explanation for the difference in results. With reference to such ‘ethnic enclaves’ Massey (1999) and Per-Andrews et al (2003) discuss high levels of self-sufficiency and latency in learning the host language, which, whilst enabling members to function well within the community can also be a hindrance to social involvement in the mainstream of society. This may be one of the underlying reasons for the apparent reluctance to progress into English language speaking.

Children make sense of the world through their active engagement with it, and develop a socio-cultural perspective on language through interaction with their peers (Gee, 2002). It must therefore be highlighted that in schools 4 and 5, children do not have the opportunity to actively engage with English speaking peers from differing backgrounds, but rather, continue with those from the home, and community who are also EAL. There is therefore no natural opportunity for children to learn their English language skills directly through interaction with peers. It is clear that all settings make good considerations for the children in terms of developmental needs, for the individual and, with regards to what is also culturally appropriate. (Gonzalez-Mena, 1998). Likewise, is their common intention to working positively with parents, however, this is made more difficult for staff in those settings where a translator must be relied on for communication. This may be an indication that in settings such as schools 4 and 5 where the expectations of the school and those of the parents appear to be incongruent, a different approach to working with parents is required. This could ensure that a greater level of co-operation from parents is fostered, in order to establish a base for language that supports the transition of children into education.
Table 5.2 Levels of attainment for speaking and listening for all schools at the end of KS1

Table 5.3 Levels of attainment for reading for all schools at the end of KS1
By the end of KS1 children across all schools are in the majority, achieving the expected level 2 for speaking and listening. This shows significant improvement for schools 4 and 5, which may suggest that once EAL children begin to develop confidence in their use of English the rate of development continues. It is clear that these children already know what language is, they are merely now discovering what
the English language is (Tabors, 2004). What is common across all schools, is the practice from all staff of using English at all times, since they are concerned with the quantity, and quality of exposure of the language. They are to some extent also under pressure from parents, and head teachers for children to be making observable and quantifiable progress.

Table 5.6 Percentage achievement for level 2 in reading and writing for all schools at the end of KS1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of EAL children in class</th>
<th>Number of children achieving L2 for reading</th>
<th>As a percentage</th>
<th>Number achieving L2 for writing</th>
<th>As a percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst oracy is the basis for all language development it is not unsurprising then that children in all settings perform better in the speaking and listening elements of the curriculum. In terms of the results for all components of English those schools with better outcomes appear to have some aspects in common; a higher number of children in the group who are native English speakers, good working relationships between staff members, a creative approach to literacy, and a higher percentage of parents who can support their children at home.

The impact of peer tutoring and creativity in approaching literacy has already been previously discussed. The element of staff cohesion and co-operation is identified, since it is clear that children are social learners and will internalise not just the language modelled by the adults around them but also, the emotional quality of those relationships (Whitehead, 2010). Where an element of tension exists between staff (as is identified in schools 4 and 5) children may be wrongly identifying this to be concerned with themselves, their home language or culture. This misperception
may be further exacerbated by communication with parents being facilitated through a translator, thus slowing down the formation of good parental participation. There is a stark contrast here compared with the more co-operative approaches identified in the other three schools, in particular school 2 where an EYP works with the teacher, and school 3 which has developed a key-worker system. Recent research (Evangelou et al, 2009; Tickell, 2011) recognises that good quality early years settings can compensate for those children who do not enjoy a strong home learning environment. This is attributable to the skill of practitioners in offering to support the quality of home learning and in working constructively with parents. This may be the strongest indication yet, that where this is clearly evidenced the outcomes for children are better than where this is identified to be lacking.

Kabuto (2011) discusses the need for children to develop language practices at home, such as understanding that graphic forms carry meaning. Where the home language is merely used in a spoken form there is no encouragement for this to happen. Likewise where parents do not read/have low levels of literacy there are few opportunities if any, for children to develop this skill either. Parental education has been identified as strong indicator in determining how well a child’s potential may be released in adult life (Fields, 2010). Another critical factor is that of the home learning environment; a measure of which is the extent to which parents participate in reading to children, playing with letters and numbers, teaching rhymes and songs and engaging with libraries (Melhuish et al, 2001). It is worth mentioning here that what has become increasingly apparent during the study is that there are no children’s books written in some language and only few in some dual languages. Evidence drawn from the parent focus group shows that all parents, regardless of their own literacy skills, are keen for their children to become proficient in their use of English. Delgado-Gaitan (1992) recognises that linguistically diverse families perceive reading to be important and also to be a major factor in school success. What has become apparent from the study, is that those families living in English-dominant communities feel that learning to read, write and speak in English is necessary for school and future economic stability, there is not the same ‘necessity’ shown from those living in EAL-dominant communities. (The same findings are revealed in Martinez-Roldan and Malave, 2004). An interesting point discussed by Billet et al
(2003) suggests there may be a link between starting to learn an additional language at an early age and a perceived weakening of national identity. Similar comments emerge from those parents from Moslem cultures who regard the maintenance of their home language inextricably linked to their religious identity. Interestingly too, is the view that whilst parents and home remain important influences throughout childhood, it is the influence of friends and peers, school, and the wider community that becomes of increasing significance as a child grows older (Sutton et al, 2004).

For children then who live in homes, and communities where English is an additional language (as in school 4 and 5) and, where it is possible to continue without this, there is perhaps less motivation and encouragement to do so. The influence then, of the school may be seen to be at a tangent to the other dominant influences of friends, peers and the wider community. One interesting feature emerging from the parent focus group, is that some mothers born here and who are English speaking have reverted back to their perceived ‘mother-tongue’ following marriage. The reason given for this is the patriarchal dominance of the culture, whereby the husband will decide which language is to be used in the home and therefore which language children will speak. Forster and Renfrew (2012) also identity that in mixed language marriages where the male is dominant, women will transmit the ‘higher status’ spouses language to their children. Such factors need therefore to be considered when questioning why outcomes across these schools differ.

The study clearly identifies that all settings work competently within the guidelines of the EYFS and National Curriculum, with individual setting also incorporating various strategies aimed at promoting literacy. However, throughout such current guidance is the assumption that EAL children are the minority within any group, and as such have the opportunity to hear and use English amongst their peers. The research (to date) has been unable to identify any guidance that adopts the opposite approach, that of, supporting groups of children where EAL is the majority or, as with those cohorts identified in the study which consisting completely of EAL children. For staff working in such settings then there is no specific guidance available.

In conclusion of this chapter then, the main themes to emerge are in general terms, the quality and quantity of English as both a distinct taught subject and through general daily activity between children and staff, and, the extent to which creative
resources and activities are used to underpin literacy. There is a clear link identified between a creative approach and levels of attainment; where creativity is increased attainment levels are higher. The quality of professional working relationships between staff is identified as important, since this clearly sets the tone for co-operation and learning in the classroom. The consequence of this may influence the approach adopted in developing positive relationships with parents, since this may ultimately impact on developing the home learning environment this is an issue that cannot be overlooked. The issue of working in partnership with parents is clearly high on the agenda for teaching staff who understand how this strengthens children’s learning. It is therefore a matter of concern where this is difficult to establish, yet alone maintain. One final theme emerging from the chapter, concerns the ratio of children in any one group who are EAL and the opportunities this either presents or denies them, to learn alongside indigenous English speaking peers. This is a particularly important matter for those schools where cohorts are made up entirely of EAL children.

The next chapter will outline the significance of the themes.
CHAPTER 6

Conclusion
Introduction

The chapter concludes the study and suggests recommendations in addition to the current curriculum and initiative guidelines, currently adopted in the primary phase of education. The study collected a considerable body of data, both qualitative and quantitative in order to establish a range of opinion, perspective, and practices; this forms the basis of the recommendations and conclusions.

Before discussing the findings and offering suggestions for changes to practice, it may be appropriate to acknowledge the parameters of objectivity and as such how recommendations are arrived at. Whilst, as in Chapter 3, Research Methodologies, every effort was made to reduce the possibility of bias, the suggestions made may in some part reflect the researcher’s own discipline, experience, and ideological perspectives (Gall et al, 2007).

By developing previously explored themes linked to the results, the chapter will provide conclusions, and suggest recommendations designed to further improve the teaching and learning of English as an additional language in primary education.

Observations of staff reveal that English is used exclusively by teachers as the means of communication with all children, and parents. This is some instances is accompanied by translation and interpretation to both children and parents provided by BLAs. This is not provided for all languages, and from the study only for those languages representing the Asian sub-continent; predominantly Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi and related dialects. There appears to be a tendency for BLAs to communicate largely in L1 rather than encourage and promote the use of English. There is no suggestion from the study that is done with any intent other than to aid communication. It may however, suggest a lack of understanding with regard to the process of acquiring a second language or, that there is the need to do so sooner, rather than later, so that parents and staff can communicate directly. What is also clear is the determination of teachers to forge good relationships with all children and divide their time equitably, so that every child has directive input by an English speaking role model as a means of supporting their successful acquisition of an additional language. It is clear that children will acquire speech through imitating those around them (Tabors, 2004) with staff therefore expressing concerns about
children using standard rather than pidgin English (Jacobs, 1995). Pronunciation is a particular issue, as some English sounds may not be in the repertoire of the first language (Sage, 2006) and may therefore hinder the use of phonics. There is clear evidence of strong positive interaction between teachers and children which does much to create a warm caring ethos. This in itself provides a strong basis for learning and development to occur and is reminiscent of the approach favoured by Vygotsky (1978).

Teaching and learning is largely facilitated by the use of creative resources, which is observed in all settings. There appears to be a strong link between the range and type of resources used in the teaching of English, as both a distinct and integral part of the curriculum, and, the results at the end of both EYFS and KS1. This may suggests that ‘creativity’ itself is important in stimulating language development, related brain function and motivation for learning. The introduction of the EYFS (2003) seems to have opened up a wider pedagogy that has seen an increasing integration of the concept of multiple intelligences into primary education (Barnes, 2007). This is seen in terms of more group work, problem solving and role play; all of which has been observed in the study. Kirtlan (2009) considers that creativity improves children’s self-esteem, motivation, and achievement; again this is clearly evidenced in the study.

Whilst all staff understand the value of working positively with parents and are keen to implement this in their practice, the barriers of communication, particularly in schools 4 and 5 appear to militate against this. The use of BLAs in communicating with parents is necessary to convey information between teacher and parent. However, whilst this does facilitate communication, the extended use of a translator becomes a barrier, since it does not progress the relationship between the two parties and certainly in some situations has become a frustration. The role of the BLA could be viewed as a mere conduit since there is no development of language taking part, in either, parents beginning to use English or staff acquiring even a basic vocabulary of the home language. Whilst staff; both teachers and BLAs are keen to ensure that children feel included into the classroom and learning, they appear to do this in parallel rather than in co-operation with each other. This would appear to be the root of tension between staff and suggests either, a lack of shared
understanding or, a difference of interpretation in creating an inclusive classroom (Dunne, 2009). This may indicate that there needs to be a different approach to the training of BLAs and a clearer definition and understanding of the role.

Whilst it is without question that children learn through play, the understanding of both learning and play would appear not to be the same in all cultures. Discussions with parents reveal that this is often associated with younger children, whilst learning is expected to occur through more formal means. This feature of play is the dominant focus of teacher training for all early years practitioners, though, this is seldom extended for those teachers working beyond the foundation stage. It may likewise appear then, that the understanding of learning and play is not the same for all staff working with children under eight years of age. It would seem that staff are trying to encourage parents to engage with their children through play-based learning, when, as practitioners they themselves have a limited practical understanding of its use and value. This identifies a difference not just in terms of initial teacher training but, more fundamentally a lack of a deep rooted value and passion for high quality early years provision, which provides a strong basis for all future learning. Those with specific early years training are therefore best suited to teach in the early years (Nuttbrown, 2012).

The opportunities for learning that are facilitated through play are endless, since it is the natural way in which children learn and so can be shaped by skilled practitioners to meet expected learning goals. This is clearly utilised by all settings in the study, though a direct link can be made between the extent to which this is implemented creatively, and, the observed levels of achievement (see Chapter 5). During play children learn and develop social and communication skills, this is therefore particularly pertinent for those children who are learning English as an additional language. In relating naturally with their English speaking peers, L2 children have the opportunity to absorb the rules of grammar and forms of spoken language, explore the use and meaning of words and develop an understanding of how to express thoughts, ideas and emotions. This collaborative playing with language enables children to build up positive concepts, and a knowledge of language (Whitehead, 2010). In those settings where L2 children are in fact the sole majority, there is no opportunity for this to occur; such children could therefore be perceived to be at a
disadvantage. This is exacerbated further where there is little, if any, opportunity for such social interaction to take place outside of school either, as is clearly the case in schools 4 and 5. It is a matter of concern that children are apparently growing up in ‘cultural isolation’, since the only culture they are encountering is that of the home community. The findings of the study would suggest that this group is merely transferring itself, along with its’ language and culture to another location.

The use of resources in all settings is clearly a key to learning, and, there is much in the study that strengthens the use of creativity as a means of children acquiring and progressing in their use of English. All settings make use of explorative, practical means of learning accompanied by the use of visual and musical props (Mac Naughton and Williams, 2009). The overwhelming emphasis is on speaking and listening, as a firm basis on which reading and writing are then built (Smith, 2010). Those children who are native English speakers are also exposed to, and, can practice the symbolic forms of language prior to starting school and as such can be seen to have an entry level that is somewhat higher than those who have not had this (Lambeth, 2010). There is therefore a strong need for L2 children to acquire this base element before any forms of writing and reading can be expected (Cole, 2004). It is here that teachers and parents appear not to be able to work together, since the lack of basic literacy skills in children is largely due to a lack of literacy in parents; as such there is no common ground. Some schools have recognised this and have responded by promoting literacy classes for parents; this is a slow process and not one that all teachers feel either able or qualified to handle. This in some part offers an explanation for low levels of achievement at the end of KS1, however, it must also be pointed out that the rate of English language development may speed up by the end of KS2 in line with maturation and motivation. Work by both Cummins (1992) and Collier (1995) suggests, that it takes five to seven years in education for bilingual pupils to become fully competent in L2 skills and to catch up with up with their peers. The overall trend however appears to continue, with achievement levels for reading and in particular writing to remain lower that the national average. Research into attainment levels at KS2 (Lambeth, 2010) identify those L2 pupils at the early stages of acquiring English skills to have significantly lower scores than monolingual peers.
This is a relevant point since it has already been identified that many L2 children in the study may be up to five years behind their native peers.

It is clear that staff in all settings have good relationships with all the children in their cohort and use both planned times and incidental happening to ensure they have good interaction with L2 children. Teaching staff recognise the need for L2 children to have clear models of spoken English which they can imitate and learn from. There is therefore a great, if not dramatic, use of speech, generally accompanied by symbols, signs and gestures to emphasis what is actually being said (Mac Naughton and Williams, 2009). Children are encouraged to communicate again through the use of speech, gestures, symbols and pictures. The form of spoken English observed being used by staff with L2 children is generally that used with younger children, where the form, pattern, pitch, and pace are exaggerated in order to establish the basics. The whole ethos is one which is warmly encouraging and rewards children’s efforts with praise and recognition for both effort and achievement. It is within this atmosphere that where there is a mix of cultural identities children are able to share with and learn from their peers. Teachers in all settings were identified to work in this manner, the difficulties identified where again in those settings where BLAs were not encouraging L2 children to develop English language skills and, where their own use of English is heavily accented by their first language. It is here that teachers who are native English speakers intervene to set the ‘correct’ model of spoken language. This again identifies an area of tension between staff that is not entirely positive, this is unfortunate since the way in which teaching assistants support teaching and learning is deemed to be crucial in establishing an inclusive classroom ethos (Richards and Armstrong, 2008).

Interviews with teaching staff have provided some honest and open discussion surrounding the complexities of teaching children who are educated in a language that is not their own. Enabling children to acquire and learn English in all its forms is a process, yet, at the same children are assessed in English with the expectation of reaching national levels of achievement. Staff are conscious of the pressure of trying to fulfil what they regard to be an unrealistic goal, that of being expected to get L2
children to accepted national levels at the end of KS1 with insufficient support. For staff teaching cohorts made up of several languages the value of peer tutoring is recognised, and quickly draw on as a strength (Sage, 2006) however, those staff who teach cohorts consisting entirely of L2 children are not able to do so, and are conscious of not being able to make use of this strategy.

