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**The Perceived Influences of Child-related and Situational/Systemic
Factors on EAL Learners**

By

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AEN	Additional Educational Needs
BERA	British Educational Research Association
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CLG	Communities and Local Government
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EMAG	Ethnic and Minority Achievement Grant
EMLAS	Ethnic Minority Language and Achievement Services
ESL/E2L	English as a Second Language
FSM	Free School Meal
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
IoE	Institute of Education
INSET	In-service training
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
IT	Information Technology
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
ITTE	Initial Teacher Training Education
KS1	Key Stage One
KS2	Key Stage Two
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LILAC	Language in Learning Across the Curriculum
NALDIC	National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum
NASSEA	Northern Association of Support Services for Equality and Achievement
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Woman Teachers
NLS	National Literacy Strategy
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NUT	National Union for Teachers
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PNS	Primary National Strategy

QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SATs	Standard Assessment Tests
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SLI	Specific Language Impairment
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TA	Teaching Assistant
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
Y6	Year Six

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DECLARATION

This thesis is based on research conducted by the author between October, 2009 and August, 2014. Therefore, I declare that all parts of the thesis constitute original contribution to the field. However, throughout my doctoral journey I have published the following research papers:

- Shaheen, L. (2011/2012) “The Academic Achievement of Y6 Pupils with EAL: Child-related and Situational Factors” in *NALDIC Quarterly* 9.2, Winter 2011/21012, ISSN 1751-2182.
- Shaheen, L. (2012) “Literacy Skills of Year Six pupils with English as an additional language: child-related and situational factors” in Espinoza, R. & Kambouri, M., (ed.) *Working papers of the warwick institute of education graduate association* (WIEGA).
- Shaheen, L. (2012) “Reaction to Assessing Teachers’ Organisational Learning Resources in the Context of Positive Organisational Behaviour” in Espinoza, R. & Kambouri, M., (ed.) *Working papers of the warwick institute of education graduate association* (WIEGA).

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on English as an Additional Language (EAL) children's learning and language development. The research was carried out in three primary schools in Coventry in England, with a particular focus on year six (Y6) children with EAL. Through a case study approach, two phases of research were employed: the preliminary phase and the main phase. Via the preliminary phase, an exploration of EAL provision and practice was achieved, and decisions were made on the selection of methods and the recruitment of participants by using unstructured observations. By using a mixed method approach in the main phase, qualitative and quantitative data were collected to examine perceptions of EAL children, parents and school practitioners in terms of the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL learners.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems, namely the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem were used to structure the thesis along four major sections: child-related factors, the schools' organisational structures of EAL, the wider social and cultural context of EAL and the policy context. The research has made a substantial contribution to knowledge in EAL by arguing that an ecological perspective is necessary to understand EAL children's needs and to examine perceptions about factors influencing their learning and language development. Through the ecological perspective, it has become evident that gaps and inconsistencies in EAL exist at a number of systems, and that child-related and situational/systemic factors interact, overlap and complement each other, and neither perceptions of child-related nor of situational/systemic factors are sufficient on their own, but rather, a combination of both is necessary to explore the contributory influences on EAL children's learning.

A major contribution that emerged from the study was highlighting different perspectives emerged from different participants and methods which enabled a critical perspective on the participants' contributions and the identification of different contradictions and inconsistencies in EAL policy, practice and provision. Specifically, the study uncovered different areas of discrepancies across perspectives on several issues such as the use of first language, EAL children's cultural values, the distinction between EAL and SEN, inclusion and equality issues and the use of EAL materials and resources.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

The presence of non-English speaking population in England has been historically linked to the arrival of minority ethnic immigrants after the Second World War in response to the country's need for labour. Over the decades, the number of minority ethnic people has consistently increased to include political refugees and asylum seekers and immigrants from Eastern Europe. Other people of minority ethnic heritage came to England for the purpose of study or work. Combined with the increasing number of minority ethnic population, culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms has become a fundamental feature of British schools and the teaching of English as an Additional Language (EAL) to minority ethnic children has generated debates amongst policy makers and educationalists. These debates did not arise in a vacuum, since the needs of bilingual children were diverse and complex at all levels and in varying degrees. Fundamental features underpinning these debates were primarily concerned with how to teach EAL children and how to improve their language acquisition and capacity to learn. While governmental policies and initiatives were addressed at the national and local levels to support EAL children's learning, some gaps in (EAL) children's learning remained of major concern, and this triggered further research to explore perceptions about multiple factors associated with EAL children's learning.

1.1 Historical background of EAL policy, practice and provision

In England, there has been a consistent increase in the number of EAL pupils in recent years. According to statistics, 12.8% of the whole school population are regarded as learners of EAL. Of this number, 15 % of EAL learners are in primary schools, 11% in secondary schools and 10% in special schools (Annual School Census, 2009 cited in Mallows and Mehmedbegovic, 2010). In combination with the increasing number of EAL pupils, research has shown that the distribution of minority ethnic groups varies across different LEAs in England (Demie, 2011; Graf, 2011). For example, the percentage of EAL pupils in the South West of England is 4.3%, compared to 52% in inner London (DfE, 2011 in Demie, 2011).

In the light of the number of EAL children, policy makers in different educational contexts have acknowledged the persistent need to revisit educational policies and legislation to meet the changing needs of an EAL population. There have been gradual advances and shifts in educational policies affecting EAL pupils over the last years to assist EAL pupils attain equality of education opportunity and adequate proficiency in English to access the curriculum and progress successfully in schools.

EAL pupils' needs were first recognised in the 1960s, when the government introduced Section 11 of the Local Government Act, which provided additional funding for the teaching of English to bilingual pupils in separate language centres (Hall, 1995; Howard, 2007; Franson, 1999; Leung, 2001). During this period; however, language was taught by adopting a structured approach to learning, without emphasis on the communicative role of language in different social contexts (Franson, 1999). During the same period, the Plowden report (DES, 1967) drew

attention to the importance of overcoming language barriers in bilingual children and meeting their needs; however, the report was not explicit regarding the teaching practices and classroom strategies that could be used for teaching these children:

Immigrant children who arrive later in their school life have much greater problems. They need to learn a new language after the patterns and often the written forms of their own language have been thoroughly mastered. This calls for special techniques and materials and poses problems to which little research has been directed. (DES, 1967:71)

In the 1970s, school practitioners working with bilingual children expressed their concerns about the inappropriateness of language centres in responding to bilingual pupils' cultural, social and linguistic needs (Franson, 1999), as these children were "discriminated against in their allocation to separate or special educational provision" (Hall, 1995:16).

With the publishing of the Bullock Report in 1975, some issues in the education of bilingual children became further recognised, including the emphasis on the relationship between language and different school subjects and the importance of paying particular attention to the part teachers and language specialists play to enhance bilingual children's learning:

The great majority of the children, born here or brought from overseas, have a big adjustment to make when entering school. For most of them this adjustment includes a linguistic factor, either that of learning English as a new language or of learning Standard English as a new dialect. (DES, 1975:284)

The messages and recommendations from the Plowden Report (DES, 1967) and the Bullock Report (DES, 1975) constituted an important base for later shifts and changes in the overall picture of EAL children's learning. For instance, the Bullock Report was described as a "transitional point" (Leung, 2001:40) because of its

emphasis on integrating language into the curriculum and the role of EAL specialists within schools.

With an increasing awareness and understanding of bilingual pupils' needs, educational policies affecting bilingual education have moved from withdrawal and exclusion to mainstreaming and integration in the 1980s. The Swann Report (DES, 1985:5 and 324) has explicitly acknowledged the importance of "social integration of ethnic minority communities" and ascertained the principle "education for all", regardless of pupils' linguistic and cultural background (cited in Leung, 2001:40). The principles articulated in the Swann report were reflected in practice and as a result EAL pupils were placed in mainstream classrooms with other children, with more emphasis on the communicative role of language (Franson, 1999).

During the 1980s, there was a recognition that racist attitudes towards bilingual pupils should be diminished (Hall,1995) through the provision of appropriate language support by the language support teachers whose main roles involved providing advice and knowledge of other cultures and languages and the building of awareness of discrimination and bullying that bilingual children may experience in mainstream schools.

During the last two decades, educational policies have given more control to schools in meeting EAL children's needs and removing gaps in their learning. The new policies required schools to engage more deeply with the meaning of inclusion, equal opportunities and equality, and to be more effective in their EAL provision by addressing EAL pupils' needs as a priority. Of great importance was the introducing the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) in 1999, which aimed to tackle

underachievement in bilingual pupils and place responsibility for their achievement on schools (Graf, 2011; Howard, 2007).

At the start of the 21st century in Britain, there has been an expansion of governmental initiatives and strategies (e.g. Aiming High DfES, 2003; Every Child Matters DfES, 2004; Every Parent Matters DfES, 2007), which stressed the need for overcoming barriers to minority ethnic children's learning and teaching English and meeting the curriculum needs, while valuing other languages and cultures in schools. There was also greater clarity and specification of language support teachers' roles and responsibilities (Creese, 2005; Graf, 2011) to provide focused language input for EAL learners.

Whilst educational policies have been successful in making positive changes in EAL i.e., entitlement for extra funding, they failed to bring about improvements in some aspects of EAL. For instance, Tickly et al. (2005) argued that the EMAG failed to close the gaps in attainment between minority ethnic children and White British children. Debates about the shortcomings in educational policies affecting EAL pupils continued unabated (Andrews, 2009; Butcher et al., 2007; Creese, 2005, 2010; Franson, 1999; Institute of Education and TDA, 2009; OFSTED, 2003). Creese (2010:99) explicitly acknowledged that "there is no policy" that equates language and curriculum content to meet EAL pupils' needs, and argued that acquiring a new language cannot be achieved merely through inclusion. As Creese (2010:99) pointed out:

By policy, I mean an officially endorsed body of classroom materials, resources, and pedagogies for the teaching of the curriculum at different stages of English language development.

Similarly, Amniana and Gadour (2007) argue that EAL children's needs cannot be solely met by accessing the same curriculum and resources, and that the potential to achieve equal opportunities has been hindered by some barriers. Therefore, it may be argued that although educational policies affecting EAL practice and provision have been abundant in content, the actual implementation of these policies appeared to be problematic. This is mainly due to the lack of particular policies for EAL, since EAL has been recognised as "part of a wider educational and social policy framework" (Leung, 2001:38). Moreover, it is not obvious in the policies what would constitute effective EAL practice and provision for several features of EAL children's learning.

1.2 Definition of English as an Additional Language

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is the predominant term used in British schools since the 1990s (Demie, 2011) to refer to bilingual children. According to Cortazzi and Jin (2007:646), EAL children are those children "who as recent migrant arrivals or longer-term residents speak another language as a first or dominant language and whose use of English is not at the same level as those using English as a first language". The definition draws particular attention to the residence status of EAL pupils who may come from newly arrived families, or second or third generation families. Moreover, this definition recognises the inadequacy in English as compared with the English of native speakers.

Other studies have referred to EAL pupils as "pupils who live in two or more languages, who have access to, or need to use, two or more languages at home and at school" (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2011:1). The definition does not involve

reference to fluency in both languages; rather, there is an explicit focus on the bilingual dimension of EAL learners in terms of speaking two or more languages at home and school.

Several terms, such as English as a Second Language (ESL/E2L), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP), were used in parallel with English as an Additional Language in research conducted in American, Australian and Canadian contexts (Cummins, 1984, 1996; Cummins and Swain, 1986). Although these terms are similar to EAL in their reference to bilingual pupils in general, they cannot be used interchangeably with EAL, because of the implication that EAL pupils need “language support and particular help with using English to access the curriculum at least for a while” (Cortazzi and Jin, 2007:646). Further, the term ESL/E2L is restrictive in nature, because for many pupils English might be a third or a fourth language, while ESL/E2L is confined to speaking two languages: the first language and the second language (Edwards, 1998).

Edwards (1998) contends that EAL as a term carries two positive connotations: firstly, the recognition that English is an additional language implies valuing bilingualism and valuing a child’s first language. Secondly, a lack of focus on the number of languages the EAL child speaks since the EAL child might be bilingual (speaking two languages), trilingual (speaking three languages) or multilingual (speaking many languages).

Further, a distinction has been made between the terms EAL and “bilingual” (DfES, 2006a:23): EAL refers to people who speak two or more languages and “are adding English to their repertoire”, while bilingual refers to people who have access to

more than one language in different settings such as home and school. Nevertheless, the term “bilingual” has been criticised for its inappropriateness in including newly arrived children who join schools with no English, and who only speak a first language (Edwards, 1998).

In England, there is variability in the terms used to refer to EAL children in governmental and policy documents ranging from EAL, bilingual or minority ethnic children. However, in statistical documents such as the national census, EAL children were referred to as “pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English” (Ainscow et al., 2007).

Leung (2001:33) argued that EAL has a “disciplinary identity”, in that the researcher in the EAL field requires knowledge from different fields of social and educational sciences (e.g. education, ethnic studies, literacy, sociology and applied linguistics).

Agreeing with this view, Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) commented:

It is multidisciplinary and problem oriented, and forces the researcher to familiarise herself with many disciplines, in addition to her original one (s), and to ponder over the relationship between the definitions of social reality inherent in different disciplines. (Cited in Skutnabb-Kangas and Cummins (Ed), 1988:9)

In many respects, EAL can be seen as an umbrella term to refer to children who “learn a new language, while learning through the medium of that new language” (Frederickson and Cline, 2009:347). Other features, such as the child’s proficiency in his/her first language or the additional language, are not important parameters in the EAL definition adopted for this study.

1.3 Additional language learning and development

Whilst having a high number of EAL children is a common feature of British schools today, schools are faced with the challenges of teaching EAL children to meet the demands of the curriculum. In order to facilitate the teaching and learning process, school practitioners at different levels need to be aware of the key principles of additional language learning and language acquisition.

While language is central to children's learning, in the case of EAL children, it is clearly crucial. Research into the acquisition of an additional language has shown that Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), which refers to playground and street language, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which refers to the academic language needed to access the curriculum, are two important phases of learning an additional language (Cummins, 1984). Research has also shown that EAL children take up to two years to learn (BICS), but that they take from five to seven years to develop (CALP) (Cummins, 1984; Demie and Strand, 2006).

Cummins (1984) argued that normally, EAL children do not struggle with learning BICS; however, they actually need long time to acquire CALP to access the curriculum and make progress in their learning. More recently, and in parallel with Cummins' findings, Harper and colleagues (2010:75) argued that EAL children can "acquire English naturalistically through social interaction" whereas the big challenge is developing the academic skills required to access the curriculum. This means that EAL children may learn spoken English quickly, but they may struggle to

learn academic English, and this may hinder their potential to learn and acquire language skills.

Communication is regarded as a crucial part of learning an additional language. This is normally developed through social interaction with people in different settings and contexts (Frederickson and Cline, 2009; Issa and Ozturk, 2008). Frederickson and Cline (2009:240) argued that in order to achieve effective communication and full proficiency in the additional language, EAL children need to master five types of competency: 1) competence in phonology and syntax which refers to the sounds, forms and structures of language, 2) competence in semantics, which refers to the vocabulary and meanings of words, 3) pragmatic competence, which refers to the way people use the language and the social conventions that determine the way people address different forms of language, 4) conversational competence, which refers to the ability to use different types of conversation to suit different audiences, and 5) sociolinguistic competence which refers to the use of different forms of language according to different social and cultural contexts.

It is important to recognise that EAL pupils may struggle to learn one or more of these competencies (Frederickson and Cline, 2009). It is also necessary to take account of the individual differences amongst EAL children, considering that while some EAL learners may have difficulties in mastering some or all of these competencies, others may learn them quickly. Frederickson and Cline (2009) argued that lexical and syntactic differences i.e., grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure between child's first language and English and a lack of child's competence

in the first language may act as barriers to learning one or more of these five competencies.

The EAL child is regarded as “the sum of two monolinguals” (Frederickson and Cline, 2009:248), because he or she can encompass knowledge of two languages and two linguistic systems. This feature enables EAL children to switch between two languages easily depending on the situation and the speaker regardless the mastery of one or both languages. As Frederickson and Cline (2009:248) commented:

They switch between languages flexibly to meet the needs with whom they are talking or to convey emphasis or intimacy or private meanings when talking to members of their own bilingual language community.

EAL children are not a homogenous group of learners (Cortazzi and Jin, 2007; Graf, 2011; Hartas, 2005), but vary in terms of the time they need to acquire the additional language (Demie, 2011). For instance, Demie (2011) found that pupils of African heritage develop full proficiency in English in a shorter time, as compared with pupils from other countries. This may be attributed to historical reasons, since African communities have more exposure to English since the British empire. Further, the length of time required to learn English can be attributed to a combination of factors such as child’s age, fluency in first language, cultural affiliation to the English language and home literacy support. Moreover, research has shown that a silent period that may last for several months is normal in the learning of an additional language (Graf, 2011; Hall, 1995).

The facts and findings explored in this section about EAL children’s learning need to be embedded within the scope of the curriculum and teachers’ targets. This may

contribute to the effectiveness of teaching and EAL children's progress. Issa and Ozturk (2008:35) pointed out,

It is therefore our duty as teachers to ensure that we provide ample opportunities for children to use their powerful tools of expression so that they, too, can 'really express' what they feel inside, what they know and their lived and shared experience.

1.4 Overview of the contributory factors to EAL children's learning

Assumptions that EAL pupils' learning is hindered by deficits rooted in the EAL children themselves, such as having learning difficulties or low Intelligence Quotient (IQ) were common in old debates in the US literature (Cummins, 1984). Cummins (1984) argued that in the past, bilingualism was considered by school practitioners as a deficit and as an obstacle to children's learning. Nevertheless, these assumptions have been denied by research, which argued that learning English in addition to children's first language can exert a positive influence on child's general learning and can support the additional language development (Cummins, 2000; Frederickson and Cline, 2009; Graf, 2011; Issa and Ozturk, 2008; Kenner et al., 2007; Thomas and Collier, 2002). Kenner et al. (2007) argued that a child's first language is important in enhancing EAL children's multicultural identity; enhancing skills used in conceptual transfer between languages; and developing a metalinguistic awareness, which is built on a range of languages and linguistic skills.

Furthermore, a child's first language can facilitate "more fluent and creative thinking" (Baker, 2002, cited in Issa and Ozturk, 2008). Built on these important conclusions, research has recommended that the role of first language should extend everyday communication and practice to cognitive development and thinking (Issa and Ozturk, 2008).

Other child-related factors, such as lack of language skills in the additional language i.e. lack of reading comprehension and limited vocabulary knowledge would hinder children's progress and result in difficulties of approaching the learning tasks successfully (Burgoyne et al., 2011; Cameron and Besser, 2004; Hutchinson et al., 2003). In reflecting on this, Issa and Ozturk (2008:3) indicated that a lack of language skills in the additional language should not be perceived negatively by teachers as a "learning difficulty" or a "deficit model", since such perceptions may have negative consequences on EAL learners, such as grouping EAL children with SEN children.

Although child-related factors constituted a crucial part of understanding EAL children's learning, further studies have explored factors within the school context. These included the attention teachers paid to EAL children's learning and language development (Gillborn, 1990; Wright, 1992), training courses for teachers to meet bilingual children' cultural and linguistic needs and the funding allocated for bilingual children and racism (Verma et al., 1995).

The exploration of factors influencing EAL children's learning has been extended to focus on the wider social and cultural context of EAL. For instance, it has been argued that socio-economic factors may influence EAL children's learning (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003; Demie et al., 2007; Demie, 2011; DfES, 2003; Tickly et al., 2005). The DfES (2003) has argued that parents' education and parental aspirations contribute to EAL children's learning, and Demie et al. (2007) found that low expectations, disrupted schooling experiences and lack of parents' knowledge of current educational system in England exert an influence on EAL children's learning. Moreover, gender has been cited as a contributing factor to EAL children's learning.

It has been found that girls are more likely to do better in schools and outperform boys across different minority ethnic groups in all key stages (Tickly et al., 2005).

In addition, other influences such as the role of policy in EAL learning (Creese, 2005; Issa and Ozturk, 2008; Leung, 2001) and schools' ethos (Issa and Ozturk, 2008) have been discussed in EAL studies. This overview of studies has provided insights into, and an exploration of the influences of EAL children's learning at different levels. It is evident from these studies that factors influencing EAL children's learning are complex and interrelated (Haque, 2000).

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of study was to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/ systemic factors on EAL pupils' learning and language development. For the purposes of this study, EAL was used as an umbrella term as it encompasses all bilingual, trilingual and multilingual pupils at different stages of language proficiency. The term 'EAL' has evolved throughout the study, to cover "a wide and increasingly diverse group of learners with different language knowledge and expertise and varying strengths and needs in their learning" (Conteh et al., 2008:224). For consistency, EAL has mainly been used throughout the thesis, while the terms bilingual and minority ethnic pupils have been used when necessary.

A key principle in this study is that all EAL pupils come from minority ethnic groups (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003), but not all pupils from minority ethnic groups are classed as EAL learners because such pupils speak English as their first language, and do not use their native language. In England, minority ethnic is officially defined as people who:

Did not identify themselves or their children as white [referring to children who come from a White British background in particular] when taking part in the 2001 census of population, or in the annual censuses of schools in England. (DfES, 2004:4)

Given the differences and variations in educational policy, EAL practice and provision and terminology used to refer to EAL pupils in different parts of the UK (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), the main focus in the study was on research conducted, policies implemented and statistics based in England.

1.6 Rationale for the study

My interest in this research area emerged from my previous experiences as a bilingual interpreter working with minority ethnic parents and children, and as a mother of three children speaking English as an additional language. I have been working as a representative member for the past four years at the Children, Learning and Young People Directorate at Coventry City Council. My role involved representing minority ethnic parents' concerns and opinions regarding different services in Coventry. At the same time as I had these personal and professional experiences, I then noticed that language issues formed the most important part of discussions by schools' leaders and services' managers. The centrality of language in children's learning and well-being became apparent, and thus, formed the base of my study. I then started to review the relevant literature about EAL pupils and minority ethnic communities, so as to map existing knowledge about EAL and to identify existing research gaps in the field.

1.7 Research questions

In this study, the perceptions of school staff, parents and EAL children about the influences of child-related and situational/systematic factors on EAL pupils' learning

and language development were explored. The research questions are the “abstract and conceptual” questions researchers “propose to answer through data collection” (Hennink et al., 2011:33-34). How research questions are shaped depends on the nature of the research inquiry (Cohen et al., 2011) and “fitness for purpose” (Gleeson, 2010:85).

Punch (2009) has identified two key approaches to developing research questions. The first involves “working deductively”, in which the formulation of research questions moves from general to specific. The second way is “working inductively,” in which the direction of the research questions begins from specific questions to general questions. The current study has adopted a deductive approach, whereby wide concepts and definitions such as EAL and bilingualism have been used as a starting point. As a researcher, I found that many questions emerged and became expanded, and some particular questions were split into more focused questions.

The following research questions provided the focus of this study:

1. What are the perceived influences of child-related factors (e.g., language factors, special educational needs and social, emotional and behavioural factors) on EAL learners’ learning and language development?
2. What are the perceived influences of schools’ organisational structures (e.g., identification and assessment approaches, EAL workforce and workforce development, EAL pedagogy, teaching strategies and the curriculum and EAL infrastructure) on EAL learners’ learning and language development?

3. What are the perceived influences of minority ethnic parents' involvement on EAL children's learning and language development and the facilitative or hindering factors to parental involvement?
4. What are the perceived influences of educational policies on EAL learners' learning and language development?

1.8 Significance of the study

The study contributed to examining the perceived influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL learners. At the same time as different contributory factors to EAL children's learning have been found in the study, the findings revealed inconsistencies and gaps in EAL policy, practice and provision, including a lack of funding, confusion about EAL roles and responsibilities, and the absence of a nationally recognised assessment framework for EAL pupils. Furthermore, a major contribution emerged from the study was cross-examining different perspectives and discrepancies emerged from different data sources (e.g., interviews, classroom observations, policy documents) which enabled a critical perspective on the participants' contributions and the identification of different contradictions and inconsistencies in EAL pedagogy. Specifically, the study highlighted discrepancies across perspectives on several issues such as the use of first language, EAL children's cultural values and lifestyle, the distinction between EAL and SEN, inclusion and equality issues and the use of EAL materials and resources.

In addition, the findings showed examples of good practice with regard to EAL pedagogy, such as collaboration between the class teacher and EAL teacher.

1.9 Thesis structure

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic, and provides a historical background about EAL and definitions of the concept of EAL, leading to the research questions and the significance of the study. Chapter two introduces the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter three reviews the related literature in EAL. The bodies of literature reviewed are structured around two overarching themes: child-related and situational/systemic factors. Chapter four discusses the research design in terms of the context of the research, methodology, sampling, ethical issues and analysis approaches. An analysis of the data emerged from different methods was structured around two broad themes and introduced in chapters five and six. Chapter five provides an analysis of the data about child-related factors. Chapter six introduces the emerged results about situational systemic factors. Chapter seven discusses the findings. Chapter eight presents the conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

A conceptual framework has been developed for this study to represent the key concepts and their interrelationships. Many theories have been developed to express the relationship between social, cultural and environmental factors and a child's learning and behaviour. $B=f(P, E)$ is a formula developed by Lewin to show how behaviour is dependent on two factors: personal characteristics (P) and environmental factors (E) (cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2009:202). Bandura (1977) has argued that behaviour is dependent on continuous mutual interactions between behavioural, cognitive and environmental factors. In 1985, Kaufman et al. developed a model paralleling Lewin's formula, which they introduced mathematically by the formula $C=f(Lr, Es)$. In this formula, C stands for competence, L stands for learner, r stands for role, E stands for environment and s stands for setting. The model shows that a learner's academic and social competence is determined by their role in different environmental settings that are influenced by certain factors, such as socio-economic status and previous schooling experience.

2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological model

Based on Lewin and Bandura's findings, Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed an ecosystem approach which reveals how multiple influences shape a child's development. Bronfenbrenner (1979:3) has explained how the learner's development is based on "a set of nested structures, each contained inside the next like a set of Russian dolls". Within Bronfenbrenner's model, the relationships between different levels are interacting which means that the child influences and is

crucially influenced by different surrounding systems. Bronfenbrenner's model has been used to inform the research process by considering four interactive systems (i.e. the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem).

At the centre of Bronfenbrenner's model (Figure 2.1) is the child who is affected by interactions between overlapping systems. In the study, child-related factors (e.g. the EAL child's language needs, special educational needs and emotional, behavioural, social factors) were addressed within the centre of Bronfenbrenner's model. The first system in Bronfenbrenner's model is the microsystem, which introduces the immediate interpersonal interactions of the child's experiences with his/her family and school. The microsystem refers to "the complex of relations between the developing person and the environment in an immediate setting containing that person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977:514). In this study, school is the microsystem, which involves the EAL child as an active member and it has been found to be influential in its EAL provision, practice and policy and its organisational structures e.g. EAL pedagogy, the curriculum, EAL infrastructure and the EAL workforce.

The second system in Bronfenbrenner's model is the mesosystem, which comprises "the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005:80). In other words, the mesosystem is "a system of microsystems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977:515). For Bronfenbrenner, the stronger and more diverse the links amongst settings are, the more powerful the influence will be on children's development. Similarly, Muuss (2006) contends that the success of the mesosystem is highly dependent on the quality of interactions

and the strength of the interrelationships between the microsystems. In this study, the mesosystem was exemplified by home-school partnerships, determined by factors such as parents' language capacity and the schools' efforts to involve parents.

The third system in Bronfenbrenner's model is the exosystem, defined as "an extension of the mesosystem embracing other specific social structures, both formal and informal, that do not themselves contain the developing person, but impinge upon or encompass the immediate setting in which the person is found" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977:515). The exosystem here refers to the EAL child's community, in which cultural and socio-economic influences (e.g. cultural attitudes, role of community institutions) play an important role in the EAL child's learning and attitudes towards school.

Finally, the macrosystem is defined as a "societal blueprint for a particular culture or subculture" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005:81). The macrosystem is the overarching layer which envelopes and surrounds the microsystem, the mesosystem and the exosystem together with their characteristics, features, their interactions and their interrelating links (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). In relation to EAL pupils, the macrosystem does not have a direct influence on their learning; however, it encompasses the political, cultural and societal layers, including the implementation of schools policies such as policies on equality, inclusion and equal opportunities. As such, it exerts an indirect effect on children's life.

In considering the multi-faceted nature of the study, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model has been deemed to be appropriate for several reasons. Bronfenbrenner's

model enabled a detailed exploration of child-related and situational/ systemic factors, and structured the study according to four systems (i.e. the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem). With a more focused presentation of different themes within each system, Bronfenbrenner's model helped to minimize the interrelationship and complexities amongst different issues. A further useful aspect of the model was the development of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, in parallel with the development of the research questions, where the key concepts and the relationships between them were highlighted.

Furthermore, the appropriateness of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model arose from its inclusion of three key concepts of "process", "person" and "context" (Tudge et al., 2009). Within the "process" dimension, "the complex reciprocal interaction" (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998:996) between the EAL child and other surrounding situational/systemic influences (i.e. influences cited within school, community and educational policies) has been identified. Within the "person" context, the emphasis was on the EAL child *per se* and his/her individual characteristics and attributes. Within the "context" dimension, three major contexts were included: school, community and policy contexts.

2.2 Interactions in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model

The central notion of Bronfenbrenner's model is that a child's development affects, and is affected by interactions between the interrelated systems in his model. Bronfenbrenner (1994:38) argued that applying his model successfully may be achieved through a "more complex reciprocal interaction" between different systems, which should happen on a regular basis. This interactive feature has been

fulfilled in the study through mutual interaction between child-related and situational/systemic factors which occurred at four levels: child, school, community and policy.

As such, the EAL child is surrounded by multiple systems, ranging from the micro to the macro. The bigger context has been found to contain the smaller context, each influencing and being influenced by the other. Through the various perceptions explored in the study, it has been found that the EAL child is surrounded by school and home, and by the wider context of the interaction between home and school, which had an influence on the EAL child's learning. Home and school interaction expands to fit into the larger context of community. Different factors within the microsystem, the mesosystem and the exosystem expand and develop to fit into a larger societal and policy context, the macrosystem.

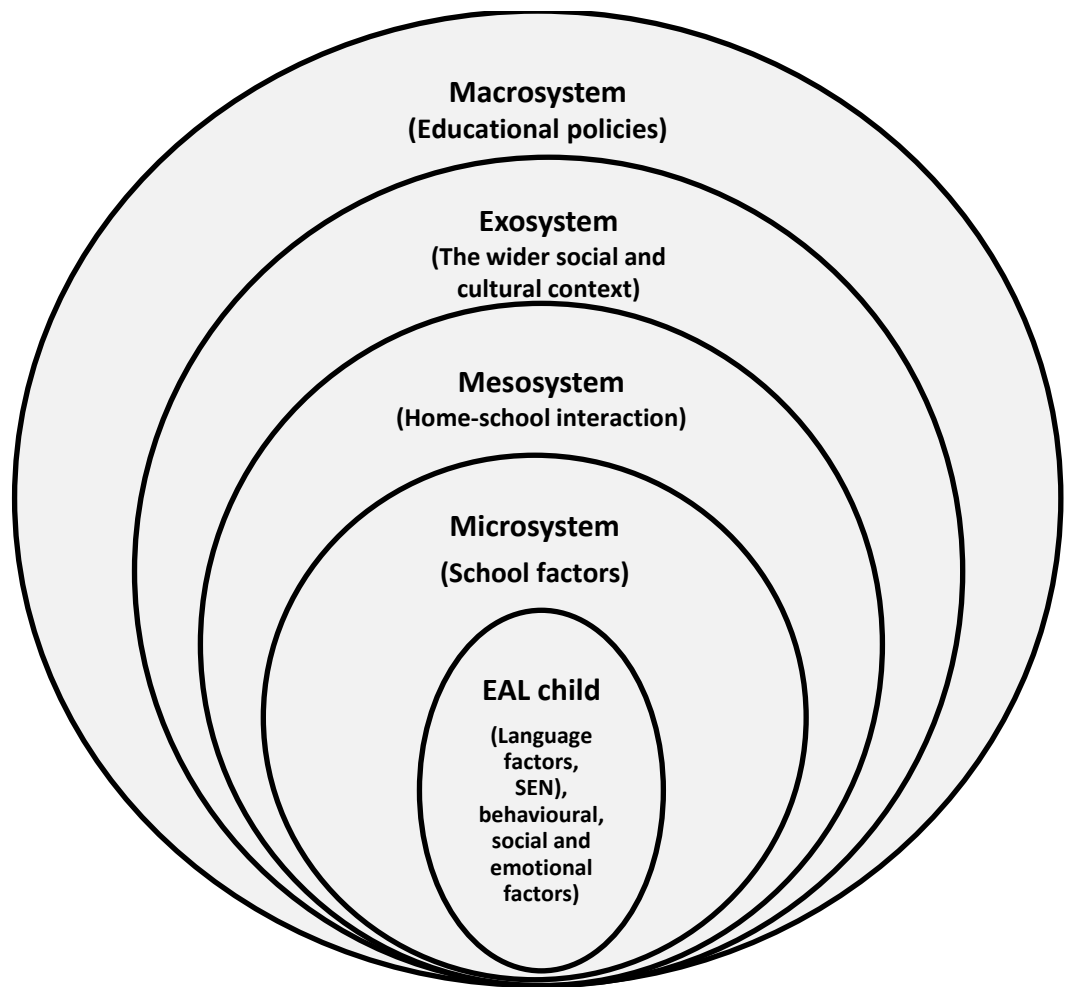


Figure 2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. (Source: adapted from Frederickson and Cline, 2009:204)

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to set the parameters of the study by reviewing research on EAL pupils and the contributory factors to their learning and language development. Bodies of literature were identified, and studies were categorised according to two overarching themes: child-related and situational/systemic factors. Studies on child-related factors have provided a clear and consistent picture of the linguistic, special educational needs and emotional, social and behavioural factors that influence EAL children's learning. The second section of the literature has explored situational/systemic factors, and focused on three key layers: the organisational structures of EAL (i.e. EAL workforce and workforce development, identification and assessment, EAL pedagogy and the curriculum), the wider social and cultural context of EAL (i.e. facilitative or hindering factors to parental participation) and the policy context that surrounds EAL.

Bodies of literature included in each layer of the review varied according to their sources as follows: firstly, professional and practice-oriented literature drawing on classroom practices and provision and is addressed to school practitioners; secondly, policy-oriented literature issued by officials from schools, LAs and governmental and national bodies and associations to guide practice and provision in schools; thirdly, research-oriented literature, written by academics and researchers in the EAL field reflected empirical research findings and theoretical understanding of EAL.

The combination of different sources of literature allowed a critical perspective on understanding different aspects of EAL to be adopted. It is worth mentioning that some studies could not be categorised or assigned accurately according to their sources, since they had mixed aims of clarifying policies, guiding practice and introducing the research findings.

The criteria for the selection of the literature were based on whether the studies were relevant to the current research area, and whether they provided sufficient evidence to support their conclusions. In order to meet these criteria, electronic database searches (e.g. Education Abstracts, Social Sciences Abstracts, ERIC and Google Scholar) were used. The majority of studies included in the current research were conducted in England, which means that the use of research carried out in Australia, Canada and America has been limited, due to differences in terminology and educational contexts. Most of the studies included date back to 2000; however, some older studies were important in exploring different theoretical perspectives about EAL children's learning and language development.

3.1 Child-related Factors

Whilst EAL pupils do not form a homogenous group in terms of their social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and proficiency in English, the literature has identified factors that are likely to exert an influence on their learning, as follows:

3.1.1 Language and literacy factors

There is a growing body of literature which focuses on language and literacy in EAL children. Like all children, the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) requires EAL children to be competent in the four literacy skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, which are perceived to be equally important in children's learning (DfEE, 1998:3).

Purewal and Simpson (2010:2) argued that literacy can be understood within the context of “learners’ ability to use the language effectively without specific consideration of their backgrounds or previous social and cultural experiences.” In practice, these definitions of literacy were beneficial because they guided school practitioners on how best to develop EAL children’s literacy skills in diverse schools.

Research has shown that there is a relationship between language proficiency and EAL pupils’ achievement and learning. For instance, Strand and Demie (2005) found that EAL pupils at an early stage of learning English had lower KS2 test results compared with pupils who are native speakers of English, and that EAL pupils who are fluent in English outperformed their monolingual peers in KS2 SATs tests.

Other research literature went beyond the general influence of language on EAL pupils’ learning, by exploring more specific linguistic skills such as reading comprehension skills and vocabulary knowledge (Burgoyne et al., 2011; Hutchinson et al., 2003; Purewal and Simpson, 2010). Hutchinson and colleagues (2003) have attributed the underachievement of EAL pupils to a limited faculty of English when joining schools. Bilingual and monolingual children were assessed using various measures of fluency in English, such as reading accuracy, listening comprehension, receptive and expressive vocabulary and grammar. The findings from Hutchinson’s et al. study found that both groups of learners were similar in terms of reading accuracy, but they were different in terms of vocabulary and reading comprehension. As Hutchinson et al. (2003:22) pointed out:

The English language related difficulties experienced by many children learning EAL may impact on both verbal and written curriculum learning.

In agreeing with Hutchinson's et al. study (2003), Burgoyne et al. (2011) have found that EAL pupils have high scores in reading accuracy and decoding skills, but have lower scores in vocabulary knowledge, although at times they outperform their monolingual peers on the same measures. Burgoyne et al. have also shown that the ability to decode a text is fundamental to reading comprehension for all children, irrespective of the stage of English language development. However, decoding text *per se* is not sufficient to understand text.

Further research was conducted to provide theoretical understandings and explanations for reading comprehension difficulties in EAL children within classrooms. One view is that reading comprehension is crucially linked to vocabulary knowledge, and considering that EAL pupils may experience difficulties with understanding oral and written vocabulary, they may struggle with understanding a text (Burgoyne et al., 2011; Graf, 2011; Hutchinson et al., 2003; Purewal and Simpson, 2010; Williams, 2004) and to write in different genres (Graf, 2011). A second view attributes EAL pupils' lack of comprehension skills to the absence of effective classroom strategies to develop their oral language skills (Burgoyne et al, 2011). A third view considers that EAL pupils' unfamiliarity with cultural references used in text hinders their understanding of the text (Frederickson and Cline, 2009; Hutchinson et al., 2003).

A consideration of research findings is central for school practitioners in linguistically diverse schools to develop EAL children's language and literacy skills. Leung (2012a:238) pointed out:

The curriculum guidance and professional advice offered to teachers are based on interpretation of theories and concepts that have reified selective concepts of additional language development.

Cummins' (1984) Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) theory is an example of how research studies have informed practice and provision and provided a basis for understanding the contribution of language and literacy factors to EAL children's learning. Cummins' work provided a theoretical understanding of how EAL children must learn a new language and the academic competence achieved through the medium of the new language (Creese, 2005; Frederickson and Cline, 2009). Gravelle (2005) explains that BICS is concerned with learning basic features of language such as basic comprehension, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, while CALP is concerned with the semantic and pragmatic aspects of the language and its various functions to analyse and interpret information acquired through language.

However, BICS and CALP theory has caused considerable controversy amongst scholars. Practice-oriented literature has criticised Cummins' BICS and CALP theory for being "oversimplified" (Scarcella, 2003), "deficit theory" (MacSwan, 2000) and for presenting academic language as "abstract" (Creese, 2005). In particular, Creese (2005:148) argued that Cummins' CALP is 'problematic' both 'theoretically' and 'pedagogically', because CALP focuses on academic proficiency as 'higher order reasoning skills' without presenting a view of academic proficiency as social skills to be acquired.