Teachers clearly recognise the importance of working with parents to achieve better outcomes for children, though unfortunately, encounter communication difficulties with those parents who are non-English speaking. Whilst this in some part is facilitated by BLAs, this is not ideal (see previous comments). They realise they may have little or no understanding of the home cultures of L2 children, but have little opportunity to develop this either. In discussion about family types and background it is clear than no assumptions can made about what children experience at home (Dearden and Sibieta, 2010), and what some have found most helpful is to make home visits (Siraj-Blatchford et al, 2007).

Staff comment that during initial training they received little if any instruction with reference to L2 children, cultural differences, working with L2 parents, or second language development. The work of Butcher et al (2007) drew similar conclusions. Only those staff with specific early years training have an understanding of child development and so, are in a better position to understand the process of pre-linguistic and early language development (Whitehead, 2010). Whilst there has been the opportunity for post-qualifying training many feel they have had to develop knowledge and skills in these areas for themselves. Teachers clearly value working with parents and recognise this as a significant factors in children’s learning (Easen et al, 2007) yet, are unable to engage fully in this. It is here that an element of frustration has led at times, to feelings of professional incompetence. It should be recognised that all staff in the study work hard to make learning enjoyable and, in doing so have become inventive with their creativity. Credit should be given for their perseverance in working through the complexities of the job, creating such warm caring environments and maintaining a sense of humour.

Focus groups with parents reveal that in general, parents are dived into two groups, those who live in diverse neighbourhoods and those who live in cultural enclaves.
(Per-Andrews et al, 2003). Whilst this decision was based on choice, other factors have also been a strong influence e.g. the extent to which family and friends were already living here and so could provide support. There is a strong tendency for members of Asian cultures to settle in the same community (as is evidenced in schools 4 and 5), following patterns of linear migration (Massey, 1999). The impact this has on language development and social integration has already been identified. It is this however, that would appear to be the strongest determinant on how soon children living in these communities start to learn English. There is much debate about the age at which this is most helpful to begin. Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2009) not only agree with Krashen (1982) that the earlier children start to learn another language the better the proficiency achieved, but also, regard age onset as a key factor in developing ‘native-like-ness’. This factor needs to be considered in line with the levels of attainment achieved by L2 children at the end of KS1 (see Chapter 5). Fishman (2006) recognises the need for a language shift as positive since it allows greater communication, and integration of groups who may otherwise remain socially isolated. Likewise is the fact that this can also lead to cultural disintegration, a fear clearly expressed by some parents.

Whilst all parents want to see their children do well at school and realise that this is largely dependent on their ability to use English, there is again a divide as to how this is best achieved. The trend is again linked to the home communities; where families live in mixed localities there is a greater willingness to assimilate into the host language, as opposed to those living in mono-cultural communities who are reluctant to do so. This is largely due to perceptions of cultural identity Jabobs (1995) recognises that to the L2 speaker learning another language in some part diminishes the home language, their self view and that of the home country. This is often seen by the host community, and speakers of the host language as an unwilling refusal to integrate (such feelings are identified by staff in the study). There is thus misunderstanding and tension on both parts, which makes the need for successful communication all the greater.

Many areas of conflict were identified by parents surrounding issues such as; high academic expectation for their children, an element of language loss, the complexities of religion and language in their own culture and how this is transmitted
into a different society, the roles of women and how mothers want this to change for their daughters, particularly through education. There is much in common here between the aspirations of parents and those of the teachers; this again highlights both the need for positive communication in order to make progress, and the barriers that prevail against it (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2005).

The two curriculum models adopted nationally are the EYFS and National Curriculum, however, they appear to give lip-service to L2 pupils rather than address properly the issue of promoting proficiency in English language skills. They remain mandatory requirements, yet, in terms of what is required nationally provide what may be deemed to be only general guidance. They are also based on the premise that L2 children are a minority in any classroom, a fact that is clearly not so in this study. To date, the researcher is unable to find any guidance that supports teaching English as an additional language where the cohort consists entirely of EAL pupils. It has to be said that general policies to suit all children in all schools may not work in all situations (Creese, 2003). Rather what is needed is a nuanced approach that recognises and responds to the differences and diversity of local situations. There is however, some evidence (Flynn, 2007) that good teachers of literacy are also good teachers for L2 learners and have successfully adapted for example, the National Literacy Strategy to accommodate their learning. This can be seen too in the study, where teachers have adapted resources and developed a wide range of creative ideas to support learners. A lack of specific guidance, and concerns about levels of literacy have seen the introduction of several national strategies and initiatives that are complimentary to existing curriculum models, alongside which, commercially designed programmes are utilised by some schools. The overwhelming emphasis throughout the primary phase is currently based on phonics, which sets out an explicit, systematic and principled approach to the teaching of English for all children, and provides at the same time a good basis for L2 learners (Whitehead, 2006). A clear strength of this approach is its oral focus which provides a solid foundation for literacy to develop; this is evident in all settings in the study.

The issue of assessment in the curriculum identifies that levels of achievement for L2 learners may not necessarily be a true reflection of their understanding, since they are being assessed in a language that they are still acquiring. There is some
suggestion (Leung and Dickens, 2007) that current assessment sets too narrow a focus which fails to recognise the range of abilities that L2 children may have. Additionally, that there needs to be a clearer distinction between assessment for English and assessment for EAL, since there may be a disparity between the two sets of results. The work of Scott and Erduran (2004) focused on EAL assessment being measured separately from English language competencies, rather than the present UK approach where this is subsumed within English. The aspect of teacher perceptions is relevant here, since, based on such ‘assessment’ they may then assume lower levels of ability that is actual.

All of this may suggest there is a distinct lack of pedagogic understanding in relation to the teaching of English as an additional language across all key stages, though in light of comments made previously about age onset this is particularly poignant across early years education. Bezemer (2007) argues for a more varied pedagogic approach which could include more learner involvement whilst Conteh (2007), suggests that a more culturally responsive pedagogy is needed.

### Summation of findings

1. An examination of the effectiveness of differing approaches to the teaching of English as a second language.

   Across the different schools a common feature is that the class teacher takes overall responsibility for the planning, and implementation of strategies for teaching English. This is accompanied in some settings, in particular in reception year, by a TA, EYP or key-worker. BLAs make up part of the team approach in all settings though the remit of the role varies depending on the cultural make-up of the cohort. Whilst it is clear that classroom delivery encompasses a team approach, in all settings it is the teacher who takes the lead with varying levels of support by other staff. The significant difference of approach identified is the extent to which creativity is employed in teaching; it is this factor that appears to have the greatest impact on successful outcomes in children’s learning.
2. Examine the role of L2 learner support in the classroom.

In all settings again it is the teacher who takes responsibility for supporting L2 learners, through daily planning, by building relationships, through personalised learning, and having a clear commitment to spend time throughout each week with every child. Additional support is provided by TAs working within the planned framework and by again adopting the same personal approach as the teacher. In those setting where the cohort consists of both L1 and L2 learners, the opportunity exists for peer learning and it is clear this happens naturally through socialisation, but also, because teachers take advantage of this means of learning and allow time to happen. Although settings employ BLAs they do not support all L2 children, in the study only those languages from south east Asia are provided for; those L2 children from other language communities have no such support. Thus, in settings where there are several languages present only those children from Asian language background receive support in the home language. In those settings where cohorts are made up entirely of L2 children speaking Asian languages (as in schools 4 and 5) the role of the BLA is to translate and interpret between teacher and child.

The role of adult learner support for L2 children appears therefore to be inconsistent, and might suggest that some children are being disadvantaged by a lack of support in the home language. The results, however, may indicate otherwise, that in fact those children who are not provided with BLA support in the home language are advantaged, because in not being able to rely on support they actively seek out other opportunities to learn from both teachers and peers.

3. Examine strategies of communication between school and L2 parents.

All settings seek to establish and develop strong links with parents. This is based on the underlying recognition that parents are the first educators in children’s lives and, this is now firmly enshrined into practice through existing government policy such as the ECM agenda (2003). All settings to some extent act in response to individual and local need. This is seen by some
schools as conducting home visits to meet parents and thus build a bridge between home and school. Other schools recognise that the key to raising educational achievement is through working with parents and have introduced parent reading classes. Whilst this is commendable outreach on the part of teachers, it must also be recognised that this was not part of their training or something they feel particularly equipped to do. The role of the BLA becomes significant as part of communicating with parents, particularly in schools 4 and 5, where they are required to act as translator between parents and staff. Whilst in the first instance this acts to remove the language barrier, its continued use throughout early years eventually becomes a barrier in itself to successful direct two-way communication between parent and teacher.

**Recommendations**

The study has found that all of the teacher participants are committed to their professional values and display a great determination to ensure the children in their care achieve as well as they can, despite the lack of support and training expressed. This can be seen through the many and varied creative use of resources incorporated into the teaching and learning of English as an additional language, most of which is self-initiated. The recommendations are that both initial and in-service training needs to develop a wider knowledge base that concentrates on culture and cultural awareness, cognitive and language development and, specific second language teaching and learning strategies. A greater level of knowledge and understanding may thus encourage staff to move away from a general expectation of L2 learners, towards a more positive base of expectation. Training that equips teachers to work effectively with bilingual children, would do much to increase teacher confidence and competence in classrooms that are becoming increasingly linguistically diverse. Perhaps what is also being recognised here, is the need for teachers themselves to have a better understanding of the English language, so that the focus is not just on language acquisition but, on developing academic language skills too. This could see specific teaching roles not just for a curriculum specialist in English but moreover, an EAL specialist. A greater partnership between these two
would see a move away from the current model which relies on translation and interpretation and in turn, remove some the tensions currently exhibited between teachers and BLAs.

With respect to the training of BLAs recommendations include, a greater emphasis on learning English, for both spoken and academic purposes along with improvements around issues of classroom management, managing children’s behaviour, culture and cultural awareness, and successful team work. Since the minimum educational requirement for those working in early years (0 -5) is level 3 (Nuttbrown, 2012) it would seem logical that is applied consistently across all stages of education. It would therefore be strongly recommended that this be introduced for those training as TA/BLAs, including support for those already in post.

In terms of classroom practice the strong oral base provided by the BLAST approach is strongly recommended, though during the course of the study this has already become adopted by the host local authority on a widespread basis. Teachers should therefore continue this focus on the oral strengths of pupils, so that future learning has this solid foundation to build on, additionally, the interactive nature of this process helps new L2 learners to construct a meaning to the culture of school-based learning. The use of Makton as an aid to communication where spoken language is still developing is proving successful with children at the pre-linguistic stage and so, would again be a positive step for L2 children to utilise, particularly during the early stages of developing a new language. In those settings where L2 speakers are the sole majority (as in schools 4 and 5) the pairing of infants and juniors would encourage and promote confidence in using English. A further recommendation is for the introduction of ‘communication’ to be incorporated into lessons which recognise means other than spoken language e.g. non-verbal, dance, mime, puppets, pictures and drawing to support L2 pupil transition.

The role of parents has been clearly linked to levels of achievement for children, establishing and developing such partnerships is an area that needs to be addressed, though clearly the study identifies language to be a barrier to successful communication. Recommendations aimed at reducing such barriers include; language classes for parents, classes where parents can learn alongside their
children, fast-track language classes and, talking-partners where L2 parents can converse with L1 parents. Once spoken language has progressed, reading and writing can then be introduced and again this could work in conjunction with children. As a positive step towards encouraging mutual understanding it is further recommended, that parents are informed about both the host culture and, the culture of education. Better links between out-of-school classes and in-school classes similar to that provided by out-of-school-clubs could be established with the emphasis on developing language and cultural understandings. This should include strong parent-teacher associations, that work also on a social level to foster good adult-adult relationships to enhance both parent and community involvement. And finally, in relation to parents and the home culture, a clear policy on home visits needs to be developed.

In relation to the curriculum, it has to be acknowledged that there are many ways of learning and so a clear recommendation includes extending the concept of play-based learning to the end of KS1. The issue of L2 children missing out on many of the pre-reading and pre-writing activities on which these skills later develop has already been discussed as such, to extend this opportunity would be clearly beneficial.

The curriculum needs to address this issue of ‘sufficiency’ since it is clear that where there is insufficient language support for children and insufficient training for teachers, having 100% EAL children in mainstream classes may not work. This has the appearance of paying lip-service to multiculturalism, and as such devalues the children it seeks to educate. What is recommended is a more sensitive response that could involve L2 children having separate and/or additional English lessons in line with their individual requirements. The option of bilingual education facilitated by a specific EAL teacher remains a difficult option in settings were many languages are present, and, would tend therefore to favour the language spoken by the majority rather that all languages (as is observed in the study). The curriculum at present does not address the reality of what is happening in many classrooms, and needs to wake up to current issues of educating L2 children who have little experience of UK school culture. The response requires specific guidance that distinguishes between language learning and EAL language learning, special needs and, curriculum
content. The issue of assessment needs also to be addressed to clarify the
difference between what EAL learners achieve in English and what is achieved in
terms of curriculum content, this would produce a truer reflection of overall levels of
attainment. Since teachers are the principal feature in engaging with learners and,
ultimately, in their success it is expedient that they are given the tools necessary to
achieve this.

One final recommendation, in view of what has already been discussed concerning
schools made up of 100% L2 pupils is, for some form of language/culture quota
system to be introduced. Whilst this may appear a somewhat radical suggestion, it is
fact being implemented in the town of Oldham which saw the opening of a brand
new secondary academy in September 2012; this is made up of 50% white British
and 50% Asian. Recalling the recent history of the town which saw unprecedented
race riots during 2001, this has been part of the move towards greater racial
integration and potentially better educational achievement. A similar approach in
primary schools would remove some of the hindrances (as identified previously) to
L2 learners.

The finding of the study suggests that many underlying issues faced by teachers are
not being addressed by government, and that insufficient support is given to both L2
learners and teachers alike. Before moving to the chapter's conclusion, it will be
useful to briefly summarise the recommendations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

➢ Initial teacher training needs to include culture and cultural awareness,
cognitive and language development and, specific second language teaching
and learning strategies.
➢ There needs to be wider opportunities for CPD for teachers, concerning EAL
teaching strategies and EAL assessment
➢ Teachers themselves need to have a better understanding of the English
language from both initial and CPD training.
Specific teaching roles need to be developed whereby a curriculum specialist in English and EAL specialist work in partnership.

Training of BLAs needs to reach a secure level 3 and, should include, a greater emphasis on English language skills, classroom management, managing children’s behaviour, culture and cultural awareness and, successful team work.

In-service training is needed for BLAs to address areas of weakness.

Adoption of the BLAST programme

Introduction of Makton for communication with L2 learners

The pairing of infant L2s and juniorsL2s

The introduction of ‘communication’ to be incorporated into all lessons

English language classes for parents; including classes where parents can learn alongside their children, fast-track language classes and, talking-partners where L2 parents can converse with L1 parents.

Lessons in reading and writing for parents to run in conjunction with children’s learning

Better links between out-of-school classes and in-school classes

Strong parent-teacher associations

A clear policy on home visits

The concept of play-based learning should be extended to the end of KS1.

Sufficient language support is needed for all children

A more sensitive response to L2 children should be put into practice such as, separate and/ or additional English lessons in line with their individual requirements

Bilingual education to be facilitated by a specific EAL teacher

Specific curriculum guidance that distinguishes between language learning and EAL language learning, special needs and, curriculum subject content is urgently needed

Assessment should addresses the difference between EAL and English achievement
CONCLUSION
The main aims of the study have been achieved, by identifying the role of bilingualism in primary education and the extent to which English is taught effectively as an additional language. It was initially suggested that this may have possible implications on the training of early years practitioners provided by F.E. What in fact the study suggests is far more wide reaching, since the implications of the results reveal it is the training of teachers, both as ITT and CPD that also needs to be reviewed, in response to current and projected trends relating to numbers of EAL speaker in the UK. What is recognised by the teachers in this context is, the extent to which the curriculum fails to recognise the complexity of EAL teaching and learning. The good practice that is observed in the study is largely down to the professional competence and creative abilities of teachers, in recognising and responding to the needs of L2 children and parents. At the onset of the study parents were not included, though this was soon identified as an important group to consult with, and has been the source of much learning with respect to a widening cultural understanding by both parties.