Leung (2012b:26) interrogated the extent to which BICS can be separated from CALP within classroom contexts: "Is it possible to keep everyday language and formal

academic expressions separate? Is teacher talk always encoded in formal academic language? Is informal language always used for social purposes only?”, pointing to the importance of considering the multiple facets and functions of language simultaneously.

In response to these criticisms and questions, Cummins (2008) summarised the different ways in which BICS and CALP theory has influenced policy, practice and provision within classroom contexts. Specifically, Cummins found that BICS and CALP distinction affects the amount of funding necessary to provide additional support for EAL learners, and the pedagogical support required for EAL children at different stages of language proficiency. Cummins modified his original conceptualisation of CALP to be defined as “the extent to which an individual has access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling” (cited in Valdes, 2004:121). Cummins (2008:10) commented:

The BICS/CALP distinction was not proposed as an overall theory of language proficiency but as a very specific conceptual distinction that has important implications for policy and practice. However, the distinction is likely to remain controversial, reflecting the fact that there is no cross-disciplinary consensus regarding the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to academic development.

In light of the criticisms of BICS and CALP theory, it may be argued that providing an open-ended definition of the linguistic needs that formal and informal interactions place on EAL children is challenging given the diverse theoretical and pedagogical implications of such interactions in practice.

Furthermore, Cummins’ framework (Figure 3.1) emphasises the importance of embedding “content” and “context” when teaching in multilingual classrooms (Cummins, 1984; Graf, 2011; Leung, 2000). The framework has four quadrants,

which are embedded in a two dimensional matrix of a horizontal and vertical axes. The horizontal axis represents a continuum from context embedded (i.e. where visual resources, materials, teaching strategies are used) to context reduced (i.e. where the learning is achieved by relying primarily on the content of the text and language use). Meanwhile, the vertical axis begins with cognitively demanding tasks (i.e. where reading is used to find some information) and ends with cognitively undemanding tasks (i.e. where teaching strategies such as copying is used).

The professional literature has argued that there are many examples where teachers can adopt Cummins' framework to meet EAL children's needs in classrooms due to the framework's dynamic character which suits EAL children's variability of needs in different school contexts (Leung, 2000). For example, if a newly arrived child with little English is showing progress in learning when involved in activities with simple cognitive demands and high contextual support, teachers may increase the cognitive complexity of these activities and reduce the contextual support. Graf (2011:38) argued that teaching EAL children:

Should progress from the lower left quadrant, where tasks are simple and there are plenty of contextual clues, to the upper right quadrant where tasks are challenging, there are few contextual clues beyond the task itself and where academic language is needed to cope with the cognitive demands.

However, some scholars found that the distinction between Cummins' cognitively demanding/undemanding and context embedded/reduced dimensions becomes implicit rather than explicit due to difficulties in applying them in practice. Cline and Frederickson (1996) argued that although the cognitive and contextual dimensions, as addressed in the framework are separable and unconnected, it is difficult to disentangle "cognitive" tasks from "contextual" ones in class. Furthermore,

Frederickson and Cline (2009) argued that teachers cannot analyse EAL children's cognitive strategies and learning styles nor can they provide information about children's cultural backgrounds through Cummins' framework.

In conclusion, research findings and theories (e.g. Cummins' theories) were approached as capable of improving EAL children's language and literacy skills. However, practitioners in the EAL field are sceptical about whether these theories were sufficient and practical in terms of translating into an effective practice.

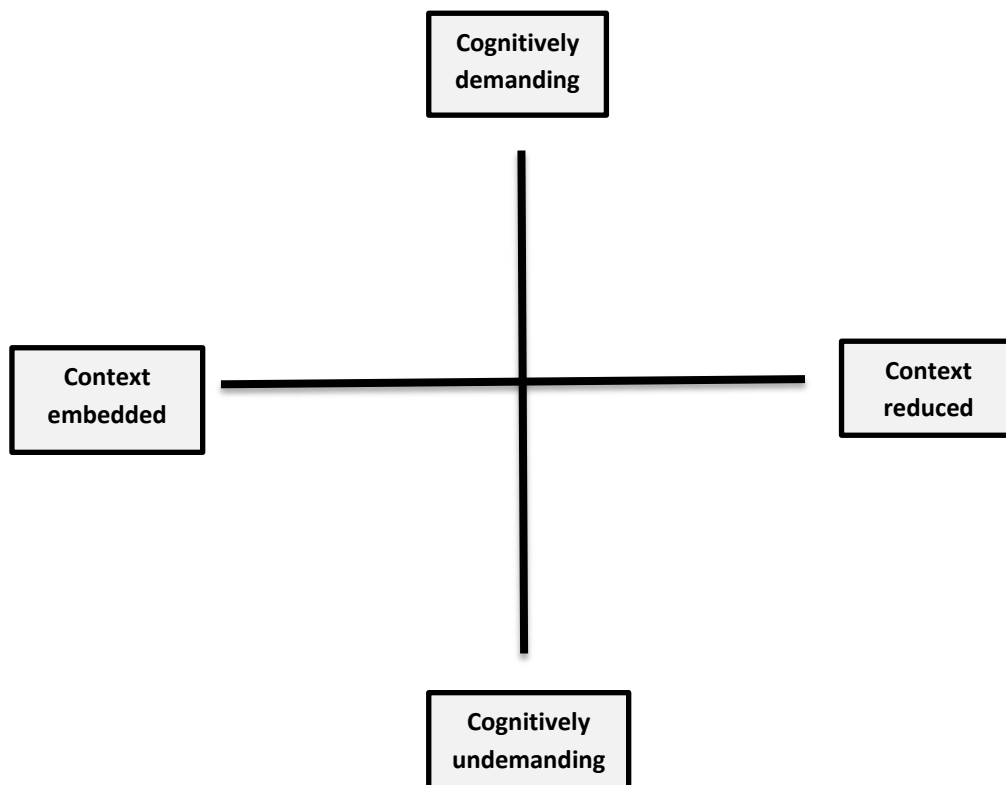


Figure 3.1 Cummins' (1984) framework

3.1.2 Special educational needs

In legal and policy terms, special educational needs (SEN) refers to children with particular learning difficulties and needs who require support from special educational services such as a SENCO to support their learning (Frederickson and

Cline, 2009). As a principle rule, SEN legislation (DfES, 2001a:6) recommended that “children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.”

Although the theoretical basis of the SEN legislation was welcomed by school practitioners, a number of difficulties were raised in practice. Confusion is likely to arise between EAL and SEN resulting in two potential mistakes regarding the identification process: the first mistake is that the EAL child’s lack of language may be treated as a learning difficulty; the second is that a learning difficulty may be ignored because of lack of language skills in EAL children. Both potential mistakes may cause a delay in supporting EAL children’s learning due to inappropriate provision, wrong grouping and a mismatch between child’s genuine cognitive needs and the learning tasks (Cline and Shamsi,2000; Frederickson and Cline, 2009).

There has been extensive debate about the extent to which practitioners in linguistically diverse schools can benefit from the SEN Code of Practice and a number of criticisms has been raised in professional literature. Frederickson and Cline (2009:41) criticised the way in which language difference in minority ethnic children was constructed in the SEN Code of Practice considering its negative implications with regard to low expectations of and discrimination against EAL children and provision of inappropriate support.

To ensure that the influence of the SEN Code of Practice on EAL practice and provision is effective and positive, it is important to discuss different aspects of EAL (e.g. assessment) in more detail and depth. Specifically, the fact that EAL children

may experience patterns of behaviour i.e., lack of concentration and difficulties of engaging in learning tasks, that might be interpreted as learning difficulties (Tangen and Spooner-Lane, 2008) should be given more attention in the SEN Code of Practice.

Research-oriented literature has examined the implications of the incorrect identification of SEN in EAL children in practice. In some cases, EAL children might be seen as incompetent or less able learners, and may receive “impoverished forms of learning” (Bourne, 2005: 8-9) and there is also the risk of low expectations of EAL children by their teachers (Cline and Shamsi, 2000). Some initial symptoms to guide referral for an SEN assessment include a child’s inability to learn basic number concepts, weakness in their first language, poor listening and attention skills and slow progress compared with other children (Milton Keynes Council, 2004b).

Since language, speech and communication are central elements to EAL children’s learning, research studies have focused on the distinction between EAL and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) (e.g. Lindsay et al., 2008); EAL and Special Language Needs (e.g. Hartas, 2005); EAL and Language Difficulties (e.g. Frederickson and Cline, 2009) and EAL and Speech, Language and Literacy Difficulties (Martin, 2000). Lindsay et al. (2008) have drawn a distinction between children with EAL and those with SLCN and argued that in the case of the EAL child, the language system develops normally, but the EAL child may be thought to have SLCN as a result of being in an environment where the home language is different from the school language.

Hartas (2005:86) acknowledged that the difference between EAL and SEN is “a grey area” and brought attention to the difference between “language needs” referring to the needs arising from lack of language and “special language needs” referring to special educational needs EAL children experience in their first language and English. However, these studies may be criticised for presenting an unclear distinction between EAL and other types of learning difficulties, and for including the inconsistent and imprecise use of terms referring to very similar types of learning difficulties with a confusing and interchangeable use of terms such as ‘need’ and ‘difficulty’.

Practice-oriented literature has pointed to many barriers and constraints in distinguishing EAL from learning difficulties within classroom and school context (Cline and Shamsi, 2000; Frederickson and Cline, 2009; Graf, 2011; Hall, 1995; Hartas, 2005; Martin, 2000; Milton Keynes Council, 2004b; Tangen and Spooner-Lane, 2008). Lack of background information about language development, difficulties in communicating with parents and carers of EAL pupils due to lack of language, and the shortage of appropriate assessment tools for EAL pupils have been cited as obstacles to identifying SEN in EAL children (Hartas, 2005). Additionally, “fragmentation” in EAL and SEN provision and absence of integration and collaboration between EAL and SEN services and expertise (Cline, 1997) and lack of awareness of child’s linguistic and cultural backgrounds and not using child’s first language in the assessment (Cline and Shamsi, 2000) can impede assessing EAL children who appear to have SEN.

Overall, studies on SEN and EAL have provided different professional and theoretical views on SEN and EAL. But these views are never clear-cut when put into practice, because in addition to the language barrier, there are still complexities (e.g. a lack of clarity regarding the terms used) school practitioners face in schools.

3.1.3 Behavioural, social and emotional factors

According to the SEN Code of Practice (2001a:87), children with behavioural and social difficulties are those:

Who are withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lack concentration; those with immature social skills; and those presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs.

The definition above represents the UK legislation on emotional and social difficulties which applies to children in general but there is no mention here of behavioural and social difficulties in EAL children in particular and their practical implications.

It is worth mentioning that there are many studies on behavioural, social and emotional needs/difficulties in children with language difficulties (e.g. Clair et al., 2011; Lindsay et al., 2007; Lundervold et al., 2008). However, less is known about the behavioural and social needs in EAL children. For example, Weare and Gray (2003) have focused on the behavioural, social and emotional aspects of learning, given their role in enhancing educational success and social integration, areas that are particularly important for newly arrived EAL children.

Furthermore, it has been argued (Demie et al., 2007; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007) that the presence of behavioural, social and emotional needs is most acute in minority ethnic children from refugee and asylum seeker and Traveller backgrounds.

This may be attributed to minority ethnic children being more likely to experience trauma, sadness and depression due to the language barrier and other legal, medical and psychological or political challenges they face as well as the perceived disparity between their own culture and the new culture (Demie et al., 2007; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007). Frederickson and Cline (2009) recommended that school practitioners working in diverse schools are expected to enhance their cultural knowledge, so they are able to accurately identify problematic behavioural and social manifestations in minority ethnic children.

It seems that the literature shown in this section makes very little contribution to explaining behavioural, social and emotional needs in EAL children. As such, more research is needed in this area to provide evidence on these children's social competence to inform practice.

3.2 Situational/Systemic Factors

Factors influencing EAL children's learning can also be understood within the context of situational/systemic influences which are external to the EAL child. This section consists of three major parts: the organisational structures of schools, the wider social and cultural context of EAL and the educational policies relevant to EAL provision.

3.2.1 Organisational structures of EAL

Organisational structures refer to schools' procedures and arrangements in place to support EAL children's learning and meet their language and academic needs. Organisational structures that are likely to affect EAL children's learning involve the following:

3.2.1.1 Identification and assessment

The necessity of providing a nationally standardised measure to assess proficiency of EAL pupils has been highlighted in the literature (Demie, 2011; Franson, 1999; Gravelle, 2003; Hall, 1995; Howard, 2007; QCA, 2000; Strand and Demie, 2005). Moreover, some research referred to the shortage of data available on stage of proficiency in English for EAL children (Demie, 2011).

Normally, an initial assessment is carried out in schools to assess EAL children who have recently arrived in England (Franson, 1999; Graf, 2011; Issa and Ozturk, 2008). The main purpose of the initial assessment is to check the child's general capacity of English. If translation services and background information on the child's previous linguistic and cultural experiences are available (Franson, 1999), the initial assessment may also ascertain the child's knowledge of their first language, and distinguish between language needs and SEN (Graf, 2011).

In the policy context, there are no statutory requirements on schools in relation to the content of the assessment used and its structure. This means that schools have the option of using different types of assessment to assess EAL children's proficiency. However, a lack of statutory legislation has presented practical difficulties for teachers in "understanding pupils' progress should a pupil moves from one part of the country to another" (Howard, 2007:295) and monitoring their progress nationally (*A Language in Common*, 2000:7).

In England, *A Language in Common: Assessing English as an Additional Language* (QCA, 2000) is the standard language assessment provided by the LAs to measure EAL pupils' proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Of note is that

although *A Language in Common* is basically designed for summative assessment, it can also be used for formative assessment (Graf, 2011). A key priority in *A Language in Common* is “to ensure that pupils’ attainment is appropriately linked to their full national curriculum entitlement” by applying the following principles in practice: recognising pupils’ potential and rewarding achievement; using different types of evidence and ensuring reliability of the assessment by obtaining similar results when repeating the assessment (QCA,2000:5-7).

Nevertheless, *A Language in Common* (2000) has been criticised in the professional literature because it does not resonate comfortably with school practitioners nor with EAL children (Demie and Strand, 2006; Gravelle, 2003; NALDIC, 2005; Strand and Demie, 2005). Demie and Strand (2006) argued that *A Language in Common* does not provide an accurate and systematic approach to assessing EAL children, and consequently cannot help teachers to meet the diverse needs of EAL pupils; nor can it inform teachers’ planning. Furthermore, the assessment does not take into account EAL pupils’ knowledge and skills (NALDIC, 2005) and their language needs (Strand and Demie, 2005). In particular, the fact that *A Language in Common* has stressed the importance of assessing EAL children’s proficiency in English on the same measures used for pupils whose first language is English has raised controversy amongst scholars (Demie, 2011).

Schools compensated for weaknesses in *A Language in Common* by using more effective language systems such as Hester’s four point scale of language proficiency, which involves four stages of English (i.e. new to English, familiar with English, confident as a user of English and fluent user of English) (Demie and Strand, 2006).

Hester's scale has proved to be effective within the classroom context, because in addition to its linguistic aspects (Graf, 2011), the scale can be used:

As a diagnostic tool to analyse needs for future teaching and...to provide baseline information for statistical purposes. (Hall, 1996:6 cited in Demie and Strand, 2006:219-220)

Moreover, two types of assessment, namely formative assessment and summative assessment are carried out in schools to assess EAL children throughout the year. These assessments are applicable to monolingual and bilingual children. Formative assessment, also known as assessment for learning, is concerned with the everyday assessment that teachers conduct to inform their daily planning and teaching (DfES, 2007). The Assessment Reform Group (1999) defines formative assessment as "the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning" (cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2009:168). This definition was considerably strengthened by Issa and Ozturk (2008) who emphasised the importance of seeking and interpreting evidence, since lack of language and confidence can have a negative influence on EAL children's response to the assessment.

Summative assessment is a summary of what learners have learned (DfES, 2007). In legal and policy contexts, EAL children should be assessed using Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), which are summative assessments, supplemented by the teacher assessment. In England, children sit SATs in English, Science and Maths at age 7, 11 and 14. The only exception to this rule is EAL pupils who have arrived recently to England and "need some time to adjust" to new school norms and routines (Kotler et al., 2001:404). Critics have highlighted the implications of inappropriateness of SATs, arguing that EAL children's performance in these tests

may be “impeded by linguistic factors” (Scott, 2007:44) which hinder EAL children’s ability to meet the curricula targets and lead to labelling them as failing (Rampton et al., 2001). SATs have also been criticised for being numeric in nature, which may undermine and deny bilingual pupils’ cultural and linguistic gifts and talents (Wrigley, 2000).

The professional literature on assessing EAL children has evolved, aiming at raising school practitioners’ awareness of how to use different assessment tools effectively. Such tools may include building on EAL children’s previous knowledge and skills and using targeted questioning and de-emphasising child’s weaknesses (Issa and Ozturk, 2008). Furthermore, Ofsted (1999) introduced guidance on the formative and summative assessments, advising that school practitioners should take account of two key points in relation to assessing EAL children: there are considerable differences in progress between EAL children and their monolingual peers; and also, there are variations in progress amongst EAL children across different subjects.

Undoubtly, there is controversy over the usefulness of different assessment approaches to assessing EAL children. An important dilemma for school practitioners has been the implementation of these approaches in practice, because some of these approaches do not resonate comfortably with school practitioners in their everyday practice. More importantly, the absence of a standardised initial assessment framework for EAL children represents one of the most insisting problems to overcome if the gaps in assessing EAL children are to be bridged.

3.2.1.2 EAL workforce

Human resources play a crucial role in meeting EAL children's needs and removing barriers to their learning (Creese, 2005; DfES, 2003; QCA, 2000; Sood and Mistry, 2011; TDA, 2009a and b). A case study, conducted by the Institute of Education in 2009, has identified four key priorities for the development of EAL workforce in schools in terms of (TDA, 2009a:2):equipping all non-specialist workforces with the background knowledge to teaching EAL pupils; training EAL specialists and identifying their roles; embedding collaborative working practices in schools by ensuring that specialist support reach all EAL learners; and monitoring the effectiveness of EAL provision in order to raise EAL children's achievement.

The four priorities above are consistent with further research-oriented literature (Hall, 1995; Wrigley, 2000), which argues that EAL children can achieve their full potential through the support and contribution of all members of staff in schools i.e. EAL specialists and non-specialists.

Research has shown that diverse staff can bring cultural and linguistic values to schools (Sood and Mistry, 2011), promote "good relationships and racial harmony" and remove barriers to learning (Demie et al., 2007:28). In particular, the presence of interpreters is important for schools with no staff who can speak the children's home language, because it supports teachers in gaining confidence and competence in meeting newly arrived children's needs (Ofsted, 2003), and is regarded as an invaluable strategy for facilitating EAL children's learning (Issa and Ozturk, 2008). However, research has found that there is shortage of the diverse workforce in schools, with high numbers of EAL pupils. For instance, between 2001 and 2002 the

proportion of minority ethnic teachers on initial teacher training was 7% only (2001-2002, statistics cited by DfES, 2003).

A central issue within the context of EAL workforce is the crucial role played by school leaders in responding to EAL children's needs, promoting a strong ethos to tackle racism, developing strategies to teach minority ethnic children, and enhancing inclusion in diverse schools (DfES, 2003; Ofsted, 1999; Sood and Mistry, 2011). Ofsted (1999:3) has summarised school leaders' roles in relation to EAL thus:

Evaluating the extent to which the specific needs of EAL pupils and their teaching requirements are recognised by the senior staff, particularly in developing policies and deploying resources effectively, with the result that progress and attainment can be shown to have improved.

Furthermore, EAL specialist staff e.g. EAL teachers play a crucial role in supporting EAL children (DfES, 2003; QCA, 2000) by reinforcing the partnership with classroom teachers and taking on more effective roles such as providing advice and training (DfES, 2003). However, recent studies refer to a lack of specialist EAL staff in schools (IoE and TDA, 2009; TDA, 2009a). According to statistics, between 2004 and 2008, the number of EAL pupils rose by 25% compared with the number of specialist EAL teachers, which increased by just 8% (TDA, 2009a).

Additionally, the DfES report (2003:18-29) has found that EAL teachers are "too often marginalised, and have little influence on the practice of their mainstream colleagues" and that less than 30% of EAL teachers had a qualification in EAL. This reflects the narrow conceptualisation of EAL in educational policies, and the fact that EAL as a profession and specialised discipline requires professional skills and knowledge. EAL as a profession may be improved through recognising EAL as a

structured career and promoting the status of EAL specialists by having an agreed national qualification in EAL (Mallows and Mehmedbegovic, 2010).

Several studies refer to the inconsistencies and confusion of EAL roles, and their responsibilities. The Institute of Education (IoE) and the TDA (2009) found that in some cases, EAL is managed by a TA or by SEN teams. It has also been found that most minority ethnic adults in schools work in support roles such as teaching assistants and multilingual assistants, rather than having teaching roles (DfES, 2003). In response to these gaps, Creese (2005:204) has strongly recommended that the roles of EAL teachers should be introduced within an “expertise” context rather than a “support” context, because “notions of support position EAL work negatively within the classroom”.

It seems that the different aspects of EAL workforce which have been touched on in this section have a contribution to EAL children’s learning and school practitioners’ performance. A combination of different elements is important for EAL workforce in schools: variability in roles and responsibilities, qualifications and effective relationships amongst staff. There is an interface between EAL practice, research and policies, since EAL practice is embedded within the dominant research framework and educational policies. Nonetheless, substantial changes in educational policies are needed to sort out the confusion over EAL roles and responsibilities.

3.2.1.3 EAL workforce development

Professional development opportunities are essential for staff working in diverse schools (Qualifying to Teach, TTA, 2002b), since these opportunities reinforce

teachers' knowledge of EAL pupils' attainment (DfES, 2003) and their emotional and psychological needs, in particular those children from asylum seeker backgrounds (Ofsted, 2003). It has also been found that development opportunities support staff with making the "links between in-school and out-of-school learning contexts" (Ma, 2008:248), and enhancing their awareness of EAL pupils' cultural backgrounds (Sood and Mistry, 2011).

Research has drawn attention to the role of teachers' expectations in improving EAL pupils' learning and language development (DfES, 2003; Hall, 2001; Haque, 2000; Howard, 2007; Ofsted, 2003; Sood and Mistry, 2011). In practice, teachers may have low and negative expectations of EAL children's academic potential (Gravelle, 2005; Haque, 2000) and may think that EAL pupils are not "bright or confident and unable to access the learning" (Sood and Mistry, 2011:207). Such expectations may emerge from teachers' perceptions about the pedagogic challenges they face in diverse schools, and may lead to the underachievement of EAL children (Foley, 2010; Farrell, 2005).

When teachers have low expectations of EAL children, Ofsted (2003:12) assert that head teachers in schools, with high numbers of EAL learners, have the responsibility for removing fears and uncertainties amongst staff working with EAL children; raising confidence in their ability to meet their needs; and "not seeing them as a problem". In legal terms, since 2002 the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards have required newly qualified teachers (NQT) to build high expectations of EAL children, be able to plan and manage lessons; and provide language support (DfES, 2003). Moreover, the DfES (2003) has acknowledged that teachers' performance

during the induction year should be monitored, assessed and supported to meet the needs of EAL children and to support their language acquisition.

There has been extensive debate about the quality of professional development opportunities provided for school practitioners in diverse schools and their relevance to school practice, and the extent to which educational policies can improve teacher education in relation to EAL. Policies affecting teacher education have been criticised for being “confused” (Butcher et al., 2007:498), since these policies failed to meet trainee teachers’ needs in relation to teaching EAL children.

Critics have argued that the structures and systems in place to monitor the impact of the training provided “remain unclear” (Sood and Mistry, 2011:212). This resulted in NQTs being “partially but not wholly prepared” for teaching EAL pupils due to shortage of training on assessing EAL children, raising their confidence to meet EAL children’s needs and teaching reading and writing to EAL children (Hall and Cajkler, 2008:357).

A central issue in this section has been the extent to which professional development opportunities are relevant to educational policies and classroom practice. School practitioners need more input on language learning, and this may affect how an additional language is taught in diverse schools. Educational policies need to give clear guidance to professional bodies about the quality and content of training provided.

3.2.1.4 The curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy

Since the 2000s, efforts have been made to reinforce language learning, through providing guidelines on how language and literacy skills should be incorporated

across different subjects (DfES, 2003; QCA, 2000) and how teachers' awareness of the role of language should be embedded in everyday teaching practice (Creese, 2005). Within the practice-oriented literature, there has been a recognition that "language objectives" should be brought "to the fore of subject content-driven lessons" (Brentnall, 2010:23) in order to create an effective learning environments for EAL children in diverse schools.

There has been a consistent policy direction to meet EAL children's needs in schools. For instance, the Primary National Strategy (PNS) issued three essential principles and guidelines on the EAL pedagogy in British schools: firstly, a child's first language plays an important role in the EAL child's learning, and bilingualism should be looked at as an asset. Secondly, the cognitive dimension of learning should be emphasised in the linguistic and contextual support offered. Thirdly, EAL children's language acquisition should be developed in line with academic and cognitive development (cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2009:347).

It is widely recognised that it would be necessary to meet EAL pupils' needs in mainstream classrooms, alongside other monolingual children (DfES, 2003; Hall, 2001; Sood and Mistry, 2011). Such a practice allows English to be "acquired in a subject-specific context and speeds up access to the curriculum" (DfES, 2003:29); contributes to EAL pupils' success (Hall, 2001; Sood and Mistry, 2011); and improves their social and communication skills (Sood and Mistry, 2011).

Nevertheless, critics have argued that placing EAL children in the mainstream classroom does not necessarily improve EAL children's linguistic, social and cognitive

skills since such a practice may give EAL pupils “equality of presence” but it does not ensure improvement in their learning and progress (Franson, 1999:70).

Cortazzi and Jin (2007) gave suggestions to school practitioners on how best to maximise EAL children’s capacity to learn and access the curriculum by embedding the following principles in their everyday practice: The first principle is concerned with “meaning” and “relevance”, in which the EAL child learns an additional language to express their own meanings and understand other people’s meanings by drawing links between their own meanings and the curriculum content. The second principle is concerned with applying “repetition” and “variance” strategies, by enriching EAL children’s learning with a variety of examples and giving them the opportunity to repeat. The third principle focused on simplifying the content of the curriculum with some complexity. The fourth principle stressed the importance of providing positive feedback for EAL pupils and encouraging them to take part in different learning activities. The fifth principle focused on scaffolding EAL children’s learning by adopting a variety of approaches, such as working in pairs or in groups, but with an appropriate level of independent learning. The sixth principle is concerned with developing literacy skills and illustrating meanings for EAL children.

Nevertheless, the Institute of Education (IoE) and the TDA (2009) argued that teachers cannot recognise the relationship between classroom strategies and EAL pupils’ progress and learning in schools. This has implications for the quality and effectiveness of teaching strategies provided, and the extent to which they match children’s needs.

3.2.1.5 EAL infrastructure

EAL infrastructure refers to basic facilities and resources which exist in schools to support children's learning and language development. At a classroom level, EAL materials (e.g. pictures) and resources (e.g. dual language books) act as supportive and useful aids for EAL children's learning (Graf, 2011). Graf (2011) suggested that EAL learners become more comfortable and confident in classrooms with supportive materials and resources, because they would be less dependent on adults and children in school. Further, Graf argued that the use of materials and resources will facilitate easier linkage to the curriculum content while acquiring a new language.

Practice-oriented literature has given suggestions to school practitioners on how best to use materials for EAL children. For instance, Issa and Ozturk (2008:24) recommended that schools should take into consideration a number of guidelines when selecting materials for EAL children: it is important "to identify stereotyping and bias in texts and remove such texts" and to contextualise materials used by drawing on children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds; any materials selected should support all literacy skills i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing in EAL children.

However, research has found that an effective use and provision of EAL resources and materials is complicated and inhibited by the diverse gaps in the EAL field and an absence of policies and pedagogical framework for EAL (Creese, 2010; Franson, 1999). For instance, the Institute of Education (IoE) and TDA (2009) identified gaps in materials used in schools for EAL children and found that there is an absence of resources and materials in place for advanced learners of EAL since most of the

materials addressed for newly arrived children focused entirely on their induction rather than their learning.

Meanwhile, as the EAL infrastructure plays a crucial role in improving EAL children's language skills, more collaboration needs to be achieved between policy, practice and research to ensure an effective use and provision of EAL resources and materials.

3.2.2 The wider social and cultural context of EAL

Parental involvement (e.g. attending parenting events, reading to children at home) is researched in the practice-oriented literature, with more attention given to the pedagogical implications of parental involvement in the classroom context and what their involvement can bring to schools, parents and children (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007; Vincent et al., 2003). It has been found that parental involvement reflects positively on schools' general performance and the quality of education they provide (Laroque et al., 2011) and can be used as an effective method to understand schools' communities and address "cultural disadvantage and inequality" (Hornby and Lafaele, 2011:44). At a classroom level, parental involvement can enhance teachers' planning and teaching targets in the light of parents' home notes and observations (Laroque et al., 2011).

Within the same context, parental involvement can bring benefits to parents, because they can develop positive attitudes towards schools; keep up-to-date with their children's learning; develop higher educational aspirations of their children; and enhance their understanding of schools' system and ethos (Laroque et al., 2011).

Recent research has paid particular attention to the role of minority ethnic parents in their children's education, and found barriers to their involvement (Demie et al., 2007; Hornby and Lafaele, 2011; Lall et al., 2004; Ma, 2008; Page and Whitting, 2007; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007). Minority ethnic parents were described in research literature as being "hard to reach", "uninvolved" (Cork, 2005; Crozier and Davies, 2007) and "ill equipped" (DfES 2006b:14) to take part in their children's education for several reasons. Minority ethnic parents may feel discouraged and marginalised in schools (Ma, 2008; Laroque et al., 2011) because of their limited capacity of English. In some cases, the language used by school practitioners may appear professional and academic and may cause parents to feel "intimated", which in turn may hinder their participation (Laroque et al., 2011:119). "Parents' fear and suspicion of the practitioner(s)" (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007:81) have also been cited as other obstacles to minority ethnic parents' participation.

In some cases, minority ethnic parents may underestimate their role in supporting their children's education (Payne, 2009) and may feel excluded from schools' cultures because of their low levels of education and the language barrier (Laroque et al., 2011). Hornby and Lafaele (2011:41) pointed out:

In general, minorities are less involved, less represented and less informed, and are less likely to have access to resources, as well as more likely to have problems associated with language, transport, communication and child care.

Poverty may be a factor impacting on minority ethnic parents' involvement. Household statistics show that 40 % of minority ethnic people in England live in poverty (Kenway and Plamer, 2007) and research has shown that poverty restricts minority ethnic parents' involvement in their children education (Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair,

2003). Furthermore, it has been found that low income parents from minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to suffer from higher levels of stress and depression which result in underachievement in their children (Demie, Lewis and McLean, 2007).

An explanation for minority ethnic parents' disengagement in their children's education is the potential clash between the values of Western society and parents' cultural values i.e. "visible and invisible cultural nuances" such as the way parents communicate or their costumes and norms (Laroque et al., 2011:120). Such differences may make parents feel "less comfortable" and "perceive prejudicial treatment or attitudes on the part of school", which can affect their potential to access resources and participate in events within the school (Lee and Bowen, 2006: 199). Within school contexts, teachers should not assume that they need to change parents' cultural values and beliefs, but to draw upon their cultural experiences to reduce "incompatibility" and "conflict" (Laroque et al., 2011:120) between parents' and schools' cultures.

The theory of "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti, 2005), aimed at removing cultural and linguistic barriers to parental involvement with EAL children's learning, can inform professional practice in multilingual diverse classrooms. Funds of knowledge refers to the "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, Gonzalez, 1992:133). Proponents of this theory accept that removing obstacles to parental participation within schools' context can be achieved by understanding culturally situated bodies of knowledge that parents

of EAL children have (Andrews and Yee, 2006; Conteh, 2012). This can be achieved by using “the existing flexibility within the curriculum” and drawing upon children’s previous social and cultural experiences and knowledge to inform classroom interactions (DfES, 2003:17).

Furthermore, critics assert that a successful implementation of theory of funds of knowledge can be achieved through schools’ efforts to establish a trusting and supportive relationship based on mutual respect with parents (Hornby and Lafaele, 2011; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007) and through home visits and cultural activities (Drury, 2007).

In conclusion, it seems that barriers to minority ethnic parents’ involvement may be overcome by translating theories (e.g. theory of funds of knowledge) into practice. There is also a need for more policies on how schools should engage with diverse cultures, identify the strengths that already exist in families and encourage genuine parental involvement in schools.

3.2.3 Educational policies

School practitioners in diverse schools rely on legislative considerations regarding pedagogical practices, as drawn from educational policies, to teach and support EAL children (Billig et al., 1988). A reference has been made, implicitly or explicitly, to EAL learning and teaching in educational policies written by officials from schools and LAs to either render various aspects of EAL practice and provision or to recommend improvements in relation to EAL. The majority of educational policies affecting EAL have taken the form of “government reports or guidance sponsored by

the national and local governments and published in their name” irrespective of the status of these policies having had “a statutory power or not” (Creese, 2005:29).

In the 2000 Ofsted guidance, EAL children were placed within “the different groups” list, which refers to groups who need particular attention in terms of their achievement (*Evaluating Educational Inclusion*, Ofsted, 2000:4). Moreover, the Ofsted report (2005) “*Could they do even better?*” has rendered various features of EAL practice and provision and criticised schools for not paying appropriate attention to the language needs of the advanced learners of EAL. Furthermore, other official reports such as the *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils* (DfES, 2003) and *Managing the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant* (Ofsted, 2004) have identified aspects of EAL that require improvement such as staffing and funding.

Policy documents have been crucial in clarifying the statutory requirements on schools to implement the principles of equality, inclusion and equal opportunities for all children. As a recent Ofsted inspection framework (2012:11) pointed out:

We know that in learning and skills provision, promotion and management of equality and diversity are important to learners’ success. Learners cannot achieve well unless individual needs are met, the provider is inclusive, and equality and diversity are promoted well.

The *Equality Act* (2010) was an example of how the policy literature guided practice in schools since it required schools to offer an equal treatment for people accessing their services, irrespective of their individual characteristics and to tackle harassment and discrimination amongst their populations. Furthermore, the *SEN Code of Practice* (DfES, 2001a) and *A Language in Common* (QCA, 2000) have given

suggestions to school practitioners on how best to assess EAL children, identify their needs and raise their attainment.

It is worth mentioning that EAL was not always constructed positively in educational policies. Indeed, policy documents introduced by the DfEE and QCA (1999) have been criticised for presenting a view of EAL as being “a barrier to learning.” Ainscow et al. (2007:10) argued that this view is problematic theoretically and pedagogically because it introduced EAL as a “deficit model” which may impact negatively on teachers’ expectations of EAL children.

Although there is a plethora of policy initiatives related to EAL pupils, more recently, policies focus on equality and diversity with an increasing focus on meeting individual needs. It appears that most policies do not necessarily focus on EAL *per se* and this may not provide sufficiently clear guidelines to practitioners as to how to support EAL children within shifting and increasingly complex notions of equality and diversity.

3.3 Strengths and gaps in the literature

In considering the complexity that surrounds EAL children’s learning, it has been useful to discuss studies on the various influences on EAL practice and provision by drawing upon three broad sources of the literature: practice-oriented literature, research-oriented literature and policy literature. The three literature strands have combined to understand the influences of various child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL children’s learning. It became evident that language factors permeate different bodies of the literature and relate to schools’ organisational structures, educational policies and children’s needs.

This is illustrated in the interplay between research, policy and practice and their relevance to EAL children's learning and language development and school practitioners' performance. But the relationship between research, policy and practice is not "a one-way street" (Frederickson and Cline, 2009:11) since researchers, policy makers and school practitioners "do not necessarily share the same interests, understandings and goals;" however, research findings from empirical works remain the most influential source which informs classroom practice and criticises policy (Leung, 2012a:222) in diverse schools. However, it seems that educational policies play a fairly limited role in guiding practice and research. This may be attributed to the fact that the majority of educational policies have adopted an all-encompassing approach to diversity, inclusion and equality which obscured policies' exact influence on EAL practice and resulted in a fragmented representation of EAL within policy context.

Occasionally, findings from different sources of the literature contradicted each other. For example, there has been extensive debate about Cummins' theories and their relevance to EAL practice and policy. While professional literature can be critiqued according to how it renders Cummins' theories as being impractical in practice, research literature defended criticisms of these theories by explaining their implementation in policy and practice. However, such a "critical dialogue" (Robinson, 1993: vii) between scholars is desirable to provide a critical perspective on understanding the complexity of EAL children's needs and to delineate the interplay between policy, practice and theory.

Another message from the literature was that EAL children, parents, and school practitioners were the key stakeholders in EAL, so if a combined system is to be created for improving EAL children's learning, it should take these three stakeholders into consideration.

Overall, the findings from studies reviewed in the literature have provided direction for current research by positioning the research topic within research, policy and practice contexts; guiding the direction and formulation of the research questions by clarifying key issues and gaps in previous research e.g. a lack of literature on behavioural, social and emotional factors; and informing appropriate methodological approaches for the study. Although qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods approaches have been used in studies in the literature, few studies addressed EAL children's policy, practice and provision within a detailed case study context, and triangulated the voices of different stakeholders in EAL (i.e. EAL children, school practitioners and parents).

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the context of the research, the participants, the research design and the methods. The ethical issues, the positionality of the researcher and approaches to the data analysis are also considered in this chapter.

4.1 The context of the research

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions about contributory factors to EAL learning and language development at a number of levels: the individual child, the schools' organisational structures, the wider social and cultural context of EAL and the policy context. Three Y6 classes in three Coventry primary schools formed the context for this research. The three schools are situated in three different areas of Coventry, which is the 12th largest city in England, with a population of 316,960 (Coventry City Council, 2012a). Coventry is a diverse city where minority ethnic groups form 33.4% of the whole city population (Coventry City Council, 2012a). In Coventry, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and Maths in KS2 results in 2011 is 71% (Coventry City Council, 2012b).

The schools in this study, all co-educational establishments, represented a large mixture of minorities, languages, cultures and religions, and shared three features: firstly, they were situated in areas of linguistic and ethnic diversity; secondly, the schools operated various forms of EAL provision, and thirdly, they were in a geographical area which was economically poor. Information accessed from schools' websites revealed that the percentage of pupils with EAL, with a SEN statement or

on School Action Plus, and pupils eligible for Free School Meals, were above the national average (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011).

In terms of KS2 results, the assessment league tables showed that all three schools' KS2 results in English and Maths were below the national average in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively, and that the schools attained below the national average in reading and writing in 2011 (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011). Background information about the three schools, accessed from OFSTED inspection reports and schools' websites, showed that the schools received pupils at different times during the academic year, and also had a high number of beginners in English.

4.1.1 School A

This was a co-educational, average sized primary school, with pupils aged 3 to 11. The school was situated "at the heart of a diverse community" (Ofsted, 2009:2) of significant social and economic disadvantage. The school's area was described as "the only one of the 18 wards in Coventry where non-whites form a majority of the population" (National Census, 2001). The school overlooked a main road, with many shops and restaurants which catered for minority Pakistani and Indian ethnic groups, who were the largest, predominantly established communities in the area.