Whilst the researcher has both early years training and primary experience, there is little underlying experience of EAL. The study has therefore been conducted with an open mind and willingness to discover, and as such, has been itself a learning journey.

One very clear aspect that emerges from the study is the difference between schools, and, therefore the educational experiences of children. Children (as in schools 4 and 5) who are taught in a cohort of 100% EAL speakers who are from the same heritage background, have a very different experience to those in schools (as in schools 3, 4 and 5) where cohorts consists of diverse cultures and languages. It has to be argued that this cannot be viewed to be the ‘multicultural’ face of education though it is often presented to be so. Children in some settings are not being allowed to develop social interaction in its fullest sense and the process of enculturation is sadly lacking. Such educational experiences actually work against a secure sense of identity, do not encourage a clear understanding of the host nation, and culture, militate against social integration and hinder the process of second language
development. If this stance appears overly critical, then it should be viewed in the context of the *Every Child Matters* agenda (2003).

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

- Since the study has suggested specific roles for EAL teachers in mainstream classrooms an additional study into available routes to EAL teaching would be a natural progression.
- The CPD needs of teachers have been identified as lacking and so it would seem pertinent to ask teachers what they need and how best to facilitate this.
- It is clear that ITT does not fully equip teachers for the many challenges they will face in 21st century classrooms and there is much here that needs to be addressed; ranging from what those challenges are on national, regional and local levels, what projected needs may be e.g. numbers of EAL children, what response is called for, and, how this can be addressed.
- The introduction of teaching assistants was intended to be of ‘assistance’ in the classroom and yet, one issue identified in the study is that this can be a source of tension between staff. Rather than suggest that this is failing, a review of how teaching assistants and bi-lingual assistant are trained, may offer a better solution. It is clear that the roles of teaching assistant and bi-lingual assistant are by definition intended to be different yet, in practice are often the same. Further study would questions how this difference is addressed appropriately during initial training.
- The provision of CPD for both teaching and bi-lingual assistants would offer another solution to successful team working. Further study would identify what CPD is available and, how this is identified e.g. in response to individual personal need, in response to individual school need, in response to government initiatives.
- It has become clear from the study that whilst parenting styles differ in all cultures, there are also variances across cultures, some of which appear to be in conflict with the ‘culture’ of education e.g. with regard to concepts of independence and inter-dependence. Education moves children towards
independence and autonomy, an ideal which for some children is a fundamental challenge. Further study would seek to unravel such differences and identify positive steps towards bringing the two together.

Some of these are big issues and as research projects somewhat substantial, and whilst the researcher recognises there may not be the possibility of implementing any of this, you can be assured it will in no way inhibit the level of interest generated.
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APPENDIX 1: EYFS; Communication, Language and Literacy (end of reception)

**Language for Communication**
- Interact with others, negotiating plans and activities and taking turns in conversation.
- Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and readily turn to it in their play and learning.
- Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems.
- Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words.
- Speak clearly and audibly with confidence and control and show awareness of the listener.

**Language for Thinking**
- Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences.
- Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.

**Linking Sounds and Letters**
- Hear and say sounds in words in the order in which they occur.
- Link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet.
- Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words.

**Reading**
- Explore and experiment with sounds, words and texts.
- Retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories.
- Read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently.
- Knows that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom.
- Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events and openings, and how information can be found in non-fiction texts to answer questions about where, who, why and how.

**Writing**
- Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words.
- Attempt writing for different purposes, using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions.
- Write their own names and other things such as captions, and begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation.

**Handwriting**
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to from recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
APPENDIX 2: NATIONAL CURRICULUM: Attainment targets for English K.S.1

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Level 1: Pupils talk about matters of immediate interest. They listen to others and usually respond appropriately. They convey simple meanings to a range of listeners, speaking audibly, and begin to extend their ideas or accounts by providing some detail.

Level 2: Pupils begin to show confidence in talking and listening, particularly where topics interest them. On occasions, they show awareness of the needs of the listener by including relevant detail. In developing and explaining their ideas they speak clearly and use a growing vocabulary. They usually listen carefully and respond with increasing appropriateness to what others say. They are beginning to be aware that in some situations a more formal vocabulary and tone of voice are used.

READING

Level 1: Pupils recognise familiar words in simple texts. They use their knowledge of letters and sound-symbol relationships in order to read words and to establish meaning when reading aloud. In these activities they sometimes require support. They express their response to poems, stories and non-fiction by identifying aspects they like.

Level 2: Pupils’ reading of simple texts shows understanding and is generally accurate. They express opinions about major events or ideas in stories, poems and non-fiction. They use more than one strategy, such as phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual, in reading unfamiliar words and establishing meaning.

WRITING

Level 1: Pupil’s writing communicates meaning through simple words and phrases. In their reading or their writing, pupils begin to show awareness of how full stops are used. Letters are usually clearly shaped and correctly orientated.

Level 2: Pupils’ writing communicates meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary, and showing some awareness of the reader. Ideas are developed in a sequence of sentences, sometimes demarcated by capital letters and full stops. Simple, monosyllabic words are usually spelt correctly, and where there are inaccuracies the alternative is phonetically plausible. In handwriting, letters are accurately formed and consistent in size.
APPENDIX 3: CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

SCHOOL 1: Classroom observations for reception year

Term 1

The book entitled ‘The Hungry Caterpillar’ is the theme of the month with activities planned extensively around this covering all six areas of the EYFS.

At the start of the session, all the children are sitting on the carpet and the teacher is using a large copy of the book so that all the children can easily see the pictures and follow the story. She starts by directing the children’s attention to the picture of the caterpillar on the front cover, and, using her finger underlines the title as she reads it out-loud. She explains about books, what an author is, what illustrator means and turns to the blurb on the back cover which she then reads. During this time, the TA and BLA sit at the back of the group and interact with children silently to keep them focused when necessary by, for example, tapping on the shoulder, putting a finger to their lip, touching their ears. All of the signals are understood by the children who respond appropriately.

The teacher reads each page slowly, using a lilting pitch and excited tone pointing to the words and the pictures as she does so. The children are encouraged to listen and the teacher also reinforces this by touching her ear and putting her finger to her lip; she does not stop or allow interruption, this is a listening activity. At the end of the story, she invites children to respond by asking open questions to the group followed by specific question to named children. Children know to put up their hands and are only listened to if they do. The teacher asks, ‘Well I wonder, what was it that made the caterpillar sick?’ Some children shout out and are overlooked by the teacher saying, ‘Well done, Amir you had your hand up.’ This positive reinforcement is a reminder to children of how they should respond and quickly prompts many more hands to be raised. Amir struggles with his answer, ‘Wolli … vollipop … de wollipop.’ ‘Ah, so Amir you think it was the lollipop that made him sick,’ the teacher replies. Amir nods. ‘What about you Naomi, do you think it was the lollipop?’ Naomi is quick to respond, ‘I think it was everything because he was very greedy and my mummy says that if you eat too much that your tummy will pop.’ Some of the children laugh at this and the staff smile. ‘Well, it might not make your tummy actually pop, but it could make it hurt and make you sick,’ is the teacher’s reply. She then turns to the page where the caterpillar pops out of his cocoon and has turned into a butterfly. ‘Why do you think he might have been so very hungry?’ asks the teacher to the group. Again some hands go up and others shout out, the teacher again chooses a child whose hand is up and comments, ‘Mope, I saw you put your hand up.’ Mope smiles a big smile and starts her answer, ‘A tink dat hes ungy cos he be growin and wen you is growin you is ungy …ma mammy ses dat ma little brover is growin and hes always ungy … but he wont get a be a catapilla.’ The teacher smiles and praises her, ‘That’s a very good answer, yes, he was very hungry because he was growing from being a little caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly.’ She turns to the final page and says, ‘And, look just how big and beautiful he is.’
Term 2

At the start of the morning (Monday) children have brought in to school pictures, letters and writing that they have done at home over the weekend. The practice is for them to share these with the whole class.

The teacher invites children up to the front of the class by name. They stand at the side of the teacher and show their work, explaining what they have done. Tom holds a picture up and explains, ‘This me, this dad, went B&Q, get nails … we camed home I ’elped dad build shed in garden.’ Tom accompanies his explanation with hand gestures such as, hammering nails. The teacher responds with a smile, ‘That’s a really lovely picture, Tom, and I can see that you’ve written your name on the top too. Well Done. Don’t you all think Tom deserves a clap.’ ‘Yeeeeeeees,’ comes the reply from all the other children. At this point everyone claps and a song is sung, ‘We’re having a celebration, ‘bration, ‘bration. We’re having a celebration of Tom’s work.’

Several other children share what they have done too; a letter to say thank you for a birthday present, a card for grandma and a picture of Sunday tea at McDonalds.

Each child explains what they have done and this is followed every time by applause and the celebration song.

Term 3

This is a phonics session and all the children are sitting on the carpet with the teacher sitting in front of them. The TA and BLA are sitting at the back of the group. The teacher starts to say the alphabet, ‘a.’ All the children repeat, ‘a.’ Next, the teacher and the children together say, ‘a-a-a’ whilst, using the associated gesture of climbing their fingers up one arm to suggest ‘ants’. (A is for ant.) This format continues throughout the whole alphabet with children repeating each sound three times accompanied by a gesture. The majority of children are confident and able to both say the sound and do the action correctly for each letter. There are a few children who make all the right gestures but do not say all the sounds. At the end of the session the teacher praises all the children for their efforts and tells them how wonderful she thinks they all are. To add to this she refers to the TA and BLA, ‘Well, Mrs J and Mrs B, don’t you agree that we have some very clever children in this class.’ Both reply a positive yes and nod their heads.

The children who struggled to say all the sounds are selected by the teacher to come to the yellow table, two at a time, the others go to choose their own activity for the meantime.

The teacher sets out on the table a selection of letter cards and ten objects beginning with those sounds. These are the sounds the children have struggled with: p,c and t. The objects laid out are: pan, pig, pen, pot, cat, cot, cup, tin, tap and top.

The teacher shows the cards to the children alternately, who then say the sound. They are then asked to find an object whose initial letter sound matches the sound they have just said. The teacher then asks them to name the object and then say the
sound and put the two together. For example, Abe says, ‘Pig, puh … pig.’ The little pig and the card marked ‘p’ are then placed together on the table.

Geo struggles with the letter ‘c’ and wants to match it to the pot. Teacher questions, ‘Let’s look again, Geo, this is … cuh …, can you show me something that begins with that sound … cuh?’ This time he picks up the cat. Teacher says, ‘Well done, now can you tell me what this is?’ Geo answers, ‘Cat.’ Teacher responds, ‘Well done again, and now can you put it with the right sound?’ Geo puts the cat next to the letter ‘c’. Teacher asks pointing to the letter card, ‘Can you tell me what sound this is?’ Geo replies, ‘Cuh, cuh … cat.’

Teacher says, ‘Well done that’s excellent Geo.’

This session continues until the six children who had struggled earlier have completed this reinforcement activity.
APPENDIX 4: Classroom observations School 1 Year 1

Term 1

Children are making individual books. This is taking place in three mixed ability groups with a member of staff sitting with each group. The theme has been harvest and the books are about different fruits and vegetables. Children have a choice of different coloured papers to use and can also either write or word processed. All books are to be illustrated, although again there is the choice to draw, download or cut-out from magazines. The room is a hive of activity with children busily engaged in their own work, staff facilitate and provide support as necessary. There is much discussion about colours, textures, flavours, where things grow and how. At the end of the session children are invited to go around the room to look at each other’s work. The teacher is so pleased by the effort and outcome of all the children that not only are they praised by her but she goes to collect the Head and he too praises them all.

Term 2

The theme has been the ‘Rainbow Fish’ which has been approached in a cross-curricular way. There are beautiful pictures of fish around the classroom, mobile displays from the ceiling and a fish tank sits in one corner where an interactive table display encourages children to discover more for themselves.

At the start of the session all the children are sitting on the floor and the teacher has used a large copy of the book to read to the whole class. The TAs sit at the back of the group and provide visual prompts to children who need to be reminded of the need to listen.

The teacher asks the children what they liked most about the book. Hands are raised and children are spoken to by name. ‘Yes, Salma’. ‘A likd the bit where he get to av frends’. There is murmur of approval from the rest of the group. ‘Are friends important to us then?’ asks the teacher. ‘U as to as frends cos if u don’t u is lonly’, replies Tamwir. There follows some discussion about what friends are, and are not! The children are very clear that a friend is someone who is kind to you and that you want to be with.

The children are then divided in to three groups. The teacher takes the low ability group, whilst the TAs take the middle and high ability groups. The low ability group have the task of describing five fish characters from the book, using the cloze procedure. There is a lot of discussion with children actively searching through the book to find words.

The middle ability group have to write a sentence of their own describing the same characters. There is much discussion about good words to describe things, from this ‘brainstorming’ a list of adjectives is written down by the TA so that all the children can use them.
The high ability group are to write two sentences of their own about each character using their own choice of adjectives. Dictionaries are available and there is access to the word wall. Again there is some lively discussion about words, the TA encourages children to spell for themselves or go and find how to spell.

Whilst all the staff are there to support, guide and direct children, the levels of this are clearly different depending on the ability of the children.

**Term 3**

It is almost the end of the school year and the children are getting ready for a summer concert. This involves a small play and lots of songs. They busily rehearse their words and attempt to project their voices without shouting. This is not just about speaking and listening but also about presenting confidently to an audience. The children are very excited about the whole event and delight in showing me their costumes, ‘Look Miss am to be the princess, see ma dress and crown … do a look gud?’ I assure Miso that she looks the most beautiful princess I have ever seen. ‘So long as av no to kiss a prince!’ she laughs. We both laugh. Nazeen who is to the prince frowns and pulls his face, all the children laugh.
APPENDIX 5: Classroom observations School 1 year 2

Term 1
This is a group of low ability children who have been reading ‘The Runaway Chapatti’ together. They have enjoyed the fun element of the story and the repeated phrases. ‘He is well naghi,’ chuckles Aneesa, with the others joining in the laughter. ‘Ye but e didn wanna get et did e?’ adds Raza. The teacher asks which part of the story they most enjoyed and why. Each child in turn contributes. The focus then shifts to writing.

Term 2
It is ‘day-of –the-month’ today and the focus is on Portugal. Children have made and decorated Portuguese flags which are festooned around the room, and there is a large manikin wearing the Portuguese national dress. Parents have made traditional food which the children are busy eating; traditional music is playing in the background. Displayed in the room are examples of children’s writing e.g. descriptions of the national clothes, instructions for designing and making the flag. This will continue tomorrow with children writing about the foods they have tried today. The whole ethos is very relaxed and enjoyable with children, parents and staff chatting informally about all things Portuguese.