As I walked through the school's main road, I noticed that Urdu, Mirpuri and Punjabi were the main languages spoken. Two mosques and one Sikh temple were located a few meters away from the school. Inside the school, the staff in the reception area were welcoming, with different welcoming posters and displays translated into different languages. The building of the school was old, with medium sized classrooms.

Almost all the children in the school came from an Asian background, and 20 languages were spoken in the school, and the majority of pupils joined the school at an early stage of learning English (Ofsted, 2009). In 2011, the total number of children in the school was 232. Of this number, the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language was 84.7%; the percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals was 26.7%, and the percentage of pupils with an SEN statement or on School Action Plus was 17.7% (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011). The number of Y6 pupils who were assessed against SATs was 29. Of this number, 38% attained Level 3 or below; 62% attained Level 4 or below, and 17% reached Level 5 (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011).

Ofsted (2009) reported that many children in the school needed to improve their literacy skills, in order to attain higher levels in the assessments, and that newly arrived children who entered the school throughout the year attained much less than the established children. Ofsted also showed that pupils with SEN progress well in reading and writing.

Ofsted (2009:2) indicated that the school was successful in meeting the needs of all children, irrespective of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and that the children “feel free from any form of discrimination”. The school had high expectations of all children, and the school’s motto was: “To aim for the moon and land among the stars” (Ofsted, 2009:2). The school had taken action to support bilingualism, employing growing number of bilingual TAs and teachers who supported the learning of children in various ways. The effective roles of staff at school A were due to the leadership of the head teacher, who: “Leads the school

well, with clear and high expectations of staff and pupils and a strong commitment to equal opportunities” (Ofsted, 2009:9).

The school’s curriculum was rich, and encouraged the children to engage in learning. Ofsted (2009:3) commented that “the curriculum provides a good balance between developing pupils’ language, literacy and numeracy skills”.

The school had good links with the community by establishing connections with the parents and increasing pupils’ awareness of issues about different faiths and cultures. According to parents’ questionnaires and interviews, 72% of the parents indicated that their children enjoyed school, and that most parents appreciated leadership and the way staff supported their children’s needs (Ofsted, 2009).

4.1.2 School B

This was a large, mixed community school with thirty-eight languages spoken in the school (Ofsted, 2011). The age range of children was 3-11 years. It was situated within the south east area of Coventry. The school’s area was socio-economically deprived, which comprised of a series of large council estate housing, bordered on one side by some privately owned housing. The school was considered by Ofsted, (2011:4), as providing “satisfactory education”. The school building, which was rebuilt and extended five years ago, was spacious, with wide corridors leading to large and bright classrooms. On visiting the school, an appreciation and awareness of cultural diversity was apparent, with many displays and posters around the schools in different languages and cultural references. The school’s website stated that the school did much to celebrate EAL pupils’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds through assemblies and cultural events.

The school had always had predominantly white British children, and it was also proud of its integration of minority ethnic children. Half of the school population are of White British origin, and around two fifths are Black or Black British African heritage (Ofsted, 2011:3).

A large number of minority ethnic children who joined the school were beginners in English, and came from refugee and asylum seeker families or EU immigrants who joined and left the school midway through the academic year. In 2011, 54 newly arrived children joined the school, and 43 left (Ofsted, 2011:4). A number of pupils belonged to other minority ethnic groups such as Polish, Russian and Latvian, and the proportion of pupils from second and third generation families was very small.

Performance tables (2011) show that the number of pupils on roll was 398; the percentage of pupils with SEN statement or on School Action Plus was 19.1%; the percentage of pupils with English not as first language was 44.3% and for FSM was 52.6%. In terms of SATs, the total number of pupils assessed in 2011 was 44 pupils. Of this number, 15 pupils belonged to a Black African heritage and 24 pupils were White British. The remaining number included different ethnicities, including 'any other white', 'any other mixed' and 'any other Asian'. Of the 44 Y6 pupils, 34% had achieved Level 3 or below; 63% had achieved Level 4 or above; 17% had achieved Level 5 or above, respectively. Ofsted (2011:4) acknowledged that minority ethnic pupils made satisfactory progress and attained below average because of the lack of writing skills and "the high number of pupils entering the school on a weekly basis, many of whom do not attend for long enough to benefit fully from the school's provision".

Ofsted (2011) reported that many improvements should have been made in spelling, punctuation and the ability to write long and advanced written texts. Pupils' writing had been described as being superficial, without elements of richness and complexity and without an effective use of figurative forms of language, such as metaphors.

Ofsted reports (2007, 2011) showed that equal opportunities, equality and inclusion were at the core of the school's everyday practices. These policies were reflected in meeting the needs of pupils from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and tackling racism and discrimination, as well as promoting community cohesion.

Ofsted (2011:5) commented:

The school is effective in promoting an ethos of respect and racial harmony, which contributes to pupils' good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. They are proud to celebrate their cultures within the school.

Leadership and management provided a strong impact on the school's progress and the curriculum met the needs of all children in the school:

The curriculum is having an increasingly positive impact, leading to more rapid progress and good personal development. This is because it is usually adapted to the very wide range of pupils' needs... It reflects pupils' diverse backgrounds well. (Ofsted, 2011:8)

Establishing partnerships with parents, including those who were isolated and hard to reach, through parenting clubs, was a crucial part of the school's work. According to the Ofsted report (2011), most parents were happy with the way staff support their children, but a small number of parents had concerns about bad behaviour and its influence on classroom activities and pupils' concentration.

4.1.3 School C

School C was a large school, with pupils' ages ranging from 3 to 11. Many languages were spoken in the school, and the number of pupils on roll was 457. There were 84.9% of pupils for whom English was not a first language (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011:1) and the proportion of White British pupils was small. Asian pupils were represented in high numbers: "almost half of the pupils are of Asian – British Pakistani origin and a further fifth are of Asian-British Indian heritage" (Ofsted, 2010:2). Alongside Asian children, there were other ethnicities, such as Somali, Libyan, Romanian, Polish and Afghani. The school was located in a quiet area, and served one of the most deprived areas of Coventry. Classrooms were quite large, with noticeable cultural and linguistic displays on the walls.

The school was considered by Ofsted, 2010 to be "good", and a school where the literacy skills of EAL pupils were developed well. According to the DfE Performance tables (2011) the percentage of pupils with an SEN statement or on School Action Plus was 17.3%, and pupils eligible for FSM totalled 29.3%. In 2011, the total number of Y6 pupils assessed was 62. Of this number, 42% achieved level 3 or below, 58% achieved level 4 or above, and 7% achieved level 5 respectively.

Ofsted (2010) acknowledge that although the majority of children were at an early stage of learning English, their listening and speaking skills developed quickly, given the nature of the curriculum, which provided a variety of topics which enriched and widened pupils' experiences. Ofsted also reported that pupils in KS2 experienced different difficulties in reading and writing, and lacked good knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

The influential role played by the head teacher and the staff at the school was described as follows:

The head teacher has modelled the high expectations she has of others. She is supported well by a capable and enthusiastic senior team and a motivated staff. (Ofsted, 2010:3)

The school's website assigned a corner for parents called 'Parent Partnership', which discussed issues around positive parenting and how to strengthen confidence and resilience in children. The partnership corner discussed how parents could encourage and motivate their children to learn creatively. The school's visions and aims were made explicit on the school's website in terms of building positive expectations of children, staff, and school governors to support the general success of the school. The majority of parents' responses to Ofsted's (2010) questionnaire were positive with regard to the school's efforts to support their children; however, some parents felt that the school did not take account of their views and concerns around different issues related to their children's education.

4.2 Sample

Cohen et al. (2011) argued that the quality of research is, crucially, determined by appropriateness of the sampling strategy for research topic. A non-probability sampling strategy was employed, since the main target was to gain rich contextualised knowledge from participants, regardless of the representativeness of the findings in the wider population (Cohen et al., 2007, 2011). Defining the population was the first step in selecting the sample since accessing the "entire population is unrealistic" (Conrad and Serlin, 2006).

The choice of sample was first determined by some practical constraints, such as access, but once access was approved, the selection process was primarily dependant on whether cases selected can maximize the researcher's knowledge of a specific phenomenon and whether cases identified "are easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry" (Stake, 1995:4). As such, a key criterion was whether the selected participants (i.e. parents, EAL pupils and school practitioners) were able to provide information to address the research questions, and whether particular issues about EAL can be explored. Punch (2009:162) commented:

In case study research, qualitative sampling involves identifying the cases and setting the boundaries, where we indicate the aspects to be studied, and constructing a sampling frame, where we focus selection further.

In educational research, determining a "clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size" (Cohen et al., 2011:144) is difficult, however, decisions on the sample size relied on the type of analysis to be conducted. Cohen et al., (2007, 2011) argued that a minimum sample size of 4-5 participants is sufficient in qualitative research and that a sample size of 30 participants is enough to conduct a quantitative research.

Furthermore, in the study, decisions on sample size have also been guided and justified by considering key criteria, highlighted by Hennink et al., (2011:89-90): 1) The research topic and the nature of the research i.e. given the complexity of EAL and the exploratory nature of the study, the sample size was ruled by whether participants were suitable to answer the research questions and explore core issues in relation to EAL; 2) the nature of study population i.e. given that EAL pupils, parents, and school practitioners form a heterogeneous group of participants, the

sample size was guided by capturing “the variability in experiences” because the more heterogeneous the study sample, the more participants were needed.

4.2.1 Y6 pupils

Y6 pupils were selected for this study because this is an appropriate year to recognise EAL pupils’ progress in language and literacy as they move through different stages of language development to access the curriculum, and to identify their learning needs. According to the national literacy strategy (NLS) (DfES, 2001b), Y6 children are expected to attain level 4-5 or higher in KS2 literacy skills, and should reach a standard level of spoken and written English before transition to the secondary school. The NLS requires teachers to ensure that by the end of Y6, pupils can write in different styles, including poetry, narrative writing, biography, plays and journalistic writing.

33 EAL pupils (Table 4.1), both boys and girls, were observed and interviewed at schools to collect data on child-related factors (i.e. language skills, SEN and social, emotional and behavioural needs). Being an EAL learner has been the main criterion used for selecting EAL children. However, since EAL children are different in terms of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds and their needs, two types of evidence have been used to inform a more focused process of selection: firstly, information collected from class teachers about EAL children’s literacy skills, SEN and emotional and social development. Teachers maintained records of observational notes and assessment data about the children, and reported information about EAL children normally collected from other members of staff, such as EAL teachers and SENCOs, to inform their teaching and planning. Secondly, the observational notes collected

by me during the preliminary phase showed that EAL children in schools represented different profiles in terms of the stages of language development and their needs.

EAL pupils in school A were characterized by the class teacher and the researcher as advanced learners of EAL, because they were familiar with English or were confident speakers of English. They were established in the school for long time, and some of them had SEN. There were no new arrivals in school A during the data collection period. At school A, most of the EAL children who took part in the study were of Asian heritage, mostly second and third generation Muslim/Pakistani, with the most common first languages spoken being Urdu and Bengali. Moreover, one Somali and one Afghani child were included in the study.

Schools B and C had newly arrived Y6 children who were beginners in English; advanced learners of EAL who were familiar with English or confident users of English and gifted and talented EAL children who were fluent speakers of English. In terms of social / cultural backgrounds, the children represented different profiles. At school B, the EAL children who took part in the study came from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, with the main ethnicities being Black African and Somali, Polish and Latvian. Y6 EAL children, at school C reflected diverse ethnicities and social backgrounds with the most predominant languages being Pakistani, Indian, Afghani, and Polish.

4.2.2 School practitioners

Sixteen school practitioners (Table 4.1) with different EAL roles and responsibilities (i.e. EAL subject managers, class teachers, EAL teachers, SENCOs, SEN teacher,

multilingual assistants and the teaching assistant) were interviewed in order to explore perceptions of the influences of schools' organizational structures and home-school partnership on EAL children's learning.

The selection of school practitioners was, in essence, informed by the preliminary phase results, which showed that EAL children were the responsibility of all staff in schools. However, as the study progressed, two criteria were used to select school practitioners: firstly, whether or not they had different EAL roles and responsibilities to ensure that different perspectives on the issue can be obtained; secondly, whether they could contribute specific information on not only school-based EAL processes, but also the wider community context.

4.2.3 Parents

Twenty-three parents of EAL pupils (Table 4.1) were interviewed in schools, the most predominant ethnicities being Pakistani, Indian, and Somali. Being a parent of EAL child was the key criterion used for selecting parents. The gatekeepers and class teachers in the three schools helped me with the selection process by referring to parents who met this criterion and would have liked to have taken part in the study. Diversity in parents' status in terms of their social backgrounds was also important in the selection process, to ensure variability in experiences and views. Some parents were established members of the community, while others were from refugees and asylum seeker backgrounds.

The main purpose of interviewing the parents was to explore the factors that facilitate or hinder their involvement in their children's education at school and in the home. In school A, seven interviews were conducted during parents' meetings.

Most parents, interviewed at school A, came from second and third generation Muslim families who were established in England with Bengali and Urdu as the most predominant languages spoken. Moreover, one Somali, one Bangladeshi and one Afghani parent were interviewed. There were multilingual assistants or interpreters to support with the interviewing. It was also noted that EAL pupils acted as interpreters to interpret what the teachers said about their progress. Some parents came with their relatives and cousins, who helped by interpreting.

At school B, seven Somali parents from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds were interviewed during the homework club. The multilingual assistant was present, and helped with the interpretation. Nine parents were interviewed during a parents' meeting at school C. The parents were of Asian and Indian heritage: four Indian parents, four Pakistani and one Chinese. The languages spoken in the meeting included Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Mirpuri. Some parents came with their friends and relatives to help with interpretation. In addition, multilingual assistants, who were established in the school, interpreted for the parents.

Parents of newly arrived pupils did not attend the meeting at schools B and C, and class teachers expressed their worries around their absence, since the teachers wanted to discuss their children's progress with them. As a result I did not interview any parents of newly arrived children there.

Table 4.1: Number and gender of interviewees

Participants/job roles	School A	School B	School C
School practitioners' total number is 16: 3 male and 13 female			
EAL manager	1	1	1
Y6 class teacher	1	2	1
EAL teacher	1	1	1
Teaching assistants	1	1	1
SENCO/SEN teacher	-	1	1
Multilingual assistant	-	1	-
Parents' total number is 23: 3 male and 20 female			
Parents	7	7	9
EAL pupils' total number is 33: 20 male and 13 female			
Gifted and talented EAL pupils	1	3	2
Advanced learners of EAL including EAL pupils with SEN	10	4	5
Newly arrived pupils	-	3	5

4.3 Research design: the case study approach

A case study approach was used to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL pupils' learning. A case study is defined as: "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single study, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (Stake, 1995Q: xi). According to David and Sutton (2004), a case study is the in-depth study of a specific unit and its specific features. In the study, identifying the contextual information about the three schools and their specific characteristics (e.g. nature of the schools' population and schools' areas and languages spoken) was crucial in order to operate a successful research design. Cohen et al., (2007:258) pointed that:

The case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit...to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit.

Yin (2009:11) highlights the fact that the case study is highly encouraged when “examining a contemporary event”. As a contemporary and up-to-date issue, EAL requires different sources of evidence in order to explore perceptions about the myriad of influences that affect EAL pupils’ learning. The case study approach is important to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth with its contextual conditions (Yin and Davis, 2007); however, the boundary between the phenomenon and its context is blurred (Yin, 2009). In relation to EAL, it was impossible to separate EAL from its contexts, which were exemplified by the information obtained about the socio-economic make up of schools’ areas, the participants and staff’s roles and responsibilities.

The case study approach provided data that was “strong in reality” (Cohen et al., 2007:256) by exploring different features of the phenomenon. A challenge in the study was to articulate the different roles of staff involved in EAL teaching, since there were differences across the three schools in terms of EAL job titles. Yet through the case study approach, I was able to observe specific events that involved different roles of EAL staff and to explore participants’ views with regard to EAL pupils’ learning.

The case study guided the methods deployed for data collection. The limitations of the different methods may be compensated for by adopting the case study strategy, which can “flesh out the picture in a way that is crucial to our understanding” (Punch, 2009:123). For instance, the questionnaire had no meaning on its own. However, employing the questionnaire in combination with other methods had more meaning because it complemented data collected from these methods.

Yin (2009) argued that the case study researcher can adopt an embedded multiple-case design by including more than one case and incorporating different 'sub-units' for analysis. This flexible feature of the case study approach enabled the use of 'single cases' (Yin, 2009) in the form of three Y6 classes, and EAL children who were incorporated into the broader case study design of the three schools. Decisions on how many case studies are required in the research are typically governed by the nature of the topic; different benefits the researcher seeks to achieve and the research questions.

The case study approach has been criticised for its limited generalizability and unrepresentative nature (Cohen et al., 2007, 2011; Punch, 2009, Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Reflecting on this, the purpose of study was not to generalise its findings, but to understand EAL children's learning in its everyday context. Nevertheless, some questions were raised in my mind: Can the findings be generalised beyond the current study? In response to this question, I "extrapolated" whether the same findings would emerge in case studies with similar features (Macpherson et al., 2000) and considered that the findings may be generalised to other schools in two ways: firstly, certain features of Y6 pupils with EAL included in the study might be applied/ replicated in EAL pupils in other year groups across the three schools. Hence, generalisations extend "from the single features of part of the case to the whole of that case" (Cohen et al., 2011:295). Secondly, the findings generated in each school can be generalised to other schools with the same features, so that generalisation occurs "from features of the single case to a multiplicity of classes with the same features" (Cohen et al., 2011:295). For example, it is anticipated that

newly arrived pupils in another school with a high number of EAL pupils are likely to have similar needs (e.g. language needs, social and emotional needs) and that similar influences on EAL children's learning might be explored.

On the negative side, case studies can be prone to subjectivity and bias (Nisbet and Watt, 1984 cited in Cohen et al., 2011) in that a researcher may "overstate or understate the case" (Shaughnessy et al., 2003:290-9). The case study approach employed in this study may be criticized for its reliance on qualitative data compared with the quantitative evidence and the unequal representation of the qualitative data that emerged from each method e.g. interviews, documents and observations. For instance, while data generated from interviews formed a substantial source of evidence which guided the research questions, other methods such as observations, made a smaller contribution to addressing the research questions.

Furthermore, a deep exploration of some issues was achieved in one case study school, but was hindered in another, and the data varied from one school to another in terms of quantity - given lack of access and time. For instance, there was greater focus on newly arrived children at schools B and C, compared to school A, because there were no new arrivals at school A during the data collection.

Research was conducted in two phases: the preliminary phase and the main phase. Unstructured observation was used in the preliminary phase, while a mixed method approach, consisting of unstructured observation, interviews, questionnaires and documents, was employed in the main phase.

The following two sections introduce the research methods and the phases of the research.

4.4 Methods

The following methods were used in the study:

4.4.1 Unstructured observation

As a research method, observation enables researchers to observe different behaviours, actions and interactions taking place within a setting (Hennink et al., 2011). Unstructured observation was used during the preliminary and main phases, and its role was different in each phase. During the preliminary phase, EAL pupils and teachers were observed concurrently for three days to explore the field, and to collect data on general aspects related to EAL (e.g. general features of EAL children's language and literacy, general classroom practices, overall aspects of EAL provision). During the main phase, classroom observations took place for seven days, and the nature of the observation changed, "typically sharpening in focus leading to ever-clearer research questions" (Punch, 2009:154). The purpose of the observation during the main phase was to focus on aspects of the research setting that matched the research questions.

Observations were useful, for many reasons. They provided an opportunity to go beyond participants' answers in the interviews, and their "self-interpretations of their attitudes and behaviours towards an evaluation of their actions in practice" (Gray, 2004:238). For instance, it would have been difficult for teachers to describe in an interview how they built confidence in EAL pupils; however, during the observation, I witnessed the process of building confidence in EAL pupils through

teachers' attitudes towards children and children's reactions in classroom contexts. The observation explored the larger picture of events "more holistically and more macroscopically" (Punch, 2009:155), and provided rich data about EAL by exploring new features in the three schools.

Using observation as a research method to fit the nature of the research questions was an important means of validating and complementing the data obtained from interviews, school policy documents and questionnaires. For instance, research questions about teaching strategies, materials and resources required contextual details that cannot be obtained through interviews or questionnaires only.

Further, observation was important to explore discrepancies or similarities between the other methods stated and their implementation in practice. For example, even if school policy documents suggested that schools have built a partnership with parents, observing teachers and other school practitioners' attitudes towards parents through parents' meetings confirmed what the school policy documents stated. On the other hand, while "the data gathered from observation are often rich in evidence, extracting themes and concepts from the data can be quite challenging" (Gray, 2004:239) because there was an element of overlapping between the themes emerged.

The main strategy used for collecting field notes was that of recording all observations relevant to the study. In order to avoid the danger of forgetting what I had observed, all notes were dated and recorded immediately following the observation. At times, I paraphrased the conversations between different participants. At the beginning of every class observation, I asked myself: Who was in

the setting? What did they do? What behaviour or interactions took place? I followed Baily's framework (1996) to collect field notes. I first started by collecting raw field notes, and then reflected on and recalled some of the field notes.

On very few occasions, certain behaviours and events were recalled and other events were added because they were not recorded immediately after observing them. Baily (1996) explains that the pre-analysis stage is where the new themes, ideas and inferences begin to emerge. At this stage, I noted down any impressions, thoughts and feelings which were useful in the analysis later on. Finally, at times, it was important to revisit the setting to collect more data that I was not able to collect in the first instance, due to pupils' or teachers' absence and school events (e.g. parties, festivals, trips).

A crucial part of taking field notes was to be aware of how to minimise the effect of bias and subjectivity by separating my own values and emotions from the conclusions drawn from the field notes, because "the interpretation of what is observed may be influenced by the mental constructs of the researcher"(Gray, 2004:239).

4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

The research relied largely on semi-structured interviews as a technique for gathering information that has a direct bearing on the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were used for in-depth exploration of participants' views and meanings (David and Sutton, 2004) and to build a "better foundation of understanding" (Punch, 2009:279). Since an interview is "a social, interpersonal encounter" (Cohen et al., 2011:421) and "a human-to-human relationship with

respondents" (Mertens, 1998:323), it allowed the participants and I to develop unexpected themes (Mason, 2002) such as cultural barriers to EAL children's learning and language development. Through the interviews, misrepresented voices in research, such as the voices of minority ethnic parents (Byrne, 2004:182), were explored. On the negative side, interview's findings cannot be generalized to the wider population (Cohen et al., 2000), and transcribing the interviews takes a long time.

All the interviews were conducted over the academic year 2010-2011. Interviews with parents were conducted in the community room or 'parents' room' and in classrooms during parents' meetings; all EAL children were interviewed during the literacy hour; school practitioners were interviewed in classrooms or in the office during break time.

Building rapport with the interviewees and creating a comfortable atmosphere were fundamental elements of the interviewing process (Hennink et al., 2011). The language used in the interviews was simple and straightforward, in order to fit the different levels of language fluency of the participants - parents and EAL children. Open-ended and closed questions were used in the interviews. The open-ended questions allowed for a deep investigation of the respondents' views on the topic, and gave more opportunities for the participants to answer the questions in their own words (Cohen et al., 2000). The interview questions (Appendices F, G, and H) were clear, and mapped onto the research questions.

Perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL children's learning and language development were examined in all interviews.

Parents were asked about whether they supported their children at home and how they contacted the school. Interviews with school practitioners sought to collect data on their roles and responsibilities with regard to supporting EAL pupils, as follows: interviews with EAL subject managers (who are the deputy heads in the three schools) provided information about the EAL organizational structure. In relation to class teachers, teaching assistants and the multilingual assistant, the interviews explored EAL teaching strategies, materials, resources, their knowledge and understanding of EAL pupils' needs and any EAL training received.

An exploration of EAL pupils' needs, assessment, identification, and the structures in place to differentiate between EAL and SEN were achieved by interviewing EAL teachers, SENCOs and the SEN teacher. Some questions on the same issue were asked differently, to suit the participants' role. For instance, deputy head teachers were asked how they facilitated and met the training needs of school staff; meanwhile, school practitioners were asked whether they attended training on EAL.

The core questions in the EAL pupils' interviews were the same for all EAL pupils, with additional questions directed solely to newly arrived pupils to cover issues of admission and the bilingual support available when they first joined the school. The language barriers in newly arrived children during the interviews were overcome through the assistance of multilingual assistants, who helped with interpreting for the children. Newly arrived children with good survival and conversational English were able to answer the interview questions without multilingual assistants' support.

The interviews generated different types of answer: interviews with schools' practitioners generated unstructured and long responses, which meant that they provided their answers as fully as they wished, without being constrained by the questions asked (Cohen et al., 2011). In contrast, interviews with parents and EAL pupils generated short answers. This might be attributed to a limited faculty of English and the lack of prior experience in being interviewed.

All interviews were tape-recorded in order to accurately capture the interviewees' answers, except for the interviews with two Somali parents at school B and one teaching assistant at school C who preferred not to tape-record their answers. In response to their request, I recorded their answers by taking notes. The interview time varied from 10 minutes to 40 minutes.

4.4.3 Documents

Documentary evidence, in the form of written texts and documents, complemented data obtained from other methods (The Open University Course Team, 2001). After obtaining permission to access the documents (Scott, 1990), I selected those that met the following criteria: whether the documents were relevant and corresponded to the research questions (Finnegan, 1996); whether the documents provided sufficient and clear information about different aspects of EAL policy, practice and provision; whether they were up-to-date and whether they were reviewed regularly.

Further, the selection of documents was consistent with Jupp's (1996) criteria, which argued that selecting documentary materials is a process of establishing authenticity in terms of whether documents are original, credibility, which refers to

the accuracy of documents, and meaning, by which the content of documents should be relevant to research topic.

There were two types of document obtained (Table 4.2): firstly, documents accessed from schools through the class teachers and the deputy heads produced data on the following issues: newly arrived pupils' induction, admission, assessment, EAL staffing, educational policies such as inclusion, equal opportunities and equality; and secondly, public documents that were available online (e.g. Ofsted inspection reports and performance league tables).

Although the documents were relevant to the key themes in the research questions, a full understanding of the documents required an understanding of their contexts (Cohen et al., 2007), and accessing some additional information to make sense of the documents. For instance, in order to understand a document accessed from schools about distinguishing EAL issues from SEN, some additional information was necessary: Who normally uses the document? Where does the information come from? How was the document used? Such questions guided me to understand the content of the document in its context. While some documents reflected and corresponded to EAL practice and provision in schools, other documents showed conflicts and contradictions between policy and practice.

Table 4.2: School documents

Schools	Documents
School A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Newly arrived pupils policy - Inclusion and equal opportunities policy -SEN assessment -Structured Language Units assessment form -English and literacy policy -EAL policy -Ofsted reports (2009, 2011) (Internet source. See references) -Performance tables (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) (Internet source. See references) -Background information accessed from school's website
School B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Newly arrived pupils policy -Inclusion and equal opportunities policy -SEN assessment -Written samples of pupils' work -English and literacy policy -EAL policy -Ofsted reports (2007, 2011) (Internet source. See references) -Performance tables (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) (Internet source. See references) -Background information accessed from school's website.
School C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Newly arrived pupils' policy -Inclusion and equal opportunities -SEN assessment -Written samples of pupils' work -English policy and literacy policy -EAL policy -Ofsted report (2010) (Internet source. See references) -Performance Tables (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011. See references) -Background information accessed from school's website.

4.4.4 Questionnaires

Questionnaires have been deemed to be appropriate because they can reach a wide audience efficiently (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007, 2011; Gillham, 2000; Gray, 2004). The purpose of using questionnaires was to generate numerical data to explore school practitioners' opinions and attitudes with regard to different issues in EAL. The questionnaire began with general questions, before moving on to specific questions (Cohen et al., 2000), and a number of issues were considered in designing the questionnaire: clarity of purposes; inclusion of appropriate questions; and capturing key concepts and purposes of the research questions (Cohen et al., 2000).

The language used in the questionnaire was clear and simple. The questionnaire was semi-structured, and included two types of questions: closed questions and open-ended questions (Cohen et al., 2007). Questions 1-7 were closed questions using a Likert scale, whereas questions 8-9 were open-ended (Appendix E). Questions 1 and 2 were introductory, and focused on participants' job role and responsibilities. Question 3 interrogated participants' responses with regard to the frequency of using specific teaching strategies, materials, and resources for EAL children and benefitting from human resources available in school. Questions 4 and 5 were about professional development opportunities, and focused on two dimensions: whether participants had received EAL training and the usefulness of the training provided.

Question 6 was concerned with rating the four literacy skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in terms of their importance in promoting language in EAL pupils. Question 7 investigated the importance of a number of themes in relation to EAL: assessing EAL pupils when they first arrive, understanding the difference

between EAL and SEN, building confidence and self-esteem, awareness of cultural and ethnic backgrounds of pupils with EAL and better communication with EAL pupils and their parents. Questions 8-9 were open-ended, and asked staff about challenges they faced when teaching or supporting EAL children.

The closed questions were quick to complete, and could be coded quickly (Gillham, 2000; Gray, 2004) which meant that they were easier for computer analysis, but they did not enable the participants to add any explanations to the categories. The closed questions were analysed using SPSS.

The open-ended questions enabled the participants to write their answers “in their own terms”, and to remove any restrictions due to the nature of the closed questions (Cohen et al., 2000:248) and provided qualitative data. Cohen et al., (2007:330) pointed out that “it is the open-ended responses that might contain the ‘gems’ of information that otherwise might not be caught in the questionnaire”.

26/36 participants had completed the questionnaires’ open-ended questions. Data generated from open-ended questions were analysed using the grounded theory approach. Bearing in mind the possibility that the questions might not have been interpreted in the same way, the questionnaires were piloted with 2 members of staff in each school, to check the participants’ understanding of the questions and the time required for completing the questionnaires (Oppenheim 1992 cited in Wilson and McLean, 1994).

The questionnaires were circulated to all members of staff across all year groups, because EAL was considered to be a widespread issue in schools. The questionnaires

were circulated in two rounds to 60 members of staff with different EAL roles and responsibilities in the three schools. In round one, the response rate was low, at 18/60: 2 questionnaires from school A; 10 questionnaires from school B and 6 questionnaires from school C. In round two, the response rate rose to 36 questionnaires, collected from the three schools (Table 4.3).

The deputy head teachers facilitated the dissemination and collection of the questionnaires at the schools during staff meetings, as I was not allowed to collect the questionnaires from the participants. The deputy heads indicated that members of staff were always busy, and that completing questionnaires individually may interrupt their work. Disseminating and collecting the questionnaires on the researcher's behalf and without his/her presence had advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, it helped the participants to be more honest in their answers (Cohen et al., 2007) and ensured a higher response rate because the deputy head was able to access a higher number of participants. On the negative side, the researcher had no control over some issues, such as who completed the questionnaire and who did not, how the staff were selected and the "seriousness given to the completion of the questionnaire" (Cohen et al., 2007:345) which could in turn affect the quality of the data collected (Punch, 2009).

Furthermore, Hennink et al. (2011) argued that in using gatekeepers to facilitate the collection of data, there is a possibility that the participants were obliged to take part in the questionnaire because of power inequality. In response to Hennink's et al., point, it may be argued that the majority of participants had answered open-ended questions, with no omissions or deletions showing that the participants were

willing rather than obliged to complete the questionnaires. Furthermore, the fact that the questionnaires had sufficient information about the purpose of the study, confidentiality and anonymity issues encouraged the participants to cooperate and take part (Punch, 2009).

Schools	Total number of participants	Experienced class teacher	Newly qualified teacher	TA	EAL teacher	Other	Number of participants in each key stage			
							KS1	KS2	KS1+KS2	OTHER
School A	8	4	1	1	0	2	2	4	2	-
School B	15	8	1	1	1	4	3	5	4	3
School C	13	5	3	0	2	3	2	6	2	3

Table 4.3: Number of questionnaires' participants per school categorised according to job title and key stage

4.5 Phases of research

The case study approach guided the preliminary and main phases. The main purpose of the preliminary phase was to explore key features of EAL children's profiles and identify key individuals involved in EAL provision and practice in the three schools. The purpose of the main phase was to collect qualitative and quantitative data to answer the research questions.

4.5.1 Preliminary phase of research

The preliminary phase was a 'preparatory stage,' in which decisions were made on methods and participants' recruitment. I began the preliminary phase by negotiating access to schools and conducting general classroom observations, conducted in "a more natural open ended way" without predetermined categories and classifications (Punch, 2009:154). They provided initial information on the EAL learning environment and EAL children's profiles.

Having built up a rapport with the schools for three days before embarking on the main phase, the participants acted naturally, and felt comfortable with my presence. The preliminary phase had moved the research to what Cohen et al., (2011) called "the process of operationalisation" where the specific research questions may have to be calibrated to fit the purpose of the research, and its time framework and the methods used. As such, new questions about the identification and assessment of EAL pupils' needs, for example, emerged at that stage and some research questions (e.g., questions about children's progress in maths and science) were reduced or deleted, due either to their irrelevance to the purpose of research or to difficulties in gaining access to data.

The data arising from the preliminary phase informed and guided changes to the main phase in terms of appropriateness of methods and participants to produce the data necessary to answer the research questions. For instance, classroom observations showed that EAL pupils were supported by a range of staff with different EAL roles and responsibilities. Consequently, the questionnaires were circulated to all members of staff, considering that all staff seemed to have some involvement in EAL provision. Further, classroom observations guided me to interviewing appropriate participants who had important roles in supporting EAL pupils, such as SENCOs and multilingual assistants. Moreover, the school practitioners' interviews were modified to involve questions which matched the job role, and which reflected the interviewees' specialism/s.

The observational data collected in the preliminary stage, in combination with information from the Ofsted reports, showed that schools were located in areas of social disadvantage and poverty, and that the geographic areas of schools were linguistically and culturally diverse. This gave me the impression that limited English is prevalent among the school population and their parents. As such, I began to think of different arrangements for interviewing the pupils and their parents in the main phase (i.e. using simple language in interviews, checking whether multilingual assistants or interpreters were available in the schools, asking whether parents and children spoke my first language).

The preliminary phase facilitated the identification of EAL pupils' literacy profiles and length of residence, and placed them on two continua: continuum of EAL

children language development (Figure 4.1) and continuum of length of residence (Figure 4.2).

The EAL continuum of language development (Figure 4.1) is interactive in nature since the three groups of EAL children were not distinct or clear-cut and their language skills may overlap and may not sit easily within the one group only. Nonetheless, certain literacy skills and individual characteristics were more prevalent in some EAL children than others. Therefore, the continuum begins with EAL children who are at an early stage of learning English (i.e. children who have no or little knowledge of English), then moves to EAL pupils who are at an advanced stage of learning English, and ends with EAL children who are fluent speakers of English.

The second continuum (Figure 4.2) reflects EAL children's length of residence in England. It begins with newly arrived pupils, then moves to established EAL children who have been to England for more than three years and ends with British born EAL children.

EAL children (Little or no knowledge of English)	EAL children (Advanced knowledge of English)	EAL children (Fluent speakers of English)
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Figure 4.1 EAL pupils' language development

Recent arrivals	Established EAL children*	British born EAL children
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Figure 4.2 EAL children's length of residence

*Established children refers to EAL children who have been to England for more than three years.

1) EAL children who had little or no knowledge of English: “recent arrivals”

Classroom observations and initial conversations with school staff indicated that the following features characterised the language and literacy of EAL children who had little or no knowledge of English in schools B and C:

Reading:

- They had the ability to recognise letters and could decode short words or sentence without an understanding of meaning.
- Their ability to read was largely dependent on contextual clues such as charts, pictures and diagrams in texts.

Writing:

- They relied heavily on copying words accurately without spelling mistakes, but with limited understanding of their meaning and absence of cultural knowledge hindered their ability to complete the writing tasks.
- They wrote in their first language, and used the bilingual dictionary to understand the meaning of the text. Given differences between first language and English, one child, observed at school C, found it difficult to read from left to right.
- They had difficulties following written instructions and their writing was guided by contextual clues, by describing pictures of a dog, a flower, or a boy, for example. In some cases, they expressed their understanding of the instructions of the writing tasks by drawing pictures and sometimes their writing was a mix of English and words used from their first language.

- They had the following mistakes in their writing: verb endings and tenses (e.g. I *buyed* a new dress); inaccuracy of using pronouns and verbs (e.g., she do, they does); word order (e.g., putting verb at the end of sentence); wrong spelling patterns (e.g., 'k' instead of 'c'); inaccurate use of plurals (e.g., man...mens, sheep... sheeps).

Listening and Speaking:

- They used their body language and non-verbal clues to communicate, and showed interest in tasks supported with visual and practical support, such as music and singing.
- They used short words instead of using full sentences when they spoke, such as 'toilet' and they used pointing and head nodding instead of speaking to express likes and dislikes.
- Their interest in listening relied largely on their understanding of the topic; in some cases they lost their ability to maintain listening, because of the cultural references in the text. Their attentive listening was not an indicator of their understanding of what teachers said, but it was part of the silent phase they come through.
- They had mistakes in pronouncing certain sounds, such as "p", "b", "j" "g", and words with similar sounds, such as coat and caught boat and bought.

One typical group of EAL children, who had little or no knowledge of English, were, in this study, children who had recently arrived in England from a non-English speaking country. Nevertheless, classroom observations showed that although the majority of newly arrived EAL children were at an early stage of learning English,

there was variation in their skills across domains of language (e.g., writing, reading, listening, speaking) as well as evidence of capabilities and specific gifts and talents. These gifts and talents did not necessarily relate to newly arrived children's language competence, but could be relevant to other subjects of the curriculum such as maths, science, art and computer. For example, it was noted that some newly arrived children had a very advanced knowledge of maths and Information Technology (IT) compared with other children who were already established in schools. As such, the continuum does not present distinct categories but interactive places that reflect the fluidity of EAL children's strengths and needs.

2) Advanced EAL learners: "Established children"

Some EAL learners were at a more advanced stage of learning English. The majority of the advanced EAL learners in this study were children who were established at the schools and had been in England for more than three years. Classroom observations conducted at schools A, B and C explored the following features in their literacy:

Reading:

- Their understanding of the text relied heavily on their familiarity with the topics and they had the ability to retell written texts using their speaking skills. In some cases they found it really difficult to comprehend texts with figurative and idiomatic forms of English, or texts with cultural references.
- Their understanding of the text was hindered by lack of vocabulary and they asked the TAs or teachers' assistance to understand instructions of tasks.

Writing:

- They had common spelling and punctuation mistakes in their writing, and some of them had mistakes such as the wrong use of tense, adding or omitting articles, using wrong forms of plurals and the wrong use of prepositions.
- They were able to use simple forms of sentences without developing their complexity, and they were good at writing texts modelled on texts written by the teacher, or shown on the board. They may have used very informal vocabulary in their writing with repetition of the same vocabulary throughout written texts.
- They were able to produce more complex texts if they were supported by the TA or the teacher, and in case of writing long texts, the texts lacked coherence and structure.

Listening and speaking:

- They were able to communicate with children and adults in class, and engaged in interaction with the class teacher, and most of them contributed to classroom discussions on familiar topics.
- When teachers gave long and detailed instructions on tasks, they picked out the main ideas, but missed the details, and they were good at speaking, in that teachers did not have problems in understanding what they said.
- Since they were familiar or confident speakers of English, their ability to speak masked their lack of comprehension skills and knowledge of vocabulary.