Term 3
The local librarian is in today to continue with the poetry theme. The children are all seated on the floor listening to a range of poems being read out loud, some are funny which cause laughter, ‘I like that when the dog does naghi things it’s funny.’ Others are sad which prompt children’s responses, ‘Aw, nuffink is gud, poor Bella, it’s so sad.’ The teacher asks children to identify key words e.g. nouns and adjectives, which are written on the whiteboard. At the end of the session children are to write a poem of their own choice based on what they have heard. The teacher, TA and librarian support the children in this task. The children work in table groups, of no particular ability or language. At the end of the morning each child reads their poem out to the rest of their table and this is then voted on. The best from each table are then read out by the individual child, followed by praise from the adults and applause from everyone. (All the poems are to be displayed as part of the continuing focus on poetry).
APPENDIX 6: SCHOOL 2: Classroom observations for reception year

Term 1

The teacher is sitting at the front of the class all the children are sitting on the carpet listening to the story of ‘We’re going on a Bear Hunt’, the TA is sitting at the back of the group. The theme is autumn and is being liked to environments. The story has a repeated refrain, ‘We can’t go over it, we can’t go under it, we’ll have to go through it.’ The children join in this every time with increasing volume and enjoyment. The teacher stresses the onomatopoeia in the story with words such as, squelch, swishy and swirly, accompanied by actions. Gradually the children start to copy her actions too. The TA mirrors everything the teacher says and does. The children sit awed at the story so that they are listening and joining in. There is no intervention by the TA to keep children focused, since they clearly are. At the end of the story the teacher ask, ‘So, did you enjoy that story?’ ‘Yeeees,’ comes a loud reply. Teacher then asks, ‘Which part did you enjoy, remember hands up.’ Fria has her hand up first, ‘I liked the bit when the bear shouted.’ ‘Teacher,’ When the bear roared at the children?’ Fria nods her head and giggles. Other suggestions come in fast and furious.

Ben, ‘I liked the snow ‘cos I likes snowy wever, I likes makin snowmens.’

Bree,’ A liked de mud ‘cos it squelched an it’s dirty an I like playing in mud.’

Amber, ‘It was fun when they woz in the water.’

‘So, I see, you like the story because it has all the things you like to play in,’ summarises the teacher.

At the end of the story twelve children are selected to stay with the teacher, the rest can choose what they do. Six children go outside with the TA, the rest stay inside and go to the various activities that are set out in the room: jigsaws, small world, sand-tray, and mark-making.

The teacher takes this group of twelve children to a quiet corner of the room whilst indicating to the others that if they need anything they should ask the TA and not disturb her. This is day one of this week BLAST session and a key aspect is listening and speaking, so there is clearly a need to make sure that distractions are at a minimum.

The results are recorded at the end of the session and progress is identified at the end of the week. It should be noted that children who did not speak to me at the start of the session were happy to do so at the end. This may well be down to the fact that they have seen me observing and making notes and assume that I am therefore part of their learning, they after all familiar with staff working together.
Term 2

All the children are outside with the teacher and the TA. The current theme is growing and the story of ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ is being used to support this. In the classroom the role –play area is now ‘the Giants palace’ and children’s work consisting of pictures, marks and words is displayed attractively.

All the children are wearing wellies and coats, small spades, forks, hoes and watering cans are in abundance. The garden has been divided into three large areas with carrots, beans and tomatoes having been planted. The children have made their own labels to identify who has planted what eg: Jed has planted carrots. The teacher is with a group at the carrot area whilst the TA is with those at the beans. Each member of staff is discussing with the children how their plants are doing.

Teacher, ‘I can see that these carrots are doing well.’ Them’s mine,’ says Jed. ‘No, theys mine,’ argues Toni. ‘Let’s see,’ says the teacher pointing to the label, ‘Whose name is here.’ Both children come over to look closely. ‘Me,’ points Toni, ‘That’s my name see, t-o-n-i says Toni.’ Jed doesn’t look too happy at this and kicks the dirt. ‘Come over here and let’s looks at yours now,’ encourages the teacher. Jed follows her with Toni in close pursuit. Jed finds his label and quickly shouts, ‘Mines bigger’an yours so mines better ‘swell.’ Toni lifts his hand. The teacher is quick to intervene, ‘That will do, both of you, if you carry on then you will have to go back inside.’ She looks in my direction and apologises for this. I assure her that I have no problem with this, and, that children are children and these two are still working out how to co-operate with each other. She smiles.

The TA is helping children to measure how tall their beans are, they are using simple sticks, she is writing the date on a sticker and the children are putting this onto their stick. ‘We planted beans, like Jack dun,’ explains Dan. ‘And mines growed lots n lots,’ adds Megan. ‘We av to give em water for drink or they gets firsty,’ Rory tells me. Zeb brings me a picture card with beans on it, ‘Beans, me do beans,’ he waves the card as he says this.

Term 3

This is a listening trail. The teacher and six children are all wearing a headband with pictures of ears at either side of their heads. This is to signal to each other that they need to listen and not speak until the teacher invites them to. The teacher has her finger on her lips to again direct the children to be listening.

The teacher has previously, walked round the building and placed various objects in places not visible, but easily accessible to the children. She has a mini-recorder in her hand which contains a series of noises that match the hidden objects. The children are to identify what sound they can hear and then find the object that accompanies it. They set off on their discovery tiptoeing as they go. The message that they need to be quiet has been clearly understood. They make a stop and a ticking sound can be heard. The teacher puts her finger to her lips before anyone can shout out, and then touches her ear. Once they are all concentrating she asks, ‘What can you hear … Fred?’ Only the selected child can answer. ‘A clock,’ is his
reply. ‘Well done you not only recognise the sound but also what makes that sound too,’ the teacher praises.

The trail continues until all the objects have been found, these are: clock, bell, cat, dog, a crying baby doll, toy microwave, drum and triangle. The only object that the children could not identify was the triangle, they guessed at whistle.

Once they get back to the classroom the teacher puts the collected objects on a table and the children sit around this. The teacher picks up each object in turn and asks children by name if they can remember what sound it made. Some children need a little prompting but all are successful. A selection of word cards are then placed onto the table with the sound words on them, these are: tick, ding, purr, bark, sing, ping, bang and ting. The teacher picks up a card and invites all the children to say what the word is before she reads it out, ‘T-i-c-k, tick.’ This is then repeated letter by letter by both teacher and children and the word is again emphasised. She then asks, ‘Who can remember which object made this sound?’ Only those children putting up their hand are asked, however, the teacher ensures that every child takes part. ‘Johura, can you tell me?’ ‘Clock,’ she replies. ‘Well done, can you match them together for me.’ Johura puts the word tick with the clock. This continues until every word/object has been correctly matched.
APPENDIX 7: Classroom observations School 2 Year 1

Term 1

The teacher is concerned about some of the boys who show little interest in writing and has decided that some practical support needs to be implemented. She has decided to introduce ‘writing boxes’ that can be taken to any part of the classroom, shared area or outside. These are simply either plastic container with a carry handle or small plastic tool boxes that contain a whole range of writing implements from pencils to gel pen, thin and chunky markers and ‘hero’ pens (e.g. Bob the builder, Spiderman and Peppa Pig). Whilst the concern is for the boys, boxes can of course be used by the girls too. When children are told to start writing they can choose from the resources laid out their tables or collect one of the boxes.

The apparent ‘masculine’ identity of the tool boxes draws the boy’s attention and they are happy to choose their resources from these. (The teacher winks at me and with a knowing smile and starts a conversation with a group of boys!) ‘Amir, let’s see what you’ve chosen to use?’ ‘Av got piderman Miss, he’s ma favourite, you know he’s a gud guy in e.’ ‘and me, Miss av got spidemen too, a lik im’, adds Ibrahim.

The two boys then sit down and start to write, the objective is to describe what’s in their hand. Whilst actual letter formation is slow to progress these two boys are happy to chat about their pencils, how they like Spiderman and what he can do; they are actually writing down what they are saying to each other.

Term 2

This is a handwriting session and all the children are using individual whiteboards and black marker pens to practice letter formation. The teacher is using the large whiteboard at the front of the class and is demonstrating how to form letters with ‘tall ascender’ i.e. b,d,f,h,k,l and t. As she writes the letter she talks through how it is formed at the same time e.g. ‘b’ is top to bottom, up, over the hill and all the way round. The children are encouraged to watch and repeat this, She demonstrates this twice more and then the children copy. Whilst the children are doing so, both members of staff circulate around the room, in particular to see that children are using correct tripod pencil grip and watching as they write. Everyone then holds up their work at the same time. The teacher is able to identify who can do this correctly and who needs more practice.

Term 3

This is a spelling test. Every week children take home ten words to practice and then at the end of the week there is written test. Words are allocated in line with children’s ability and they sit in ‘spelling’ groups for this exercise. Some children are still on
simple c-v-c words and are still working towards the 100 key words required. The teacher reads out words by walking to the corresponding group so that everyone is involved in this at the same time and there is little time delay. Immediately after this time, children collect a red pen and mark their own work as the teacher reads out the correct spelling. The TA sits with the lower ability group who often needs support to read correctly. Those children with ‘mistakes’ are encouraged to write these words out three times correctly, not as a punishment but to reinforce memory.
Term 1

As part of current theme using the book 'We’re going on a bear hunt', the children are planning and designing a suitable home for a bear. There is a lot of discussion and collaborative work as children are involved in small groups on this task. They are not working in single ability but rather, mixed ability groups. The aim of the lesson is for them to write a set of instructions for making this home. The teacher and TA circulate the room intervening and making positive comments as they do so. One group have decided to use wood and straw. ‘Wood is gud because it’s wot bears iz used to, they live in woods,’ states Amelie. ‘No, that’s woods, not wood,’ explains Kia. ‘That’s wot a sed wood,’ repeats Amelie. The teacher smiles and intervenes, ‘These words sound very similar but have different meanings… wood is the material that comes from trees and when we have a lot of trees altogether we call that a wood or like in the story the woods … it’s a place.’

Term 2

The children have been looking at famous explorers and the life of David Livingstone. The objective in this session is to imagine they are Livingstone and to write a diary extract of what happened on this amazing journey. They are encouraged to use imaginative detail with lots of rich description. The teacher prompts them to use the story-frame i.e. start-middle-end. Targets are identified for the different ability groups; high ability to write a minimum of 8 sentences using 2 different ‘describers’ per sentence/medium 6 sentences each with 2 and low 4 sentences using 1. This is displayed on the whiteboard for the duration of the session. The teacher sits with the low ability children throughout the session whilst overseeing the middle group; the TA sits with the high group throughout.

The teacher encourages children to think about what they might see, hear, touch, taste and smell on this journey and to then describe this. As the children make their suggestions they write them down on small whiteboards. ‘I can see monkeys and they is being cheeky,’ suggest Buto. ‘Pineapple, juicy yellow prickly pineapple,’ adds Meesha. ‘Oh, I like this,’ says the teacher, ‘I can see that you’re thinking very hard and using some excellent words.’

Term 3

In the outside area, 4 ‘secret writing’ spaces have been set up; there is a large den made from sticks and sheets, a tee-pee, a small canvas tent and a bright pink bubble tent. Each space has several torches and various backpacks laid out inside it. These ‘secret writing’ place are where children can choose to go and work in. The literacy session starts with the teacher explaining that the ‘secret places’ are open today. This is greeted with a cheer from the children. At the point when they are to go to their groups to write, they have the choice of where they will do this, either at their table or in one of the outside areas. Today is the turn of the middle ability group who will be accompanied by the teacher. The TA remains to oversee the other two
groups. (All the children will have the same opportunity at some point during the week.)

There are 6 children in this group, 2 girls immediately go to the pink bubble tent, 1 goes to the tee-pee and 3 boys go to the den. Once inside their spaces the children have the task of writing expressively about ‘In my little world’. The teacher moves around the groups peeking through the door intervening, making positive comments and praising the children's attempts. All the children know they have to read out what they have written; this acts as an inhibitor to any silliness.
APPENDIX 9: SCHOOL 3: Classroom observations from reception year

Term 1

The teacher is sitting at the front of the class all the children are sitting on the carpet for the ‘meet and greet’ time. Teacher asks, ‘Who has something they would like to share with us?’ Immediately there is a surge of hands waving in the air. Children are only chosen if they are sitting ‘well’. This is defined as sitting on their bottom with legs crossed and arms folded or in this case with one hand in the air and not shouting out. The teacher points to Alif, ‘I’m choosing Alif because he was sitting so well.’ At this comment those who are not sitting so well fidget until they are. ‘Alif come and stand here and tell us your news,’ continues the teacher. Alif gets up looking very pleased and stands at the side of the teacher handing her a postcard. The teacher says, ‘Oh what a lovely card is this from someone you know?’ Alif nods but doesn’t say anything. ‘Can you tell me who sent it?’ Alif nods and quietly says, ‘Aunty … India.’ ‘Did you hear that everybody, this is from Alif’s aunty who lives in India,’ expands the teacher, ‘Is she coming to visit you?’ Alif nods and smiles, ‘She come to see me.’ The teacher prompts the child and provides vocabulary for him whilst encouraging his confidence. Other children share their news which covers news that Theo is having a new baby and Zak is having chips for this tea. Each time children come to the front of the group to share their news and are helped in a similar way by the teacher.

Whilst this is happening, the other teacher sits at the back of the group with a TA, the other TA prepares fruit for snack time.

Term 2

All the children are outside all the staff. The current theme is spring and the story is ‘Percy the Park-keeper’. Children have been looking at baby animals and where animals live. There are some new additions to the unit at the moment; there are two rabbits outside and some chicks waiting to hatch inside. The children are delighted to have pets and are quick to both tell and show me all about them. ‘We got wabbits … wabbits,’ shouts Greg. He grabs my hand and takes me to the hutch, ‘Look.’ In the hutch are two beautiful black and white rabbits. ‘We’ve been busy choosing names for these two,’ explains one of the staff, ‘The children decided to call them Percy and Peppa.’ The children gather round and try to talk all at once; there is obviously a lot of excitement about the rabbits. The children have been putting out food for birds on a bird-table and planting flowers that will attract butterflies. The teacher puts her hands in the air and shouts, ‘Right everyone ten fingers.’ The children respond to this by putting their hands in the air and waving ten fingers back at the teacher. ‘It’s time to go back inside now,’ she explains. There is a general, ‘Aaaawww,’ from the children. ‘It’s time to go and check on the chicks,’ she says knowing this will get them to go inside.
The children walk back inside and hang up their coats and then in turn wash their hands. The teacher has explained that they must wash their hands every time they handle the rabbits or soil. There is a period of apparent chaos as children wander back from the toilets, some with hands still dirty and others with wet hands. ‘Listen everybody, you need to use the soap and you need to dry your hands too,’ the teacher reinforces the hand-washing routine. At this the TAs take charge of this and usher children back to the toilets helping them to use the soap, rinse and dry their hands properly. As this is happening the teacher gathers the children on the carpet, there has been a change of plan and the teacher picks up the Percy book and starts to read to the children whilst the TAs mop the floor in the toilets. The children listen quietly to the story which is all about animals. ‘I luv Percy, he’s kind,’ says Gabriella. The teacher nods her head, puts her finger to her lip and carries on reading. There are no more interruptions. At the end of the story the teacher asks, ‘Which part of the story do you like best?’

‘The wabbits … the wabbits … I like the wabbits ‘cos I like wabbits lots,’ it’s Greg.

‘Fox, he funny,’ smiles Blessing.

‘A lik de mouses, wen vey get into Percy’s shoes … that funny,’ giggles Aaron.

‘I like the end, when they are all cosy and tucked up in bed for the night.’

At this point a cheeping sound can be heard faintly and some of the children have heard it. They turn their heads and start to get up. ‘Listen, can you hear what I can hear?’ asks the teacher. ‘What’s that little noise?’ ‘The chicks, the chicks,’ reply the children excitedly. The TA takes groups of children over to the cage four at a time and explains that they need to be quiet so that they don’t disturb the baby chicks who are growing inside the eggs. ‘Ssshhhh,’ goes round the classroom with several children putting a finger to their lips as they do so. In one corner of the room is an incubator with 12 eggs inside, a small run and a heat lamp. Some of the eggs are showing signs of cracking. The children come back to the carpet tiptoeing as they do so, they are keen not to disturb the chicks and very keen to see them hatch.

**Term 3**

The current theme is holiday. The structured play area has been set up as a travel agent with brochures, maps, globes and picture of destinations. The small world area is an airport and the sand tray is being used a part of a beach area.