3) Fluent speakers of English: “British born EAL children”

Some EAL learners were very capable academically, and were fluent in English. In this study this group of EAL children, were typically British born children. Classroom

observations conducted at schools B and C showed that these children had been placed in the top groups with gifted and talented children, and that these features characterised their literacy:

Reading:

- They were able to understand complex forms of language, such as sentences, with complex syntactic forms, connectives and prepositions, as well as different forms of text (e.g. stories, poems, historical texts).
- They were able to understand figurative and idiomatic forms of language which are common in the English culture, with a growing ability of using metaphor, alliteration and rhyme in poems, for instance.
- They had developed a good understanding of cultural references in texts, and they were able to participate in classroom interactions that enhance and reinforce their reading.
- They had a wide knowledge of vocabulary, and could read the text quickly and find specific information in long texts. After reading, they were able to retell what they read with a good understanding of detail, and were able to go beyond the text by making their own conclusions.

Writing:

- They could write different types of text (e.g. reports, poems, stories) independently, and they did not rely on adults' support or contextual clues such as pictures, diagrams and charts.
- They had the ability to structure their writing in paragraphs by using complex sentences with appropriate use of adverbs, adjectives and prepositions.

Listening and speaking:

- They contributed to class interaction and discussions with ease, and expressed more complex views and ideas confidently and their use of words and expressions in their speech was similar to native speakers.

The literacy skills, described above, were observed during the Literacy Hour and other literacy activities, such as guided reading and writing, which were delivered after play time and lasted for 30-40 minutes. A variety of learning tasks and activities provided during the literacy hour, including reading comprehension, writing, oral discussions, grammar and spelling activities provided rich information about EAL children's literacy skills. I was allowed to read through the children's writing and listen to their reading. On different occasions, the class teachers provided comments and notes about the literacy skills of individual children in the class.

At school A, classroom observations and informal conversation with the class teacher showed that some EAL children had SEN, such as motor problems, speech and language difficulties, as well as social and emotional problems. The SEN children shared similar characteristics, such as lack of concentration and motivation during the literacy hour, and were placed in the underachieving group.

The observational notes in the preliminary phase revealed that EAL pupils did not form a homogenous group of learners, in terms of their social and cultural backgrounds and stages of language development, and that several features in their learning needs and social backgrounds may have overlapped. Built on this, three important points were considered in relation to EAL children: firstly, there were

varied needs and individual differences amongst EAL pupils, which meant that they could not be categorised or assigned to specific groups accurately, and it was difficult to encompass all features within one stage. For instance, a newly arrived child may have an advanced level of English and be gifted and talented academically or in terms of possessing culture specific skills and knowledge. Secondly, although EAL pupils were at different stages of language development, they had similar educational needs and received similar additional support by the EAL teacher, the TA, and the multilingual assistant. Thirdly, different stages of language development did not necessarily reflect EAL pupils' length of stay in England and their socio-economic backgrounds.

Classroom observations and initial discussions with staff identified EAL children as belonging to asylum seekers and refugees, who had left their countries for political reasons and came to England, such as Somali families; second and third generation families, established in England, such as Pakistani and Indian families; professional families who come to England for purposes of study or work; EU and non-EU economic immigrants such as Polish families; and traveller immigrants, who travel around different countries for economic reasons or as a lifestyle choice, such as Gypsy Travellers.

4.5.2 Main phase of research

A mixed method approach was used in the main phase, to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational / systemic factors on EAL pupils' learning and language development. The mixed method approach brought together different paradigms that reflect inductive and deductive approaches to the research.

The inductive approach sets out “to explore a field” (David and Sutton, 2004: 36) through qualitative data collected from interviews, observation and school policy documents. The deductive approach focuses on quantification in the collection and analysis of the data (David and Sutton, 2004).

The combination of the two approaches is “a means of getting the best of both worlds (qualitative and quantitative)” (David and Sutton, 2004:45). Qualitative and quantitative data collected in the study took three forms: 1) written data collected through observational field notes and school policy documents; 2) verbal data collected via interviews and 3) numerical data generated through questionnaires and statistical information collected from the attainment league tables and the Ofsted reports. The mixed method approach has been deemed to be appropriate for this study because it provided the complementary quantitative and qualitative data required to answer the research questions (Punch, 2009).

The combination of interviews, questionnaires, observations and document sources facilitated ‘triangulation’, which is “the concurrent, but separate collection and analysis of two types of data which are then merged, at the interpretation of results stage” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007: 62-4). In the study, triangulation was achieved by employing different methods of data collection, recruiting different participants and using different types of analysis: qualitative and quantitative.

No single method has replaced any other, but rather, I drew on the strengths and minimised the weaknesses of both in one study (David and Sutton, 2004; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Punch, 2009). For example, via observation, I collected

data on specific features of EAL children's language skills which cannot be obtained through written responses to a questionnaire or verbal responses to an interview.

Triangulation ensured a rich data set for analysis, because data came from three distinct perspectives: teachers, parents and pupils. It increased "the chances of accuracy" (The Open University Course Team, 2001:65) and established confidence (Yin, 2003) and concurrent validity (Cohen et al., 2000) in the findings because reliance on one method only might bias the findings. The findings of a specific method were checked against the findings from other methods for consistency of evidence (Mertens, 1998) and to identify any contradictions and tensions in the data.

Although qualitative and quantitative data were collected within the same time frame, they were not given equal weight, because the study relied mainly on qualitative data in that the quantitative data was employed to plug the gaps in a qualitative study (Punch, 2009:242).

Punch (2009:27) argued that research questions should have "a logical priority over the method of the research". With triangulation, the matching of questions and methods is even more important, because there will be many inter-related ideas and concepts within the questions, and the methods should fit this interrelationship between the themes and concepts. In this study, a successful matching between the research questions and the methods has been achieved by ensuring that different methods were employed to answer the research questions.

4.6 Ethics

To ensure that participants were a key priority (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007, and 2011), the research was conducted within:

An ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief or any other significant difference.(BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, 2011:5)

A number of ethical issues were taken into consideration, as follows:

4.6.1 Access, informed consent, and voluntary participation

Access was negotiated by contacting schools in person and in writing (Appendix C).

It was important to demonstrate that my research was worthy of being accorded the facilities of the schools and of the participants' time. I explained to the schools the aims of my research, its duration, the methods I wanted to use and the participants I hoped to approach. As part of the planning process, I started to contact schools in May 2010.

The deputy head teachers in the three schools acted as the gatekeepers. Cohen et al. (2007) argued that gatekeepers are people who have control over different aspects of the research setting, such as what to observe and whom to talk. In the study, the gatekeepers arranged for appropriate times and places where I could access participants and supported the data collection process by facilitating the dissemination of questionnaires and sending written informed consent forms to parents.

One of the disadvantages of using gatekeepers is the possibility of bias in the selection and the recruitment of participants (Hennink et al., 2011). However, the possibility of bias was overcome by explaining to the gatekeepers the purpose of my

research and the participants which I wanted to approach. For example, I explained to the gatekeepers that the questionnaires should be distributed to all school practitioners who had teaching or support roles in relation to EAL children.

Typically, gaining entry is controlled by mutual advantages, whereby both the researcher and the participants gain benefits from taking part in the research (Cohen et al., 2011; Mertens, 1998; Patton, 1990). As a doctoral student, there were two main purposes for accessing the three schools: to collect the data required for the research and to support schools' EAL practices through dissemination of my results. School staff benefitted from this research by reflecting on their practice and increasing their EAL support.

The participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that their participation was on a voluntary basis. No participants declined to take part in the study. Voluntary informed consent (Appendix A), as described by the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) ethical guidelines (2004, section 10-11), was sought from participants prior the completion of the interviews. They were allowed sufficient time to read the forms and to sign. The main purpose of informed consent was to respect the participants' decision as to whether to take part or to withdraw from the study. I designed the consent forms to include the "voluntarism, full information and comprehension" (Cohen et al., 2000:51) and to ensure "clarity of purpose" and "honesty" (Lindsay, 2010:118).

Lindsay (2010:118) explains that a researcher should disentangle issues of access from those of consent, by being considerate to "levels of consent". In the study, accessing schools through the gatekeepers did not guarantee the participants'

consent. As such, I firstly needed the university's acceptance of my ethical approval form (Appendix I) to approach the schools. Following this, it was necessary to gain permission from the gatekeepers at the schools. Next, I gained class teachers' approval to conduct the observations, interviews and to access policy documents from the schools. The gatekeepers and class teachers provided access to interview parents and children, and school practitioners such as EAL teachers, SENCO and TAs. Through this "intertwined processes of access and consent" (Lindsay, 2010:118), I made sure that all of the participants were accessed ethically.

Informed consent was obtained from the participants in different ways. Written consent was obtained, by which participants were given an information sheet (Appendix B) to explain the aims of the research and some ethical issues, such as confidentiality, anonymity and how the data collected were used. The information sheet was useful because it gave the participants clear information about the research.

In terms of obtaining informed consent from EAL pupils, simplified letters explaining the main aims of the research were sent home (Appendix D). The letters gave parents a brief description of the study and the role of their children in the research. Parents read the letters and signed to indicate their approval. I also asked the children whether they agreed to take part in the study prior the interviews to guarantee their acceptance. Lindsay (2010:119) stresses the importance of gaining the child's assent orally by commenting:

Young children will normally require an oral explanation expressed in a manner that communicates effectively to indicate a lower level of force and that consent may not be inferred.

Given the differences in the languages and cultures of parents, informed consent was obtained in two ways: firstly, oral consent was given by the multilingual assistants or parents' cousins and friends on behalf of some parents who did not speak English. Using interpreters assisted with the interview procedures and created comfortable circumstances for the parents, due to sharing the same language and culture. Secondly, parents with good English were happy to read the information about the study, and to sign the informed consent forms.

4.6.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

The privacy and confidentiality of the participants was respected, with all the data being anonymous. The notion of anonymity is "that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity" (Cohen et al., 2000:61). Therefore, I stored any personal data such as signed informed consent forms, Y6 pupils' names, questionnaires, names of schools and any personal identifying details separately. All of the research data with names and identifying details were transferred to unnamed and coded data, to be presented in the thesis. The names of the schools' areas were also removed. The fact that the participants were offered assurance of anonymity encouraged them to take part in the study and to provide honest answers.

Confidentiality is defined as the "way of protecting a participant's right to privacy" (Cohen et al., 2000:62). Achieving confidentiality pertained to all stages of the research process, such as distributing the questionnaires, collecting them, analysing the data and reporting the results. Mertens (1998) argued that in research contexts where "silent voices" (e.g. minority ethnic people) are involved, "cultural sensitivity"

towards issues related to socio-economic backgrounds and the immigration status of the participants was important. However, the data collected for this research did not include any sensitive or intimate information.

4.7 Positionality of the researcher

Positionality influences the power relations between the researcher and the participants, and is determined by “silent messages” sent by researchers to participants through their appearance and ethnicity (Hennink et al., 2011:122). Positionality is defined as the ways in which researchers portray themselves in a research setting, and the ways in which they are perceived by the participants which can influence the feasibility of data collection (Hennink et al., 2011).

As an interviewer, I was able to position myself as both an insider and an outsider in a number of ways. Like many of the parents, I am a mother of bilingual children. Being a minority ethnic member and an additional language speaker were the most salient commonalities between myself and the parents and the EAL children, and provided optimal conditions for an informal chat, prior to interviewing them. I looked very familiar to the children, who began to ask me questions about my ethnicity and were happy to read to me during literacy. I gained advantages in terms of understanding the participants’ perspectives and removing some of the cultural barriers. Merriam et al., (2001:406) has outlined a number of advantages of being an insider:

The more one is like the participants in terms of culture, gender, race, socio-economic class and so on, the more it is assumed that access will be granted, meaning shared, and validity of findings assured.

I found that on different occasions, ‘we’ shared the same traditions and religious practices such as ‘celebrating EID’ and ‘fasting Ramadan’. One parent asked me:

“Are you celebrating Eid on Wednesday?” (Parent 4, Pakistan: school A). Another parent said: “We took part in your research because you wear *al hijab*” (Parent 11, Somalia: school B). Al hijab in Arabic means scarf.

Although being a researcher from a minority ethnic background may have supported an initial building of rapport with some parents, a sense of trust was harder to attain, especially in the case of two Somali parents who appeared reluctant to take part in the interviews, and perceived me as an outsider in the context of being a researcher. It may be that lack of trust was precipitated by lack of trust in the school as an organisation, or because they felt they were in a weaker position, and had less power due to language differences and lack of education. They seemed to trust me as a member of their culture, but not as a researcher, since my role was aligned with the schools’ role as an organisation.

I had a dual positionality, as a non-participant observer and participant observer (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007, 2011; Hennink et al., 2011). As a non-participant observer, I was engaged in the deployment of research methods, data collection, observing participants and classroom activities and taking notes without engaging in any activities with other participants. At other times, I acted as a participant observer, as I was considered to be part of the group by taking part in activities in the research setting which might have been irrelevant to my key targets, such as assisting teachers and supporting pupils with literacy activities such as reading and writing.

Being a non-participant observant had a number of advantages. It helped with observing different behaviours as they occurred, and making notes about their salient features and developing more intimate and informal relationships with

participants (Bailey, 1994). The non-participant observation enabled me to have ‘a broader view’ of the setting by taking the observational notes ‘more freely’ (Hennink et al., 2011:185). On the other hand, participant observation helped me to familiarize myself with the setting, and giving participants time to get used to my presence. As such, I was less visible to the participants, and helped them to act more naturally in their interactions (Hennink et al., 2011).

Power inequality, which was determined by factors such as participants’ education and position, was another important feature of the research setting. Within the context of power issues, it is important to discuss the positionality of “powerful people” (Cohen et al., 2007, 2011). Powerful people refer to people “with great responsibility, whose decisions have significant effects on large numbers of people” (Cohen et al., 2007:127). In this study, powerful people were exemplified by deputy heads, who showed respect and interest in the study and were happy to take part in the interviews, and to answer all my questions. They were familiar with different procedures of signing the consent form and tape recording their answers. Interviewing powerful people required careful and thorough preparation and planning of the interview questions (McHugh, 1994 in Cohen et al., 2007:129) and prior collection of background information about the schools as educational organisations.

While “more power resides with the interviewer” (Scheurich, 1995:246 in Cohen et al., 2007:151) in terms of deciding on the nature of the questions asked and the procedures employed, interviewees also have the right to withdraw (Cohen et al., 2007, 2011). In order to reduce the influence of power inequality, I supported the

interviewees by explaining the purpose of the study, issues around confidentiality and the participants' right to decline participation, and used simple and clear language in the interviews.

4.8 Data analysis plan

Deciding on a data analytic approach is governed by the fitness of purpose of the analysis and the nature of the study (Cohen et al., 2011). This means that the researcher should determine the data analysis through the research questions and the aim of the research in mind. In this study, the main purpose was to identify the emerging themes from the data and to check whether they address the research questions. To this end, qualitative and quantitative analyses took place in the study, as follows.

4.8.1 The grounded theory approach

The study has adopted some elements of a grounded theory approach to analyse the qualitative data (i.e. interview transcripts, observational notes and policy documents) and its aim was not to build theory, nor to explain a phenomenon but to describe and explore the perceived influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL learners. As such, data collected via qualitative methods were analysed by drawing on some aspects of a grounded theory approach such as using a “coordinated” and “organised” approach to structuring the themes according to their overarching categories (Punch, 2009:134). Also, conducting a detailed review of the literature in order to structure the themes was another aspect of the grounded theory approach (Punch, 2009).

The grounded theory approach used in the study involved two major procedures: 1) open coding; and 2) creating connections between different categories. Open coding is defined as: “the process of breaking down and examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising data” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:61 cited in Seale et al., 2004:84). It involves putting codes which are names or labels against pieces of the data (Punch, 2009).

After generating codes and categories, the second task was to compare categories, in order to generate connections between different categories, by identifying similarities and differences within the data (Seale et al., 2004). As such, and built on the research questions, I classified the data generated into different themes within the two overarching themes of child-related factors (i.e. language needs, SEN and social, emotional and behavioural factors) and situational /systemic factors (i.e. schools’ organisational structures, the wider social and cultural context and policy context). Next, I developed relationships and links between different themes that were conceptually related. For instance, funding and school space were placed under the same broader theme, because they were considered as part of the EAL infrastructure.

In transcribing the interviews, an unfocused transcription was used. Unfocused transcription refers to “the process of simply trying to represent what was said or meant in a particular event or interview setting, without paying attention to the details of how the meaning was created”(Gibson,2010:297). By adopting this approach, the main focus was on the meaning of what the interviewee said, rather than the ways in which the answers were represented. For instance, I did not pay

attention to particular features such as tone of voice and speed of speech, because these features lay beyond the scope of this study.

I found the transcription process challenging, because it was difficult to capture meaning from the first hearing, since some interviewees spoke very quickly, and there were some interruptions in the interviews due to people talking, knocking on the door or the phone ringing. I re-listened to the interviews many times to maximise accuracy. The length of time required for transcribing interviews was also influenced by the quantity of data obtained and the participants approached (Cohen et al., 2011). Interviews, conducted with school practitioners, required a longer time to be transcribed because they provided long and detailed answers, while interviews with parents and EAL children required less time because they provided brief answers, given their limited command of the English language. Finally, no software was used to analyse the interview data, and any irrelevant data found in the interviews, such as interruptions from outside e.g. knocking on the door were deleted.

In terms of observations, themes and codes extracted from the observational notes were used in developing thematic categories. I found a degree of overlapping and interrelationship between the themes, and at times, extracting and separating the observational notes that were related to teachers, from the ones related to pupils, was difficult.

Documents accessed from schools were analysed using content analysis. Defining the content of the document and whether it matched the research questions were the first steps to documentary analysis. The relevant data in the documents were

included, and the irrelevant data were ignored. Defining the sampling units for analysis and classifying the documents into themes and a combination of categories and codes constituted the next step in the document analysis (Krippendorp, 2004). Therefore, the themes emerging from the documents mapped onto the broad themes of child-related and situational/systemic factors.

The data obtained from the documents was either in the form of quoting from documents or paraphrasing and summarising the main contents and ideas of the documents (Cohen et al., 2007). There was no focus during the documentary analysis on the linguistic features of the texts, because these features were not relevant to the purpose of study.

4.8.2 Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis was used for data generated from questionnaires by using SPSS (i.e. software package for the social sciences). The main purpose of using statistical analysis was to summarise and describe the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics enabled an overview and a summary of the data to be obtained (Hartas, 2010) by providing a number of occurrences of certain responses to specific categories included in the questionnaire, such as EAL strategies, materials, human resources, assessment and identification of EAL and SEN. Quantitative analysis enabled the researcher to understand the distribution of different variables across questionnaire's participants (Punch, 2009) and clarified the data "more straightforwardly than extended prose" (Cohen et al., 2011:604).

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS “CHILD-RELATED FACTORS”

5.0 Introduction

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of staff, parents and children of the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL children’s language development and learning. This chapter presents the data collected about EAL children and their attributes, characteristics and needs (i.e. language, SEN, behavioural, emotional and social factors) as cited in classroom observations, interview data, school policy documents and questionnaires.

Throughout this chapter, alphabetical and numerical codes were used to refer to which schools and participants the data came from. A, B, C referred to schools. Numbers 1-33 indicated EAL pupils included in the study. With regard to school practitioners who took part in the interviews and the questionnaires, their job roles or specialism were used to refer to their identities. As I interviewed two Y6 class teachers in school B, letters A and B were added alongside their job roles to differentiate their identities (i.e. Y6A class teacher and Y6B class teacher). In order to ensure a consistent and original use of job titles, as reported by the schools, the terms “language support teacher,” “EAL coordinator,” and “inclusion teacher” were used to refer to EAL teachers in schools A, B and C respectively.

5.1 EAL children

Results indicated that EAL children were different in terms of their needs, factors influencing their learning, their literacy skills and interaction in the classroom context. Classroom observations and interview data indicated that there was a

consensus amongst school practitioners that EAL pupils did not form a homogenous group of learners. One participant said:

“Pupils with EAL suggest a homogenous group, but in fact learners come from many backgrounds and with different experiences, so EAL is a more complex issue than managers and classroom practitioners realise.”
(Language support teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

One participant from school B commented:

“I teach many EAL pupils in one class. However, their needs are not the same. I cannot treat them as a homogenous group. The range is from NO English to children with difficulties with pronouns or maybe prepositions or gender or verb tenses. Every child has his/her own issues and the home languages are often different so I can't rely on them having any common understanding.”(Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school B)

A similar point of view was highlighted by the inclusion teacher in school C, who referred to differences between EAL children:

“They're all different. And they're all learning differently. They're all learning differently (she repeated).” (Inclusion teacher, school C)

The following section introduces features and characteristics of newly arrived EAL children, advanced learners of EAL and gifted and talented EAL children.

5.1.1 Newly arrived EAL pupils: “Little or no knowledge of English”

The term ‘newly arrived EAL pupils’ refers to EAL children who have recently arrived in England with little or no English. Newly arrived pupils were the most notable group of EAL pupils who needed assistance and received language support. Of particular importance for newly arrived pupils were issues of identifying their individual needs at an early stage and carrying out an initial language assessment. The observational notes and interview data showed that there were considerable variations amongst newly arrived pupils because of the wide differences in their needs, differences in educational systems in their countries and prior school

experiences. Variations in the new arrivals' needs required different resources and input. As one participant commented:

"Differences between newly arrived pupils depend largely on where they come from. Some countries have developed educational systems, while other countries have no schooling experiences at the age of 6 or 7."
(Language support teacher, school A)

Learning an additional language was considered to be interesting to the majority of newly arrived children because it provided children with the opportunity to communicate with other people in school and motivated them to come to school to learn English. The following extracts were taken from interviews with newly arrived children:

"I was so happy because I loved the school. It's a big school and teachers are kind. I love learning English." (Pupil 2, Afghanistan, school C)

"I love school. It's nice. I love learning English." (Pupil 1, Afghanistan, school C)

However, an opposing view indicated that learning English was difficult for some newly arrived children who did not understand what the teacher or other children said. Such difficulties resulted in newly arrived children to feel sad and isolated when they first joined the school. The following extracts were taken from interviews with newly arrived children:

"Sad [because I couldn't speak English when I first arrived]." (Pupil 4, Romania, school C) [

"I was sad when I first arrived because I couldn't speak English." (Pupil 7, Poland, school B)

There were references in the interviews to some factors which accelerate learning an additional language including the role of the buddy and multilingual assistants who interpreted for newly arrived children:

“I remember that some children came to help me. They played with me.”
(Pupil 6, Somalia, school B)

“I was happy when I first arrived. I remember that the Polish interpreter was there to help me.” (Pupil 5, Poland, school C)

In almost all the cases, newly arrived children’s parents spoke little or no English and were unable to help them with the homework because they arrived in England recently. Additionally speaking a first language was a common feature of newly arrived children’s learning:

“My mum can’t speak English.” (Pupil 6, Somalia, school B)

“My parents don’t understand English. My sister helps me sometimes.”
(Pupil 5, Poland, school C)

“My parents speak Romanian.” (Pupil 4, Romania, school C)

The following are case studies of newly arrived pupils in schools B and C:

Case study 1

Pupil 1 was a newly arrived pupil in school C. He came from Afghanistan with his family, and spoke no English. He benefitted from the buddy system and from being placed with a group of new arrivals who spoke his language. I noticed that pupil 1 kept silent due to his lack of English, and he did not raise his hand to answer questions. He communicated with other pupils using body language and facial expressions. Within the period of six weeks, pupil 1 had many friends and had also developed ‘survival’ English. Classroom observations showed that pupil 1 did not show interest in learning, due to a lack of understanding of what the teacher said and he appeared disengaged in different classroom activities. However, away from the classroom, pupil 1 appeared talkative and active when meeting his friends who

spoke his language. Pupil 1 required continuous support by the inclusion teacher and the class teacher to tackle the tasks.

Case study 2

Pupil 2 was another newly arrived child from school C. She came with her family from Afghanistan and had been in England for three months. Her father had a good command of English and he was interested in his daughter's learning by getting involved in different activities at the school. With her father's support, pupil 2 developed her 'survival' English very quickly:

"I think that she's better than anybody else because dad speaks to her at home in English and he's very secure in his English and that obviously helps. He's also very keen. He wants to come in and he wants to know all the time what's going on. And therefore that helps. The parental involvement would help a lot with progress." (Inclusion teacher, school C)

Pupil 2 acquired good speaking skills which enabled her to achieve at a similar level to other pupils who were already established in the school for a long time:

"She picked up so much and you can have a conversation with her and you would never know otherwise." (Y6 class teacher, school C)

As a result of her quick progress, pupil 2 was placed in the mid-able group:

"Pupil 2 is no longer in the lower group because we felt she can cope and she's very able to cope more within the classroom." (Inclusion teacher, school C)

However, pupil 2 was still in need of more support to develop better linguistic skills such as use of tenses:

"She didn't get the tenses right and she also has a big issue with everyday things that we speak about. She doesn't know the words or the places like going to the zoo. These sorts of things the children learn when they grow up." (Inclusion teacher, school C)

The class teacher saw pupil 2 as "a very confident and clever girl". She had arrived at this conclusion because of her ability to pick up and learn English very quickly. My

observation of pupil 2 indicated that she was able to take part in different activities in the class such as asking and answering questions. She looked confident and showed interest in learning. When pupil 2 asked about what she liked best at school, she answered with “learning English”.

Case study 3

In school B, I met pupil 3, who was a newly arrived child from Latvia, a country in Eastern Europe. During the data collection, he had been in England for two weeks only. His parents had a very limited understanding of English and no other children or staff in the school spoke his language. The Minority Group Support Services (MGSS) had been able to help in providing a bilingual dictionary in English and Latvian; however, providing multilingual assistants who spoke the child’s first language was difficult. Classroom observations revealed that at the beginning staff working with pupil 3 found it frustrating that it was difficult to have a basic conversation with the child and his parents and it was difficult to collect some background information about his previous schooling in Latvia.

The EAL coordinator and the class teacher had learnt a little Latvian through the bilingual dictionary and from the Internet, in order to explain things to the child and his parents. They were also able to communicate with the child through body language and practical and visual objects. Given the difficulties in gaining background information about the child, conducting an initial assessment for the child was difficult. He was watching what other children were doing and kept silent. During playtime the child was lonely and quiet. The EAL coordinator’s plan focused on teaching basic literacy skills such as teaching letters, sounds and numbers in

English. The child moved to another school after two months since joining the school because his parents moved to Birmingham.

Case study 4

Pupil 4 was from a Romanian Gypsy family, and had been in school C for three weeks. His schooling had been disrupted and he did not speak English. Due to inaccurate information about his previous schooling in Romania and his parents' lack of English, he was well behind his peers in the development of basic 'survival' English. There were no children in his class who spoke his language. Observations showed that pupil 4 kept silent for long periods of time. However, the class teacher said that silence was a natural part of the language learning process but it should not last more than six months. His silence was attributed to social factors, possibly because of the differences between his Traveller Gypsy culture and the dominant culture in class and also his lack of communication skills:

"Pupil 4 is having problems socially, so therefore he's not speaking. And we need to get him speaking and to be confident. You can tell by his body language. He's not actually...ummm (the interviewee was thinking). He's not actually interacting normally with the other children, whereas other new arrivals are very confident with the other children. So this is an issue that needs to be sorted before he's able to develop further." (Inclusion teacher, school C)

Pupil 4 was observed to listen attentively to what others were saying and relied on non-verbal gestures to ask and answer questions. He was able to follow simple instructions and copy what other pupils were doing, and it was easy for him to answer yes/no questions. He expressed his needs using simple words such as "toilet", "drink" and "play". With regard to reading and writing, pupil 4 was aware that English is read and written from left to right and with time, he was able to read and write the English alphabet, numbers and sounds and establish meaning of a text

by looking at the pictures. In terms of social skills, he showed a great deal of shyness and a lack of confidence.

In terms of writing skills, in one lesson the teacher expressed frustration about a particular situation when pupil 4 used drawing instead of writing:

The class teacher asked the children to go outside in order to touch the snow, feel the snow and then to write a poem about it. After coming back to the class pupil 4, who is a newly arrived child, did not understand what the teacher said and instead of writing he drew a picture of a boy. At the end of literacy hour time, he recognised that the lesson was about snow. He was unable to write a word about it. He only drew a snowman. (Observational notes, school C)

Case study 5

Pupil 5 was a newly arrived pupil in school C. She was from Poland and had been in England for three years. Before coming to England, pupil 5 had a very limited experience of using English. She spoke Polish to her mother and father but English with her friends and cousins. When she first arrived, she received language support by a Polish multilingual assistant for some months. When pupil 5 was asked whether she liked to learn English she said:

“I like to learn English to have more friends, but sometimes I don’t understand what people say in English.” (Pupil 5, school C)

This language sample was taken from a piece of written work pupil 5 did in literacy on ‘the use of alliteration, personification and rhyme in a poem about snow’:

As we arrived by trimtrale, I can see all the ground
Covered with White delicate snow. I can hear cold
Wind blowing in my ears. I can feel freezing ice
And snow in my hand. The snow on the ground
is shining in the snow, it shines like stars in the sky.

Pupil 5 had worked hard to write this poem, and she also received support from adults in the class with writing. The class teacher described this sample of writing as ‘poor writing’.

Case study 6

Pupil 6 was a newly arrived child in school B, and had been in England for two years. Her parents were refugees and asylum seekers and came from Somalia. The child had prior schooling experiences and spoke Somali. After two years of schooling, she had developed 'survival' English skills and she was offered support by the multilingual assistant in small groups to develop her academic English. She had also benefitted from the buddy system, where she talked and worked with other Somali pupils in the same class. According to the class teacher, pupil 6 was a confident learner, who took part in different activities in class by contributing to classroom interactions and discussions. My observation of pupil 6 showed her to be interested in some literacy activities. When asked about what she liked best in the school, she answered by saying "my Somali friend" - referring to her buddy. Since her arrival in England, pupil 6 had changed school three times due to immigration related issues. She had left for another school one week after the interview was completed.

Case study 7

In school B, I met pupil 7, a newly arrived pupil from Poland. He had been in England for three years and developed good conversational skills in English. But there was a particular concern about his writing. The following extract gives an idea of the types of errors I observed:

On 4th august in Britain German's talk at Christmas time. Is war at august to September 1914. Araes friends played with uncle, but they didnt play with the german's chirdren because London didn't Like german's At September Lord Roberts send a long mesaege to the Chirdren. So as uncle teddy jointed the royal. (Copied from the original source: child's writing notebook)

This excerpt shows spelling mistakes and problems with the sentence structure, tense and verb endings, punctuation, and the use of capital letters. At times, pupil 7 appeared hesitant to ask questions or volunteer an answer. He relied on the class teacher to support and motivate him all the time to enable him to concentrate on different tasks and activities. On different occasions, I noticed that pupil 7 did not understand what the teacher said; he did not complete his work and the overall quality of his work was poor. When asked if he liked literacy, pupil 7 said “No”, because he did not understand what the words meant and had some problems with spelling.

The seven case studies introduced here show variations in the needs and capabilities of newly arrived pupils. While some newly arrived children were motivated, others appeared to be quiet and withdrawn. Their familiarity with the new culture played a crucial role in their learning and language development. The case studies show that language permeates much of newly arrived children’s learning, and plays an important part in facilitating and hindering their access to the curriculum.

The case studies show that a silent phase is normal in newly arrived children’s learning, and should not be looked at as a hindrance to their learning. In some cases, newly arrived children’s silence may cause confusion amongst people working with them as to whether they have language needs or social and emotional needs or a combination of both. This means that teachers should be attentive to specific details children may experience during the silent phase such as length of time the

child remains silent and their concentration on different learning tasks and communication with other children.

Given that the newly arrived children in the case studies came from asylum seeker and refugee and immigrant backgrounds, family and social factors, such as unsettled lifestyle and mobility, constituted a crucial part of their life and resulted in disrupted schooling and irregular attendance. This in turn resulted in gaps in their learning, and caused inconsistencies in different aspects of schools' provision such as teachers' assessment and planning.

Schools' organisational structures such as the role of multilingual assistants, the buddy system, and bilingual material and resources supported newly arrived children's learning. However, some gaps and inconsistencies in schools' organisational structures such as lack of multilingual assistants have been cited in the case studies.

Although factors influencing newly arrived children's learning overlap within different contexts (the child, the family and the school), language remains the main factor that permeates so much of newly arrived children's learning and language development.

5.1.2 Established EAL children: "Advanced knowledge of English"

The observational notes showed that advanced learners of EAL were familiar or confident users of English. These children are established in schools and have been to England for more than three years. They were able to communicate and converse with teachers and children in different contexts. However, their ability to speak fluently masked underlying difficulties in literacy such as reading and writing. Some

advanced learners of EAL were able to understand common idioms and proverbs in the English language and, at times, it was difficult to differentiate between their accent and the accents of other monolingual pupils from White British backgrounds. Classroom observations showed that the most salient feature of advanced learners of EAL in schools A and C was using their first language during play time and lunch time, since languages such as Urdu, Punjabi or Gujarati were common in the school. The advanced learners of EAL moved with ease between English and their first language, depending on the contexts they found themselves in and what they found appropriate:

“I speak English with those people who speak English and Urdu with those people who speak Urdu.” (Pupil 19, Pakistan, school A)

“I can speak three languages.” (Pupil 26, India, school C)

“I use both. I go to Urdu classes every day. I love it.” (Pupil 27, Pakistan, school C)

Some advanced learners of EAL preferred their first language because they felt more comfortable and able to engage with people from their linguistic backgrounds, including their families:

“I speak English with my cousins, but mostly I speak Bengali.” (Pupil 20, Pakistan, school A)

“I speak Urdu at home. I feel more comfortable when I speak Urdu.” (Pupil 27, Pakistan, school C)

“I speak Punjabi to my grandparents. They don’t understand English.” (Pupil 26, India, school C)

By contrast, some advanced learners of EAL said that they spoke English only and had no or little knowledge of their first language:

“I don’t understand French. My first language is English.” (Pupil 23, Congo, school B)

“I love English. It’s easy. My parents speak English at home.” (Pupil 24, Congo, school B)

“I speak Swahili when I go to Africa. But here I speak English. People can’t understand my first language.” (Pupil 25, Kenya, school B)

The interview data revealed that advanced EAL children enjoyed school and understood what the teacher and the children said and they liked to learn English, but some said that they found spelling, punctuation and grammar difficult.

“I love school. It’s interesting.” (Pupil 26, India, school C)

“I love to play with my friends. I love to come to school.” (Pupil 24, Congo, school B)

“I love literacy time. It’s nice to read books about scary adventures.” (Pupil 25, Kenya, school B)

“I struggle with spelling. It’s difficult to spell everything correctly.” (Pupil 23, Congo, school B)

Parents of advanced learners of EAL varied in terms of their support to their children’s education. Some children indicated that their parents spoke English at home, helped with their homework and encouraged them to learn:

“My parents ask about what I am learning at school. They help with spelling difficult words sometimes.” (Pupil 25, Kenya, school B)

“I read to my mum.” (Pupil 27, Pakistan, school C)

“My parents have access to school website. They learn about different activities we learn at school.” (Pupil 23, Congo, school B)

While other advanced learners of EAL said that their parents had little or no English and could not support their learning:

“My parents can’t read English. They can’t help.” (Pupil 22, Pakistan, school A)

“My dad looks to see what I’m learning at school. He is not always able to understand my writing.” (Pupil 28, India, school C)

The following are case studies of advanced learners of EAL:

Case study 8

In school A, pupil 8 was born in England and came from a Pakistani family established in England. The class teacher described her as a confident speaker of English, but raised some concerns around her reading comprehension and limited vocabulary knowledge and indicated that the pupil had difficulties with decoding text which in turn affected her reading comprehension. After reading the text, pupil 8 could only identify the main ideas without offering a detailed description in terms of events, details and conclusions. Classroom observations showed that pupil 8 was shy and quiet, and made little contributions to classroom interactions and discussions. During playtime, pupil 8 used Urdu to communicate with other children of Pakistani heritage.

In line with the class teacher's concerns, the language support teacher had similar concerns, stating that more language support was necessary for this pupil, such as teaching her how to pronounce the words, understand the new words in the text and answer the comprehension questions after reading. Classroom observations revealed that the child was able to produce a long text of writing, but with many spelling and grammatical mistakes. At times, her writing was difficult to read because word syllables were missing. Another classroom observation showed that pupil 8 was able to produce a good sample of writing, modeled on what was written by the teacher. On different occasions, I noticed that pupil 8 asked the teacher, or the language support teacher for instructions regarding writing tasks.

Case study 9

Pupil 9 in school B was of Black African heritage from Kenya. His first language was Swahili. He arrived in England with his family when he was three years old. He said in the interview that he could not speak Swahili and preferred to speak English all the time. The class teacher was pleased with pupil's 9 reading and writing and said that his parents were very supportive. They always came to school and asked the teacher about their child's progress. However, the class teacher encouraged pupil 9 to be confident and to take part in classroom discussions and interactions. Classroom observation showed that pupil 9 could use English with ease with children and teachers. The child could comprehend different types of text (e.g. poems, letters, and stories), and could write long stories independently requiring spelling support on very few occasions. His writing reflected a good vocabulary knowledge and correct use of verbs, but with spelling and punctuation mistakes.

Case study 10

In school C I met pupil 10 who was of Pakistani heritage born in England. She spoke Mirpuri as her first language. The child switched easily between her first language and English and used her first language when talking with other Pakistani pupils in school. After school day she learnt the Quran and Arabic at the mosque. The class teacher said that pupil 10 did better at subjects such as science and maths because these subjects are less dependent on language and that sometimes pupil 10 had a problem with understanding the cultural references in a text, such as English proverbs and idioms. Classroom observations revealed that pupil 10 took part in different classroom discussions and interactions and worked with other children. Pupil 10 could write quickly, but with many spelling and grammatical mistakes. Her

spelling of the words was affected by the way she pronounced the words, for example, she wrote 'the' referring to 'there', 'hi' referring to 'high', and 'stat' referring to 'start'. During writing, pupil 10 relied largely on words and phrases drawn from everyday speaking and listening and was very good at working as part of a team.

Case study 11

In school C, an interview was conducted with pupil 11 who came from a Pakistani family. The observational notes showed that pupil 11 interacted well in most school discussions and that he was engaged attentively with all literacy tasks. He was a confident speaker of English in class. The class teacher said that pupil 11 showed interest in most literacy tasks. However, he was not familiar with figurative uses of the English language. During the literacy hour, the class teacher asked the children to write about snow and the following is a language sample of his writing:

Through the misty window,
I can see the crystal white snow,
As the people crawl and leave their dusty footprint
On the snow
Also I could see and might know
The wind is as fast as a cheetah
The blazing sun is a ball of chillies,
As it melts away the crystal snow,
Like a liquidly ice ball.
I could touch the dancing snow,
As the wind pushes it on my tongue.
When I touch the crystal white snow,
It makes a crunch sound,
As I squiz it in my hand
I can hear the children,
Playing with the snow,
Although its searching cold.
I can smell the fresh misty air.
As it travels through my frozen rose
And out my nose.

The class teacher commented that pupil 11 could improve this writing sample by including more examples of alliteration, rhymes and personification.

This section has highlighted the facets of the advanced learners of EAL. The advanced learners of EAL had dual competence in that they were able to switch flexibly between the first language and the additional language depending on the situation and context. Their proficiency in the additional language was not made up simply by the mastery of conversational and phonological competence, but it also required competence across other areas such as reading and writing. They experienced grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes and had a limited knowledge of vocabulary and comprehension skills, due to difficulties in understanding texts with idiomatic and figurative expressions.

It was evident that the needs of advanced learners of EAL were less complex than newly arrived pupils' needs because they were not at an early stage of learning English and were established in the school for several years. They required additional support and language input in using more complex sentences and engaging in long writing. The children's affiliations to learn an additional language were different. Their first language was regarded as an important tool to communicate with members of family. However, others used English regularly because it is the dominant language.

There is an emphasis in the case studies on the role of the classroom learning environment and pedagogic practices to improve children's language and skills such as teaching strategies used and the role of practitioners such as the EAL teacher.

Furthermore, the role of parental support was highlighted in the case studies, in that it reflected positively on children's learning.

5.1.3 British born EAL children: fluent speakers of English

British born EAL pupils observed in schools were fluent in English at the level of native speakers of English. They were able to communicate with teachers in different social and learning contexts, and demonstrated knowledge of different uses of language (e.g. metaphor, simile, alliteration and personification) and of different genres of writing (e.g. poetry, story, autobiography and reports). Their contributions to different discussions in the class showed excellent speaking skills and background knowledge. Most of the British born and fluent English speaking EAL children interviewed for this study had been placed by the school in the 'gifted and talented' group [i.e. high attaining children who could achieve above what is expected in their learning].

Interviews with gifted and talented EAL pupils showed that they had some characteristics that underpinned their school success. Although they were bilingual or trilingual, they said that they mostly spoke English at home, and their parents also did so. They spoke their first language in very few cases with some members of family who cannot understand English, such as grandparents.

Gifted and talented EAL children liked to read and write and to learn English because this procedure was interesting. They commented that they worked independently on most literacy activities at home and that their parents were very supportive and encouraged them to learn and gave them extra activities beyond school homework. One child said that he had a private tutor for all subjects.

The class teacher in school C stated that in some situations this group of EAL children outperformed their monolingual peers from White British background:

“There are, I think, in this class, about three... two or three, white British... born here and they are underachieving and a lot of my top groups are all from EAL backgrounds.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

The Y6 class teacher pointed to the role of parental involvement in the learning of gifted and talented EAL children:

“And I think it’s very much the work you do at home as well. I think this has such a big impact.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Classroom observations and interview data have shown that gifted and talented EAL children’s skills and abilities were extended through focused work and advanced tasks to enhance their learning. Also, teachers had planned opportunities to explore all aspects of language and literacy skills through challenging and enrichment tasks and activities:

“We have our gifted and talented who are at the top. We need to really challenge and make sure whether they are pushed high enough so they’re stimulated all of the time.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

The following are case studies of gifted and talented EAL children:

Case study 12

Pupil 12 was a gifted and talented pupil from school C. Her first language was Punjabi and spoke English fluently. She took part in all literacy activities successfully. This is a sample from pupil’s 12 writing. The task was about using alliteration, personification and rhyme in a poem. Pupil 12 used correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. The class teacher described this piece of work as “excellent”:

“As I opened the window, I saw the icy blanket over the crystal clear mountains.
The snow pranced elegantly as it fell from the sky slowly
As I stuck my hand out of the window I saw my hand go blue, icy and cold.

As I opened the misty window slowly, the snowflake touched my cheek and flickered on the frozen floor.
The snow came rushing down with light as it touched the floor and melted slowly into water.
Moving forward my heart froze with coldness and cold.
As I closed the window the snowy and night day continued on, day and night.”

This language sample shows that pupil 12 spelt the words accurately and used alliteration, rhymes and personification in her writing. She had developed a good structure and used a range of vocabulary.

Case study 13

Pupil 13 was a gifted and talented EAL child in school C. He spoke English and Punjabi and was able to produce different types of writing for a range of audiences. He was a confident learner, motivated to learn and to take part in different classroom discussions and interactions. Classroom observations revealed that pupil 13 had a broad knowledge across a range of subjects, and was interested in sessions that involved speaking, acting and role-playing. During the school’s speaking day, the Y6 class teacher asked the children to choose any topic they wanted, and to present in front of the class. I noticed that pupil 13 spoke competently and confidently. He talked in detail about his dream of travelling to space in the future. He talked at length about the space shuttle he wished to design, and described what he was going to see. It was apparent that pupil 13 was able to express complex ideas and had imagination.

Case study 14

Pupil 14 was a gifted and talented child in school B. She came from Somalia with her family and had been in England for seven years. Classroom observations revealed that pupil 14 was proficient in English and Somali and worked independently on

different tasks. The class teacher said that pupil 14 enjoyed reading and writing and described her as “a very able girl”. During the interview, she said that she did extra activities at home such as reading and writing to support her learning and was very happy in the school. I noticed that pupil 14 collaborated with other Somali pupils as a buddy; helped them with doing different activities and switched easily between English and Somali. In one literacy hour, the class teacher asked the children to write about the famous football player ‘David Beckham’, I noticed that pupil 14 worked independently on the task and finished her writing quickly. The class teacher described pupil’s 14 writing as being excellent because the child used grammar and vocabulary correctly with a good structure and progression of ideas.

The case studies show that gifted and talented EAL children had competence in phonology, syntax and semantics and they were able to vary their conversational competence and speaking to suit different audiences and social contexts. Their conversational competence was manifested in volunteering answers and asking for clarification. The needs of gifted and talented EAL children were reflected in schools’ provision and practice and their needs were identified by teachers. The children received special support from schools to achieve the highest possible standards because their capability in English is sufficient for them to access the curriculum with its various applications. The differentiated curriculum provided appropriate tasks with high cognitive demands and teachers had high expectations of the children and provided stimulating tasks that allowed the children to be creative and independent.

The case studies of the EAL pupils, above, interview data, classroom observations, school policy documents and questionnaires data revealed that three types of factors exerted an influence on EAL pupils' learning and language development:

5.2 Language and literacy factors

There was a clear consensus among school practitioners that language and literacy factors are prevalent across EAL children and can influence their learning irrespective of their stage of language development. A combination of factors was said to accelerate EAL children's learning of an additional language. School practitioners indicated that there were variations amongst EAL children in terms of their proficiency in English which can be dependent on their cultures and countries. For instance, children from certain cultures may learn an additional language faster than children from other cultures:

“In fact it's much broader and wider than this, so you've got some children who're newly arrived, who've got little or no English and even there can be a wide variety because depending on which culture and country they come from. There will be quite big differences.” (Language support teacher, school A)

EAL children' ability and speed to learn English was attributed to their country of origin. According to one participant, children from Eastern European origins took a longer time to acquire the language, compared with Black African children but the participant did not provide reasons for such differences amongst EAL children:

“It really does vary. From what I've seen Eastern European children find it a lot harder than African children to access the curriculum.”(EAL coordinator, school B)

EAL children's familiarity with the English sounds and alphabets was another determining factor in EAL children's ability and speed in acquiring the new language:

“If they are coming with the English style alphabet knowledge, obviously they've got that as a basis to build on, but of course coming from a

language where the alphabets and sounds are completely different then this is another issue that impacts on their ability to acquire English.” (Language support teacher, school A)

There was a brief reference in the interviews with school practitioners to how an additional language is acquired and class teachers did not articulate the mechanisms, principles and processes of an additional language acquisition. The exception was the language support teacher in school A, who showed awareness of how the additional language is acquired and referred to the length of time the EAL child needs to learn the additional language:

“It actually takes about 6 or 7 years to get to a near enough equivalent standard of English as a native speaker.” (Language support teacher, school A)

It was clear that EAL children required more linguistic input to learn the additional language, and in some cases, lack of language proficiency was said to mask newly arrived pupils’ intelligence and other skills:

“New arrivals who are intelligent, but it is difficult to say how intelligent due to lack of language.” (KS2 experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

There were contrasting views operating across the three schools with regard to EAL children’s ability to learn an additional language. The first view of these argued that lack of language slowed newly arrived pupils’ learning and increased teachers’ concerns regarding meeting their needs:

“Newly arrived children have difficulty with understanding language. Sometimes I take it for granted that they do understand. I now ask constantly if they understand.” (TA, questionnaire participant, school B)

Another supporter of this view argued that lack of language affected different aspects of newly arrived children’s learning:

“Their language affects every single aspect of their learning.” (SEN teacher, school C)

The second view argued that some newly arrived children learned English quickly and that language was not a barrier to their learning. One participant reported:

“He didn’t speak lots of English when he first came. I think he picked up very quickly. I was really surprised that he hasn’t been in the school before. But it was really surprising how quickly they do learn. Language was not a barrier to his learning at all.” (TA, school B)

As the children progress through upper Key Stage 2, the nature of the curriculum becomes more complex, and demanding, and this requires children to have advanced language skills to comprehend information and access different learning tasks and may put pressure on schools to respond to their needs:

“In key stage two newly arrived pupils may struggle with understanding difficult Y6 topics that require a lot of language to ensure clear understanding. Science is one of these lessons that need a lot of language.” (Experienced teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

Similarly, the Y6 class teacher in school C reported that the learning process of EAL pupils, in KS2, is more difficult compared with young bilingual learners in the foundation stage, because their needs are more complex and the curriculum is more demanding:

“It’s particularly difficult when they come in as EAL pupils and they are in KS2 because they have then to move on with their class and with their learning. Also the learning is going to be considerably more complex than it would have been in the foundation stage. In the foundation stage the gap was not so big. But now it’s so complicated, we have to deliver a curriculum so that we’re achieving the higher levels. In KS2 the gap is bigger and it’s much more difficult to cater for them.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

The Y6 class teacher in school C recognised the dilemma EAL children faced in balancing their lack of language with the demands of a national curriculum in the secondary stage. The Y6 class teacher in school C raised concerns about EAL children’s ability to adapt to the new learning environment with different learning

structures, the demanding curriculum, intensive tasks and different learning mechanisms available for support:

“In primary school we still cater for them because they’ve got the need and we need to cater for that need. I don’t know how they would cater for them. I think it would be much more difficult. They won’t have the time to stop thinking and absorb the information or understand the information.”(Y6 class teacher, school C)

Policy documents have shown that speaking a first language at home is an important feature for developing EAL children’s literacy skills in the additional language. The following extracts were taken from schools A, B and C respectively:

“We believe that all children in school benefit from this use of home language. It is apparent that confidence and self-esteem increases and children can discuss their ideas, understand tasks more clearly and as a result they become more active and effective learners.” (EAL policy, school A: p.9)

“Continuing the development of the first language while adding English has positive effects on cognitive development and the child awareness of how language works.” (EAL policy, school B: p.7)

“Share learning in their home language. It is our belief that this will aid learning and enable children to attain more highly.” (EAL policy, school C: p.10)

However, speaking children’s first language was recognised as a temporary strategy until the child was able to learn survival English. Bilingualism policies were not always adaptable to school practitioners because implementing such policies was dependent on the availability of multilingual assistants in schools. In practice, school practitioners tended to privilege the use of second language over first language when they talked about bilingualism:

“It’s not necessary whether they are refugees or it’s whether they are from second and third generation families established in England, so if they speak English when they are at home so then that’s great because this helps with how schools work, but if they speak Urdu, Polish, Russian at home, well that slows down the rate of learning English.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“I’m not discouraging my children from continuing to use their Urdu or Bengali or whatsoever during school day. But it would be easier for me if they speak in English. It’s better for their learning because I may understand one or two languages but how about when you have so many languages in one class.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

These two extracts show that practitioners in schools were not able to achieve the intended outcomes of bilingualism policies because the use of first language created barriers to the learning of the additional language. Practitioners were not able to strike a balance between improving children’s language capacity in English and encouraging children to maintain first language. It seems that there were two distinct perspectives operating in the three schools with regard to the first language acquisition in EAL children. The first perspective was advocated by the schools’ policy documents and reflected a whole school approach towards maintaining EAL children’s first language. The second perspective was supported by school practitioners who thought that maintaining children’s first language inhibited their additional language acquisition.

Furthermore, an emphasis has been placed on EAL children’s lack of comprehension skills and their limited vocabulary knowledge. This feature was most apparent in the advanced learners of EAL and was attributed to limited lifestyle experiences and little exposure to language:

“The children who are born here, but perhaps their families weren’t born in England may have had a much more limited lifestyle experiences of language experience than the children who’ve perhaps lived fully within the English culture. And so their vocabulary will be more limited, their ability to express more complicated ideas and their ability to understand more difficult texts will be more limited.” (Language support teacher, school A)

In this extract the language support teacher argued that culture and lifestyle can be barriers to EAL children's learning and language development since they affected children's ability to develop their linguistic skills. However, policy documents were in favour of maintaining EAL children's cultural backgrounds:

"Maintaining children's cultural values will accelerate the learning process." (EAL policy, school A: p11)

The extracts above show that schools agreed with inclusive policies that support cultural differences, but within school contexts, school practitioners struggled with implementing these policies and found that some cultural practices may impact negatively on learning the additional language. Practitioners' beliefs about the role of culture in posing obstacles to EAL children's learning was in conflict considering policies' endorsement of the importance of maintaining EAL children's cultural values. However, such a mismatch between policy and practitioners' views may be due to policies being ignored, given the difficulties of implementing them.

The data collected from interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations showed that school practitioners in the three schools were in agreement with one another about lack of different types of vocabulary (e.g., technical, scientific, and mathematical) required for all subjects:

"Understanding of mathematical language [is essential for understanding maths]. Children who are at a more advanced stage of language often understand calculations such as $6+4=$ $9-6=$. They face challenges when exploring vocabulary such as less than, greater than, before, after, difference, least, fewer etc..." (Every Child Counts Teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

"Maths is generally a universal language; however, when bilingual children move onto problem solving, key vocabulary needs to be learnt." (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

“Lack of understanding of language, vocabulary and grammar [has a negative impact on EAL children’s learning].” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school B)

“Understanding of specific vocabulary such as industrial types of vocabulary) [is important for EAL children’s learning].” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

“A lack of sophisticated vocabulary - words need to be learnt/taught prior to understanding concepts or comprehending a text.” (Newly qualified teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

“Lack of vocabulary is a challenge. Also comprehension is demanding. Vocabulary is often basic and our aim is to improve and extend better and more powerful choices.” (Deputy head teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

“Some children do not have a wide vocabulary and so could miss a key element of a lesson just by misunderstanding one word. To try to overcome this, we think carefully about the vocabulary we choose to use when teaching, frequently check children’s’ understanding of key vocabulary and provide them with visual clues, as well as word banks.” (Newly qualified teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

The extracts above concurred with classroom observations which showed that children could not always find the appropriate vocabulary to support their writing and wanted help with understanding new vocabulary in text.

Improving EAL children’s reading was suggested as a strategy to improve EAL children’s language skills:

“Reading is something I’ve focused on for this year to try to push a lot because if we can’t increase their linguistic experiences by direct experiences then we need to increase their reading capacity and their desire to read.” (Language support teacher, school A)

It was noted that in many situations EAL children had only a general idea about what teachers were talking about. They understood speech through the ‘process of approximation’ which means that the children got an approximate and often inaccurate meaning of what was spoken:

“They get by the process of what they call the process of approximation. They have got a rough idea of what’s going on in a text or in a piece of communication but they haven’t got the precision and process that they have and what I’m trying to do is to get a more overt awareness of what’s going on within the language they’ve confronted with. So they’ve been picking up the nuances and these sorts of language.” (Language support teacher, school A)

The extract above reflects the language support teacher’s broad knowledge of mechanisms of additional language learning. Furthermore, the fact that EAL children in school A had a superficial understanding of what was going around them in school gave an indication that the language spoken by school practitioners was not accessible for children which contradicted the data collected from policy documents and interviews which argued that all staff used clear and simple forms of language:

“We will use language that will be accessible for all pupils and give support to those who have additional language needs.”(Educational Inclusion and Equality Policy, school A and B: p.12 and 9/10 respectively)

“I just break things down. I have to break things down in very simple language; I can help by explaining things simply.” (Y6 TA, school A)

On different occasions it was noted that EAL children looked bored, and were not able to understand what teachers said. To a certain extent, it seems that the data collected from different sources were at cross meanings with one another, with some school practitioners and policy documents stressing the use of simple language, and classroom observations showing that some teachers used language that was not accessible for EAL children. This points to inconsistencies and contradictions in the data since results generated from one method did not correspond to those generated from another method and that schools may support policies that can be difficult to be translated into practice.

School practitioners across the three schools reported that EAL children could not understand figurative and strange expressions and cultural references in the texts. The following extracts came from interviews with school practitioners across the three schools:

“They sometimes don’t understand some of the phrases that are very common in the British culture. You know these phrases that the British people use. So when our EAL children are reading such phrases, it completely flies over their heads because they don’t understand it. And I think you see that a lot more as a teacher. They haven’t got that understanding because they don’t really know what this phrase means. It doesn’t make any sense.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

“And they take things literally when they’re reading something that I suppose maybe a little joke or just a figure of speech, they will take it literally say for example, ‘pigs can fly’. We all know that it’s just almost made up like we know that it’s supposed to be enhancing the truth and that it’s not gonna happen. They actually think that they can fly - I do realise that.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

“We are looking at the most common reasons that stop EAL children from making progress. They struggle with understanding these strange, quirky sayings like ‘it’s raining cats and dogs.’ They struggle with things which are so bizarre in the English language.” (Deputy head, school A)

It seems that there are some contradictions and tensions in the data that generated from different methods. The extracts above showed that the use of figurative and strange expressions was still in use in the three schools and that the onus was on EAL children to understand the difficult expressions of language. This contradicts policy documents which emphasised:

“Avoiding language that cannot be understood.”(Inclusion and equality policy, schools A and B: p.10).

In many ways it seems that schools supported policies to meet individual needs, while the implementation of these policies was difficult in practice.

School practitioners were asked about the importance of literacy skills for EAL children's learning. Their responses varied across the three schools as shown in Table (5.1). Compared with reading, writing and listening, speaking had the highest ratings: 7/8, 11/14 and 9/9 school practitioners in schools A,B, and C respectively answered with "great extent".

Table 5.1: The importance of literacy skills in EAL children's learning

Literacy	School	Lesser extent	Somewhat	Great extent
Reading	A	-	3	4
	B	3	4	6
	C	-	3	5
	N= school A: 7, school B: 13, school C: 8			
Writing	A	1	1	5
	B	3	3	8
	C	-	4	4
	N= school A: 7, school B: 14, school C: 8			
Listening	A	-	3	4
	B	2	3	8
	C	1	2	7
	N= school A: 7, school B: 13, school C: 10			
Speaking	A	-	1	7
	B	1	2	11
	C	-	-	9
	N= school A: 8, school B: 14, school C: 9			

5.2.1 Conclusion

In this section there is a variability of school practitioners' views in the ways different language and literacy skills can affect EAL children's learning and language development. School practitioners argued that EAL children may face some difficulties in learning which occur as a result of their unfamiliarity with topics and cultural references in texts and their limited vocabulary knowledge. This means that EAL learners needed some kind of input to learn different language and literacy

skills. Furthermore, language used in schools has impacted on how EAL children are taught in the classroom and in turn, has presented difficulties for EAL children's learning. School practitioners were primarily interested in meeting EAL children's needs while schools' policies supported a whole school approach to dealing with EAL in general without taking into consideration the implications of these policies in practice.

5.3 Special educational needs

Classroom observations and interview data revealed that SEN can inhibit EAL children's language development. It was noted that EAL children with SEN were less able than other children to integrate into the group and wasted their time in playing with objects and moving around the classroom. They took longer to complete learning activities and tasks. Key features of EAL children with SEN are shown in the following case studies which were carried out in school A:

Case study 15

Pupil 15, of Pakistani heritage, had speech and language difficulties as diagnosed by the SENCO. During classroom observations, considerable difficulty was noted in his interactions with the teacher and with the children. His speech contained unlinked utterances, with some parts of speech omitted, displaying a lot of hesitancy in the flow of words. The child got support from the SENCO, the TA and the language support teacher. The school's support of the child included individual and small group work with an emphasis on speaking clearly. The child demonstrated his knowledge through writing and in many occasions the class teacher asked him to read aloud in order to build his confidence and self-esteem. His writing was very much affected by oral language problems showing many spelling and grammatical

mistakes and it was very difficult to understand because of his poor handwriting. He spent most of his time playing with objects and watching what other children did.

Case study 16

Pupil 16 was placed in the underachieving group [i.e. low attaining children who could not achieve the expected progress in their learning due to language difficulties or SEN] and received support from the TA and the language support teacher. Pupil 16 had received regular support by an educational psychologist who helped her communicate with other people and express herself clearly. The class teacher reported that when pupil 16 was first referred by the school, with a query as to whether she had SEN, the only interpretation given for her slow progress was that she had social and emotional difficulties as diagnosed by the SENCO and the educational psychologist. Pupil 16 was a very quiet child and looked withdrawn, sad and lonely. She understood everything the teacher said, but remained silent most of the time. The class teacher reported that the emotional and social problems posed obstacles to pupil's 16 learning because the child was unable to interact effectively with others and showed little interest in learning.

Case study 17

Pupil 17, from Pakistan, had speech, language and communication problems and difficulties with memory and motor skills as diagnosed by the SENCO and external professionals. Due to her disabilities, pupil 17 was unable to follow instructions or to interact with the class teacher. She did what other pupils were doing without understanding the tasks. Repetition was the key teaching strategy used with her. I noticed that external professionals came every week to assess her progress. Although she could not tackle the Y6 curriculum successfully due to her lack of basic

literacy and numeracy skills, the class teacher reported that her parents refused to send their daughter to a special school for SEN. She was placed in the underachieving group and was supported by the SENCO and the teaching assistant. She supported her speaking with body language and non-verbal clues. She read stories and songs designed for children in Year 1 and Year 2, with lots of contextual support such as pictures. She understood a small range of vocabulary and had difficulty in remembering what she had read. She joined in with most of the activities during the literacy hour but did not participate orally. She could copy words and short phrases, supported with pictures and could spell very short words such as 'cat' and 'car'.

In the three case studies above, SENs exert an influence on children's learning and language development. Key features of EAL children with SEN were their reliance on adult support (e.g. SENCO, TA), lack of confidence, low literacy skills and lack of concentration and motivation to learn. The children were placed in the underachieving group and had difficulties in communicating with the children and with the staff in schools. Schools facilitated children's access to the curriculum and took into consideration the nature of learning activities provided, grouping and lessons content. The children were supported by professionals and existing services who responded to their specific needs and an interprofessional collaboration between teachers and additional adults informed appropriate provision and facilitated their learning.

5.3.1 SEN and EAL

A diagnostic assessment, based on SEN and EAL filter questions, was carried out by the SENCO to diagnose SEN in EAL children. The SENCO shared the evidence and the information obtained from assessments with class teachers. All of the answers to the SEN and EAL filter questions were based on evidence collected from different sources: class teachers' observations and assessments and parents' concerns with regard to the EAL child's learning. SEN documents showed that the questions were designed to measure different aspects of the EAL child's learning and were classified into eight categories: 1) lack of response, 2) problems with listening, 3) lack of oral expression over a range of skills, 4) difficulty in progressing in areas of the curriculum other than English, 5) slow or little progress with reading, 6) difficulties with writing for a variety of purposes, 7) difficulties with handwriting and 8) behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The SENCO and the SEN teacher reported that the child's answers to these filter questions acted as an initial diagnosis of whether the EAL child should be given EAL or SEN provision and the nature of their SEN. The diagnostic assessment was used as a measure of the possible need for further intervention and to help teachers modify and improve their teaching plans and inform the appropriate provision for a child's grouping.

Reaching a clear decision of whether the child had language needs or SEN took several months from the child's arrival and making an accurate distinction between EAL and SEN was considered to be a complicated process, mainly hindered by children's and parents' limited proficiency in the English language. SEN documents

explained that working with parents in terms of collecting background information and notes about their children's learning and their individual needs is a crucial part of the differentiation between EAL and SEN. However, this process is hindered by the parents' and the children's lack of language:

"If the parents haven't got the English they can't explain well. It's just difficult to know how we would expect the EAL child to progress. And obviously if the child has got English needs as well and they don't understand what the assessment is so they can't get a judgment from the assessment. So it's quite difficult." (SENCO, school B)

Wherever possible, EAL children's learning needs can be assessed in their home language by conducting first language analysis. The multilingual assistant can support the identification process through making a judgment of whether the child's needs arise because of his/her language needs or SEN:

"With the newly arrived children when they come in here, there is a second language analysis done. For example, the Romanian multilingual assistant comes in to work with that child (Pupil G) and she would analyse his first language, so in Romanian he can do this and this. So we can see, and especially for the EAL, we can see whether it's an EAL or whether it's SEN." (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Information gathered about children's previous schooling was considered to be an important part of the differentiation between EAL and SEN:

"Sometimes it comes with history, sometimes it comes with previous school notes, or it comes with the other school's SEN register when they come here." (SEN teacher, school C)

External agencies which involved speech and language therapists and specialists were involved in the identification and assessment process when schools have concerns about the child's learning. Some tests might be conducted to test the child's hearing, sight and speech:

"In some cases external agencies come to school when we have concerns about children's hearing, sight or speech." (SEN teacher, school C)

“We have outside agencies who come in and do assessment on the children. And they pick up if they have memory difficulties, if they’ve got difficulties in following instructions or if they’ve got mass difficulties.” (SENCO, school B)

Schools’ policy documents showed that schools’ procedures with regard to differentiating between EAL and SEN were informed by the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice, which recommended that EAL children should not be placed as SEN solely because of differences in the language spoken. Schools’ SEN documents revealed that the needs of EAL children with SEN should be met in mainstream schools, and that the children’s and the parents’ opinions should be taken into account when delivering the provision. The schools’ response to the needs of EAL children with SEN was determined by taking account of the nature of their learning difficulties and needs and by ensuring that SEN children are not stigmatised. Schools’ documents argued that EAL children with SEN should be offered full access to a balanced education, including an appropriate curriculum.

The SEN teacher in school C made a distinction between EAL pupils’ language needs and SEN, in terms of the nature of their needs. She described the needs of EAL pupils as being short term, while the needs of EAL pupils with SEN as being long term and complex. She also explained that what determines the type of support the EAL child receives is the type of learning difficulty he/ she has.

EAL pupils with SEN may experience difficulties with recognising the sound, hearing the sound and saying the sound, which are all considered as indicators of having SEN:

“They may have difficulties in recognising the sound, they have difficulties in hearing the sound, and they have difficulties in saying the sounds.” (SEN teacher, school C)

The only language needs experienced by EAL children arise because of their little exposure to English. The SEN teacher provided an example of the language needs in EAL children:

“It’s really difficult for EAL pupils to get their voice box around some of the sounds easily. They recognise the shape of the letter, but when they come actually to pronounce the sounds, it’s something quite different. And when they want to incorporate that letter into a word. It then affects the way they say the whole word. So it’s purely a language issue.” (SEN teacher, school C)

Since speech, language and communication are regarded as central issues in relation to EAL, a distinction has been made between Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and language needs:

“The children I work with are classed as having Speech Language and Communication Needs because something in their brain is affected so it’s like a physical disability is likely to cause those problems, when obviously children with EAL in their home language they have no difficulties at all.” (SENCO, school B)

The class teacher in school A used a number of clues from other school subjects such as science and maths to differentiate between language needs and SEN:

“I think 10 is a basic concept. They should have learnt in Y2 and Y3. It takes them sort of 8, 9, 10 seconds to answer a question. While most of the class has got it in 3-4 seconds. So they spend long time. There are various clues. Probably one or two more, but yes it’s sort of conversation with adults as well. Things like science. The way they would talk about adaptations or interdependence or habitat. If they were EAL learners, they would try to use that vocabulary and sometimes they get it right and sometimes they get it wrong. If they were SEN, I don’t think they have the confidence to use vocabulary like that, so there are some of the clues I use obviously.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

Practitioners across the three schools presented different views regarding the difference between EAL and SEN and the assessment approaches used. The majority of practitioners were not able to label EAL children with SEN neither they were clear

about different types of SEN. The following extracts came from school practitioners in the three schools:

“We don’t put the new arrivals on SEN register until they have been diagnosed by SEN. We don’t put them on SEN register straight away. But after a term if they aren’t making progress, if they aren’t making visible progress, then I have to go to see (Mrs G) our SENCO. I have conversation with her and say well it’s more than a language issue what do you think? And then she decides if the child will be on the EAL or SEN register.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“Often both (referring to SEN and EAL) are seen as the same thing, but they’re really not.”(KS2 experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

“I’ve studied supporting children with special needs, but with the children who have EAL needs, I think it’s a different area and people who support them need a different training. So I think in a way it’s important to have the support as SEN but you’ve got different staff supporting EAL because they are on different training and they’ve got different skills than I’ve got. So I think in a way if you put it all together you’ve got that worry that one person would be expected to have all of this expertise.”(SENCO, school B)

“We don’t use the same learning material always for SEN as we would use for EAL. It’s different.”(SEN teacher, school C)

“If I met somebody who’s fluent in English it would be apparent quite quickly to whether it was a processing issue or SEN issue because English would be their first language.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“No, I can’t [differentiate between EAL and SEN]. The difference between EAL and SEN is confusing and it needs an expert I mean a SENCO or a speech therapist. We can cooperate with these people to identify children’s needs.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

“As a teacher myself, personally it would be quite difficult in assessing right at the very early of starting career at school.” (Y6B class teacher, school B)

“It’s difficult to know. I always consult our SENCO or the SEN teacher to identify their needs. I mean it’s difficult.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

“It’s very difficult to work with EAL children initially because you don’t know if they got any other issues going on with their learning.” (SEN teacher, school C)

“It’s quite difficult and you have to get the balance between not labelling the EAL child as SEN very quickly because obviously their needs as EAL are

different from SEN. But then also you don't need to be using the fact that the children are EAL for a reason of not succeeding in the school for too long. It's a quite difficult thing to do." (SENCO, school B)

"Absolutely, absolutely we come across it (referring to the distinction between EAL and SEN) all the time all the time. It's quite difficult to make a final judgment of whether the child has SEN or EAL." (EAL coordinator, school B)

"It can be quite easy to confuse the two. It's very difficult to detect what's the EAL issue and what's the SEN issue." (SEN teacher, school C)

In the above extracts, there are variations amongst school practitioners in terms of their knowledge of how to disentangle EAL issues from SEN. The general assumption was that teachers could not make a judgment as to whether the child has SEN or EAL and stated that they always sought support from SENCOs or other human resources to help with the identification. There was evidence of class teachers looking at EAL children with SEN as being the responsibility of SENCOs only, rather than being a shared responsibility as indicated in schools' policies. This meant that teachers relied on SENCOs to identify the needs of EAL children with SEN. This contradicts schools' policies which stated that teachers should expect to work with the SEN children at any point during their teaching journey:

"We believe that all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs." (SEN policy document, school A, B, and C: p. 1, 4, 5 respectively)

Furthermore, there were several references in the interviews to the fact that SEN and EAL can be easily confused, and that making a final judgment of whether the child has SEN or EAL is a difficult process. Difficulties in differentiation between EAL and SEN were attributed to the language barrier. Unlike EAL pupils, the identification of SEN in monolingual children is an easy issue because their first language is English. However, school practitioners expressed a variety of

contradictory views with regard to EAL and SEN. Their views showed them acknowledging the difficulties of distinguishing between EAL and SEN and struggling with identifying children's needs while they also acknowledged that they did not place EAL children with SEN children and that EAL provision was managed separately from SEN. Practitioners did not report any instances of wrong grouping or misidentification of EAL children's needs in schools even in light of the language barrier. However, such unrealistic claims were partly true, and were made because either school practitioners wanted to distance themselves from any responsibility for gaps in schools' structures or because they wanted to play down or hide any mistakes in the identification process.

Participants' ratings for the questionnaire's question about differentiation between EAL and SEN are shown in Table (5.2). It was apparent from the questionnaires that understanding the difference between EAL and SEN was a vital issue. 7/8 participants in school A; 14/15 participants in school B and 11/13 participants in school C, indicated that understanding the difference between EAL and SEN was 'very important.'

Table 5.2: Difference between EAL and SEN

Theme	School	Not at all	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Understanding the difference between EAL and SEN	A	-	-	1	-	7
	B	-	-	-	1	14
	C	-	-	-	2	11
N= school A: 8, school B: 15, school C: 13						

5.3.2. Conclusion

This section has moved beyond teachers' views to schools' policies with regard to SEN and EAL. Whereas schools' policies have provided guidelines on how to differentiate between EAL and SEN, teachers struggled with distinguishing between SEN and EAL. There was also little evidence of how teachers planned and prepared lessons for EAL children with SEN that brought together language and curriculum content which fit their special educational needs.

School practitioners expressed a variety of negative or critical views regarding the lack of language in EAL children. Lack of language caused difficulties in making a distinction between language needs and SEN and put more pressure on SENCOs to identify children's needs. Ironically, there was certainty in the interviews that EAL and SEN were recognised in schools as two different areas and that EAL children's needs were not misidentified even in light of the language barrier. Moreover, there was no evidence in the interviews of incorrect diagnosis of EAL children's needs and this was very unrealistic in diverse schools with high numbers of EAL children.

5.4 Behavioural, social and emotional factors

There was agreement amongst the data that emerged from different sources that a lack of language in EAL children may lead to behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, and that these difficulties were most apparent in newly arrived EAL pupils. The extent to which behavioural, social and emotional factors hindered or supported an EAL child's learning depended solely on the EAL child's language skills.

It was noted that there were some situations where newly arrived pupils looked confused and lost when they were asked by the teacher to do some work and both

teachers and EAL children found it difficult to understand one another. This put more pressures on both teachers and children: on their part teachers found it difficult to deliver the curriculum and check children's understanding on a regular basis while children were not able to interact with other children given the language barrier. Sometimes the children relied on an adult to come and help them and lack of language led to difficulties in understanding what the task required. One participant commented:

"They appear quite lonely and I think that this is a language issue. They don't find it so easy to socialise with the other children who have already established themselves in the school due to the language barrier." (SEN teacher, school C)

A lack of sufficient English affected newly arrived pupils' ability to communicate with other children and to adapt to the new norms, system and routine. Loneliness and isolation were highlighted amongst the key features of this period:

"So they aren't used to a school environment and this obviously has an impact on their ability to learn and to mix with other children and so on." (Language support teacher, school A)

Lack of language was looked at as a burden, since EAL children were required to make an effort to master a new language and to settle in a new learning environment with different norms and routines:

"It's very difficult at break times, it's very difficult at dinner times, and it's very difficult if you want to ask a question." (SEN teacher, school C)

One participant was concerned with EAL children joining school in higher KS2 because of the social and emotional implications of this stage:

"In higher KS2, newly arrived children might feel a bit like the outsider because all other children have been to the school for the last four or five years. So it is difficult if a Y6 pupil tries to fit in the groups of children who by this stage have got their friends." (SEN teacher, school C)

Schools' policy documents acknowledged that schools were aware that newly arrived pupils from certain backgrounds, such as refugees and asylum seekers, required an effective induction and particular care because they normally have emotional needs associated with their immigration status and experiencing trauma, bullying and instability. The emotional well-being of these children was looked at as a priority before any further practical procedures.

Policy documents also showed that sometimes, schools worked with external agencies in order to deal with the complex issues that newly arrived pupils faced such as lack of language and other medical, psychological, emotional and legal needs which could not be met by school staff. Evidence came from schools A and C, respectively:

"Providing an effective programme that ensures that the needs of particular pupils are met e.g. refugees and asylum seekers." (Inclusion and Equality Policy, school A: p.8)

And:

"To ensure that newly arrived pupils from overseas, including refugees and asylum seekers are sensitively integrated into the school and consideration given to their specific needs." (EAL policy, school C: p.1)

It was noted that most newly arrived pupils were shy, withdrawn, and silent. One participant reported that having confidence was an important parameter in the learning of newly arrived pupils and their language acquisition, since it allowed a more accurate identification of their needs:

"It's a confidence issue because sometimes it's a balance between what we can't quite see and which way they're going and it's only when the confidence comes out you can say OK you're confident enough to do this work now." (EAL coordinator, school B)

A lack of confidence was said by several participants to exert an influence on newly arrived pupils' learning and language acquisition and it might be combined with lack of concentration and interest in different subjects. One teacher reported that she encouraged newly arrived pupils in her class to speak and to be confident:

"I think mainly that encouraging them to speak is the one thing I'm trying to do more of. Because quite often newly arrived pupils look quiet and withdrawn. I'm encouraging them to have confidence and have a go. It takes them a little bit longer to actually verbalise their thoughts." (Y6A class teacher, school B)

Encouraging newly arrived pupils to talk was said to encourage the children to build more confidence:

"Getting them to talk is very important so they can build more confidence and relate the situation to their own." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

There was also recognition among staff that not all of the social and emotional factors had a negative influence on EAL children's learning. For instance, good behaviour and respect were found to accelerate an EAL child's learning and language acquisition. One participant reported a situation where good behaviour helped to enhance a newly arrived child's learning, language development and achievement:

"Last year, I had a child in my class who comes from a family that was in a process of breaking up who only arrived in the school part way through Year 6 with no English what-so-ever. In terms of progress, he made the most progress in my class last year entirely down to his attitude because he was very good at listening to adults who are working with him. By the end of being here, he achieved level 4 in his reading and was also close to level 4 in his writing, so he got level 4 for English overall which would be expected of a child who lived in this country all their life. He did that in a year because of his attitude and he didn't have the parental support which all children should be entitled to and he was surrounded by the same group of peers like the rest of the children." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

5.4.1 Conclusion

A key finding that emerged from this section was that behavioural, social and emotional factors appeared to be much dependent on EAL children's language skills. It seems that schools' policies have achieved little in terms of finding practical procedures to overcome emotional, behavioural and social difficulties in EAL children. School practitioners were aware of EAL children's social and emotional needs and their roles were beyond teaching EAL children. There was evidence in the data of school practitioners using procedures such as encouraging the children to speak and build their confidence in order to handle behavioural, social and emotional factors in EAL children. However, this section left some questions unanswered: are strategies used by teachers sufficient on their own right to overcome emotional and social barriers in EAL children? Would different strategies used by school practitioners offer permanent solution to EAL children's emotional problems?

CHAPTER SIX: RESULTS “SITUATIONAL/SYSTEMIC FACTORS”

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected about situational/systemic factors referring to external influences on EAL children’s learning and language development, as cited in classroom observations, the interview data, school policy documents and questionnaires. Throughout this chapter, alphabetical and numerical codes were used to refer to which schools and participants the data came from. A, B, C referred to schools. Numbers 1-23 indicated parents included in the study. With regard to school practitioners who took part in the interviews and the questionnaires, their job roles or specialism were used to refer to their identities. As two Y6 class teachers were interviewed in school B, letters A and B were added alongside their job roles to differentiate their identities (i.e. Y6A class teacher and Y6B class teacher). In order to ensure a consistent and original use of job titles, as reported by the schools, the terms “language support teacher”, “EAL coordinator”, and “inclusion teacher” were used to refer to EAL teachers at schools A, B and C respectively.

Situational/systemic factors consisted of three parts: 1) organisational structures of EAL, 2) social and cultural context of EAL, and 3) educational policies.

6.1 Organisational structures of EAL

The organisational structures of EAL, referring to arrangements and procedures made by schools to support EAL children’s learning, involved five types: 1) Identification and assessment, 2) EAL workforce, 3) workforce development, 4) the curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy, and 5) EAL infrastructure.

6.1.1 Identification and assessment

This section introduces approaches to the identification and assessment used for EAL children across the three schools:

6.1.1.1 EAL children's admission

Admission refers to the first days of EAL children joining the school and settling into a new learning environment. The three schools examined in this study were similar in their admission procedures and took into consideration EAL children's lack of English. Classroom observations showed that establishing good relationships with the parents by inviting them and showing them around the school was an important step in the admission process. It was evident that the children were treated with respect and kindness by all and placed in appropriate classes on arrival.