In the structured play area 2 girls are wearing little uniforms sitting at desks whilst 2 other girls are choosing a holiday from a brochure. ‘Where u wan a go for holidays?’ asks Rabina. ‘To see me aunty in Pakistan,’ replies Fereda. ‘U av to go on plane then,’ continues Rabina. ‘A know that av bin before an a,’ exclaims Fereda ‘Well ere it is then u can go,’ Rabina hands her a piece of paper that she has made marks on, ‘It ses it ere, u can go Pakistan.’ Fereda leaves with the paper in her hand.
Meanwhile on the beach, two boys are wearing short, sunglasses and sunhats whilst digging and making sandcastles. ‘Lets see ow big we can make em,’ says Raj. ‘Yeh, let’s,’ replies Ash. The two continue digging and building and trying to make a sandcastle which keeps falling down because the sand is dry. ‘Ah that no good,’ complains Ash. ‘Well you do be..er ‘en,’ exclaims Raj. They both try again and fail. A teacher who has been observing this comes over, ‘So you two are busy building aren’t you.’ ‘Won’t do it, felled down,’ Raj tells her. ‘What do you think might stop it falling down?’ questions the teacher. ‘Glue, but we ant got no glue,’ says Ash. ‘Glue would make your hands sticky, but what would make the sand stick together … what do we sometimes put into the sand that makes it change colour?’ persists the teacher. ‘Paint,’ shouts Ash. ‘Water,’ says Raj, ‘Yoos silly Ash we dunt put paint in sand we puts water, that it Miss init water!’ ‘Well done, yes Raj we need some water,’ the teacher praises. Raj takes a watering-can to the water tray, fills it and pours it into the sand. The two boys quickly mix the sand and water and start to build again, this time successfully.

The teacher makes a note of this on a post-it and leaves this on the large observation board that is used every session by all the staff.
APPENDIX 10: Classroom observations from School 3 Year 1

Term 1

A group of six children are outside in the playground with the TA and looking for signs of autumn. They walk round with a colour swatch and small plastic bag in their hands and have been instructed to find one item for each colour. The colours are all autumn colours: brown, orange, red, yellow, black, green. The children (all L2) chat amongst themselves as they try to match leaves to the colours, ‘This orange,’ says Mika holding a leaf against the coloured card. ‘No is red,’ insists Sacha. They look closely at the colour shades whilst examining the leaves after some deliberation they decide the leaf is orange. The TA assures them that it is orange but compares the two colours for them so they can appreciate the closeness of the two. This continues until each child has collected six items. The group sit down on the grass and empty the contents of their little bags onto a piece of white paper to examine what they have found. ‘Who can show me something brown?’ asks the TA. Every child holds up what they have found and has then to describe this. There is much interest in what has been collected and some children have gathered twigs, stones and a dead bird!

All the children are praised for their efforts. They put their collection back into their bags and take them back into the classroom. The next part of this is for them to draw a small picture of each object and write a descriptive sentence at the side.

Term 2

The lesson is taking place in the new IT suite, all the children have a computer and are working at their own pace. The teacher directs the lesson and the TA circulates to assist children on a ‘need to’ basis, and perhaps more importantly to ensure they remain on task (some children are very IT aware and know how to switch quickly to other programmes!)

The first part of the lesson has all the children following instructions to find the lesson, they then work their way through this. It consists of matching the correct word to a given picture, at the end a score is given and children are either directed on screen to try again or move to the next stage. The programme moves up in degrees of difficulty and children must indicate what they have achieved by raising their hand, the teacher then comes to check before they can move on. A record is kept of individual children’s achievement. More able children are able to progress quickly through the earlier stages, some children and in particular the L2 children are struggling and thus need more adult intervention.
Term 3

It is almost the end of the year and the children are preparing for the summer fayre/concert. This class is planting cress to make ‘cress-heads’ which will go on sale at the fayre. Each child has some cress seeds, a yoghurt pot and some nylon. The teacher has provided simple written instruction on the whiteboard, picture instructions on the interactive board and is giving oral instructions as she moves around the classroom. The TA is also moving around the room supervising children. Once the children have made their ‘head’ they sit down in friendship groups to write instructions in their own words. The emphasis is on the style of writing for instructions and that they must in the right sequence.
APPENDIX 11: Classroom observations School 3 Year 2

Term 1

The children are all sitting on the floor at the front of the classroom where they have been listening to the story ‘Commotion in the Ocean’. This is a fun book and children have clearly enjoyed the humour involved. The teacher asks them to close their eyes and quietly imagine that they are under the sea. She whispers, ‘What can you see?’ The children are free to express their thoughts out loud. ‘Sand’ ‘Rocks’ ‘A big fat jelly fish’ ‘A nasty shark’ ‘Bubbles’. ‘Now think again. What can you hear?’ ‘Whales singing’, ‘mermaids’, ‘Splashing’, ‘Waves crashing’. The teacher puts some music on very quietly and asks again, ‘Now what can you smell?’ ‘Sea-side’, ‘The swimming baths’, ‘Flowers’, ‘Ice-cream’. The teacher says she very pleased with all the lovely ideas they have come up with. Each child now writes down on a small whiteboard the three things they have decided previously. The objective now is to write imaginatively that they are a character from the book, and, to describe using the words they have what it’s like living under the sea. The children make their way back to their tables and begin to write; the music continues throughout the session.

Term 2

The focus of the lesson is to identify compound words and to help with this each table has a basket of objects in it. The children are to pick out two objects and by combining the two nouns make a new word. This is quite random and some of this is to help them realise that there are sense and non-sense words, that not all words do combine and that those that do are called ‘compound’. Some of the words that emerge are e.g. pencil-hat, circle-square, car-pig. The children find this fun and enjoyable and from creating silly words start to develop the idea of how such words are used, eventually what emerges are clear compound words e.g. greenhouse, snowman, letterbox, paintbrush. The teacher and TA work their way around the classroom spending time with each group, as correct words are identified the teacher writes them up the whiteboard.

Term 3

The whole class is involved in making a class book about their recent trip to the local museum. Several groups have been established each with a different job to do. There are; writers who decide what will be written, word-processors and printers, illustrators who draw, paint and collage and editors who decide on the layout. The room is a hive of activity with every child actively involved in what needs to be done. There is real collaboration in progress with lots of discussion and decision making, most of this is overseen rather than intervened by the teacher. On the whiteboard are key words and phrases that had been decided on by the whole class the previous day e.g. pioneer, co-operation.
Term 1

The current theme is ‘Colours’ and a different colour is the focus of each week. This has so far included; red, blue, yellow and green. This week it is white. At the start of the session all the children are sitting on the carpet and the teacher is reminding children of the colours that they have looked at so far. She extends this by inviting named children to go and find an object in the classroom that is a specific colour. ‘Josie, can you find something that is red … red?’ the child gets up and wanders around the room with a finger in her mouth she stops at a red bucket in the sand tray, picks it up and brings it to the teacher with a huge smile on her face. ‘Is she right?’ the teacher asks, ‘Yeeesss,’ reply the rest of the class. ‘Well done, this is a red …..? enquires the teacher,’ Bucket, answers the child. This continues with children being asked and finding objects that are blue, yellow and green.

The teacher then draws the children’s attention to the colour white. Around the room several white objects have been placed: a spoon, a cup, a hat, a pair of pumps, a flower, a t-shirt, a sun-hat and a bar of soap. Again named children are asked to go and find these objects.

The colour is further reinforced by activities around the room. In the mark making area black paper has been put out with white crayons, chalk and white paint. In the painting area blue paper is attached to easels and only white paint is available. In the malleable area there is only white plasticine, playdoh and mashed potato. The water tray is filled with bubbles and so again is white in appearance.

Term 2

At the start of the morning the teacher is sitting at the front of the class and introduces the story of ‘Handas Surprise’. (The TA and BLA are sitting at the back of the group.) She reads through the book in English, pointing to key words and pictures as she does so. The children sit listening throughout, ‘Well I’d just like say to everyone how well you all sat and did good listening,’ the teacher praises. ‘I was thinking just the same,’ adds the TA. ‘Do you know, so was I,’ the BLA adds further. The children are looking very pleased with themselves, to this the teacher adds, ‘Because I’m so very pleased with all of you I’m going to give everyone a sticker.’

The children go to the teacher one at a time are each given their sticker. The majority say a thank you and those who don’t are encouraged to do so by the BLA, ‘Ashok, you say thank you to Mrs B … thank you … come on now you be a good boy let me hear you …thank you.’ The boy moves closer to the teacher and says, ‘tankyoo teacha.’ ‘Well done, that’s right, wait ‘til I see your mummy. I will tell her how well you’re doing,’ the BLA is very encouraging.
The teacher then outlines what will be happening that day. All of this is themed around the book content: animal masks are being made, fruit-printing, sponge painting to make African patterns and outside children are moving like the animals from the story. The teacher sits with a group of 5 children in the literacy area to make books based on sequencing pictures. The TA is making masks and the BLA is outside.

The teacher shows some pictures to the children and explains that they need to put them into the sequence that they appear in the book. ‘Who can tell me which animal we saw first? She asks. ‘Monkey,’ shouts Jamil. This pattern continues until six animals are in the right order, these are then stuck into a miniature book. The children are then free to decorate the front cover and write their names on. Laminated name cards are provided for the children to find their own and then copy this out. All of these children manage to do this without support. The teacher reinforces the names of the animals and helps children to pronounce them correctly e.g.

Teacher,’Giraffe,’

Child, ‘Jraf.’

Teacher,’Gir-af-fe.’

Child,’Gi-rrr-afff-fe.’

The obvious difficulty here is that in this word g sounds like j.

The teacher is patient yet persistent and doesn’t move onto a word until the previous one is right.

There is much discussion between the children about the correct sequence of the animals, this includes moving pictures around. The teacher encourages all the children to contribute and praises their efforts. To reinforce the element that stories have a beginning, middle and end the teacher prompts the children to recall which animal they saw first and then shows them the pictures from the book. Once they have succeeded, the pictures are put onto a flannel-board as a visual prompt whilst the children assemble their own mini books.

**Term 3**

This is an outside session and a group of six children are in the play ground using coloured ribbon streamers. The teacher is leading the activity. The aim is to develop expressive language, listening skills and promote fine and gross motor skills. Each child is holding a different coloured ribbon and they are twirling them around in the air. Teacher, ‘Let’s see how high we can go.’ She demonstrates to the children who are quick to copy her. ‘Now, let’s see how low we can go.’ There is a short time of moving positions from high to low as the children are expected to listen and respond
appropriately to her instructions. ‘Kaleb, keep up with every one, use your ears (taps her ear) and your eyes (touches her eye).’

Teacher now introduces some letter shapes for the children to make. The letters a,c,h,l,m,o,s and w are used. The children are concentrated on what they are doing and most of them are doing a very good job of this. It is clear which letters they are producing. Descriptive language is now introduced, ‘How can we describe letter ‘c’?’ she asks. Words like curly, curvy and round are suggested. Ibrahim suggest, ‘Cat, like cat.’ The teacher replies, ‘I see what you mean, cat begins with the sound, cuh, but what does the letter c look like?’ He draws this in the air with his ribbon and again say, ‘Cat.’ The teacher makes note of this. The child clearly knows his letter sounds though is not able to recall the letter formation, he is however listening and following instructions and enjoying his physical activity.
APPENDIX 13: Classroom observations School 4 Year 1

Term 1

The children are sitting in ability groups reading from the Miskin programme. Each child in turn reads out a sentence whilst everyone listens. This is a key part of the activity because words and sentences are cumulative, thus, words read will be repeated. Children who have followed the word visually and listened to the pronunciation have already had the model to follow. ‘The fat cat sat on the red mat.’ ‘The fat rat sat on the red mat.’ ‘The big fat cat sat on blue mat.’ ‘The big fat rat sat on the blue mat.’ ‘The big fat cat sat on the mat with the rat.’ The big fat cat sat on the blue mat with the fat rat.’ ‘The big fat cat sat on the red and blue mat with the big fat rat.’

The majority of the words have are clearly phonically based and will allow children to sound out, additionally, the books are clearly illustrated to provide picture clues to children.

Term 2

The children are sitting in friendship groups to write up in their diary what they did over the weekend. This is done this way because, many of the children are friends outside of school and so this offers a further opportunity for social development.

‘Am gonna talk about goin the park, Majid, on mi bike.’ ‘Nah, am gonna tell that a wen Mc Donals and I ad chips and iyzcrem.’ The two boys start to write in their diaries, ‘U no like u bik Ikram?’ ‘Yeh do but dun wanna put that.’ ‘U not a girl iz u?’ ‘Wot u mean, u know am a boy, jus dun wanna say abou mi bike … any way u lik iyzcren Majid and u not a girl!’ The TA overhears this conversation, ‘Come on you two, I thought you were friends? Ikram can write what he wants it’s his diary.’ ‘A know Miss am just jokin.’

Term 3

It is ‘book –week’ and today the children have come dressed up as their favourite book character. This is completely their own choice but, they have to stand before the whole class to say who they are and why they have chosen that character. The staff then decide between themselves who the winner is and explain the reason for their choice. The winner receives a book token for £10. The winners from each class will repeat this before the whole school and an overall winner will be awarded and additional token for £20, runner-up prizes of £5 are given for various categories e.g. best costume, best face-paint, most original idea, best reason given. There is a great deal of excitement with children rushing to tell me who they are, some children ask me who I think they are. ‘Miss, ew u think a am?’ ‘Well, let me see you’re wearing a little crown and a beautiful pink dress, could you be a princess?’ ‘A am but, wot princess?’ ‘Are you Cinderella?’ ‘Yes y’am, brill.’
APPENDIX 14: Classroom observations School 4 Year 2

Term 1

It is the start of the morning and all the children are sitting in the reading corner reading a book of their choice. They are quiet and focused. The teacher praises them for good reading. Following registration the new book is introduced by the teacher. A large copy of ‘Funnybones’ is set up on a stand so that the teacher has both hands free to read and turn pages. As she reads she uses a little hand-on-a-stick to follow the words as she reads out-loud. This is helpful for those children who struggle and particularly good for L2 children who may be recognising new words for the first time. The children sit quietly listening and smile as they hear the humour in the story. At the end of the session children are invited to comment on what they liked best and why. The children are very forthcoming with their responses. The book is left prominently displayed in the reading corner.

Term 2

Towards the end of the session a music track is heard which the children recognise as the signal for talking-time. The teacher says, ‘Right you now have ten minutes to tell your partner one thing you have learned this morning.’ The children quickly find a partner, find a space to sit down and start to share with each other. At the end of this time the music is played again and all the children go to sit on the carpet. The teacher selects pair to share with the whole group. Their contributions include; I have read a new book, I can spell wonderful, I can write better in joined up letters. The teacher thanks and praises them for this.

Term 3

The children are sitting in their ability group, the TA sits with the middle group and the BLA with the low ability, the teacher with the high ability. Each group has a set of ten differentiated words to spell. The member of staff reads these out one at a time and the children write these down on their own whiteboards. There is some prompting using exaggerated phonics to help children recognise spelling patterns. Once they have all completed they swap with the person next to them and are given a red marker to mark with. As the adult reads out the correct version children have the responsibility to mark each other’s work, although this is of course very closely supervised by the staff. Each of the staff records the outcomes so that forms part of assessment for next week’s planning. Children are praised for the efforts as well as their achievements.
APPENDIX 15: SCHOOL 5: Classroom observations from reception year

Term 1

The theme of the month is ‘All about me’ with activities planned extensively around this covering all six areas of the EYFS.

At the start of the session all the children are sitting on the carpet and the teacher is outlining what activities are available for them to choose. The BLAs repeat this so that all the children know what they can do. The teacher sits with a group of 4 children in the mark making area focusing on writing their names. Laminated cards with their names on are available and she encourages children to identify and select their own name; they are then to copy this. The teacher points out and names individual letters in each name and encourages children to repeat this after her, ‘Rafeena, r-a-f-ee-n-a.’ The children are keen to learn their names and clearly enjoy the praise they are given for their efforts. ‘Well done, Rafeena, you’re doing very well and look how beautifully you can write your name.’

During this time the BLAs move around the classroom spending time with individual children most of this interaction is in L1.