It was demonstrated by policy documents that welcoming the children, removing feelings of alienation and loneliness and celebrating their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, featured in the admission procedures:

“Newly arrived pupils can expect to be made welcome by staff and pupils alike and to make rapid progress in learning survival language.” (Newly arrived pupils' policy, school A: p.2)

Newly arrived pupils were given emotional support and encouragement to cope with different norms and routines and to learn the additional language:

“[Newly arrived pupils' policy aims to] ensure that every pupil receives the support and encouragement they need to settle quickly into the routines of school life and to begin to access the National Curriculum and learn the additional languages as soon and as fully as possible.” (Newly arrived pupils' policy, school A: p.1)

Allowing newly arrived children sufficient time to settle and adjust to school and to learn the new language, featured in the admission process at school B:

“We aim to give the child time to adjust to their new surroundings and to learn the new language.” (Newly arrived children’s policy, school B: p.1)

A lack of language in newly arrived children was considered by all members of staff to be very important. As such, particular arrangements were made in schools, in order to facilitate the admission process and to overcome the language barrier. Head teachers showed children and parents around the school; informed parents about their responsibilities and the schools’ procedures; and filled in and signed forms required for admission. Class teachers were responsible for providing the new arrivals with books and pencils and explaining the school’s rules and routines. When necessary, and if available, induction packs and programmes were provided for staff working with newly arrived children.

Office staff arranged for an interpreter when necessary and in some cases and upon availability of interpreters information about the induction process was translated into relevant languages. The EAL teachers’ key roles were to liaise with class teachers and TAs to ensure a smooth admission for newly arrived children, and multilingual assistants were also involved in the admission process by translating for children and parents and preparing the welcome letters in different languages.

In order to appropriately meet the diverse needs of newly arrived pupils, school A stressed the importance of educating teachers about the new arrivals’ cultures and languages:

“Ensuring that the needs of newly arrived pupils are met, teaching class teachers and EAL teachers about newly arrived pupils’ cultures and languages.”(Inclusion and Equality Policy, school A: p. 6)

Cultural and linguistic signs and displays were observed in school B, to welcome the new arrivals and to celebrate their languages and cultures. The Y6B class teacher at school B commented:

“I want them to feel welcomed. You know we have included signs where we celebrate culture and difference. We used to celebrate where they come from and to celebrate difference.” (Y6B class teacher, school B)

In school C, class teachers learned some words from the newly arrived children’s first language to welcome them. However, the role of first language did not go beyond transition to learning English. There was no evidence in classroom observations of teachers using first language in classroom and it was evident that teachers privileged speaking English over the first language due to practical limitations such as a lack of multilingual assistants in schools. The class teacher at school C commented:

“We try to learn some words in their language, even before they come to our school. We find out when the child is coming in and they normally start on a Wednesday and so prior to them starting on a Wednesday, I try to teach my children how to say hello or good morning in the child’s first language. So we’ve got something for this child to feel a bit more confident and to feel welcomed.” (Year 6 class teacher, school C)

Although policy documents explained the important procedures for newly arrived children’s admission in schools, it was evident that having newly arrived children in class presented dilemmas for some teachers. The two extracts below reflect the contradictions and conflicts in teachers’ interviews, raising their worries about understanding newly arrived pupils’ needs:

“I wouldn’t know what to do, with someone who speaks no English so it just worries me how would I react in that sense.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

“I find it (referring to having newly arrived children in class) very difficult.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

However, teachers negated what they said in the interview by commenting:

“I’m happy to have them (referring to newly arrived children). I would love to teach them.”(Y6A class teacher, school B)

“But I mean it’s good to have them (referring to newly arrived children) anyway.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

In the above extracts, teachers’ views were introduced differently in the same interview. It seems that teachers recognised that talking about newly arrived children negatively may place them in a difficult position. They reported honest answers in the first instance but then they appeared to distance themselves from what they said by talking about newly arrived children positively and by pretending that they were content to have them in schools. Such contradictions point to the complexity of having newly arrived children in diverse schools.

Schools’ admission procedures emerged from schools’ inclusion, equality and equal opportunities policies, which set out guidance for schools to assist them in meeting newly arrived children’s needs and removing the language barrier. Equality in relation to newly arrived children has been stressed highly in schools’ policies. For instance, evidence came from school B:

“Any newly arrived children to the school will be treated fairly and with kindness and respect by all.” (Newly arrived children policy, school B: p.1)

Practitioners reported in the interviews that no children were excluded from making full use of learning opportunities offered by the schools and that all children were treated equally. One participant commented:

“Me, personally, I treat them the same as any other child.” (TA, school B)

The class teacher in school B talked about inclusion and said that he made efforts to include children irrespective of differences in language, culture and achievement:

“Inclusion is such a big part of any school. So what I’m trying to do is to include all children from different ability levels and of all cultural backgrounds.” (Y6B class teacher, school B)

In contrast, in some cases, very newly arrived EAL children were observed to be on the periphery of the classroom, rather than being included with the rest of the children. Situations occurred where practitioners in schools did not pay equal attention to children’s needs, and there was heavy reliance on the use of materials, resources and computer programmes, without paying attention to talking to these children or engaging them in learning activities. These situations occurred either because practitioners in schools lacked the knowledge and skills with regard to supporting newly arrived children in schools, or because a variability of newly arrived children was difficult to be managed properly by practitioners in schools.

School policies required schools to take appropriate action and substantial steps to tackle any forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment exists within schools because of differences in language and ethnicity. However, it was reported in one interview that newly arrived children were bullied by their peers because they could not speak English.

It was evident that some challenges were experienced by schools to implement the admission process effectively. The deputy head teachers in the three schools reported that the arrival of a large number of children at different times throughout the year hindered the effectiveness of the admission process because it was considered unrealistic for schools to provide necessary learning resources, materials and multilingual assistants for many children within a short time.

The language barrier was said to be a cause of conflict, with schools trying to admit a large number of EAL children, whilst parents and children with no English could not communicate with practitioners in the light of lack of multilingual assistants. In view of the language barrier and lack of ready availability of interpreters, communicating with newly arrived children and their parents became more difficult.

6.1.1.2 Initial language assessment

As part of the admission process, initial language assessment was carried out with EAL children on arrival in schools in order to assess their understanding and use of English. Practitioners interviewed reported that EAL children should be fully assessed but this was not always possible given the language barrier.

The initial assessment, which was conducted verbally or in written, was carried out by staff responsible for EAL provision in the three schools: the language support teacher at school A, the EAL coordinator at school B and the inclusion teacher at school C. The interview data revealed that results obtained from the initial assessment were shared with class teachers in order to inform appropriate planning, teaching and grouping. Further, the use of appropriate materials and resources in the class was said to be determined by the initial assessment results.

At school A, a structured assessment of language was conducted to assess newly arrived children:

“In the early stages of language development, pupils will follow the Structured Language Units.” (Newly arrived pupils’ policy, school A: p.2)

The assessment form in school A consisted of linguistic units and levels. Each unit had four elements of nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositions. The following is an

example of the Structured Language Units, taken from a language assessment sheet from school A:

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Prepositions
Chair	Is	red	In
Table	Are	blue	on

Structures: (unit 1 level 1)

Simple plurals (add s)

- 1) What's this?
- 2) What are these? They're (they are) pens.
- 3) Is it a pen? Yes, it is. /No, it isn't.
- 4) Is it a red pen? Yes, it is. /No, it isn't.
- 5) The pen is on the table. /The pens are on the table.

The EAL coordinator at school B said that she assessed the new arrivals orally by asking the children simple questions, such as: What is your name? How are you? Where are you from? After assessing the children orally, a picture action test was carried out:

"We have to check what they already know and the skills that they have. There is a test run for them. It's a picture action test. And it's just basic things to give us the information to see if they comprehend what they see and we question them in such a way to see if they can answer in the correct tense. We see if they can answer us in the correct way. This obviously gives us sort of where they are and their grammatical scale and whether they have learned English before." (EAL coordinator, school B)

The picture action test can assess EAL children's knowledge of vocabulary:

"The test we do is good because it can also bring up their knowledge of the vocabulary." (EAL coordinator, school B)

In addition to the EAL coordinator, school B involved the multilingual assistant in the assessment process. The multilingual assistant commented:

“The class teacher gives me a piece of paper with the questions according to the children’s age. If they are very young, it’s the very basic questions, but if for example Y5 and Y6 she will give specific questions. They need to know their level in English.” (Multilingual assistant, school B)

It was reported that the behaviour of children from certain cultures was the most difficult to accommodate during the initial assessment. Practitioners’ time was taken up managing behaviour issues during the assessments. Furthermore, the negative impact of assessing a big number of EAL children, who joined the school partway through the year, was mentioned frequently in the interview data. One participant commented:

“I mean recently we’ve sort of assessed a lot of children. I assessed 60 children in two weeks; it’s a very high number. This makes the assessment process more difficult.” (EAL coordinator, school B)

In this extract, the EAL coordinator did not articulate the consequences of having a big number of EAL children in schools, such as difficulties in disentangling language needs from learning difficulties and the extent to which results obtained from the assessment were accurate. The extract also reflected lack of EAL staff in school B since the EAL coordinator was responsible for assessing all newly arrived children in the school.

At school C, newly arrived children were assessed in written and oral work to check their “understanding and use of English” (EAL policy document, school C: p.2). Data obtained from schools’ policy documents showed that collecting background information on the child, through an initial meeting with the parents, was a crucial part of the assessment. Information on newly arrived children (e.g. previous exposure to education, years of stay in England) helped the teachers with making accurate judgments about the child’s cognitive knowledge in his/her first language.

The class teacher and the SEN teacher at school C highlighted the difficulty of obtaining background information on newly arrived children from Traveller backgrounds because of the disparity in educational systems, parents' lack of English and lack of interpreters and multilingual assistants. Nevertheless, there was no evidence in the data as to how lack of background information could impact negatively on obtaining accurate results from the initial assessment and EAL children's learning.

The participants were asked about the importance of assessing newly arrived pupils. Their responses are shown in Table 6.1. 7/8 participants at school A, 10/15 participants at school B, 11/13 participants at school C indicated that assessing newly arrived pupils was very important. In linking the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires to the qualitative data collected from the interviews and school policy documents, assessing newly arrived pupils appeared to be an important matter in the three schools.

Table 6.1: Newly arrived children assessment

Theme	School	Not at all	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Assessing EAL pupils when they first arrive	A	-	-	-	1	7
	B	-	-	1	4	10
	C	-	1	-	1	11
N= school A:8, school B: 15, school C: 13						

6.1.1.3 Formative assessment

It was demonstrated by policy documents that assessing EAL children is an essential arrangement for tracking EAL children's progress in schools, but lack of language in EAL children was reported by practitioners to hinder the effectiveness of the assessment. Formative and summative assessments were carried out in schools to assess monolingual and bilingual children. Formative assessment, also called 'assessment for learning,' was the typical assessment for children, and was carried out in different contexts: individually or in a group context. Policy documents showed that the results of this type of assessment were important in enhancing teachers' teaching and pupils' learning.

Formative assessments were reported to help with modifying teachers' everyday and weekly plans, and to guide teachers to use appropriate strategies and resources in their teaching. Given lack of language in EAL children, teachers said that they used different tools to assess children's learning and progress through everyday observations, checking children's understanding by asking questions, hearing children's reading and talking to children. The Y6B class teacher at school B said that he normally assessed EAL children through everyday observations and talking to children:

"Through the formative assessment, I record my observations about children's learning and their response to my teaching. Any good teacher should know their children. So I know through talking to children and observing them whether they are becoming more confident in language."
(Y6B class teacher, school B)

In policy documents, two important points were highlighted in relation to formative assessments: firstly, the information obtained from the assessment was shared with the EAL teacher, and in some cases with the SENCO, to inform the appropriate

provision for the child in terms of grouping and lesson planning. Secondly, schools took into consideration the cultural and linguistic differences in order to ensure a fair assessment process of EAL children which was free from cultural and linguistic bias, to ensure equitable assessment for all pupils.

Practitioners attributed the overall difficulty of assessing EAL children to the language barrier. Three participants commented:

“It’s difficult to assess their understanding of the curriculum content because EAL children often struggle to express their ideas clearly, both verbally and in written form.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“In some cases it would be difficult to assess their understanding of difficult Y6 topics that require a lot of language. Our literacy lesson today is about Greek myths. It would be really difficult to assess newly arrived children who are new to English. I don’t think that they learnt about such topics in their countries.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

“Some EAL children at an early stage of language learning may understand the lesson and the content. You can judge this as a teacher, but when you check their understanding by asking questions, they keep silent. It’s really difficult to check their understanding on everyday basis.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

In the extracts above school practitioners talked about the difficulties of assessing EAL children, in practice, they appeared to be concerned with assessing these children and balancing their individual needs with the demands of the assessments. Achieving successful formative assessment of EAL pupils who are beginners in English is a difficult process, because normally, these children cannot demonstrate their knowledge and keep silent. In particular, there were concerns about assessing EAL pupils’ understanding of difficult Y6 topics, which were heavily dependent on language. Ironically, school practitioners put the onus on lack of language in EAL children instead of criticising current assessment approaches and found that the assessment process problematic. Practitioners recognised that assessments were

incompatible with EAL children's needs, since EAL children lacked the language competence, and therefore, could not cope with the assessments' requirements.

There were references in the interview data to *A Language in Common* approach, the formal assessment created by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to assess EAL children's development in English. The key purpose of *A Language in Common* was to assess bilingual children on the same descriptors used for monolingual children. Through *A Language in Common*, information about children's language development was compiled and gathered in relation to the national curriculum.

It was demonstrated by policy documents that *A Language in Common* assessment can be used for formative and summative purposes to inform the next stage of learning, to monitor children's progress and to reflect children's levels according to the national curriculum descriptors at the end of school year. EAL teachers had different views with regard to assessing EAL children on the same measures used for monolingual children. There was evidence to suggest that there were difficulties in assessing the children using an accurate scale for language proficiency because EAL children developed English in very individual ways and because there were lots of overlapping and blurring amongst their needs and skills.

The language support teacher at school A said that EAL pupils may meet some of the linguistic features stated in *A Language in Common*, but not all of them:

"Well, no, me personally, I don't encourage using *A Language in Common*. It is very difficult to meet all of the descriptors in the assessment. EAL children develop English differently and you can't assess them accurately using such accurate descriptors." (Language support teacher, school A)

Agreeing with the language support teacher at school A, the EAL coordinator at school B criticised *A Language in Common* because it suggested a structured approach of assessment that cannot be applicable accurately to all EAL children:

“I’m opposed to *A Language in Common* because it’s based on a structured approach which cannot be applicable to all EAL children at different stages of learning English.” (EAL coordinator, school B)

Unlike schools A and B, the inclusion teacher at school C was supportive of the use of *A Language in Common* for assessing EAL children, because she said that it was good to assess EAL children on the same measures used for monolingual children and in line with curriculum descriptors:

“I think it’s good to assess their needs against the national measures. I don’t see any problem with this.” (Inclusion teacher, school C)

Classroom observations across the three schools revealed that practitioners’ perceptions about EAL pupils’ learning and language development were not only based on their results in tests. ‘Doing well’, ‘learn very quickly’, and ‘pick up very quickly’ were different phrases used across the three schools to refer to the EAL pupils’ progress. It was evident that in the case of the newly arrived child, measures used for achievement were based on markers beyond the child’s test results, such as the child’s success in settling well into school, social adjustment to the new learning environment and learning the new language.

6.1.1.4 Summative assessment

Summative assessment was carried out at the end of KS2 through the use of SATs, supplemented with teacher assessment to show the child’s national curriculum level at the end of school year. The situation with regard to assessing newly arrived EAL pupils using SATs was complex. It was reported by practitioners in schools A and C that very newly arrived children were normally excluded from SATs given the

language barrier and that the schools primarily considered teachers' assessment to assess their performance. The following evidence came from schools A and C:

"The majority of our EAL children come to school with no English so the majority are not ready for the tests." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

"Our EAL children, who are new to English, don't sit SATs. We normally rely on teachers' assessment to assess their learning." (Y6 class teacher, school C)

However, the deputy head at school B reported that newly arrived pupils should sit SATs like the rest of the children to track their achievement throughout the year.

Evidence collected from practitioners in schools demonstrated the complexity of assessing EAL children against SATs, given the language barrier. The language support teacher in school A reported that SATs were not 'diagnostic' measures of the child's progress, because they provided raw numerical data about the whole school achievement and marginalised the specific needs of the child. As such, the assessment data could be used to draw comparisons between schools, but it could not detect or measure any weaknesses and gaps in the learning of the individual EAL child such as a knowledge of vocabulary, lack of comprehension skills and the ability to use language structures:

"But, I mean, I'm opposed to the SATs tests because of the league tables comparing school by school but also because they are not diagnostic. They have just given you a numerical response to a child's progress. It's a way of providing a superficial level of success really that the government can easily say. It's just a numerical assessment. It doesn't tell you this child is lacking assessment. It doesn't tell you this child is lacking in vocabulary or if this child has a problem with structuring the language. So it's not diagnostic at all." (Language support teacher, school A)

The Y6 class teacher at school A opposed assessing newly arrived children on the same measures used for monolingual children, and explained that developing

different language skills required for the test within a year, from the child's arrival, could be difficult:

"The government expects that a child of 11 years old to reach a standard in English. A newly arrived child is supposed to be working towards these standards like their peers within a year. This is widely unrealistic." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

In contrast, the Y6A class teacher at school B was supportive of using SATs to assess EAL children:

"It's good to track their achievement, even if there are gaps in their learning. So I think SATs are good for tracking achievement." (Y6A class teacher, school B)

6.1.1.5 Conclusion

Practitioners' views with regard to assessing EAL children were mixed. One view supported assessing EAL children against SATs, while another view stressed the difficulties of assessing EAL children, and argued for the exclusion of newly arrived children from SATs due to the language barrier. Concerns were raised about the inappropriateness of current assessment approaches used in schools to assess EAL children. For their part, it was unrealistic for schools to have one standardised assessment that could meet all of the children's needs, since the assessment approach was beset by different dilemmas and practical limitations in practice.

6.1.2 EAL workforce

The EAL workforce was perceived by practitioners to encompass influences at the cognitive, cultural and structural levels of EAL. At the cognitive level, the EAL workforce offered a variability of functions that can widen EAL children's cognitive skills and improve their language acquisition. At the cultural level, schools were aware that there were disparities between EAL children's cultures and schools' cultures. As such, schools recruited staff from different cultural backgrounds in

order to reduce cultural disparities. At the structural level, the roles of school leaders have proved particularly useful, as they monitored other EAL roles and responsibilities, implemented inclusive policies and coordinated the EAL work.

This section consists of three parts: 1) EAL roles and responsibilities, 2) representation of staff from minority ethnic groups, and 3) inconsistencies and gaps in EAL workforce.

6.1.2.1 EAL roles and responsibilities

Three key principles were recognised in schools' policy documents in relation to the EAL workforce: Practitioners in schools should play a crucial role in meeting EAL pupils' needs, they should understand their roles and responsibilities towards EAL children and they should have specialist knowledge to support EAL pupils and their parents. But these principles opposed data generated from interviews and classroom observations, with many tensions existing in schools' EAL workforce.

School practitioners' contribution to EAL provision and practice was demonstrated by the range of roles and responsibilities which took different forms as follows:

Leadership and coordination

It was shown by policy documents that EAL management structures in schools relied primarily on head teachers and deputy head teachers who were responsible for managing and leading EAL work. Leadership and coordination roles and responsibilities were focused on ensuring that all members of staff were clear about their roles in relation to EAL; tackling any form of racism and discrimination; and promoting racial harmony in schools through the implementation of equal

opportunities and inclusion policies. The following extract was taken from policy documents:

“The responsibility for educational inclusion and equality in this school lies within the remit of the head.” (Educational inclusion and equality policy, schools A, B: p. 7, 4 respectively)

The role of the head teacher was particularly important in leading staff and monitoring the effectiveness of the EAL strategy and EAL teaching and support. The following extract was taken from the EAL policy at school C:

“Head teachers are pivotal in providing leadership. Their role is to ensure that an EAL strategy features prominently in the school development plan.” (EAL policy, school C: p.7)

EAL subject managers, who were the deputy heads in schools, were responsible for identifying EAL children; consulting specialist services working within the school; and liaising external agencies and services such as interpretation services and speech and language therapists. On different occasions, it was noted that the deputy heads supported EAL children and visited classrooms on a regular basis to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by gathering information about children’s progress. They worked with a small group of EAL learners to improve their literacy skills.

School policy documents revealed that EAL teachers in the three schools were responsible for coordinating the provision for EAL children. Their roles and responsibilities involved: ensuring the day to day implementation of educational policies affecting EAL; reporting on the quality and effectiveness of EAL provision to the deputy heads; and checking the availability of multilingual assistants, bilingual resources for EAL children with little or no English. The following extracts were taken from schools’ policy documents:

“As part of their coordination roles, EAL teachers will know the pupils for whom they have specific responsibility. Know how well the pupils are doing in terms of attainment and achievement, ensure that support is available if needed, be in regular contact with specialist services where appropriate.” (Educational Inclusion and equality policy, school A: p. 9)

“[Our aim is] to advise and support pupils, teachers, support staff and parents [in line with our inclusive and coordination policies]. This may involve directing individuals or groups to specialist services when appropriate.” (Educational Inclusion and Equality Policy, school B: p. 7)

“The role involves coordinating provision for all children in vulnerable groups including those with English as an Additional Language.” (EAL policy, school C: p.1)

However, it was noted that in some cases, EAL work was not managed effectively in schools, but rather there was a reliance on teachers to direct EAL work at class level. This resulted in fragmented patterns of management across schools since teachers’ had different ways of managing EAL work and they interpreted and enacted schools’ policies in different ways. It was, therefore, difficult for head teachers and deputy head teachers to supervise the ways in which policies were implemented by practitioners at class level.

Teaching and support

Classroom observations showed that teachers prepared the appropriate teaching materials, tracked EAL pupils’ progress in different subjects and planned the curriculum. As part of their teaching role, teachers collaborated with EAL teachers, TAs and multilingual assistants when teaching and monitoring EAL pupils’ progress and consulted SENCOs, in case of having concerns about children’s progress.

However, it was noted that some teachers did not have the knowledge of how to teach EAL children which stressed the need for LAs and schools to be pro-active in widening teachers’ knowledge and improving their teaching skills. There was

evidence in classroom observations of teachers handing over responsibility for newly arrived pupils to other staff. For instance, newly arrived EAL children in school C were supported at almost all times by the TA, when the teaching took place in classroom and there was recognition that the class teacher did not have a direct responsibility for them. This happened frequently in case of teaching difficult subjects and new topics that required advanced language input.

EAL teachers were recognised in the three schools as skilled specialists with good language teaching skills. They were recruited by schools to have direct responsibility for EAL children and to be a crucial part of EAL provision in schools. EAL teachers' roles were focused on making language central in their teaching of EAL children. They planned the language learning programme appropriate to the age and ability of EAL children, worked in collaboration with the class teachers to ensure that the curriculum is made accessible for EAL children, and planned extra activities to improve children's language to access the curriculum.

Schools were reportedly engaging TAs in EAL work, but their roles varied across the three schools. TAs' support ranged from 15 minutes to half an hour during the literacy hour. Interviews with the teaching assistants in schools A and C showed that their main roles were centered on supporting EAL pupils' language acquisition by using the appropriate materials and resources as directed, and guided by the class teachers. The TA in school A was responsible for providing in-class support for Y5 and Y6 EAL pupils in reading and writing while the TA in school C was assigned to support Y6 children only.

In contrast, the TA in school B was responsible for supporting SEN children since EAL children were the responsibility of the EAL coordinator:

“I’m not really allocated EAL. I’m just SEN really. It’s the EAL coordinator who deals with EAL work.” (TA, school B)

The extract above shows that the TA in school B was not involved in the EAL work and directed her attention to the needs of SEN children rather than EAL children. This is an example of the TA having job responsibilities beyond those of the TAs in schools A and C, which opposed policy documents which argued that EAL children were the responsibility of all members of staff in schools.

Interpretation and translation

When language was found to act as a barrier to EAL children’s learning, providing multilingual assistants was recognised as the first consideration in schools. Multilingual assistants, who were bilingual, trilingual or multilingual interpreters, were sent to schools by LAs to interpret and translate for EAL children. One multilingual assistant was interviewed in school B and one was observed in school C. Their roles were focused around translating the key vocabulary and words for EAL children; highlighting texts with new grammatical forms and structures; scaffolding the learning for EAL children by using bilingual materials and resources and reading with children. The following extracts came from schools B and C respectively:

“I have to interpret or translate the big words.” (Multilingual assistant, school B)

“She can pre-teach the vocabulary and support children’s language acquisition.” (Deputy head teacher, school C)

Classroom observations revealed that the multilingual assistants interpreted EAL pupils’ answers for teachers while the teaching was taking place in classroom. It was noted that multilingual assistants communicated with children by using their first

language in order to facilitate children's access to the curriculum while acquiring and developing English. They drew on EAL children's previous knowledge by embedding cultural and linguistic references to facilitate children's learning. They also translated letters, leaflets and information sent home to the parents. The multilingual assistant in school B talked about her role:

"I work alongside the teachers. The teacher plans for me whatever she's teaching the children. I also work alongside the parents. Most of parents can't understand English or they understand but they can't reply to others. So my role is to understand what the parents' needs. I then translate to the teachers or parents." (Multilingual assistant, school B)

On some occasions, it was noted that the presence of multilingual assistants in class; interpreting for children and teachers and getting EAL children through the curriculum simultaneously caused chaos in class and distracted other children's attention. This in turn put more pressures on teachers to manage the class.

The participants' ratings for the questionnaire's question about using human resources available in schools are shown in Table (6.2). 4/8 participants in school A; 5/14 participants in school B and 4/11 participants in school C indicated that they "always" used human resources available in schools.

Table 6.2: EAL human resources

Theme	School	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
I benefit from human resources available in school	A		-	1	3	4
	B		1	1	7	5
	C		-	4	3	4
N= school A: 8, school B: 14, school C: 11						

6.1.2.2 Representation of staff from minority ethnic groups

Cultural disparities between schools and minority ethnic children was recognised by schools as an important issue. As such, it was reported by the deputy head teachers that schools recruited staff from cultural and ethnic backgrounds to match predominant ethnicities in schools and to ensure a balanced range of role models and a diversity of experiences amongst adults within schools.

However, ethnic diversity in staff varied from one school to another and from one class to another. Pakistani and Indian staff and volunteers were noted in schools A and C. For instance, the Y6 class teacher in school C was of Indian origin, which meant that she was ethnically matched to the majority of Y6 pupils of Asian origin. Some members of staff were Muslim, and covered their heads with scarves, and wore traditional Pakistani or Indian dress.

In contrast, there was no noticeable representation of diverse staff in school B, apart from multilingual assistants and one Somali parent who became a classroom assistant and a dinner lady. The fact that school B had a smaller number of ethnically diverse staff can be attributed to the fact that school B had a smaller number of EAL children compared with schools A and C.

Volunteering was another way in which schools involved diverse people from the community. Volunteers helped schools with reading to children and supervised children during lunch times. They also helped schools out during trips and visits. Schools also made an effort to involve people from minority ethnic community organisations and representative members from Sure Start and Minority Group

Support Services (MGSS) and complementary schools, to take part in schools' events.

Classroom observations showed that diverse staff were appropriately deployed in schools, being involved in cultural and linguistic events and acting as a liaison between schools and parents and the local community. They helped children maintain their first language, since speaking the first languages such as Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Mirpuri during the school day was a common practice in the schools.

6.1.2.3 Inconsistencies and gaps in EAL workforce

Some tensions and inconsistencies in the EAL workforce were reported and noticed to cause gaps and delays in EAL children's learning and language acquisition. An important issue reported by practitioners in schools was the lack of multilingual assistants, especially for languages which were new to schools, such as Dari and Latvian. The difficulty of having multilingual assistants outside school hours was said by practitioners to hinder EAL and SEN assessment, basic skills development and accessing the curriculum. Lack of interpreters was described as being difficult and problematic and underneath practitioners' perspectives, there was recognition of what to do with a newly arrived child without multilingual assistants in the classroom:

"Sometimes, you can't find interpreters who speak the language because we have so many languages now." (Y6 TA, school A)

"It was really difficult last year to find an interpreter for a newly arrived child who speaks Dari." (Deputy head, school A)

"Our hardest was pupil C. When pupil C first came, probably nearly a year and a bit now, we couldn't find a Latvian interpreter. We didn't have one at all." (Deputy head, school B)

“Lack of EAL human resources and translators is an important issue in this school.”(KS2 experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

“Interpreters needed at parents’ evening.” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school B)

In contrast, policy documents showed that providing interpreters was an important part of school procedures to overcome the language barrier in EAL children. But educational policies were not simply implemented given limitations in provision and funding. The following evidence came from school B:

“Where necessary we provide interpreters for parents and children whose English language skills are limited.” (Equal opportunities and inclusion policy, school B: p.4)

On two occasions, the deputy heads in schools A and B talked about situations where a lack of multilingual assistants was counterbalanced by using practical strategies. They looked at the lack of interpreters as part of everyday practice, but not as a problem, which opposed teachers’ views that lack of interpreters could hinder getting the children through the curriculum. The deputy heads were trying to simplify the problem, but this was very unrealistic in practice, since the use of practical strategies could be sufficient to have a simple conversation with newly arrived children but not to access the curriculum. The deputy head in school A commented:

“But you work through that and you have lots and lots of different ways to work because children are very adaptable, they pick up things quite quickly. It’s not necessarily always the right thing, but there are ways of working. So the repetitive ways of pointing out things and saying words. Picture cards that say actually: I need to go to the toilet. Just basic things like that.” (Deputy head teacher, school A)

The deputy head in school B talked about the effective role of the EAL coordinator in overcoming a lack of multilingual assistants by learning some words from a child’s

first language. She attempted to simplify the lack of interpreters and exaggerated the EAL coordinator's ability to learn the child's first language. However, what the deputy head teacher reported was partially true, because it was noted that newly arrived children without a bilingual support provided the biggest challenge for teachers in class when bilingual support was not available. The deputy head teacher attempted to hide gaps in schools' organisational structures and to defend herself against situations where newly arrived children were left without bilingual support:

"But our EAL coordinator was absolutely fantastic. She learned through the Internet as much Latvian as she could so she could converse with the child. It was done through pictures, signs and hands." (Deputy head, school B)

It was noted that in some cases multilingual assistants would leave the school due to lack of funding and were under time pressures to support children's learning as directed by teachers. For example, a Romanian multilingual assistant left school C while the child was still in need for bilingual support. One participant commented:

"We do have interpreters coming in, but we don't have them for long. Sometimes they don't come every week." (Y6 TA, school A)

The multilingual assistants' length of stay in schools depended on the school's funding and the language input the child needed. The deputy head in school C reported that multilingual assistants usually stay for 14-15 weeks to support newly arrived pupils. In contrast, classroom observations showed that multilingual assistants stayed in schools for 6 weeks only which put pressure on children and teachers:

"I have them from one morning a week, over 14-15 weeks, so you get the maximum input. Sometimes we want to keep them longer, but this actually depends on school's budget." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

Policy documents argued that there should be liaison and effective relationships between staff involved in EAL teaching and support. For example, school's C policy documents argued that:

“There should be regular and effective liaison between everyone involved in teaching and supporting EAL learners.” (EAL policy, school C: p.7)

In contrast, data collected from interviews and questionnaires referred to ineffective use of TAs and multilingual assistants in schools. Furthermore, some participants referred to the ineffective collaboration between teachers and TAs in schools:

“Better links with teaching assistants for understanding.” (Learning mentor, questionnaire participant, school B)

“More collaboration with TAs.” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school B)

“TAs should be better guided and supervised by teachers.” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

It seems that schools' policies were subject to different interpretations by staff with different understanding and knowledge. This in turn resulted in a clash between policy and practice since practitioners were not able to achieve the intended aims of EAL policies in the light of pressure placed on them. There was no evidence in the findings of how collaborative relationships amongst staff were effectively managed in schools, however, further instances of the observational data showed that TAs and teachers worked in a harmonious manner.

Teachers expressed concerns about multilingual assistants' lack of appropriate skills and knowledge despite policy documents' emphasis on the need for staff to have necessary skills in relation to EAL children's learning and support. One participant commented:

“Well, even when you have the multilingual assistants in, sometimes their support is not effective. Some of them do not have the knowledge of Y6 difficult subjects.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

This raised certain questions regarding the deployment of the least skillful and qualified practitioners to support children at an early stage of language development and the extent to which multilingual assistants’ support was consistent with the curriculum targets and content. But it seems that schools’ urgent need for someone to speak the children’s languages could be prioritised above staff’s competence and knowledge.

A further gap cited in the schools’ organisational structure was the ambiguous terminology used to refer to EAL teachers. There was no agreement in schools on using a specific term to refer to EAL teachers who were responsible for EAL provision: the language support teacher, the EAL coordinator and the inclusion teacher were used in schools A, B, and C respectively. In school’s A policy documents, the term EAL teacher was used while classroom observations showed that staff prioritised the term “language support teacher” over “EAL teacher.” This means that EAL had not been established yet in school as a separate provision with standardised job title.

In schools A and C, the EAL teachers were qualified teachers, and were attached to each class or split between two classes to provide language teaching for EAL children. In school B the EAL coordinator was a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), responsible for providing language support for all of the EAL children across all of the year groups. This means that EAL staff-to-pupils ratios were different in

schools and that EAL pupils were not able to receive sufficient and constant language input to improve their language skills.

6.1.2.4 Conclusion

The effectiveness of EAL workforce in schools appeared to be influenced by the extent to which practitioners were able to put policies into practice, and by the way schools deployed different practitioners effectively in schools. But there were instances in the data where different policies were not merely imposed on school practitioners, who found that some policies did not conform comfortably with their everyday practice given some practical limitations.

The effective collaboration between practitioners in schools and their cultural awareness of EAL children's cultural backgrounds were of particular importance in schools. Practitioners' responses to different gaps in EAL workforce varied and there were contradictory instances in the data: whether teachers were able to cope with EAL children's needs in the light of a lack of interpreters and whether lack of collaboration between support and teaching roles was the responsibility of practitioners or schools' policies. The deputy head teachers' reaction to a lack of interpreters in schools as a normal limitation in provision that can be overcome by using some alternative strategies was at odds with other perspectives which problematised this gap in provision because of its negative impact on EAL teaching and learning.

EAL staff-to-pupils ratios were different in schools which meant that EAL pupils were not able to receive sufficient and constant language input to improve their language

skills. This was best exemplified by the EAL provision in school B since the EAL coordinator was responsible for all EAL children across different year groups.

6.1.3 EAL workforce development

Schools offered training for staff through whole staff meetings, in-service training days or training provided by the Local Authority (LA). The deputy heads reported that staff should be trained to understand EAL pupils' needs and improve their language acquisition; however, schools' budgets and lack of funding restricted schools' capacity to disseminate training opportunities for all staff in schools. Evidence from school A referred to the importance of providing training for all staff in different aspects of EAL learning:

"Training in planning, teaching and assessing EAL learners is available to all staff." (EAL policy, school A: p.7)

On two occasions, the deputy head in school B talked about a situation where she distributed the knowledge she gained from training to other members of staff in schools. The deputy head teacher pretended that distributing the knowledge she gained from training to other members of staff was sufficient to meet practitioners' training needs, but this was not the case in practice since there was evidence in the findings of practitioners stressing the need for more training in EAL:

"Following my own LILAC training and now that of the foundation manager and my HLTA/EAL teacher, we are currently embedding the variety of strategies taught during the programme." (Deputy head teacher, school B)

"I have done it (referring to LILAC) myself and I really felt I need to cascade that through as many members of staff as possible." (Deputy head teacher, school B)

The deputy head in school C referred to the usefulness of the Language in Learning Across the Curriculum (LILAC) course which focused on using teaching strategies to support and help pupils learn a second language:

“Last year we delivered training called LILAC which is Language in Learning Across the Curriculum and it’s delivered to a high level and staff can use what we have done on that course. They can use that to get 20 points for their Master’s credit. So it’s high level stuff. And it’s all about teaching strategies. LILAC is a great strategy. There are lots of good strategies in there that support language acquisition.” (Deputy head teacher, school C)

There was little evidence as to how training needs were identified in schools, and how training was evaluated to maximise its effectiveness. The deputy heads at the three schools reported that they typically identified training needs by observing teaching and learning in class, and asking staff about whether they have any suggestions with regard to the training objectives.

The majority of practitioners interviewed reported that they had received training in EAL but disagreed about the effectiveness and usefulness of training. In general, there was recognition that the training received during study (e.g. PGCE) and induction year added little to their teaching and that their knowledge and skills were developed through experience.

The Y6 class teacher in school A talked about the sessions he received during his PGCE. The sessions were considered as an input and a source of information about EAL, and enabled him to differentiate between EAL and SEN using some clues. He gained knowledge and understanding of EAL pupils’ needs:

“It was covered in PGCE training so we had lots of sessions on SEN and we had lots of sessions on EAL. And people worked at lengths to make sure that people know that EAL is not the same as SEN so the two are very different.” (Y6 teacher, school A)

The Y6A class teacher in school B stated that she had received little information about EAL during the PGCE:

“They gave us little information about EAL during our PGCE. That was not useful at all. I can’t think of particular instance when we did a lot of work.

So I don't think I have got any particular training. So I don't think that I have been trained particularly well. It's just sort of learning few things along the way." (Y6A class teacher, school B)

The Y6B class teacher in school B felt that he benefitted from the time he spent with EAL specialists and professionals from outside the school, during staff meetings:

"We had a staff meeting where someone came from outside and talked a little bit into EAL, but aside from that, no, we have not had much training on it." (Y6B class teacher, school B)

The Y6B class teacher also stressed the need for having additional training in EAL in order to build more confidence:

"I do think, yes, if I'm honest. I do need extra training and I would be gratefully received that because there would be a chance for me to delve more into the subject and have more knowledge on it and then probably I would increase my confidence." (Y6B class teacher, school B)

On two occasions, the class teachers in schools B and C referred to difficulties in having newly arrived children and linked these difficulties to the lack of training in EAL. They did not feel comfortable with their knowledge of how to support and teach newly arrived children. Underpinning teachers' views was recognition that schools put the onus on teachers themselves rather than on other practitioners in schools to teach and support newly arrived children. This contrasts schools' policy documents, which acknowledged that supporting and teaching newly arrived children were viewed as a shared responsibility:

"Yes, I think I need more training because I wouldn't know what to do, with someone who speaks no English so it just worries me how would I react in that sense." (Y6A class teacher, school B)

"Well, I did it. It was for three years and I did a bit of training. They do teach you what you need to do when you get an EAL speaker in your class but it's only when you are in the job doing it you actually realise what the child's needs. I find it very difficult." (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Schools faced the dilemma of balancing training provision with limited funding available and the need to provide training equitably for school practitioners. However, deputy head teachers reported that providing training for all staff is impossible because allocating too much funding for training would reduce funding available for other aspects of EAL which could impact negatively on EAL general practice in schools. Comments from practitioners regarding the need for more training indicated that staff's training needs were not being met. Two participants commented:

“MUCH, MUCH, MUCH more support for class teachers in EAL and funding to provide trained additional adults.” (Language support teacher, school A)

“It's very useful sometimes though I think we haven't got enough of it. We have to have a refresher every two years because it needs updating, but we don't always have the finance to do that and sometimes you forget things and then you've to think really carefully of how to meet children's needs.” (Y6 TA, school A)

The shortage of training opportunities within school context was said to be counterbalanced by collaborating with staff specialised in EAL or SEN, such as the SENCO, EAL teachers and specialists. Information provided by specialists in schools assisted teachers in managing EAL work and meeting children's needs. Two participants commented:

“I like to make sure that if there is a need which I haven't met in lessons or I can't meet adequately in some lessons, but there is time with actually adults. Normally (Mr M - referring to the language support teacher) and (Mrs H - referring to the SENCO) do some work with them. So obviously, using the staff I have effectively.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“I also try to benefit from the staff available as much as possible. I tend to place adult support in that group.” (Y6B class teacher, school B)

The two EAL teachers in schools A and C and the EAL coordinator in school B had not been trained as EAL teachers. Their responses, with regards to receiving training,

were different. The language support teacher in school A indicated that he had not received any training about EAL, but he had prior, broad experience in the area and had taught in multicultural schools. His extensive experience as a class teacher has formed his knowledge and understanding of teaching EAL children and meeting their needs and was another way by which lack of training was compensated:

“No, I had not received any training because I have a broad experience of working in diverse schools. I had the experience through my work with EAL children.” (Language support teacher, school A)

EAL teachers were offered LILAC training to develop and improve their teaching skills. Elements covered in LILAC training were said to be important for scaffolding EAL children’s learning:

“She’s done various courses as I have done so basically we’ve got the certificates for these but if you’re looking for degrees, no. She’s got NVQ and she’s got assessor’s NVQ as well. So in terms of that kind of qualification, so yes, she’s doing the LILAC course this year which we thought would be extremely valuable for her to do.” (Deputy head teacher, school B)

“I had LILAC last term. It was really useful. They teach you how to provide the appropriate support for EAL children. I learned a lot from LILAC. It helped me with scaffolding learning for EAL children. That was absolutely useful.” (Inclusion teacher, school C)

The deputy head was aware of the importance of Cummins’ Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in additional language learning, and was keen to promote language awareness amongst school practitioners. She explained how school practitioners should move EAL children from BICS to CALP. This is an example of how school practitioners’ response to empirical work and language learning theories may affect everyday practice and provision accordingly:

“Have you looked in your research at BICS and CALPS? So for those children who are very secure in their everyday language our problem is

moving them through that Cummins' quadrants up into more academic language and so the LILAC training very much looked at scaffolding learning for the children so you took them from that basic up to that more academic level." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

The TAs reported that they had not received formal training in EAL but they had learnt about EAL as a part of their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and through experience:

"They teach you how to deal with a situation when you have English as a second language or SEN or whatsoever. It was a short session. It came more with experience." (TA, school B)

The multilingual assistant in school B reported that normally prior to recruitment in schools, multilingual assistants receive one day induction training in EAL pupils and their needs. However, she added that such training was not sufficient to develop a multilingual assistants' literacy and numeracy skills to adequately support EAL pupils.

Table 6.3 indicates that 7/ 7 participants in school A; 14/15 participants in school B and 10/12 participants in school C had received training in EAL.

Table 6.3: EAL training

Themes	Schools	Yes	No
Have you received training in EAL	A	7	-
	B	14	1
	C	10	2
N=school A: 7, school B: 15, school C: 12			

The questionnaire's participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they benefitted from different types of training received (Table 6.4). Their responses are shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Usefulness of EAL training

Type of training	School	Not at all	Less extent	Somewhat	Great extent
INSET training	A	-	-	2	4
	B	1	-	7	3
	C	1	-	3	4
N= school A:6, school B:11, school C: 8					
LA training	A	-	3	1	-
	B	1	1	4	4
	C	1	-	3	2
N=school A:4, school B:10, school C:6					
Training during PGCE	A	3	1	-	-
	B	5	1	-	1
	C	-	2	-	2
N= school A:4, school B:7, school C:4					
Training during induction year	A	2	1	-	-
	B	3	1	1	1
	C	1	1	1	-
N=school A:3, school B:6, school C:3					
MGSS training	A	2	2	2	1
	B	-	-	5	7
	C	2	-	2	2
N=school A:7, school B, 12, school C:6					
Other	A	-	-	-	1
	B	-	-	-	-
	C	-	-	-	1
N=school A:1, school B:0,school C:1					

6.1.3.1 Conclusion

Whilst practitioners' rights to receive training have been strengthened in schools' policies, it was evident that the actual implementation of these policies was difficult in practice, given financial limitations. Such limitations frustrated schools' attempts to create effective EAL pedagogy and to distribute training to all practitioners in

schools. The participants did not articulate what information should be included in training nor were schools able to identify their training needs accurately.

Practitioners in schools referred to different ways (e.g. consulting EAL and SEN specialists) by which a lack of professional development opportunities can be compensated in schools. But such ways were not sufficient on their own right and required more improvement if practitioners' knowledge of EAL is to be improved.

6.1.4 The curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy

Using specific teaching strategies and differentiating the curriculum for EAL pupils were cited as an integral parts of EAL pedagogy across schools. The following section consists of three main parts: 1) the curriculum, 2) teaching strategies, 3) and EAL pedagogy.

6.1.4.1 The curriculum

At the centre of the National Curriculum, emphasis has been placed on the social, cultural and linguistic aspects of EAL children's learning and language development. School practitioners highlighted different patterns of language teaching and support and different ways in which the curriculum was differentiated to facilitate EAL children's learning. The differentiation of learning for EAL children was found to be dependent on the collaborative and effective relationships amongst staff, but there was a need for teachers to balance individual needs with whole class needs:

"The curriculum meets the needs of all children, broadens pupils' experiences and prepares them for life in a diverse society." (Educational Inclusion and Equality, schools A and B: p.10 and p.3 respectively)

"[Our EAL policy aims] to meet the particular needs of the minority ethnic pupils and to make sure that pupils learning English as an Additional Language have full access to the National Curriculum." (EAL policy, school C: p.1)

The community was increasingly the focus of the curriculum and schools acknowledged the importance of meeting children's needs and designing activities that celebrate their cultural and linguistic backgrounds and benefit the whole school population:

"The curriculum enables pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions." (Educational Inclusion and Equality, schools A, B: p.10 and 3 respectively)

However, it was noted that teachers in the three schools were presented with two types of challenge: integrating language and curriculum content for EAL pupils who were at an early stage of learning English, and making sure that their pedagogic practices met the needs of the advanced learners of EAL, gifted and talented EAL children, and other monolingual children in class. In response to these challenges, teachers benefitted from the flexible nature of the curriculum by including various topics that fit all of the children and allocating resources and staff equally between children according to their needs. School practitioners' endorsement of the important role of curriculum in EAL children's learning appears to stem from policy documents:

"Appropriate links have been made across the range of subjects in the curriculum to enable children who speak English as an additional language to make connections using a range of texts." (English and Literacy Policy, school C: p. 2)

6.1.4.2 EAL teaching strategies

A successful delivery of the curriculum relied, in part, on the extent to which teaching strategies were practical and pictorial as on the teaching style and the curriculum content that were well matched to children's needs. It was noted that an effective use of teaching strategies was primarily determined by school practitioners, who acted as active members within schools contexts, in that they

used several pedagogic approaches and teaching strategies to develop EAL children's language and literacy skills.

Using teaching strategies for language development was an essential part of EAL pedagogy in schools. Teaching strategies such as working in pairs or pre-teaching vocabulary were said to enhance EAL pupils' learning and improve their language development and literacy skills. Building self-confidence, meanwhile, was noted to encourage EAL children to take part in different classroom interactions and discussions even if they spoke little English. Schools used a "buddy strategy", where the "buddy" - a child speaking the same language - was attached to the newly arrived child to interpret and provide support. The teaching was supported with lots of non-verbal learning activities which primarily relied on practical and visual strategies (e.g. carrying objects, carrying out silent roles in plays). One participant explained how his teaching was supported by using objects, pictures and body language:

"Trying to make sessions as practical as possible. Getting something to put in their hands or something they can see so something visual they can hold." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

It was noted that teachers used yes/no questions and repeated instructions for EAL children with little or no English. They did not pressurise the child to talk and checked children's comprehension regularly. But situations occurred where there was heavy reliance on practical and visual strategies without taking account of the cognitive dimension of activities and children did not know what to do with the objects and materials provided. In some cases, the use of strategies was carried out in an *ad hoc* manner and it was not clear whether practitioners differentiated strategies in their plans or whether they addressed strategies to all children to bring

them to the same level. One teacher considered pre-teaching new vocabulary as a main strategy during literacy time:

“Going through different vocabulary. Making sure if you come across any new words that you explain or what they mean. Or talk about them. Putting them on walls or word walls. I have a wall for new words which we have learnt and some steps we can use in literacy.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

Schools created teaching strategies as a response to particular needs in EAL children. Being patient and allowing sufficient time for EAL children to learn was said to support newly arrived children’s learning:

“Patience and sort of like being able to give them time or to remember that they must be struggling and if they have got any worries and things like that they can come to me. I can sort it out for them with that and obviously within the teaching I just support them the best I can with the guidance of the teacher.” (Y6 TA, school A)

The extract above carried messages about the difficulties newly arrived children faced in schools even when support was provided. The TA did not expect a lot of children in the light of language limitations. The TA appeared to be sympathetic to newly arrived children who looked at the TA as the source of emotional security when they had worries or concerns.

Since EAL was a prevalent issue in schools, the teaching strategies used were addressed to all children, including non-EAL pupils who would also benefit from these strategies. Four participants commented:

“I use the same strategies for all children because the majority of the children in this class are EAL. So most of them are bilingual and benefit from the strategies.” (Y6 classteacher, school A)

“I think all of the strategies are applicable to all because there are other children who are very quiet and pupil G (referring to a child from White British background), for example, he’s not EAL, but he has speech problems so he would benefit from these strategies.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

“The same strategies apply to all of them because, to be honest, the majority have English as an additional language and quite a lot of them speak two languages so I think it’s something I do with the whole class and then those who don’t have EAL would still benefit from these strategies anyway.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

“Good practice for EAL pupils can be good for all/majority of the class.”
(Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school C)

It is emphasised in the extracts above that EAL is an area which was beneficial to non EAL speakers since it has broader applications to benefit all children generally including monolingual children. However, what is not obvious in the data is how teaching strategies became linked with particular children and how particular teaching strategies addressed to EAL children were distinguished from general teaching strategies that were addressed to all children including the monolingual children.

Teachers’ feelings, perceptions and beliefs about EAL pupils’ learning were positive. This was exemplified by teachers’ recognition that EAL pupils had skills and abilities and that EAL should not be equated with SEN. However, at times practitioners were felt to struggle with making balance between two important recognitions: whether to expect a lot of EAL children which may put more pressures on children to learn, or whether to have low expectations of EAL children which may impact negatively on children’s potential to learn.

Many examples were cited in classroom observations of teachers encouraging and motivating EAL children to learn and build confidence. The class teacher in school A reported that some EAL children in class, especially the girls tended to be silent and

shy. Given the class teacher's understanding of pupils' needs, he began to motivate the children to take part in classroom interaction:

It was literacy time and the lesson was about writing a myth. "What's a myth? Please don't be shy, what's a myth?" the class teacher asked a girl who is an advanced learner of EAL in his class. "I don't know" the child said. "Even if you don't know, you have to try and you have to predict the meaning of the word". The child tried to guess the meaning and said "Is it a story like?" The class teacher said "Ummm, it's a traditional story about supernatural beings and heroes." (Observational notes, 22nd Oct., 2010, school A)

During the literacy hour, although the class teacher was aware that the EAL child with SEN was unable to complete a task like the rest of the children, he tried to motivate and involve her in the lesson as a way of building positive expectations of the child:

In a lesson about how to be a good actor/actress the class teacher asked the children to work in pair or in groups of three to write a short dialogue and then to perform the dialogue in front of the class. He gave the children 15 minutes to write. Although the pupil has motor problems and speech and language difficulties, the class teacher treated her like the rest of the children and asked her to come and work with him to write a dialogue about the favourite topic she chose. "I would like to write about a monster" she said. (Observational notes, 13th Oct. 2010, school A)

In school B, the class teacher encouraged one gifted and talented EAL child by praising her and expanding her learning by going on a special visit to collect information about the Second World War:

The class teacher asked the children to write about the Second World War after watching a short video. The child worked independently on the task. She was very focused on the task and finished her work before the allocated time finished. "Well done. You are so clever" said the class teacher to the child. The class teacher asked the child to move to the next activity. Also she told the child that she would go with other gifted and talented EAL children on the next day to visit some old men and women who witnessed the war. The class teacher told the children that they will act as researchers by interviewing old men and women. This visit was assigned only for gifted and talented EAL children. (Observational notes, 9th Nov. 2010, school B)

It seems clear from the extracts above that the use of particular strategies such as praise and allowing sufficient time for EAL children to learn motivated EAL children and raised their self-esteem and confidence. This means that an EAL child's response to learning opportunities was not solely dependent on his/her individual characteristics, but on other teaching strategies used within school context.

In agreeing with the qualitative data, participants' responses for the question about building confidence in relation to EAL children are shown in Table (6.5). 6/8 of participants in school A; 13/15 in school B and 11/13 in school C, indicated that building confidence was very important in relation to EAL children's learning.

Table 6.5: Building confidence

Theme	School	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Building confidence in EAL children	A	-	1	1	6
	B	-	-	2	13
	C	-	-	2	11
N= school A: 8, school B: 15, school C: 13					

School practitioners were asked to rate their use of specific teaching strategies and their responses are shown in Table 6.6. 0/8 participants in school A; 2/15 participants in school B and 6/11 participants in school C indicated that they "always" used specific teaching strategies for EAL children.

Table 6.6: EAL teaching strategies

Theme	School	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
Use of EAL teaching strategies	A	-	-	3	5	-
	B	-	2	7	4	2
	C	-	-	1	4	6
N=school A:8, school B:15,school C:11						

6.1.4.3 EAL pedagogy

A daily Literacy lesson of 60 minutes was delivered to Y6 children to develop language and literacy skills. Further literacy activities such as guided reading and writing were organised as separate sessions and delivered after play time. EAL teachers in schools A and C and the EAL coordinator in school B were the principal sources of language teaching in schools. It was noted that language teaching was directed to EAL children to improve their literacy and language skills to access the curriculum. The information provided by EAL teachers about children's language and literacy enabled class teachers to adjust their teaching plans to meet children's individual needs. Language teaching took place during the literacy hour, and ranged from 15 minutes to one hour per day. The following two forms of language teaching were noted across schools:

6.1.4.3.1 Withdrawal teaching 'Pull out teaching'

The EAL child was withdrawn from the class to work individually or in small groups with EAL teachers in the three schools. Number of children withdrawn from class was different and relied on children's needs. Further support came from TAs and learning mentors, who provided one-to-one support for newly arrived children

outside the classroom. Withdrawal sessions focused on improving children's literacy and language, and took approximately 15 minutes to one hour.

In school A, withdrawal teaching took place in the corridor or in a corner in the classroom. In school C, meanwhile, withdrawal teaching took place in different places: sometimes in a small room near the classroom, sometimes in the computer suite, and at other times in a quiet corner in the classroom. Schools' endorsement of withdrawal teaching stemmed from policy documents which acknowledged that:

“Newly arrived pupils may need time individually or in small groups to gain survival language with some bilingual support, especially for literacy and numeracy, to draw on previous educational experiences.” (EAL policy, school C: p.5)

Withdrawal teaching was perceived by school practitioners as a necessary pedagogical practice to support low attaining EAL children. On some occasions, class teachers were noted to be relieved when newly arrived children were withdrawn from classroom since this pedagogical practice reduced pressures placed on them to meet children's needs. There was a noticeable recognition amongst teachers that a lack of language skills could necessarily prevent EAL children from learning in classes with mixed ability levels. The deputy head teacher in school A reported that EAL children should not be withdrawn from classroom too frequently in order to make a noticeable progress in their learning, but this was not possible all of the time.

The deputy head teachers across the three schools favoured withdrawal teaching because it allowed EAL children to be guided and supported by EAL teachers. However, situations occurred where newly arrived children were left alone to do some work. Benefits of withdrawal teaching involved reinforcing the children's

confidence, understanding their needs and teaching children away from distractions. According to the three schools, withdrawal teaching was seen as a temporary stage of newly arrived pupils' learning to develop initial language skills to access the curriculum:

"We believe that newly arrived pupils should continue to receive language support both individually and in small groups as appropriate until their English language skills have developed sufficiently for them to access the National Curriculum with some degree of success." (Newly Arrived Pupils Policy, school A: p.1)

However, a big challenge for newly arrived children was to integrate into a group after a one-to-one withdrawal session, and to deal with challenging learning tasks:

"As soon as they come back to the classroom they are not confident members." (Deputy head teacher, school B)

"Withdrawal teaching may affect newly arrived children's ability to do challenging learning activities. If they are within a group of children who speak better English sometimes it's quite difficult." (TA, school A).

In school B, withdrawal teaching took place in the EAL room which was a resourced room for EAL pupils of all ages. The EAL coordinator was responsible for this room, in terms of providing appropriate materials and resources. In some cases, all newly arrived children were taught in the same session, and the focus was on developing literacy skills required for the curriculum. Children were happy to receive support outside the classroom, but the EAL coordinator expressed her concerns that very newly arrival could not cope with other children in the group and might be mocked by other children.

The deputy head teacher in school B reported that withdrawal teaching helped the child concentrate more on different learning activities and build confidence by learning in a quiet space with other pupils with similar levels of learning English:

“These children are more confident in a small group situation.” (Deputy head teacher, school B)

The EAL coordinator in school B favoured withdrawal teaching, because it enabled her to cater for EAL children’s individual needs in one session and could make an obvious difference in children’s progress:

“In my teaching, I look at the dynamics of the group. Some children are really quiet and then you have children that are really loud. The withdrawal session helps both sets of children; the quieter ones to be more vocal and the louder ones to sort of respect the fact that these children need to talk.” (EAL coordinator, school B)

Overall, it seems, that school practitioners did not see withdrawal teaching as an exclusionary practice that may deny children’s right to receive education alongside other monolingual children but as an appropriate pedagogical practice to meet children’s individual needs away from noise. Practitioners ignored the negative effects of withdrawal teaching on EAL children and they did not articulate the negative implications of withdrawal in schools.

6.1.4.3.2 Collaborative teaching

It was noted that EAL teaching and learning were optimised when different expertise and efforts collaborated and cooperated for the interest of EAL children. As such, collaborative relationships were noted between the class teachers and EAL teachers in terms of agreeing on the materials and resources used and the content of the lesson. With collaborative teaching, the EAL children were not withdrawn from the class, but learned with other children in class.

School policy documents revealed that collaborative teaching is useful for EAL pupils’ literacy skills, because the children would learn in a motivating and positive learning environment, where they hear English from other children who were fluent

speakers. They can work collaboratively with other children at different stages of language development, and can develop their cognitive and thinking skills. The advantages of collaborative teaching have been identified in policy documents. The following example came from school C:

“We believe that this system maximises the possibilities of progress for EAL pupils, so that by year 6 EAL children are able to compete with monolingual children. Support teaching facilitated moderation and consistency of approach throughout the school.” (EAL policy, school C: p.2)

The benefits of collaborative teaching were highlighted in interviews. Two participants commented:

“It’s very useful to work alongside Mr M. (referring to the language support teacher). He has a better capability within the area of additional language than me.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“I mean it’s good to work together. We share the same aim of getting the job done and improving children’s language skills.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Classroom observations conducted in school A showed that the language support teacher supported the children by delivering language material to the whole class or part of the class where the majority of the children were advanced learners of EAL. The following extract, taken from the observational data, showed how the collaborative relationships were developed between the class teacher and the language support teacher in school A by agreeing on the resources, materials and grouping the children. It was noted that the language support teacher was viewed as being equal to the class teacher in terms of responsibilities and roles. However, the fact that the term “language support teacher” was used instead of “EAL teacher” constructed EAL roles in the school within support context rather than teaching context.

It was 9.45 morning. The children were attending assembly while the class teacher was busy with preparing the resources for the lesson. He was also busy with talking to the language support teacher about how to group the children and organise his main tasks during the literacy hour. It was evident that there was harmony and a positive relationship between the class teacher and the language support teacher. The language support teacher has shown the class teacher some materials he has prepared for one group of children. The lesson was about writing an argument. When the children came back to class, the class teacher asked the children some questions about the meaning of an argument; how they normally write an argument listening to some children's views about advantages and disadvantage of using public transports. The class teacher wrote the first paragraph on the board and then he sat down. He then split the class into two big groups: one group worked with the class teacher and wrote an argument about the advantages of public transports and the other group worked with the EAL teacher on the disadvantages of public transport. (Observational notes, 11 October, 2010, school A)

The inclusion teacher and the class teacher worked in partnership with each other in school C. The inclusion teacher was actively involved in the delivery of all subjects, focusing on the language needs of targeted EAL children. She observed targeted children and supported children in acquiring, using and understanding language needed for the curriculum. During the literacy lesson, the inclusion teacher led a whole class session where she used language focused examples and activities. The class teacher was in the classroom and was taking notes while observing the inclusion teacher's session. It was noted that questions were directed at children who were the new arrivals. As part of her teaching, the inclusion teacher encouraged the new arrivals to speak in front of all the children.

The inclusion teacher reported challenging behaviour for some children while she was simultaneously required to teach the rest of the children. She said that the behaviour of some newly arrived pupils could be difficult to manage, because these children came from some cultures where certain behaviours, such as talking and laughing, throwing objects and whistling in the class or being fidgety were seen as

part of the school day. Such distractions and noise distracted other children from their work. Behavioural issues were recognised by the inclusion teacher as a barrier to an effective collaboration, even when lessons were well planned and materials and resources were available:

“I would say we work hard to plan lessons for them (referring to EAL children) but they wasted our time with their bad behaviour. I’m not saying all of them. But this happens sometimes.” (Inclusion teacher, school C)

On different occasions, a combination of withdrawal and collaborative teaching took place in schools A and C, since sometimes the children were withdrawn from class, while at other times they learned alongside other children.

The terms “support teaching” and “partnership teaching” were used across the three schools to refer to collaborative relationships between the class teacher and EAL teacher. The use of the term “support teaching” maybe criticised for positioning the EAL teacher’s role differently within the class in that her/his role was to complement the class teacher’s role. Furthermore, the term support teaching had the connotation that the EAL teacher was less involved in whole-class teaching compared with the class teacher. On the other hand, using the term “partnership teaching” had the connotation that EAL teachers gained equal position alongside the class teachers.

6.1.4.4 Conclusion

Practitioners’ responses to different pedagogical practices varied across the three schools. In most cases, practitioners were responsible for deciding the appropriateness of different pedagogical practices to meet children’s needs and to put schools’ policies into practice. EAL children’s learning and language development appeared to be influenced by the way in which practitioners

developed collaborative relationships and by differentiating the curriculum to suit children's skills and needs. The classroom learning environment accounted for notable contradictions and inconsistencies which emerged because school practitioners drew on a variety of pedagogical practices and teaching strategies and because different policies were viewed differently by school practitioners.

6.1.5 EAL infrastructure

EAL infrastructure refers to the basic facilities, resources, materials and funding required for EAL children's teaching and support. The use of a range of resources and materials was frequently referred to in policy documents and interviews, and it was noted that schools updated and reviewed their resources and materials regularly in order to meet EAL children's needs. The following evidence came from school's C policy document:

"The use of materials and resources is an essential part of EAL work. We have a variety of dual language texts and resources." (EAL policy document, school C: p. 2)

Deputy head teachers in the three schools said that resources and materials allocation was dependent on pupils' needs and that the needs of EAL children with SEN had to be prioritised. However, situations occurred where there was tension in balancing the content of materials and resources available, with the demands of the curriculum. At times, it was difficult to obtain literacy materials such as dual language books or picture dictionaries, especially in the case of newly arrived children who had not been to school before:

"Having bilingual resources is not always easy because we tend to have children arrived now that we've not had in the past from other countries and we haven't got the literature to support their needs." (SEN teacher, school C)

Classroom observations included many examples of EAL materials and resources used across the three schools such as bilingual cards, small vocabulary booklets and cultural videos about Pakistan, Africa and India. On some occasions, it was noted that the resources used did not match the cognitive aims of different activities and sometimes practitioners used one resource for a few minutes and then moved to use another resource which caused the teaching to be fragmented and disorganised.

Teachers and TAs scaffolded the learning for EAL pupils by providing teaching materials and resources to meet children's needs and their endorsement of the use of materials and resources were evident in several interviews:

"I've spoken to him always; providing additional materials needed. He has his table and additional things, so he has his timetable for numeracy and for literacy; you have connectives available and sentence starters. It's a way of scaffolding their learning and hopefully to get them into a suitable level for their abilities as quickly as possible really." (Y6B class teacher, school B)

"I use picture cards frequently which I find valuable. These are used as prompt cards." (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school B)

"There are a variety of different picture and dual dictionaries which I normally use. Counting sticks and obviously things like board games. The moving place value chart." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

"There are loads. We have a variety of computer programmes for new arrivals. We have a programme which is a vocabulary based programme they can type a word in and it will come with pictures on a board and they can make sentences using those words so that's when you're teaching English for new arrivals who have no English at all." (Y6 class teacher, school A)

School practitioners favoured the use of resources and materials to meet children's needs, but in practice, it was noted that the use of materials and resources was insufficient to meet different needs since lack of language remained a source of

stress for TAs and teachers. In some cases, there was recognition amongst practitioners that lack of language was a cause of frustration even when practical and visual support was provided. One participant commented:

“Sometimes nothing seems to be helpful and I think this is because of the language barrier.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Two participants underestimated the importance of resources and materials in EAL children’s learning and language acquisition and there was recognition that the use of resources and materials had not necessarily made improvement in children’s learning, nor had it assisted teachers in their teaching:

“I mean even when we have the resources in they are not sufficient to meet several needs. You can’t rely on them to support all aspects of children’s learning and language acquisition.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

“I don’t think I would be always more supportive when I have resources. We aim to get them to understand the curriculum.” (Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

It was reported that the provision of EAL resources and materials in the three schools was influenced by the extent to which schools were financially and professionally supported by LAs, ethnic based organisations and external bodies who facilitated schools’ access to funding and necessary resources. In some cases EAL materials and resources were used in an *ad hoc* manner and there was a heavy reliance on computer based programmes such as Clicker 4/5 and websites.

Participants’ responses for the questionnaire’s question about using specific materials and resources for teaching EAL children are shown in Tables (6.7) and (6.8) respectively. 5/8 participants in school A; 3/13 in school B and 4/8 in school C indicated that they “very often” used specific materials for teaching EAL children.

3/7 participants in school A; 2/12 in school B and 3/8 in school C indicated that they “very often” used EAL resources.

Table 6.7: EAL materials

Theme	School	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
Use of EAL materials	A	-	-	3	5	-
	B	-	4	6	3	-
	C	-	-	4	4	-
N=school A:8,school B:13,school C:8						

Table 6.8: EAL resources

Theme	School	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
Use of EAL resources	A	-	-	4	3	-
	B	-	3	7	2	-
	C	-	-	5	3	-
N=school A:7,school B:12, school C:8						

6.1.5.1 School size

Classroom observations showed that the availability of a bigger space created a motivating and creative learning environment where the children could learn a variety of language skills away from distractions. Schools B and C were big schools with allocated space for EAL, but a lack of space to support EAL pupils’ needs has been cited as a problem in school A which had no allocated space for EAL pupils. As such, the EAL teaching and support took place in the school’s corridor or in the hall where there were many distractions affecting EAL children’s concentration.

The TA in school A reported that teaching the children in noisy places such as corridors or classrooms hindered their concentration, which impacted negatively on their learning. A lack of space appeared to be particularly problematic in the light of the big number of EAL children joining schools. Whereas a lack of space was not reported to be a problem by other practitioners in school A, it was perceived to be a problem by the TA whose part of her role was to support EAL children outside the class:

“Space is a problem in this school. You know children need to concentrate and they can’t have a lot of distractions. It’s very difficult you know finding a space because you’ve got lots of interventions happening and you’ve got lots of groups and you’re able to draw them you know it’s difficult it’s difficult. We need a quiet space for the children to learn.”(TA, school A)

However, it seems that lack of space was a big challenge that went beyond the schools’ capacity, since more efforts were needed at the LA level if such an obstacle was to be overcome:

“We are sorry they can’t concentrate sometimes given a lack of space. But they have to get use to this. This actually goes beyond our capacity as an institution. We need lots lots lots of funding to extend this building-I mean to make it bigger.”(Deputy head teacher, school A)

The deputy head teacher in the extract above recognised the benefits of large schools, as opposed to small schools where teachers could utilise different resources and materials effectively and children can concentrate. Although the deputy head teacher was aware of the difficulties EAL children faced in schools, due to lack of space, she did not mind the pressures put on the children who have to cope with limited space available as well as other issues in their learning. Underpinning the deputy head’s view, there was recognition that EAL children were a source of stress rather than any gaps in schools’ organisational structures.

The deputy head was not sympathetic to the whole situation of EAL children being unable to concentrate given a lack of space. The deputy head felt a requirement for EAL children to cope with a lack of space since such a problem went beyond school's capacity as an institution. The role of school to overcome organisational gaps in EAL was played down in this extract.

6.1.5.2 Funding

Funding was a crucial part of EAL provision in schools since it contributed directly to improving EAL children's language and literacy skills. The EAL budget covered the costs of bilingual resources, materials and multilingual assistants and was normally managed by the head teachers and the deputy heads and was dependent upon schools' needs. There were references in the interview data to the need for prioritising spending in relation to EAL children. The Local Authority (LA) was said to be responsible for allocating funding to schools and its allocation of funding was dependent on schools' assessment of how funding is to be used. Once the allocation of funding has been approved by the LA, schools have the responsibility for EAL spend.

Data collected from interviews and policy documents emphasised the need for schools to be cost-effective. This required the appropriate planning of materials and resources costs, and a careful examination of children's needs. The deputy head teachers indicated that lack of funding and unavailability of resources in schools can be counterbalanced by the use of human resources available in schools such as the teaching assistants (TAs) and bilingual staff. Benefitting as many EAL children as possible was said to be an important aspect of the EAL budget. Thus, the total

provision of materials and resources can be shared and used effectively by considering the needs of all children. However, the deputy head teachers indicated that EAL children who spoke languages which were new to the school required different resources and materials. The deputy head teachers in schools B and C indicated the importance of careful planning of spending the EAL funding. They explained how schools managed the EAL funding:

“It’s about being clever with your funding so what I do for children, who are newly arrived from overseas, I can claim grants for those children and these grants are £500 and then what I do is just like with a Romanian child who came to Y6 and nobody in school speaks Romanian and so I speak to the MGSS and I employ a multilingual assistant. So I used the £500 to pay for that.” (Deputy head, school C)

“Well, this year the allocated budget was £11, 000 -11, 500. Now, I’m committed to £4,700 straight up because that obviously covers interpreters. Another £4000 comes out a little bit later on. We’ve bought some dual language books. We have spent lots of money on EAL. To be honest, I mean, we have been left with a balance of £1,800.” (Deputy head teacher, school B)

The deputy heads reported that newly arrived EAL children were eligible for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) to support their learning by providing bilingual resources and multilingual assistants and to raise their achievement. Having clear funding formulae to improve children’s language acquisition was cited as key priority for schools. The deputy head of school A referred to the difficulties in accessing funding to meet EAL children’s needs but these difficulties were handled by having human resources to support the children:

“Funding is always a difficulty, but we are well-funded in that way. We have funding for newly arrived pupils. Well, it’s not very big, you know we don’t get a lot, but we are quite well resourced here in that our teacher/adult child ratio is quite large. So there is a quite large support within the school.” (Deputy head teacher, school A)

Schools faced financial tensions: EAL children receive more funding than non-EAL children and schools needed to balance their budget between all children so the budget allocated for monolingual children is not affected. The deputy heads were felt to criticise the LA's approach to EAL funding since covering children's common and individual needs in the light of a lack of funding was challenging:

"I'm quite convinced in my mind that EAL children receive a good support. But how about monolingual children? I mean other children need our support but we don't have funding to support their needs. I find it difficult." (Deputy head teacher, school A)

"A lot of people think that EAL children are behind and struggle. They have all this support where is actually in some cases they are doing far better than our White British children who don't get the support." (Deputy head teacher, school B)

6.1.5.3 Conclusion

Deputy head teachers' views of funding were parallel to those shown in policy documents. EAL children were recognised to be central in schools' funding, but the deputy heads were critical to the allocation of funding and underpinning their views there were accusations of the LAs who did not treat children equitably in terms of funding. School leaders may be fighting to have more funding and to manage EAL budget in schools, and therefore relied on alternative approaches to meet a variability of needs in EAL children.

6.2 The wider social and cultural context of EAL

A common characteristic of the schools featured in this research was the strong relationship between schools and their communities. It was evident that community and culture were intimately connected with schools' everyday practices through staff knowledge and awareness of communities' and parents' cultural and linguistic needs, as well as their efforts to establish home-school partnerships. Although

schools have made positive steps to involve parents, some barriers such as limited language proficiency in English have hindered schools' efforts to involve all parents.

Parental involvement was a two-way process, with parents on the one hand and schools on the other acting as two important players. For their part, schools established links with parents through language classes, parenting clubs, home visits and recruiting resourceful individuals such as liaison officers and learning mentors. Parental participation took different forms, including attending schools' events such as parents' meetings and supporting children's learning at home.

This section of the analysis consists of three parts: 1) schools' and staff's cultural awareness, 2) facilitative and hindering factors to parental participation, and 3) EAL family context.

6.2.1 Schools' and staff's cultural awareness

Schools' and staff's awareness of EAL pupils' cultural backgrounds was reflected in schools' curriculum, policy documents and pedagogical practices, and such an awareness was perceived differently by data from different sources.

In line with policy documents, classroom observations showed many ways in which schools strengthened their commitment to community. It was noted that linguistic and cultural pictures and posters and traditional objects such as vases and rugs with traditional Islamic decorations and African jewellery were displayed on tables in schools' corridors.

Cultural awareness amongst school practitioners was not restricted to diverse and bilingual staff only, but extended to include monolingual staff from White British backgrounds. For instance, although the Y6 class teacher in school A came from a

White British background, he had a wide knowledge of the community and showed sensitivity to its cultural and linguistic needs. In an interview conducted during Ramadan, the holy month for Muslims, the Y6 teacher talked about Eid, a big Islamic celebration for Muslims following Ramadan:

“They will not be celebrating EID tomorrow; they will be celebrating it on Friday depending on which mosque.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

The Y6 class teacher in school A said that there were occasions where making changes was necessary for religious reasons. He talked about the changes he made during PE because the children were fasting:

“In terms of fasting, for PE this week, I made sure to have a light PE session because for children who are fasting, PE is very difficult.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

There was a recognition that the integration of minority ethnic children into mainstream schools cannot be achieved merely by accepting these children into schools. Many examples have been cited in interviews and classroom observations of how cultural and linguistic diversity was genuinely celebrated and embraced in schools:

“This term is a busy term. Well, we have the EID party, Diwali which is coming up and we have the Christmas party as well.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

“I said: I want you to find out how many different ethnicities you’ve got, how many different languages you’ve got. And they’ve put little displays on the wall. We want them to celebrate their cultures. We are happy to have them in our school.” (Deputy head, school B)

After Eid I noticed that all Y6 children were wearing traditional costumes. They brought sweets and gifts for their friends to celebrate the Eid. No learning activities were organised for that day; instead children spent the whole day dancing, singing and playing. Parents were invited to celebrate with their children. All people in school had fun. (Observational notes, 15 Nov, 2010, school C)

The Y6 class teacher in school B appeared to be sympathetic to newly arrived children who need to accommodate cultural differences between their cultures and the new culture:

“It’s just to put yourself in their shoes and the whole understanding how difficult it would be to go into another culture, to go to another school and to speak another language.” (Y6B class teacher, school B)

Furthermore, it was noted that teachers in the three schools had embedded cultural topics in their everyday teaching by using EAL pupils’ knowledge to enrich the curriculum content. During the literacy hour in school B, the lesson began with displaying pictures about African Safari, African costumes, sweets and traditions and then the teacher made a short video for children showing how people in Zimbabwe celebrate their traditional events. It was evident from pupils’ interactions and contributions in class that most children from African heritage were very excited and said that what they watched has reflected the Africa they know. After the lesson, the class teacher said that embedding cultural references in lessons was not only important for minority ethnic children, but it broadened White British children’s knowledge of other cultures and ethnicities. Similarly, two lessons observed in school C were about ‘floods in Pakistan’ and ‘how to decorate a prayer mat for the mosque’.

However, it was noted that teachers in schools did not share the same awareness of cultural differences amongst EAL children, and in some cases, practitioners struggled with balancing all children’s needs with particular needs in EAL children. In a lesson observed in school B about writing a newspaper report using written extracts taken from newspapers, the class teacher asked the children to write about celebrities of TV shows displayed on British channels such as the X-Factor and Big Brother. While

these topics were interesting for White children and some Black African children, it was noted that the Somali pupils did not show any interest in the topic, and were not aware of the celebrities' names and what these TV shows were about.

This example showed EAL children as being disadvantaged by the teaching provided, because it prevented them from learning due to unfamiliarity with the suggested topics. During the interview, the class teacher reported that she was always keen to embed cultural references in texts, but this was not always the case in practice. The class teacher was not aware of EAL pupils' unfamiliarity with topics that require an understanding of specific cultural references.

Nevertheless, classroom observations revealed that practitioners in schools made clear efforts to accommodate differences in skin, colour, ethnicity, the language spoken and children's religious and social backgrounds. Muslim girls were allowed to cover their heads with scarves and to wear long trousers, instead of shorts during PE time. Children were allowed to practice their religious traditions and beliefs, such as reading Quran during play time and fasting at Ramadan.

At dinner times, Muslim children's dietary options such as eating Halal and gelatine free food were respected by providing meals that met these criteria. Many Indian girls coloured their hands with Hinnah, a dye used by Asian people to decorate their hands and different parts of the body. Some Indian children had turbans (a headwear) and during religious and cultural events, children were allowed to be absent from schools for one or two days to celebrate the event with their families.

In agreeing with the qualitative data, the quantitative data revealed that, overall, staff in schools were aware of EAL pupils' cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Table 6.9). Their responses, with regard to the importance of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, have been cited as follows: 5/8 participants in school A; 11/15 participants in school B and 11/13 participants in school C indicated that being aware of EAL pupils' cultural and ethnic backgrounds was "very important".

Table 6.9 Awareness of EAL children's cultural backgrounds

Theme	School	Not at all	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Cultural awareness of staff	A	-	-	-	3	5
	B	-	-	-	4	11
	C	-	-	1	1	11
N= school A: 8, school B: 15, school C: 13						

6.2.2 Facilitative and hindering factors to parental participation

Schools facilitated collaboration with parents, using different ways such as the provision of information sheet and letters, having events and language classes and working in collaboration with local community centres. However, there were some hindering factors to parental involvement. Practitioners in schools were aware that the majority of parents spoke English as an additional language, and that it was essential to overcome the language barrier. As such, a variety of ways (e.g. verbal and written) were used in schools to suit differences in language amongst parents.

In some cases and upon availability of translation and interpretation services, the information sent to parents was provided in different languages.