Term 2

This is free choice activity time when all the children have chosen what they wanted to do. The teacher is sitting in the book corner calling individual children over to her, the rest are milling around. There are children playing in the water tray and sand tray which are situated parallel to each other. Whilst there should only be 4 children at these two activities at any one time for health and safety reasons there are currently 6 children splashing water and 8 children digging sand. The noise levels are increasing high and two children have decided to put sand in the water tray. The BLAs apparently have not noticed or heard any of this until the teacher points this out to them. Mrs B then shouts at the children waving her arms around as she does so. The children stop what they are doing and one girl starts to cry. The other BLA comes over and she too starts to shout causing another child to cry. All of this is in Urdu. The teacher walks over, and taking the two upset children to one side quietly ask the BLAs to sort the mess out. She takes these children over to the book corner and focuses their attentions on the activity she has been doing all morning.

Term 3

This is a phonics session and all the children are sitting on the carpet with the teacher sitting in front of them. The BLAs are sitting at the back of the group. This is ‘Jolly Phonics’ and the teacher starts to say the alphabet, ‘a.’ All the children repeat, ‘a.’ Next, the teacher and the children together say, ‘a-a-a’ whilst, using the associated gesture of climbing their fingers up one arm to suggest ‘ants’. (A is for ant.) This format continues up to letter K. The majority of children are confident and
able to both say the sound and do the action correctly for each letter. There are a few children who make all the right gestures but do not say all the sounds. The BLAs intervene with these children, ‘No Tariq, that’s not right, you do it lik this, say buh.’ The child repeats the sounds accompanied by the action. ‘Well Miss J, a don’t think that Tariq knows what to do, he isn’t saying it lik he shud and he dunt know the action either.’ The teacher looks at the child who is by now looking very unsure of himself, ‘I’m sure that he can say it very well, come here and tell me,’ is the teacher’s response. The child gets up and comes to the teacher he stands looking at her, the teacher says to him, ‘Come on you show me how well you can do this.’ She encourages he child to say and act out the sound and she does it at the same time. The boy completes this perfectly and is praised by the teacher for this. ‘Well done, you are very clever boy.’

The children who struggled to say all the sounds are selected by the teacher to come to the reading corner one at a time where the teacher reinforces the sounds with them, ‘b, this is b, let’s say it together … b.’ The child responds quietly, ‘b.’ The teacher picks up the toy bun, ‘Ali, what sounds does this start with? He replies, ‘b … bn.’ ‘Good boy,’ praises the teacher. In addition to the phonic actions she uses objects with the appropriate initial letter sound and picture cards. She works patiently and at the pace of the individual children. She is lavish in her praises in recognition of their efforts.
**APPENDIX 16: Classroom observations School 5 Year 1**

**Term 1**

Four children are sitting at a table with the teacher who is working through a phonics activity with them. They have several objects laid on the table; ball, doll, fish, dish, book, bell, frog, flag. The objective is for children to listen closely for diphthongs. They have magnetic letters and boards and have to spell out each word, one at a time. The teacher picks up the frog and asks if they know the word, they all do and say it out loud. The teacher pronounces the word and then she and the children repeat it together three times. ‘Frog, frog… frog… frog.’ They are asked what sound they can hear, in order and eventually work out it is f-r-o-g. ‘Super,’ says the teacher, ‘now can you spell that for me on your boards.’ After some arranging of letter all the children show her their attempts which are all correct. This continues until all the words are complete.

**Term 2**

Working in a small group children are sitting at the ‘talking table’ with the teacher who has laid out several objects; a spoon, cup, plate, kettle, a selection of plastic food and a pair of sunglasses. The teacher remains silent as children start to pick up objects and talk about them. Speaking is important for the children, whilst the teacher listens. The children speak to each other in Urdu whilst handling the objects. The teacher reminds them they need to use English. The BLA overhearing this comes over. The teacher thanks her but stresses that the children can respond in English. The children then start to use English to describe the objects. ‘The cup is little and spotty and I can drink milk from it,’ says Shareen.

‘I will make samwitches, I lik jam on them,’ adds Jamil.

The teacher reminds them that they need to write down what they are saying on to the paper. The children write using a mixture of words and pictures, there are varying levels of phonic ability demonstrated. The teacher thanks all the children for taking part and for their hard work.

**Term 3**

It is the summer term and the children are rehearsing for their summer concert. They are to recite the poem ‘Jelly on a plate’ with some children acting out given roles throughout the telling. The whole group is standing up with taller children at the back and those in character roles dressed up and standing at the front. Ibrahim is the narrator, ‘Tooda class wun will prent u wid our poem jelly on de plate.’ The children then all start to recite, complete with corresponding actions and some drama from the front row. They can all say all the words perfectly from memory and co-ordinate themselves with actions too (this is no small feat with children at this age!). The whole performance is wonderful and very funny too. The children, in line with NC requirements are speaking appropriately to a given audience and with such confidence too.
APPENDIX 17: Classroom observations School 5 year 2

Term 1

The classroom is very quiet and still, as children are sitting at table reading in pairs. They are using their class reading books, which are differentiated according to reading skills. Children take it in turn to read 2 sentences (low ability), short paragraph (medium ability) a page (high ability). The one who is not reading has to follow, some children use their index finger to do this; others use a ruler to keep pace. Staff circulate the room intervening where children may be struggling.

Term 2

Children are working in small group, this time of mixed ability. On each table is a small box of different hats. A member of staff has sat with the children to look at the hats, describe them and decide who might wear them. The children have them in turn to put a hat on and describe to each other in one minute, the character that they have become. A small egg-timer is being used for this. The others have to listen and cannot comment until the time is up. This is fun activity which causes much hilarity, not least by the appearance of some of the children wearing some of the hats! The atmosphere is very relaxed and supports the children being able to share their ideas freely. Once every child in the group has had a turn the rest of the group vote on who was the best, and why. The best from each group then comes to the front of the class to tell the whole class who they are; these are then voted on so that there is one clear winner.

Term 3

It is the summer term and rehearsals are under way for the summer concert. This is a big one for these children who are leaving the infants. The school takes this opportunity to mark this as a rite of passage; a transition from one stage of learning to another. The children are busy learning lines for their play based on the book ‘Not now, Bernard’. This is a humourous story which the children enjoy. All the children will have a speaking part and have the confidence to do this too. They are keen to tell me who they are going to be and what they will be wearing for the performance. I am invited to attend, which of course, I am delighted to accept.
SCHOOL 1

Parent responses from reception year

The cultural/language make-up of this group consists of: 4 Urdu, 2 Bengali, 2 Portuguese, 1 Farsi, 1 Serbian, 2 Polish and 1 Romanian.

1. What do think is good about the school?

Staff are friendly and approachable and are good at listening and responding to information. It helps to have a staff photo-board in the entrance and written information is provided in a several languages.

‘A like the pictus, they elp you know who the teachers be’

Parents like the religious ethos of the school whether it reflects their own faith or not, regarding this to be a positive basis for education to be based on. Whilst the teaching staff are all English this is seen to give their children a good positive role model and is helpful for their English language skills. Opinions are divided over the provision of BLA; those parents whose children benefit from this see this as good whilst those whose first language is not included see this to be unfair.

2. What has helped your child to settle in?

Meeting staff before the children started gave parents a sense of security and trust in the school. Having a scheduled programme for starting, with children coming for mornings only for the first two weeks, helped both children and parents to adapt. A uniform is regarded as giving a sense of identity and pride. Younger siblings feel part of what older children do. Having a BLA so that those parents who themselves speak little/no English have someone to talk to, share their fears with and establish two-way links with the school.

‘It was very hard at first when I came to the school because then I did not speak any English, now I speak some. Having some-one who spoke my language made me feel better to leave my child’.

3. How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?

Mixed opinions about the rates of progress; some feel that children are doing well and practice at home. Others feel progress is slow whilst recognising that little is practiced at home. Parent from non-Asian backgrounds are more vocal about their own part in this progress and also comment about correct pronunciation. Those with older children in the school recognise that whilst their first child struggled they do not see this in younger children because they are able to copy from each other.
4. **How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?**

Letters are sent home in different languages. There are also monthly newsletters, a web-site and termly parent’s evenings. Major festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to contribute to these e.g. traditional food, clothing, music. Some parents come in to be classroom helpers, though never in the same class as their own children. Some parents are not clear about the role of the PTA, school committees and some school processes e.g. assessments. Mixed comments about attending events that might help their children educationally; some parents regard education to be the job of the teacher and not them, others are more willing.

‘I am not a teacher so how can I help my child to learn, that is why I send him to school so he can learn from a person who is educated’

‘I try to help my child so she can do well in class, so we look at books at home together and we speak a lot at home in English too’

5. **Is there anything you feel would help your child’s learning?**

Those of Asian origin would like to see heritage language teachers providing L1. Those from other language backgrounds would like to see an emphasis on ‘elocution’ so that children develop ‘good talking’ rather than speaking with an ‘Asian’ accent that they have picked up from other children in the class!

‘I’m not being awkward or nuffink but you know I want ma children to speak proper English, like an English person speak it. I don’t want em to pick up someone else’s speak. My child he come home saying, ‘In it, he say it all de time. That is what the Asian say, not the English,’

More discipline so that children are pushed harder and get better jobs when they leave. Extended/extra spoken English lessons where parents could learn alongside their children. Home-school links to be extended so that teachers come to the home and tell/show them how to help their children learn better.

6. **What would you like to see your child achieve?**

Those parents with low literacy levels want to see their children become proficient in English skills so they can have a job and get out of poverty. Be perceived as ‘better people’ rather than of low status that they feel themselves to be. All parents made the link between being literate and employment/better life chances. All parents wanted their children to do well at school; some saw their own part in this, others recognise that they are not able to have a part in this because of what they deemed to be their own ‘deficiencies’.
APPENDIX 19: Parent responses from School 1 Year 1

1. **Do you feel your child has made progress this year?**

   Parents are divided about what they thought about this, some felt it was better because there was no play and lots of learning, whilst others felt that their child learned a lot through play and so suggest there should be at least some play included.

   ‘I not like it that my boy he still play, but teacher say this is how he learn well.’

   ‘My girl learned lots o words last year so I lik her to play it help her to learn’.

2. **Is there anything in particular that has helped this?**

   Parents all commented on the teacher who is so very keen on all the children being able to read. Parents recognise that this is important if their children are to do well academically. Some parents admitted that they could not read and were picking it up from their children.

   ‘The teacher is strict she makes my boy do reading every day and now he read so well that he’s elping me to read ‘

   ‘My child she bring good things home from school so we do them together and I can learn good from her’

3. **Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?**

   Parents understand that in this school the only language spoken is English and whilst they recognise why and how it has benefitted their children there is still a desire for their children to use L1 in school. This appears to be mainly on the grounds that they fear a loss of cultural identity. There is a lot of hearty discussion around the subject with very strong feeling expressed by some about the need to ‘move on’.

   ‘I know that my children do speak English well but it is not their home language and sometimes I think I would like for them to speak Urdu in school … it is who they are’.

   ‘When I come to England I wan my childen to be English so they speak English, if I did not then why would I come ere? You av to move on you know, let all that stay behind … what was that good about it any way!’
4. **How do feel about your child going into year 2?**

Parents realise that next year is the year of formal testing though have not really linked this with the ability to use English. There is an assumption that somehow, the tests will reflect what their children actually know rather than their ability to demonstrate this. Parents have not identified that if their children cannot read and write well in English then they will not score well.

‘Well I know that next year there will be some real big tests, but I know that my boy is doing real well in class, so he will be ok.’

‘Tests, yeh, I know they all av to do ‘em, but so long as he try es best, is fine … he still be my boy’.
APPENDIX 20: Parent responses from School 1 Year 2

1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

Parents are delighted with what their children can do and recognise the progress they have made since starting school which for some has exceeded their expectations.

‘Yam so pleased with my child she read and write so gud.’

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Parents appreciate the ‘day-of-the-month’ that they have been able to participate in this year. Not only have they felt valued as individuals but, they also feel it has helped to strengthen their commitment to supporting the staff. It has also been a window into what and how their children have been learning this year.

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

Parents who expressed previously a ‘loss of cultural identity’ now feel this is less so. They recognise that the school genuinely values their home culture whilst at the same time enabling their children to make good progress in English language skills. There is some discussion about homework from the view that whilst they may not be able to help their children they can see more of that they can do.

‘ome work, a think wud be gud, if they do well now they cud do more well with some more work. No?’

4. How do you feel about your child going into next year?

Parents realise that this is the end of infant schooling and feel their children are beginning to grow up. They recognise that there will be little or no opportunity for learning through play yet, because of the progress made so far express every confidence that they will continue to do so. They also comment that staff are very creative in their methods and again this gives them a confidence that next year will be no different.

‘I know that next year will be some differences but I know that my child is doing well, so it will be so again for sure.’
APPENDIX 21: SCHOOL 2

Parent responses from reception year

The cultural/language make-up of this group consists of: 3 Urdu, 3 Bengali, 2 Hindi, 1 Farsi, 2 Polish and 1 Romanian.

1. **What do think is good about the school?**

   The school is new and it’s close to where families live so they can walk there. It has lots of good facilities and younger children can go in the nursery whilst parents use the learning facilities. The teachers are friendly and approachable and conduct home visits. It helps to have a staff photo-board in the entrance and written information is provided with pictures and diagrams.

   ‘It’s local init so’s you can get ere wiv the kids dead easy, dunt matter what weathers like .. cud say yerv no excuse for not getting ere, eh.’

   Parents like the welcoming ethos of the school and genuinely feel that they can always come to speak to someone. This may not necessarily be teachers, because of the range of staff in the Sure Start Centre advise is always available on many issues.

   ‘The teachers is gud for kids but dey can’t elp wiv stuff like benefits and stuff… but v others do, so’s I aks em.’

   ‘Meetin wiv de teacher before ma chil start school was a elp’

2. **What has helped your child to settle in?**

   Meeting staff before the children started gave parents a sense of security and trust in the school. Though some parents felt that perhaps this was ‘snooping’ on them! Having a scheduled programme for starting, with children coming for afternoons only for the first two weeks, helped both children and parents to adapt. The uniform is regarded as giving a sense of identity and puts everyone on the same level. Some parents are worried that their children will be seen as ‘poor kids’ and believe that a uniform stops this happening. Some L2 parents feel that not having a BLA is unfair and that to employ one would help them feel more confident if they had someone who they could speak to.

   ‘When I came to the school first I did not speak much English, now I speak a little better. It would be better for me and my child if somebody spoke my language.’
3. **How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?**

Some discussion surrounds a new ‘thing’ the school is trying out to help children learn better. Most parents feel that their children are slowly making progress but say that they are excited when they come home and chatter about what they have done in school. They have started to sing a song that they sing every day, they like it because the teacher sings this song with them and then everyone claps. This makes their children feel good about themselves and so it also makes the parents feel confident that they are in a good school. They rest in this confidence, believing therefore that eventually their children will do well. Those with older children in the school recognise that whilst their first child struggled and lacked confidence they do not see this in younger children. Again this is attributed to the new teacher (the EYP) and the new ‘thing’ that is happening in class.

‘*My child she sing song all time, then she clap and sing again.*’

‘*My boy was shy but he sing too, he make me sing it.*’ She laughs and sings the song. Other parents hum along and there is a genuine shared experience that their children are learning something good.

4. **How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?**

Letters are sent home in different languages but, in addition, these always have pictures and diagrams to help parents understand better. This extra help is much appreciated by these parents. There are also monthly newsletters, a web-site and termly parent’s evenings. Major festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to contribute to these e.g. traditional food, clothing, music. Some parents come in to classes at the centre and feel this is good for their self-esteem and confidence, which in turn, makes them feel better as parents. Parents are not encouraged to volunteer to work in the classrooms but rather to develop their own skills so that they are better equipped as parents. Parents are not clear about the role of the PTA, school committees and some school processes e.g. assessments and little interest is shown either. The majority of these parents have many other issues that are more importance to them e.g. large families and little money. In general parents regard education to be the job of the teacher they have enough to do being parents.

‘*Am too busy wiv de kids I does mi best to feed n dress em can’t do more,*

‘*I try to elp ma child so she do well but I fink she know an me.*’

‘*The teacher she ask me to come in and do cooking with the class, I enjoy this and it make me feel proud.*’
5. **Is there anything you feel would help your child’s learning?**

Some of those from Asian origin would like to see heritage language teachers providing L1, others feel that the mosque does this anyway so why should the school do it. Those from other language backgrounds are just happy to see their children settled in school and making some progress.

‘I’m not bovvered ma chil she be learning the speech and she happy at school wot more do I need.’

‘I wud lik ma child to speak proper English, like de queen do,’ she laughs, ‘A just wants ma chil to be appy and get a gud job.’

Home-school links to be extended so that teachers come to the home for often, not just before they start to and tell/show them how to help their children learn better.

6. **What would you like to see your child achieve?**

All parents made the link between being literate and employment/better life chances. All parents therefore wanted their children to do well at school; most did not see that they had a part in this, few did recognise this but expressed sadness that that they are not able to contribute because of what they deemed to be their own ‘deficiencies’. All parents wanted their children to be happy people regardless of their educational attainment.

‘Yeh a wud lik ma boy to be a doctor, but if not to be ‘appy’
1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

Parents are generally happy and pleased with the progress being made by their children. Some children have moved to more formal learning (NC) whilst others are still spending time with younger children (BLAST). Parents are a little concerned about this and whilst acknowledging that the teacher has explained that this is only for some literacy lessons and is done to assist their children, they still feel they would like them to spend all of their time in more formal learning. As with all parents, no one wants to feel that their child is less able than others in the class.

‘he is year 1 now but he still do some lessons with his ‘baby’ teacher, I no sure about this, I wu lik for him to do the same as the others’

‘I’m no bothered so long as she is getting better at English, an she is.

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Parents all comment on the teacher who is so very keen on all the children being able to read and write and talk about some of things she has introduced to help the children. Some parents have tried similar ideas at home and feel that this is helping their children to make progress.

‘The teacher is very good, she has good ideas that the children lik … my girl she talk about the ‘special box’ and she sing and talk all the time

‘My boy not so lik to write but he has special pen, so now he lik to write.

‘My child she lik to read an write, she lik to sit with books in school and then she always write … she always want to buy pencil and then she write all the tim … this good for her, very, very good … I like this.’
3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

Some parents would still like to see some element of ‘home’ language in school, though can give no reason other than it is what they feel comfortable with. The majority of parents show no desire for this at all and on the contrary feel that since this is the ‘home’ language that’s where it should be kept. All parents are happy with the progress their children are making and recognise increasingly that it is themselves as parents who can add to such progress.

‘I know that my children do speak English well and I learn a lot from them but it is better for us all if we speak English at home … this is when my children can learn from me.’

‘The school is doing a good job but I know that I can help too, I need to make my children work at home so they will get even better.’

4. How do feel about your child going into year 2?

Parents realise that as their children move up the school that things become more formal and they will also be tested. There are therefore some mixed comments from those parents whose children are still in the BLAST programme, wondering how they will cope with year 2. All parents recognise that education changes according to the children’s age, although for some this has apparently not happened. Parents themselves feel something of the mixed-method of approaches being adopted by the school in relation to literacy, and whilst they understand this in theory, in practice they feel uncertain about the outcomes.

‘I not always sure why my child do things but I see she do learn … and I know teacher is good for this’.

‘I can see that my child is learning good so I let the teacher get on with it, after all, she is the teacher’ (she laughs).

‘I know school will get harder, but I feel teacher will do hard work to teach my son.’
APPENDIX 23: Parent responses from School 2 year 2

1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

Parents are pleased with the level of progress made by their children as they reach the end of infant school. Most of the children have moved to more formal learning (NC) only a few have still continued this year with the BLAST programme. Those parents whose children are included in this are unconcerned since they too recognise that they were struggling and so need this extended help.

‘I’m very pleased because my daughter she do so well at English now, she read and write very well.’

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Parents comment on some of the creative things that their children do and regard the teacher to be very good at this. Those with boys, in particular feel this has been very positive for them and have recognised that their children copy some of these ideas at home too.

‘ my son he hide under table and do writing I aks him why he say that's wot he do at school and. So I aks teacher and she show me the den and we laugh’

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

There is some discussion about the place of homework with many parents expressing a desire for their children to do this. This is based around a misunderstanding that more of something must be better than none i.e. to do more writing must be beneficial for the children. There seems to be little recognition that in fact children are expected to read every night at home and practice for a weekly spelling test, though all parents say that they do actually complete this with their children.

‘ I do reading and spelling every night but I think they should be doing writing also.’

4. How do feel about your child going into next year?

Parents realise that their children will now move up into the junior part of the school. Those parents whose children are still in the BLAST programme are wondering how they will cope with year 3. All of the parents recognise that teaching and learning will become more formalised as their children now progress to the end of primary education. However, based on the progress they have seen so far remain confident that this will only continue throughout this time. They reflect on how they have felt at the end of each previous year and how the outcomes have always been positive, highlighting that teachers have always been creative and made learning interesting and so they feel this will always be the case.

‘ The school has been good so far so am sure it will still be.’
APPENDIX 24: SCHOOL 3

Parent responses from reception year

The cultural/language make-up of this group consists of: 3 Urdu, 2 Bengali, 2 Hindi, 1 Svyleti and 2 Croatian and 1 Farsi.

1. What do you think is good about the school?

   The school is new and it’s close to where families live so they can walk there. It is also a small school so that parents feel at home rather than lost. The teachers are friendly and approachable and the key-worker system means they know who to relate to and also that their children are well cared for by these individuals. It helps to have a staff photo-board in the entrance and written information is provided with pictures and diagrams. Whilst this is a church school parents are not conscious of any religious slant but appreciate the good moral basis that it provides for their children regardless of their own family beliefs.

   ‘I like that school is small so I feel part of it. I can come to speak to teacher any time and she know my girl very well.’

   ‘It not so big that my child have many friends, not just Asian, and he go to tea at they house and they come here and I know their parents too.’

   Parents like the welcoming ethos of the school and genuinely feel that they can always come to speak to someone. They are unaware of who is a teacher and who is a TA, they simply regard staff to be staff.

2. What has helped your child to settle in?

   Meeting staff before the children started gave parents a sense of security and trust in the school. The unit had open days at the end of the summer for children and parents to come in and stay as long as they wanted, this was a good ice-breaker such that children felt confident to start in the September and so did the parents to leave their children. The uniform is regarded as giving a sense of identity and parents are proud to see their children set off to school looking smart in it. Some L2 parents mention the lack of a BLA, being aware that other schools in the area do, however, they recognise and appreciate the ways in which they can communicate and in fact feel this helps them to develop their own L2 rather than remaining dependent on a translator.

   ‘When I first came to the school first I did not speak much English at all, but I was able to use pictures and word cards. It felt a little strange, even childish but it worked and now I can say that it was great help to me. This means I know that my child will also learn well.’

   ‘Having a special person to care for him ... it’s good that they know my son well. This makes me feel good to trust them’
3. **How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?**

Parents again refer to the range of communication provisions available and because they have also been helped to learn this way they feel very confident that their children can also learn to speak English well. Parents are happy about levels of progress and the fact that their children have good friends who are L1 children. To them this is an indication that their children are also accepted and so will continue to develop their language skills further from their English friends. Because their children are happy and settled in school, have made friends and are learning their new language parents too are happy and confident that this development can only flourish.

‘My child, she speaks better all the time and she tell me what she av done in school every day, she very happy and she av lots of friends here.’

‘My son was quiet at first but now he does not stop … he talk all the time.’

4. **How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?**

Letters are sent home in different languages but, in addition, these always have pictures and diagrams to help parents understand better. This extra help is much appreciated by these parents. There are also monthly newsletters, a web-site and termly parent’s evenings. Major festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to contribute to these e.g. traditional food, clothing, music. The main feature though is the open-doors policy so that parents know they can always come and talk to someone who knows their child. Some parents have volunteered to come in to classes (not where their child is) to contribute to activities like, sewing, cooking and traditional arts. This increases not only their self-esteem and confidence, but, also their confidence in the school which values their contribution.

Parents are clear about the role of the PTA, school committees and some school processes e.g. assessments. The profiles that are kept in accordance with the EYFS encourage parents to be part of the assessment process. The majority of these parents are actively involved in this.

‘I come to the profile meeting and tell what my child can do at home. The teacher tell me what he does here and show me photos of these things. This is good, very good, I like this.’
5. Is there anything you feel would help your child's learning?

Some parents would like children to do 'homework' feeling that this will help their children to learn quicker. They say that staff have explained that at this young age this is not appropriate because young children learn better by doing. There is some misunderstanding here with parents not recognising that children learn through play at this age, they would rather see them writing. This has also been explained by the staff however, in order to accommodate the parent's desire to see their children learning at home story-sacks have been provided for use at home. Parents book these out and can keep them for a week at a time. Many parents are doing this and are enjoying these shared experiences with their children. It also helps to make them feel that they are playing an active part in L2 development.

'We bring a sack home every week and then we look at book and do some writing together. I like to do this, you know, I want to help my child as much as I can.'

'We do the sack too, and my other children they join. My little one she like to do the same it make her feel grown up.'

6. What would you like to see your child achieve?

All parents made the link between being literate and employment/better life chances and since the majority of these parents are working they want their children to have better jobs than they have. Those parents who are professional want their children to go to university and become professional too. All parents therefore want their children to do well at school and all feel they have an important part to play in this.

'We came to England so our children would av a better life and we do all we can for this to be so.'

'We believe that as parents we should help our children to do well ... they should be pushed to av a good job, a nice home and of course a good husband' (she laughs).
1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

Parents are happy with the progress made by their children and comment about how well they feel they have settled in to the new class. There was a parents meeting at the start of the year when the teacher outlined how she intended to make the transition between the two approaches to curriculum. Whilst some parents originally had concerns and wanted a formal approach from the start they now feel it was the right approach.

‘at first I want my child to stop the play and sit at table to work, but she has done so good that I now happy with this.’

‘I came to the meeting with teacher and she say how she gonna do it and I think that Ok becos she is teacher and so she know what best.’

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Parents recognise that perhaps the approach to transition was a factor in helping children make progress from one stage of learning to the next. They also like the fact that the teacher listens to children read every day; they also know about the ‘special’ box because their children have told them how much they like this.

‘Yes, I think listen to them read every day is so good for them and then we also read at home together too.’

‘You know, my son, he tell me about the little box and he likes that he can use it when he wants to … he has made a little box at home for himself and he tries to do the same with me … it’s good.’

‘The teachers talked to us and showed us how lesson would be changing, this helped me to understand better.’
3. **Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?**

The majority of parents still want to see children do proper homework and not just have reading and spelling to do. When asked ‘what’ kind of homework they would think appropriate there is some difference of opinion, which perhaps reflects a level of misunderstanding about what is appropriate for children of six to be doing.

‘**They should do writing at home, like write stories.**’

‘**They could do games like matching and boxes.**’

‘**They do enough in school I think reading is the only thing and the best thing they should do at home.**’

4. **How do feel about your child going into year 2?**

Based on their experiences of the change from foundation to year one most parents feel happy that their children will settle just the same and be prepared by the next teacher for what they need to do that year. Some parents realise that children are tested in year two and are not sure about the value of this.

‘**I think that the teachers in the school do the best for the children and know what works best for them so I think that this will be the same for next year. I am not worried.**’

‘**I know that next year the children do tests but I do not think that this is good, they will only be seven and still have a lot to learn.**’

‘**It help me a lot to be able to ask teacher what I don’t understand and she tell me what my girl is doing,**’
APPENDIX 26: Parent responses from School 3 Year 2

1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

All parents comment about the progress they feel their children have made this year, even those who had previously expressed some concerns about their children moving away from play-based to a more formal style of learning. They now realise that this teacher has been creative and brought the children on to a good level of English skills.

‘I was a bit worried at first becoz I no sure how it would change but my girl is so happy she love wot she do in school and is doing good.

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

They didn’t at first appreciate some of things the teacher was doing e.g. Why play music when the children need to be quiet? But, after listening to their children explain what they were doing at school and how they enjoyed it they realised that they were clearly learning. After this they relaxed and had confidence in what and how the teacher approached learning.

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

Some parents still want to see children do proper homework and not just have reading and spelling to do. There is still some difference of opinion, with parents perhaps still not fully understanding what is appropriate for children at this age to be achieving. There is some element of getting them ready for ‘big’ school in terms of moving into the juniors next year.

4. How do feel about your child going into next year?

Parents by now have a lot of experience of how the school works and how each teacher may have slightly different approach to learning. And so, based on this expect that their children will continue to do well. Parents expressed a lot of respect for staff and say that over the years they have been made to feel valued and just a much a part of the school as their children are.

‘The school is very good for my children, and for me. The teacher she accept me as a person so I know she will do good for my child too.’
APPENDIX 27: SCHOOL 4

Parent responses from reception year

The cultural/language make-up of this group consists of: 5 Urdu, 2 Punjabi and 4 Bengali.

1. What do think is good about the school?

Parents like to have the school close to home and feels this helps children to settle because whenever they go out they have to pass the building. It helps to have staff, who speak their home language but all the staff are friendly and approachable. It also helps, to have a staff photo-board in the entrance and written information is provided in home languages.

‘A like that I can speak to lady in my language, she know what I mean ‘cos she from my culture.’

Parents like the fact that the school tries to cater for them as adults not just as parents e.g. language lessons and home visits.

2. What has helped your child to settle in?

Having the staff visit at home before the children started gave parents a sense of belonging and that the school really cared about their children and them as a family. The scheduled programme for starting that allows children to attend for the mornings only for the first two weeks, helped both children and parents to settle. Having a BLA helps those parents who themselves speak little/no English to have someone to talk to and share their fears with. The element of having a shared cultural understanding is appreciated.

‘ when I came to school I had poor English but having someone who can help me speak help me very much.’

‘ it good to have someone from my culture so we understand each other good.’

3. How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?

Parents are happy with the rate of progress that children are making in developing their English skills. Those parents who themselves feel confident about using English are comfortable speaking this with their children at home, others who feel they are still learning use L1 at home. All parents recognise that it does help children if the family speak English at home together. Those with older children in school are often lead by them into using more English. In some families there is a dependence on their children’s abilities to speak English and parents recognise that this comes from what they have learned in school.
4. **How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?**

Letters are sent home in home languages with pictures. There are also monthly newsletters, a web-site and termly parent’s evenings. Major festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to contribute to these e.g. traditional food, clothing, music. Some parents come in to school to attend English lessons and recognise that this in turn helps them to be part of their children’s learning. More confident parents have volunteered to be classroom helpers, though never in the same class as their own children. Some parents are not clear about the role of the PTA, school committees and some school processes e.g. assessments. Whilst all parents regard education to be the job of the teacher they also recognise they can help their children, in particularly by learning to speak English and use this at home.

‘*I send my child to school so he can learn from teacher I try to help him at home, I try best to speak English for him*’

5. **Is there anything you feel would help your child’s learning?**

Parents are very happy with how children are learning and believe that the school is very supportive and enables children to do well.

‘*school is good and I like how my child is doing*’

6. **What would you like to see your child achieve?**

Those parents with poor language and literacy levels want to see their children do better than that. Parents realise that for their children to get a decent job they need to do well at school and some of this is linked to their abilities in English. Some parents want their children to go to university in particular, their sons, this would make them very proud because this would be a first for their family.
1. **Do you feel your child has made progress this year?**

Parents are agreed that children have made good progress during the year to the point that they are able to help younger siblings settle into school and learn English.

‘He has done so much this year, he is reading good and writing good and he speak so very well, better than me.’

2. **Is there anything in particular that has helped this?**

There is some discussion and the general consensus is that providing children plenty of time and opportunity to talk with the emphasis on the use of English has helped their spoken skills. And, especially time spent alongside the staff which, parents believe has speeded up their progress. Some parents find the targets set for their children are helpful and informative.

‘My sister’s child she go to a different school where the children do not have so big a chance to talk with friends and teachers so much in English. She is not doing so well as my daughter so I think this is important for school to know.’

‘The teacher always tells my child and me what he need to be learning and it goes up on the wall.’

3. **Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?**

Parents are happy with the progress made to date and feel that because the school is doing such a good job there is nothing to add or that could make improvements.

4. **How do feel about your child going into year 2?**

It is recognised by all parents that next year is something of a landmark for children since they have to sit their first formal tests. Parents are somewhat divided as to the importance of this. Whilst parents naturally want their children to do well they do not want any stigma attached to them if they do not ‘appear’ to do well. There is some discussion about the truth of such results and whether it reflects children’s actual ability or not.
1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

All the parents agree that their children have made considerable progress throughout this year. Some are particularly pleased with the level of reading and others also comment on the development of written skills. They all comment on what they feel is a good level of oral fluency, which may be attributed to the opportunities provided by the talking-time.

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Their comments are about the strong lead provided by the teacher and her consistent approach to reading and writing. Parents have been in the classroom and love the reading corner, feeling that this has certainly helped their children to enjoy books more than they had previously.

‘In the classroom they av a luvly reading corner with little chairs and lamps, so cosy and nice… I wud like to read in there!’

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

Most parents feel there is little extra that the school could do since they are pleased with progress so far. Two parents comment that they would like their children to have regular homework, believing that this would give them extra learning.

4. How do feel about your child going into next year?

All the parents recognise that this is the end of infants and, that next year their children will be starting juniors. They expect that this will become harder for their children but feel that the school and staff will as usual, accommodate this very well. Some parents feel that as their children become increasingly fluent in English they are moving further away from their home language. Whilst they know this is necessary there is a sense that they are no longer in tune with the older generation of grandparents, many of whom have no English skill whatsoever. It is the parents now that are acting as translators between the generations. They perceive that this drift away will quicken as children mature.

‘It is good that my child can speak English so good, but at home he speak little Urdu so cannot speak very much to his grandparents ... and they have no English so I have to speak for both of them ... this make me a little sad.’
APPENDIX 30: SCHOOL 5

Parents responses from reception year

The cultural/language make-up of this group consists of: 12 Urdu (this is the majority language of the group).

1. **What do think is good about the school?**

   It is near to where families live so it is easy to get there. Having staff who speak the same language is a real benefit, also because they are from the same culture they understand what parents want and why things are important to them. All the staff, regardless of language are friendly and approachable and are prepared to listen. It helps to have a staff photo-board in the entrance and written information is provided in a ‘mother-tongue.’

   ‘Aving people from my culture is good, we understand each other.’

   ‘It’s good that school is near to house and family and friends, it feel safe, like part of big family.’

2. **What has helped your child to settle in?**

   Having staff who speak the same language helped children to settle because someone could understand them. This also gave parents a sense of security and trust in the school. There is strong feeling that having a shared identity means that the BLAs will have a better understanding and so look out for the children better. Being so close in proximity to home helps because children know that mum is never far away.

   ‘Having some-one who speaks my language make me feel better to leave my child’

   ‘My house is very near so I can come easy to the school for my child.’

3. **How well do you feel your child is learning to speak English?**

   Mixed opinions about the rates of progress; some feel that children are doing well, others appear unconcerned feeling that their children will eventually learn so there is no problem with how soon this may be. Parents in general feel this is the job of the school not them and that the teacher will do the job. Those parents with poor literacy themselves feel that they manage to get along so why should they rush their children, they too will manage.

   ‘I not gud at speak English so teacher she will give to my child.’
4. **How does the school encourage you to be a part of your child’s learning?**

   Monthly newsletters are sent home in Urdu, the school has a web-site in English and there are termly parent’s evenings. Major festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to contribute to these e.g. traditional food, clothing, music. Parents are not clear about the role of the PTA, school committees and some school processes eg: assessments. Some of this is linked to their own lack of formal education and little experience of how schools operate. As a result of this there is a strong feeling that education is the job of the teacher and the school and not them as parents.

   ‘I not go school so can no help my child … I send him school so he learn well from teacher’

   ‘I cannot elp my child do well, school do this … I send her school.’

5. **Is there anything you feel would help your child’s learning?**

   Parents are happy with the provision of BLAs and would like to see this continue throughout the school. Some parents say that strict teachers are good because they make children learn better. There is some discussion about less playing and more learning. There is little understanding that this is how young children do learn.

   ‘Why children do so much play them should work.’

6. **What would you like to see your child achieve?**

   Those parents who are recent arrivals in the country explain they came for a better life and so want their children to go to school, unlike some of them. They all link education with a good job and again want this for their children. There is some amusement as mums say they want their daughters to have many sons. There is a consensus of opinion that this is in fact a better option for women than getting a good job. Parents generally have higher expectations for their sons than they do for their daughters.

   ‘If my son do well at school he get good job and a pretty wife.’

   ‘My son he need job my daughter she must have many sons.’
APPENDIX 31: Parent responses from School 5 Year 1

1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

There is some discussion with parents agreeing that at the end of the year they can see how much progress the children have made and they are happy with that. Some views surrounding the use of mother-tongue are aired, with some parents recognising that their children speak so much better than they do and again, there is an element of fear surrounding a loss of cultural identity expressed. At the same time parents realise that they must prepare their children for the wider world which clearly requires them to be fluent in English.

‘I know my child must speak English well if he to do well but I don’t want him to forget who he is.’

‘At home my husband say we must speak own language so we will be ourselves and be good Moslem too.’

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

Parents, many of whom know the BLA realise that the teacher has been very insistent about the use of English, and whilst at first they had some reservations about this (linked to previous comments) they now feel that this was a good move.

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

Some discussion surrounds children being given homework such as writing though, what format this should take is unclear. Parents generally want to be able to see what their children are doing and feel that homework allows them to do this. They are of course able to go to school and talk with the teacher though some feel their own L2 skills let them down here.

‘I want to see what my child is doing so then I know how well she do, I can ask teacher but you know I not always know how to say.’

4. How do feel about your child going into year 2?

Parents generally are unconcerned about children moving into the next year and see this just as part of their ‘growing up’. Based on the progress they have made so far parents are confident that this will continue.
APPENDIX 32: Parent responses from School 5 Year 2

1. Do you feel your child has made progress this year?

All parents agree that at the end of the year they can see that their children have made good progress and they are happy with this. Some discussion follows about the role and nature of heritage language teachers and whether the school should provide this or not. This becomes somewhat heated with parents disagreeing; the vast majority are clear that the school is there to teach English which is exactly what their children need and if others want them to continue with L1 then they should do that at home.

2. Is there anything in particular that has helped this?

All parents comment on the weekly newsletter that is sent home. This is set out in plain English with diagrams and pictures, and is to inform and explain how they as parents can help and support their children at home.

‘We av a letter that com ome every week and it elp us to elp our chidrin. It say wot we can do and ow to do it. A think it very elpful.’

3. Is there anything else you would feel would help your child’s progress?

The issue of homework surfaces again though by now parents have realised that if this was needed and helpful then the school would be doing this. The fact that they don’t is clearly because they don’t feel it would serve any positive purpose. Parents have a genuine regard and respect for the work of the school and so are content to let this continue.

‘I think that the teachers know what is best for our children so if they don’t give then omework its becoz it isn’t a good thing for them to do right now.’

4. How do feel about your child going into next year?

Parents are not in the least bit concerned about children moving into the juniors next year and see this just as part of their ‘growing up’. They see the school and staff as part of the community and trust implicitly in what they are doing.
Addendum

1. **In what ways might the gender/ethnicity of the researcher influence the research process, data collection and their analysis?**

Research by its’ very nature can be problematic since it deals with people, and in particular when this involves children. Thus the researcher needs to recognise the potential impact that the research process may have on participants, either directly or indirectly (Nolan *et al*, 2013).

The researcher ultimately has power over the research process and the participants and this therefore implies ‘status’. Where the gender and ethnicity of the researcher varies from that of the participants, particularly when the researcher is white and the participants are BME, the issues of power and status may be of further significance.

Ryan (2011) indicates that when researching in hierarchical organisations e.g. schools, it is status rather than power that is the dominant feature. The perceived status of the researcher in such cases may well therefore dominate that of the participants.

When researching with BME groups the researcher needs to be mindful that such groups are often viewed within wider society to be of a low status. This can be further exacerbated by issues of gender, poverty and poor spoken English language skills. Such participants may therefore, either consciously or unconsciously defer to the researcher as someone perceived to be of a higher status than themselves.

The researcher is likely to be viewed as belonging to an educated profession e.g. teacher, who is highly socialised and proficient in the dominant language. In contrast BME participants who are in the process of acquiring language skills may well be lacking in terms of social integration. The gulf between these two parties may therefore be perceived to be a wide one. In terms of status this may result in BME participants being reluctant to express views honestly to a white researcher, since education itself may be seen in terms of being a white dominated system, of which they have little experience, feel inadequate to comment on, or fear the consequences of appearing critical.

Alternatively, studies by Mizcock *et al* (2011) found that white researchers may be oversensitive to cultural issues and so may validate and support the views expressed by respondents rather than remain objective. In line with this view then, where both the researcher and the respondents are also female and parents there may be a closer ‘shared’ element of reciprocal views upheld.
The issues of status and power are also important where children are participants in research since it is important that it is their voices that are heard, rather than what they may feel the researcher wishes to hear. Again, where the research is white English speaking and the children are EAL, the issue of status may be all the more significant.

It must also be recognised that some cultures are by nature patriarchal, such that the role and place of women is secondary to that of men. The impact of this socialisation on boys may result in them testing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour with (i) women and (ii) white women (Takhar, 2013). This is relevant when the researcher is a white female since it may be unclear what is actually being observed and call into question whether this is accurate, or skewed as a result of her gender and/or ethnicity.

Where the researcher is also an educator, and as such part of the white dominated culture of education it needs to be recognised that they may hold both personally and professionally, a different set of values to the participants. Additionally, the researcher needs to remain objective rather than be blinded to the system of which they are a part, in terms of for example; the standardisation of the curriculum, parental involvement, policy, and practice. Where apparent differences occur in data collection the researcher may assume these are due to race, ethnicity, or gender rather than their own cultural familiarity with the education system (Moscombe and Tomlin, 2013). This could ultimately influence the analysis of data.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


2. Allude to the wider political and social issues concerning education of minority ethnic pupils with EAL within the process of assimilation, integration and cultural pluralism

Schools clearly have a legal requirement to actively promote racial equality, and yet it would appear that inequalities between ethnic groups persist within education in England. Gillborn (2005) refers to this as ‘white supremacy’ and regards such inequalities to be a central feature of our education system.

Since schools can be seen to be a microcosm of the wider society in which they exist then it perhaps unsurprising that the economic, gender, and racial inequalities at work in society as a whole are reflected in some part in schools themselves (Giddens, 1990).

British education would define itself as having a multicultural approach, and one which regards all children as those who matter (DfES, 2003). Yet, in terms of assimilation, integration, and cultural pluralisms this may be less apparent.

If we view assimilation to be the blending of minority groups into the dominant society until ultimately they become indistinguishable, then we may fall into the trap of a colour-blind approach whereby we handle ethnic diversity by simply ignoring it, rather than recognising and valuing it. The inference here for minority groups is one of deference, whereby in order to be accepted it they who must change. This surely is in conflict with the policy of inclusion inherent in our education system, which seeks rather to value such differences.

Integration however, offers a more positive approach whereby ethnic groups work together in recognition of, and respect for differences. However, in order for social integration to occur there is clearly a need to acquire a proficiency in a common language. This still pit the onus of change on the minority groups to adapt, in order to become part of the majority.

Cultural pluralism then sees the smaller groups in mainstream society maintain their cultural identity and have those values and practices accepted by the wider society. Ultimately, minority groups participate fully in the dominant society. For this to be successful this again presumes some level of language proficiency.

For those ethnic minority groups with EAL then we need to recognise how the inequalities in wider society may impact on their education (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Since English is the language of both education and assessment, children need to have some level of language proficiency in order to engage with and attain some level of academic achievement. It should also be acknowledged that acquiring language and developing proficiency is indeed a process, which
children need time to accommodate. We need therefore to be consciously aware of how they perceive themselves as members of a minority ethnic group within the wider society during this period of time, since it is this that may ultimately have the greatest impact on their educational attainment.

Schools will be undoubtedly dominated by the perspectives of the staff, which on the whole and certainly in this study are all white females. The Asian staff (again in this study), all hold peripheral roles, and in terms of hierarchy this a less powerful position. This may therefore seem to reinforce to the children the 'white supremacy' that Gillborn (2005) refers to, and as a consequence deem their ethnic group to be of less significance.

Such children acquiring EAL are in the process of social integration, and language proficiency needs to be seen as part of this. However, the 'pressure' to acquire English language proficiency certainly by the end of Key Stage 1 may in fact militate against the concept of respecting differences. An extreme viewpoint may perceive this to be an acceleration of assimilation whereby children are actively encouraged to stop using their home language in order to fit into the dominant language group. This again may suggest to children that their cultural identity is not valued in the same way as that of others.

Gillborn (2005) suggests that teachers have lower expectations of EAL children which are detrimental in the classroom. Whilst that may be evidenced in terms of children in secondary education and ultimately in GCSE results the evidence from the study conducted in primary education suggests some differences. Two main aspects are identified (i) that teachers have high expectations of all young children and actively pursue this through creative means and (ii) that whilst results at the end of KS1 are lower in those schools which are entirely EAL it is recognised (Cummins, 1992 and Collier, 1995) that children continue to develop and that is often accelerated at the next stage of learning.

English is not only the host language but it must also be acknowledged as a universal language which is spoken worldwide by many, as an additional language. It has therefore in terms of hierarchy a high status. In contrast the languages spoken by many ethnic minority groups are deemed to be of low status. The gap between the two may therefore exacerbate the tension between language groups, and increase the pressure to acquire the higher status language in preference to the one of lower status.

With reference to the taught curriculum Gillborn (2005) recognises that English is both a distinct and overarching subject, EAL is not and as such receives only marginal status. This may perhaps infer that those who are EAL also hold marginal status.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


3. **Order the recommendations under broader conceptual headings regarding their social and political impact.**

The recommendations of the study can be ordered under broader conceptual headings in relation to their impact both socially, and politically. It is recognised that these two broad themes are interconnected and in turn influence and direct each other. Within these two broad themes the following headings have been identified:

1. **Teacher training and knowledge**

   - Initial teacher training needs to include culture and cultural awareness, cognitive and language development and, specific second language teaching and learning strategies.

   - There needs to be wider opportunities for CPD for teachers, concerning EAL teaching strategies and EAL assessment

   - Teachers themselves need to have a better understanding of the English language from both initial and CPD training.

2. **Para-professional training and knowledge**

   - Training of BLAs needs to reach a secure level 3 and, should include, a greater emphasis on English language skills, classroom management, managing children’s behaviour, culture and cultural awareness and, successful team work.

   - In-service training is needed for BLAs to address areas of weakness.
3. **Curriculum content**

- Specific curriculum guidance that distinguishes between language learning and EAL language learning, special needs and, curriculum subject content is urgently needed.

- The introduction of ‘communication’ to be incorporated into all lessons.

- The concept of play-based learning should be extended to the end of KS1.

4. **Curriculum delivery and assessment**

- Specific teaching roles need to be developed whereby a curriculum specialist in English and EAL specialist work in partnership.

- Bilingual education to be facilitated by a specific EAL teacher.

- Assessment should addresses the difference between EAL and English achievement.

- A more sensitive response to L2 children should be put into practice such as, separate and/or additional English lessons in line with their individual requirements.

5. **Specific support for language development**

- Adoption of the BLAST programme.

- Introduction of Makton for communication with L2 learners.

- The pairing of infant L2s and juniorsL2s.

- Sufficient language support is needed for all children.
6. **Parental involvement**

- English language classes for parents; including classes where parents can learn alongside their children, fast-track language classes and, talking-partners where L2 parents can converse with L1 parents.

- Lessons in reading and writing for parents to run in conjunction with children’s learning

- Strong parent-teacher associations

- A clear policy on home visits

7. **Wider community support networks**

- Better links between out-of-school classes and in-school classes