A crucial contribution has been made by human resources (e.g. liaison officer, learning mentor and multilingual assistants) to overcome the language barrier. They supported a flexible communication with parents, in particular those who were uninvolved and hard to reach given the language barrier. The deputy head teachers commented:

“We have learning mentors in schools and liaison lady whose real role is to be in touch with the parents and find out what they need and what the problems are and how we can help and what we can do.” (Deputy head teacher, school A)

“The roles of the learning mentors are really, really crucial because they make that link for us.” (Deputy head teacher, school C)

The Homework club was an initiative in school B to educate parents and develop their language skills. The observational notes showed that there was a real sense of equal and respectful relations between the tutor, who was the deputy head, and the Somali parents and that a friendly atmosphere was evident in the club sessions.

The deputy head teacher said that the parents were shy and isolated at the beginning, but later, they built confidence and knowledge of school’s routines and systems through the club. It was evident that the Somali parents were enjoying the club because of the sociability, friendly atmosphere and the learning content of the sessions provided. The number of Somali parents attending the club had increased since the beginning of the club:

“We’ve started with four parents, and now we have twelve parents.” (Multilingual assistant, school B)

By contrast, the deputy head in school C said that the number of parents attending club had decreased to eight, which was regarded as a small number compared with the school's size:

"It's started with about 25 parents which is good and last week it was diminished to about 8. Well, it's the tip of the iceberg. Well for a school with 460 pupils it's not great, but it's better than nothing." (Deputy head, school C)

Practitioners' perceptions of the number of parents attending parenting clubs reveal a contradictory situation. Having 12 parents in club was looked at positively in school B while in school C having 8 parents was considered as a very small number despite the fact that schools B and C were big in size. The multilingual assistant in school B was optimistic in her judgement of parents' numbers since having 12 parents only was a small number bearing in mind the school size.

The Somali parents interviewed reported that the club enabled them to support their children with the homework and remove barriers given lack of English:

"I learned how to support my children at home." (Parent 8, Somalia, school B)

"It's useful. My English is better now." (Parent 10, Somalia, school B)

What also helped with the success of the Homework club was having a Somali multilingual assistant to interpret for parents. The multilingual assistant explained how the homework club helped and supported the parents:

"What we do is that we show the parents how we teach the children in the class. Then the parents will understand, so they could help the child with homework and sometime it is easier for them to know how the child learns. Also it's more about life skills. We actually want them to involve in what the child's doing." (Multilingual assistant, school B)

Through the homework club, the deputy head raised issues of racism in order to develop trusting relationships with parents. She invited two police officers to the

homework club to discuss the necessary procedures for reporting discrimination incidents. The deputy head teacher talked about the failure of parents to talk about any negative experiences they had, despite their school's efforts to build trust relationships with them. The deputy head perceived that parents did not trust schools, or that they doubted whether the school could help them.

The deputy head teacher in school C expressed her concerns about minority ethnic parents' language acquisition since a lack of space hindered school's C efforts to build a partnership with parents through language classes:

"We used to have language classes. And we used to offer those to parents and that was taken away from us because they said we didn't have adequate provision for them. We used to hold them in the dining room. And they said it needs to be held in the classroom and we hadn't got a spare classroom. We are very disappointed about that because we did a lot to support our community and to support our parents in improving their language acquisition." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

Schools' next step was not to attract those parents who were either in regular contact with the school or who were already engaged in other learning activities, but to attract isolated and marginalized parents, such as the Polish parents and Traveller parents. This coincided with the following extracts from policy documents and interviews:

"We will explore ways of engaging with those parents who may find it difficult to approach the school for example." (Educational Inclusion and Equality Policy, school B: p.11)

"Well, we have a big problem with communicating with Traveller parents. They don't come to school events. Their children are new to school and we need their help." (Y6 class teacher, school C)

Some tensions and contradictions have been cited in the interview transcripts. Whilst all parents indicated that they liked to take part in schools' events and that

they had no problems in communicating with practitioners, practitioners cited parents' lack of English as a barrier to communicating with parents:

"Lack of language is a barrier to communicating with parents."
(Experienced class teacher, questionnaire participant, school A)

"I think it's hard when the parents are concerned because sometimes parents don't speak English and this is where we found it's really hard to communicate." (TA, school B)

"For parents with EAL, I think many of them because they are not secure in English so they are reluctant to speak with us and to take on a relationship because they are worried about their own language acquisition." (Deputy head, school C).

Parents appeared to be unrealistic in their views about communication with schools, and what they said was thus partially true in some cases. The fact that some parents asked their children and relatives to interpret for them indicated some difficulties in communicating with schools. Further classroom observations revealed instances of parents being isolated during parents' meeting. A recognition that underpinned parents' views was that lack of communication with practitioners due to the language barrier might be perceived as a stigma that should be hidden by pretending that language did not pose problems.

However, language did not always act as a barrier to parental involvement. Two participants talked about a situation where a Polish parent's lack of English did not hinder her participation in parents' meetings and that her child acted as an interpreter for her during these meetings. This also reflected the difficulties schools face in covering dialectical and linguistic matching for all parents who required language support:

"Pupil D, for example, his mum does not speak English at all, but he translates everything for her so basically we use the child to communicate with the parent." (TA, school B)

“She didn’t understand what I’ve been saying, but she still wanted to come and he translated for her which is quite useful, but she still wanted to come to get that feedback. So I think it’s quite nice to come to school and even if they might need a translation. Taking part in parents’ meetings made the parents ‘feel OK’ and they do feel secured if they come and speak to you.” (Y6A class teacher, school B)

In the two extracts above, teachers did not pay attention to the negative consequences of using children as interpreters but rather this practice was perceived by practitioners as being normal and common in schools, without any negative implications for the children involved. However, the data from classroom observations opposed practitioners’ views in this regard. On several occasions, it was noted that the children did not feel comfortable interpreting for their parents, particularly when talking about progress and behaviour issues. This in turn could affect the extent to which children were honest, and this could cause frustration for their parents, particularly in situations where their parents’ expectations were not met.

Barriers to parental involvement were perceived differently by practitioners in schools. There was recognition that the onus was not always on schools to remove these barriers but rather, parents were expected to make sufficient effort to overcome these barriers. Although schools drew on a variety of ways to involve parents, they still faced opposing situations with regard to parental involvement. In policy context there was a requirement for schools to involve parents; however, this was not always successful in practice because of challenges facing the parents themselves. The deputy head teacher at school C said that the school was perceived

by some parents as an authority and that the school's role was to remove such a negative perception:

"[Our task is] inviting parents in and taking away the authoritarian barrier." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

In some cases, parents may have been afraid to build a relationship with the school because they had had bad experiences from previous schools:

"I would say that they had a bad experience with other schools themselves. And so they don't know how to relate to the school establishment because they had a bad experience and they got the feeling that our school is the same." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

Some parents lacked the financial capacity, and could not support their children:

"Some parents are not able to support financially. They are unable to provide the resources and materials for their children." (Deputy head, school A)

Given that schools were situated in areas of social and economic disadvantage, parents' vocabulary knowledge, for example, was very limited and was seen to impact on not only EAL children's language acquisition, but also the monolingual children's language because monolingual parents in disadvantaged areas had restricted vocabularies:

"Because we're serving a deprived area. It's not just our EAL children it's our monolingual children as well. Most of the parents in this area haven't got that extended vocabulary so they can't support their children because they haven't got it. And almost sometimes they tease their children about using big posh words." (Deputy head, school C)

Questionnaire participants were asked about communication with EAL children and their parents. Their responses are shown in Table (6.10). 5/8 participants in school A; 13/15 in school B and 9/13 indicated that communication with EAL children and their parents was "very important".

Table 6.10: Communication with EAL children and their parents

Theme	School	Not at all	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Communication with EAL pupils and their parents	A	-	-	1	2	5
	B	-	-	-	2	13
	C	-	-	1	3	9
N=school A: 8, school B: 15, school C: 13						

6.2.3 EAL family context

Twenty-three parents were interviewed across the schools, with their most predominant ethnic backgrounds being Pakistani, Indian, Somali and Bangladeshi, extending to parents from other minority ethnic groups such as Chinese and Afghani. It was noted that mothers' attendance was higher than fathers', and that parents were different in terms of their social and cultural backgrounds. Most parents interviewed in schools A and C came from second and third generation families, who were established and lived in England for many years. Some parents in school C came from Poland. They spoke no English and looked isolated and quiet. It was apparent that involving Polish parents was difficult, due to shortage of interpreters and the fact that there were no speakers of Polish in the school. The seven Somali parents interviewed in school B came from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. It was apparent that they were more likely than established parents to have language needs, lack of confidence and limited understanding of the school system.

A salient feature of minority ethnic parents was the strong social ties between them. Each group of parents from the same ethnic and cultural background sat together, had a chat in their first language and wore traditional dress. Pakistani and Indian parents were wearing Saris, decorated and colourful traditional dresses worn in Pakistan and India, while Somali parents were wearing long dress and scarves. Some concerns had been raised around a Traveller Gypsy child in school C in terms of his family's unsettled lifestyle and his lengthy absence from school. The Y6 teacher said that she had met the child's parents one time during the induction, and she also explained that parents had no English and no understanding of school's routines and system.

Within the EAL family context, four key themes have emerged, as follows:

6.2.3.1 Parents' perceptions about schools' support and teaching

Parents interviewed had a positive disposition towards the schools. This emanated from schools' friendly and flexible approaches which encouraged parental involvement and facilitated an easy access to help and advice on a range of matters and issues. Parents were pleased with the level of support and teaching provided for their children, and they had no concerns about their children's progress. They reported that their children were happy at school and that teachers understood their children's needs. The following extracts came from parents' interviews:

"I normally call the school when I have questions. Staff are helpful."
(Parent 1, Pakistan, school A)

"I always ask the teacher when I have questions. People are so kind in this school. My child adores her teacher." (Parent 10, Somalia, school B)

"I have tried to contact the relevant teachers via telephone or email first and then I tried to make an appointment with the teachers and talk with them." (Parent 22, China, school C)

“I love the school. Staff are kind. I have three children here.” (Parent 15, India, school C)

The Chinese parent in school C was fluent in English, and talked in detail about teachers in her child’s school.

“Most of the teachers are very helpful and supportive. I suggest that some of the staff at school should give more encouragement to pupils rather than discourage them, especially when children first came to this country. At first it was really very difficult for children to get used to study and life in this country. The staff should understand children and give them some time to get used to life in this country.” (Parent 22, China, school C)

The Chinese parent perceived that her child’s needs were not sufficiently met, and indicated that some teachers might fail to help children cope with new norms and routines in schools. This was evidenced by her child being struggled to get used to school life in England when she first arrived. The parent perceived that some teachers discouraged children, rather than being supportive and encouraging. The extract also suggests that detailed and long answers were more easily obtained when parents were proficient in English which means that lack of language restricted the extent to which the parents were able to articulate their views.

6.2.3.2 Home learning and support

Parents listed a variety of ways in which they supported their children at home, for example, homework guidance, providing learning resources and materials for children and accessing learning websites through the Internet. The majority of parents showed a clear tendency to support their children at home and to improve their progress in different subjects. In some instances parents used other techniques, such as encouraging their children to learn in order to counterbalance their lack of language or education. But a few referred to difficulty of homework given the demanding nature of the curriculum in KS2 and lacking the adequate

academic and language skills. The following extracts were taken from parents' interviews:

"I encourage her (referring to her daughter) to read and do literacy and numeracy activities available on the Internet." (Parent 16, Pakistan, school C)

"Sometimes I can help my child, but sometimes I can't." (Parent 2, Pakistan, school A)

"Sometimes I can't help my children because it's difficult." (Parent 8, Somalia, school B)

"It's difficult sometimes." (Parent 9, Somalia, school B)

"I always support my child with literacy, but I'm not good at maths. His uncle helps him sometimes." (Parent 4, Pakistani, school A)

For their part, practitioners in schools indicated a preference for home learning, because it helped children make better progress in their learning and strengthened the collaboration between parents and practitioners regarding children's progress and learning. It was reported by practitioners that there were variations amongst parents in terms of their support of their children at home. The following are some examples:

"It's mixed. Very, very mixed. We can't make a sweeping statement that all parents are supportive or that they are not supportive." (Deputy head, school A)

"I think it doesn't stop them to be supportive they're still very supportive and it's different from child to child really their parents. Parents from certain cultures are more supportive than other cultures." (Y6A class teacher, school B)

"They really, really want their children to learn because obviously you have to pay for education back in Africa or whatever. So to them you know it's so precious so they are very supportive of the children." (EAL coordinator, school B)

"The parents are very supportive. About three or four children, I think, have extra support at home from private tutors - some for English or maths. I think they are very pro education and they want their children to

do really well and they keep asking me what they can do to make them do better.” (Y6 class teacher, school C)

The extracts above show that parental involvement is important for EAL children’s learning. In the extracts above, practitioners reported that the extent to which parents supported their children’s learning relied on the value placed on parents’ education and cultures. Practitioners gave an example of how parents from certain cultures such as Black African parents valued education in England because it offered better opportunities for their children’s learning.

6.2.3.3 Cultural obstacles to EAL children’s learning

Practitioners in schools talked about instances where a cultural mismatch between minority ethnic parents and schools was an obstacle to children’s learning and language development and resulted in conflicting expectations and tensions between home and school values. Some minority ethnic communities found it difficult to adapt to the new school rules and regulations (e.g. regular attendance) because violating these rules, although appropriate in certain cultures, was considered to be disruptive to schools’ regulations.

For instance, the deputy head at school C highlighted the influence of interrupted attendance, due to extended holidays, on children’s progress in schools and explained that children’s learning and literacy was affected if they did not speak English for a length of time:

“Attendance is a barrier to learning, but that’s for a minority. But obviously serving a community, where families have got extended families, live abroad in Pakistan or India makes absence from school for several weeks a normal practice in school. One of our main issues is extended holidays and so families think that it’s OK to go on these holidays, but they don’t see the consequences of not speaking English for a long time.” (Deputy head, school C)

But neither schools nor parents could be blamed for having different cultural expectations since both parts' efforts and understanding were important to minimize these differences. The deputy head in school C showed an understanding of families' decisions to take extended holidays because travel is expensive and she explained that this is a general issue in schools:

"I know that it's expensive to go to Pakistan or to India. So it would be silly for them to just go for a week. It's not just our school. It's actually happening in all schools." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

There were references in the interview data to parents' cultural attitudes, which acted as barriers to developing EAL children's linguistic skills and resulted in some parents being reluctant to allow their children to take part in extra-curricular activities and events such as residential trips. The following instances were cited in practitioners' interviews:

"So they have some family attitudes and cultural attitudes which inhibit their ability to make further progress in their education and to improve their linguistic experiences." (Language support teacher, school A)

"Probably the biggest hurdle that we come up against is persuading families that it's ok for their children to go to these sorts of experiences. For some families, they see it's OK for the children to come to school but that's for education and not to go beyond that." (Language support teacher, school A)

"It's very difficult sometimes to work alongside parents from certain cultures. They are not coming from a teaching background, they can't see the relationship. So we've very often got children who are obviously very able but they're not reaching their full potential because they might not be given wide experiences." (Language support teacher, school A)

"The message they got from the community or from the Imam at the mosque or whatever they see is more important than the message they got from the school." (Language support teacher, school A)

"It seems to be a culture of Pakistani parents that they very much feel that it's our responsibility to teach their children and they don't feel that they should take on that responsibility." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

The extracts above show some examples of cultural barriers to EAL children's learning and language development, as cited by practitioners in schools. Within the wider social and cultural context, the community placed greater demands on EAL children and their parents to respond to a variety of cultural and linguistic norms and values. For example, parents should cope with principles and values introduced by the mosque and should maintain their cultural identity by preventing their children from taking part in extra-circular activities. In the extracts above, parents were criticised by practitioners for having incorrect perceptions about schools and education, such as the perception that schools exist only to provide education for the children, and the perception that children's education is the responsibility of schools only. It seems that parents were exposed to contradictory expectations: protecting their cultural and linguistic identity and coping with new cultural and institutional norms and regulations.

Further, the extracts above reveal practitioners' beliefs about the role of culture in posing obstacles to EAL children's learning. This may be in conflict considering schools' policies endorsement of the importance of maintaining EAL children's cultural values. It seems that there were two opposing perspectives in schools: practitioners' perception of culture as a barrier to learning and a policy drive to encourage children and parents to maintain their cultural values. However, such a mismatch between policy and practitioners' views may be due to policies being interpreted differently by practitioners in schools or policies being ignored, given the difficulties of implementing them. Or it may be because there is an inherent conflict between learning processes, the value placed on education and certain

cultural and religious values and beliefs that cannot be easily reconciled. It seems that the extent to which policies could be utilised by practitioners in schools can be dependent on practitioners' perceptions of particular policies in schools.

6.2.3.4 Parents' perceptions about learning an additional language

Parents' competence in language ranged from speaking no English to being fluent speakers of English. However, parents' inadequate linguistic capacity was a common feature of the majority of minority ethnic parents. The language capacity determined the extent to which some parents were able to provide detailed, longer answers and to articulate their views.

Some parents commented that they could understand schools' letters and reports, while some of them indicated that they did not understand what the teachers said. Classroom observations showed that some parents with no English could not communicate with teachers, and used their friends, relatives or children to interpret for them. Upon availability, it was noted that schools provided interpreters or bilingual staff to interpret for parents.

Using a first language was a predominant feature during parenting events, and it was noted that even parents who were able to speak English preferred to speak their first language. Parents' perceptions about speaking English at home were mixed: some parents indicated that they only spoke their first language whereas others spoke both English and their home language. The majority of parents encouraged their children to learn English in addition to their first language, but a few encouraged their children to speak their first language only. The following extracts came from parents' interviews:

“I don’t speak good English. I speak Urdu.” (Parent 20, Pakistan, school C)

“I can understand little English.” (Parent 14, Somalia, school B)

The Chinese parent was a postgraduate student and was therefore able to converse and offer detailed answers. The Chinese parent suggested that learning the additional language was more quickly achieved where children communicated with native English speakers. It was felt that the Chinese parent was very knowledgeable about the importance of language in her children’s learning:

“We often took my child to see British people and talk with them in English. It is really very important to understand and be patient with children and try your best to encourage them to speak English as much as possible and try to help children to make friends with native English people and take part in parties as much as possible and talk with English people.” (Parent 22, China, school C)

However, learning an additional language was perceived by some parents as a threat to their children’s first language and identity:

“If he speaks English only, he will forget our language. We want to keep our language - our identity.” (Parent 7, Afghanistan, school A)

“I speak Somali all the time. I don’t want my children to forget our language.” (Parent 8, Somalia, school B)

Black African parents were described as being “more westernized” since losing the first language was cited as a key feature of these parents:

“Our Black African parents are more westernized and more open to what’s going on. What we realized with the French children was that they were actually losing their language and their parents weren’t speaking it as much at home. In other words their first language is English, not French.” (Deputy head teacher, school B)

Other parents viewed learning English as an asset and an investment for their children’s future, and they perceived learning English as a social and economic necessity in that the children can communicate with the community; access services; secure a good job; and broaden their knowledge and experiences:

“Now everywhere computer and English mean good job.” (Parent 5, Pakistan, school A)

“I loved English when I was little and I am an English teacher. It is important for me to keep learning English. It is also very important for my child to learn English because English is the linguafranca in the world and it is important for my child to come to study in the UK and learn most advanced knowledge and information. It will help to increase job opportunities if my child can speak and write very good English.” (Parent 22, China, school C)

“English is important for our children. They need to communicate with people in the community.” (Parent 2, Pakistan, school A)

“We live here and everything is in English: services, GP, and schools. Everything is in English.” (Parent 2, Pakistan, school A)

“I encourage my children to speak English, but I also encourage them to speak Punjabi. They should learn both. I want my children to communicate with other people.” (Parent 23, India, school C)

Being able to access different services in the first language was reported as a reason to opt not to learn English. One Bangladeshi parent, who had lived in England for 15 years, spoke very little English. She preferred to speak her first language all of the time, since Bengali was a predominant language in her community:

“English is not important for me because I have a big community who speak my language. There are many Bengali shops and even my GP is Bengali so why to learn English?” (Parent 3, Bangladesh, school A- interpreted from Bengali to English by her relative).

Some parents referred to the ease or difficulty of English and the first language. One parent said that he did not learn English because he found it a difficult language to learn:

“Learning English is difficult.” (Parent 6, Somalia, school A)

“We speak Urdu. It’s easy.” (Parent 5, Pakistan, school A)

“I have joined the ESOL classes, but then I stopped after one week, it was boring and difficult.” (Parent 3, Bangladesh, school A- interpreted from Bengali to English by her relative)

6.2.3.5 Conclusion

There was variation in parents' perceptions about the importance of learning an additional language. Some parents looked at learning an additional language as a social and economic necessity and were motivated to learn; others were reluctant to learn the new language and thought of it as being a threat to their linguistic and cultural identity, or, simply thought that it was difficult to learn. Others argued that learning English does not necessarily negate the importance of the first language, since both the first and the additional language are assets. It is of interest to note that parents' did not refer to the role of additional language in enhancing children's academic achievement and cognitive development.

6.3 Educational policies

Documentary analysis was conducted to explore ways in which educational policies regarding EAL children's learning and language development are articulated and transferred into school contexts. Schools' policies were regarded as an over-arching context which encompassed different aspects of EAL since extracts and quotations from policy documents have supported all sections of the analysis. Policy documents incorporated comprehensive information about different features of schools' EAL practice and provision, but the actual implementation of some aspects of educational policies was difficult to control given practical limitations. Different policies were subject to different interpretations by school practitioners, who formed a heterogeneous group in terms of their views, experiences and skills.

While the deputy head teachers reported that schools' policies informed everyday practice, classroom observations suggested that the implementation of schools' policies was not always consistent with everyday practice in schools:

"We have them (referring to school's policies) on file and teachers are aware of them." (Deputy head teacher, school A)

"I am always trying to emphasise certain aspects of our policies during staff meeting. So that I'm reminding staff that their roles should be done according to our school's policy." (Deputy head teacher, school B)

"We take on board staff suggestions so we as management team modify our policies in the light of their views." (Deputy head teacher, school C)

In the extracts above policies' implementation was looked at positively by deputy head teachers who acknowledged that staff had sufficient knowledge of schools' policies. The deputy head teachers talked about different ways by which schools strengthened practitioners' awareness of schools' policies and modified their policies in the light of practitioners' suggestions. However, it was noted that practitioners in schools were faced with some barriers that prevented them from implementing these policies in practice. The data reflected tension in this regard between: the requirements for school leaders to implement EAL policies, as opposed to different barriers practitioners faced in practice.

Schools' policies reflected the LA's general approach to EAL and worked within its policies, including equal opportunities, equality and inclusion. Inclusion has been cited as a comprehensive framework, which includes all pupils, irrespective of their linguistic or ethnic backgrounds:

"Educational inclusion and equality is about equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment or background." (Ofsted, 2001 cited by Inclusion and Equality Policy, school A: p.1)

Inclusion, equality and equal opportunities were referred to frequently by school practitioners who had different perceptions of these terms and their implementation in practice:

“I’m aware that different children have different needs. So with our inclusive policies we provide equal support for all children.” (Y6 class teacher, school A)

Representation of inclusion, equality and equal opportunities in schools took different forms, and appeared to stem from national policies such as the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995; the Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000; and the Equality Act, 2010. As the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) commented:

“Prepare a written policy on race equality, assess the impact of its policies on ethnic minority pupils, staff and parents; and, monitor the impact of its policy with an emphasis on the attainment of ethnic minority pupils”. (Cited in school’s A Inclusion and Equality Policy: p. 2)

There was emphasis in schools’ policies on schools’ responsibility towards raising EAL children’s attainment, meeting their needs and removing barriers to learning through developing appropriate strategies. The following example came from school C:

“The school development plan takes account of the needs and skills of EAL learners and sets targets for these pupils who are challenging and attainable EAL children.” (EAL policy, school C: p.7)

Although schools’ policies emphasised the importance of raising EAL children’s achievement and improving their literacy skills, data about the three schools showed that all three schools’ KS2 results in English and Maths were below the national average in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively. It was noted that on their part, school practitioners made efforts to raise children’s achievement, but they were faced with a variety of barriers such as the language barrier, a lack of interpreters and socio-economic adversity. This example shows that whilst policies

were perceived positively by practitioners in schools, they did not necessarily have a noticeable impact on everyday practice and children's achievement.

Schools' English and literacy policies emanated from the national framework for teaching literacy, which emphasised that children should reach their full potential in speaking, listening, reading and writing by learning certain features relevant to each skill and focused on three main aims in relation to EAL children's language development: to develop excellent communication skills in English; to understand the complexities of the English language and to enable children to express their thoughts both orally and in written work. In contrast, it was evident that teachers did not incorporate all of these features in their teaching since evidence suggested that EAL children had difficulties with understanding idiomatic expressions and communicating effectively in different contexts.

6.3.1 Conclusion

Whilst policy documents focused on children's right to inclusive education, school practitioners struggled to implement these policies in practice given limitations in resources, staff expertise, and community factors (e.g. values placed on education). School policies were open to different interpretations by school practitioners, and schools found it difficult to achieve the intended aims of some policies such as raising achievement and removing barriers to learning for EAL children. However, they were aware of the disjuncture between EAL policy and practice and will continue to implement inclusive strategies to support EAL children.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

7.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL children's learning and language development. The findings have primarily emerged from qualitative data collected from three case study schools, which provided a detailed picture of EAL pupils' needs and provision. A mixed method approach was utilised in this study to cross examine and identify several contradictions and inconsistencies in the data that emerged from different sources and understand the pedagogical dilemmas school practitioners faced on a daily basis.

The findings suggest that EAL children's learning and language development were influenced by as many child-related as situational/systemic factors. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of child development was used as a conceptual framework to structure the discussion according to four major sections, as follows: firstly, child-related factors, which represented key features and characteristics of EAL children, were at the centre of Bronfenbrenner's model; secondly, organisational structures of EAL, which are concerned with procedures and structures in place to support EAL children's learning, represented the microsystem; thirdly, the wider social and cultural context of EAL, which is concerned with home-school partnership and facilitative and hindering factors to EAL, formed the mesosystem and the exosystem; and fourthly, the educational policies affecting EAL children represented the macrosystem.

In structuring the discussion within the Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, allocating one system of the model to introduce specific research questions was challenging, because of the interrelationship and complexity within the themes. As such, specific research questions were addressed within more than one system, and the same evidence was used to answer different research questions. For consistency purposes, the discussion was framed within two overarching themes of child-related and situational/systemic factors. In this chapter, the findings will be discussed in respect of the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived influences of child-related factors (e.g. language factors, special educational needs and social, emotional and behavioural factors) on EAL learners' learning and language development?
2. What are the perceived influences of schools' organisational structures (e.g. identification and assessment approaches, EAL workforce and workforce development, EAL pedagogy, teaching strategies and the curriculum and EAL infrastructure) on EAL learners' learning and language development?
3. What are the perceived influences of minority ethnic parents' involvement on EAL children's learning and language development and the facilitative or hindering factors to parental involvement?
4. What are the perceived influences of educational policies on EAL learners' learning and language development?

7.1 Child-related Factors

Three types of child-related factors have been revealed in the findings, as follows:

7.1.1 Language and literacy factors

There was an agreement in the findings about the influential role of language and literacy in EAL children's learning (Demie et al., 2011; Graf, 2011). Consistently with previous studies, the findings revealed variation in the speed and efficiency of learning English as an additional language. For instance, children of Black African heritage were said to learn English faster than children from Eastern European origins who may take a longer time to acquire the language (Demie, 2011).

The demanding nature of the curriculum in upper Key Stage Two required children to have advanced language skills to comprehend information and access different learning tasks and thus put pressure on schools to respond to their needs. EAL children's ability to learn the additional language was hindered by a lack of comprehension skills and limited vocabulary and a poor understanding of cultural references or idiomatic expressions. This finding was consistent with previous research findings (Burgoyne et al., 2011; Graf, 2011; Hutchinson et al., 2003; Purewal and Simpson, 2010; William, 2004) which attributed EAL children's lack of comprehension to limited understanding of figurative and cultural references in the text (Frederickson and Cline, 2009).

Language was perceived by school practitioners as a fundamental contributory factor to EAL children's learning, irrespective of EAL children's stage of language development. School practitioners took account of a child's language needs as a priority in their planning for EAL children since language played a crucial role in their

progress (Demie, 2001, 2011; Demie and Strand, 2006; Strand and Demie, 2005). Specifically, the Literacy Hour was important to identify EAL children's strengths and weaknesses and to assess children's language in a holistic manner (Cline and Shamsi, 2000; Wrigley, 2000) given its inclusion of a variety of learning tasks and activities such as reading comprehension and guided reading and writing.

The findings stressed the importance of identifying EAL children's needs as early as possible, because language permeated all aspects of EAL children's learning. In this study, EAL children's linguistic skills and characteristics were placed on a continuum with EAL children who were beginners or at an early stage of learning English at the one end, moving next to EAL pupils at an advanced stage of learning English, and finally to gifted and talented EAL children who were fluent in English. The continuum was interactive and fluid since different aspects of EAL learners were overlapping and there was no clear-cut way to categorise the children into groups because EAL children formed a heterogeneous group who learned English differently and possessed different sets of skills (Graf, 2011; Hartas, 2005). For instance, not all newly arrived children were at an early stage of learning English.

In examining the continuum of language learning, various facets of EAL learners have been identified. For example, it was evident that the needs of advanced learners of EAL were less complex than newly arrived pupils' needs because they were not at an early stage of learning English, and were established in the school. The advanced learners of EAL had a dual competence in that they were able to switch flexibly between the first language and the additional language depending on the situation and context (Frederickson and Cline, 2009). Their proficiency in the

additional language was not only evident in their mastery of conversational and phonological competence, but also in their competence in reading.

Gifted and talented EAL pupils observed in schools were fluent in language at the level of native speakers of English, and were able to communicate with teachers in different social and learning contexts, and demonstrated knowledge of different uses of language and of different genres of writing. Their contributions to discussions in the class showed excellent speaking skills, and background knowledge.

Cummins' (1984) second language acquisition theories, namely the Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) theories were applicable to EAL children in the study. Specifically, while newly arrived children's main task was to learn several features of BICS such as learning basic comprehension, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (Gravelle, 2005), gifted and talented EAL children were able to use different features of CALP which were concerned with learning the pragmatic and semantic aspects of language and its various functions (Gravelle, 2005).

BICS and CALP theories were also influential in guiding EAL practice and provision in schools (Cummins, 2008). On one occasion, the deputy head teacher in school C explained how the Cummins' BICS and CALP theory should be embedded in teacher training, arguing that practitioners in schools should understand how to move EAL children's language to using an academic or subject-based language. This is an example of how theory can inform practice and influence practitioners' perspectives on EAL provision in schools.

Some practitioners in schools showed limited awareness of how an additional language is acquired in terms of articulating the mechanisms, principles and processes of an additional language acquisition. A language support teacher in school A, however, showed awareness of how the additional language is acquired and referred to the length of time the EAL child needs to learn the additional language. This points to variability in practitioners' knowledge and understanding of second language acquisition, raising implications for policy and practice.

Research has shown that the use of a child's first language in the early stages of learning an additional language facilitates teachers' exploration of children's literacy practices and skills, and increases children's confidence (Issa and Ozturk, 2008). However, in practice, schools rely on the availability of bilingual staff in schools to facilitate the communication with EAL children during their transitional strategy until the child was able to access the curriculum (Baker, 2006).

It was evident from policy documents analyses and interview findings that balancing EAL children's capacity in English with maintaining the first language was challenging. Two contradictory perspectives have emerged in the data on the first language: The first perspective emerged from policy documents and reflected a whole school approach to maintaining EAL children's first language. The second perspective was expressed by school practitioners who found that maintaining the first language could inhibit the EAL child's additional language acquisition. This tension between policy and practice in schools referred to how some policies did not resonate comfortably with practitioners in schools (Creese, 2005).

7.1.2 Special educational needs

Through interviews and classroom observations, Special Educational Needs (SEN) were influential in understanding EAL children's learning and language acquisition. Three key features were found to hinder EAL children with SEN to progress and to acquire language skills: firstly, the children had difficulty in learning compared with their peers of the same age; secondly, their SEN hindered them from making use of the educational facilities available in schools; and thirdly, special educational provision was not made for them. These features were consistent with the SEN Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a:6) which states that:

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

It was recommended by Frederickson and Cline (2009:270) that "the need for support will be greater if the child's acquisition of a second language is impaired by SEN". By contrast, the findings showed that the needs of EAL children with SEN were not always catered for effectively and regularly by teachers who did not have direct responsibility for these children and relied on SEN specialists to identify children's needs. This resulted in EAL children being "stigmatised" in schools (Frederickson and Cline, 2009).

It was reported by practitioners in schools that SEN was more likely to be confused as an EAL related difficulty, given EAL children's limited linguistic competence. Practitioners, however, did not report any instances of wrong grouping or misidentification of EAL children's needs in schools. This was inconsistent considering the contextual information about the three schools which revealed that the percentage of pupils with SEN statement and on School Action Plus was above

the national average (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011). In light of these contradictory views, practitioners could be criticised for not presenting objective views in this regard and for trying to play down or hide any mistakes in the identification process.

It is worth mentioning that schools should pay particular attention to the fact that a pattern of disproportionality, referring to over/under-representation, of minority ethnic children in SEN may exist (Artiles, 2003; Artiles and Trent, 2000; Lindsay, Pather and Strand, 2006) in schools with high numbers of EAL children. This disproportionality in schools could be attributed to the way linguistic difference is perceived in the educational system as being associated with “deficit” and “disadvantages” (Artiles, 2003) or may be looked at as being “equated with deviance or stigma” (Minows, 1990 cited in Artiles, 2003:193).

Making a distinction between EAL and SEN was perceived by practitioners in schools as a “multilayered” and a “complex” process (Tangen and Spooner- Lane, 2008:66) that requires a “particular care” (SEN Code of Practice, DfES, 2001a:46) given the language barrier. In some cases, reaching a clear decision as to whether EAL children had language needs or SEN took several months, due to parents’ and children’s lack of language (Cline and Shamsi, 2000).

The diagnostic assessment, referred to by SEN documents, is an important way to help practitioners to navigate the “grey area” (Hartas, 2005) between learning difficulties and EAL. The assessment was carried out by the SENCO and was conducted by asking EAL children and their parents SEN and EAL filter questions in order to inform provision, for example, grouping and lesson planning for EAL

children. However, as a SENCO in school B reported, successful application of the SEN assessment was hindered by children's and parents' lack of language.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCNs), referring to "the difficulties with fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what other say, and using language socially" (Bercow Report, 2008:13), were demonstrated by the interview data to be different from language needs, even if EAL children experience communication and speech problems. SLCNs may arise because of having a disability, while EAL children have no difficulties in their learning.

Despite seeking various sources of evidence including the EAL child, his/her parents, the SENCO and external agencies to assess SEN in EAL children as recommended by the SEN Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) and Cline and Shamsi (2000), the findings revealed that the accuracy of the assessment could not be ensured, even in cases where multilingual assistants supported the assessment process. It might therefore be argued that current processes of identifying SEN in EAL children were compromised given the language barrier.

7.1.3 Behavioural, social and emotional factors

It was reported by practitioners in schools that joining schools in upper KS2 may have social and emotional implications for EAL children since they could find it difficult to cope with the social and academic requirements due to lack of language. These views were illustrated by several examples from classroom observations: EAL children showed certain behavioural, social and emotional characteristics including

being shy, withdrawn and silent (SEN Code of Practice, DfES, 2001a: 87) and in some cases, they looked bored and inattentive (Graf, 2011).

In some instances EAL children saw themselves as being different from other children in school who had established friends and competence in English. Such perceptions in EAL children were formed primarily because of the language barrier. Practitioners recognised the difficulties facing EAL children joining school from certain cultures since they should accomplish two sets of targets:

To comply with the social code of the classroom and to extend their linguistic repertoire to encompass the accepted standard language of their society. (Frederickson and Cline, 2009: 242)

Research has shown that EAL children's silence is a "natural" and "receptive period" that can support their learning and language development (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2011:6). By contrast, EAL children may remain silent for long time, causing a confusion for practitioners as to whether this is a sign of learning difficulties or language needs.

It was demonstrated by the interview and observation findings that there was variability among EAL children in terms of their social and emotional adaptation to the new learning environment and that language was the most influential factor to newly arrived children's familiarity with the new culture. The "sink or swim approach" is an expression used by Tangen and Spooner-Lane (2008) to refer to EAL children's adaptation to schools' norms and routines. Findings revealed that some EAL children were found to "sink", being unable to learn the routines and norms quickly and as a result, giving up, while others were found to "swim", being able to adjust to the new learning environment.

Contrasting examples of EAL children's adaptability to the new culture were demonstrated by interview and observation data. For example, while it was difficult for a gypsy Traveller child in school C to be accustomed to school's norms given the disparity between his and the new culture, a newly arrived child with no English in school A who adjusted to the school easily attained the national level in his reading within one year.

It is vital to distinguish between what policy documents acknowledged regarding schools' adaptability to EAL children's needs and their actual implementation in practice. Policy documents place an expectation on schools to implement particular procedures to help children adjust to the new learning environment, giving particular attention to children from refugees and asylum seeker backgrounds. However, such procedures were found not to be sufficient on their own right since there were instances of children suffering from challenging emotional and social difficulties given the language barrier.

Overall, it may be argued that EAL children's behavioural, social and emotional needs are transient during the first days of joining a school, until the child acquires language skills and gains confidence. More research, however, is needed to 'explain' the bi-directional influence of behavioural, social and emotional factors on EAL children's learning and language development.

7.2 Situational/ Systemic Factors

The situational/systemic factors consisted of three types:

7.2.1 Organisational structures of EAL

Four types of school organisational structures were explored in this research: 1) identification and assessment, 2) EAL workforce and workforce development, 3) the curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy, and 4) the EAL infrastructure.

7.2.1.1 Identification and assessment

Two major issues have been identified regarding EAL children's identification and assessment in this study. Firstly, there was no standardised initial language assessment used in schools to assess newly arrived children. Secondly, there were some concerns about the inappropriateness of formative and summative assessments for EAL children.

Consistently with previous studies, the three schools in the study, though working within the same Local Authority (LA), have used various types of initial language assessment to examine EAL children's understanding and use of English (Graf, 2011). In school A, structured assessment was used to assess newly arrived children's knowledge of nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositions. While an oral, written and a picture action tests were used in schools C and B respectively. It has been argued that through the assessment, a language baseline for development and progress in the additional language can be created (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007).

Such differences across schools mean that there are no local or national statutory legislations that require schools to use a standardised assessment framework for EAL children. This makes the assessment process "problematic" (Edwards, 1998: 24),

which is further compounded by the casual arrival and departure of EAL children during the year, resulting in schools having fragmented evidence on newly arrived children's proficiency in English. As such, findings from this study agree with those by NALDIC (2013b) and Demie and Bellsham-Revell (2013), who recommend further research in this area.

According to Franson (1999:62), most teachers underestimate the outcomes of the initial assessment because of its little influence on "locating the pupils in the curriculum". Contrary to Franson's (1999) findings, it was demonstrated by policy documents and interviews that the initial assessment results were used to inform teachers' planning and teaching, and identify appropriate materials and resources in class. These findings are in line with previous research (Graf, 2011; Issa and Ozturk, 2008; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007), in that they recognise the initial language assessment as an effective tool to assess EAL children's general language development.

Graf (2011) argued that background information about family circumstances has a strong impact on child's settling into school and his/her attitude and motivation to learn an additional language. The findings have shown that the collection of background information about EAL children such as child's previous exposure to education and years of stay in England helped the teachers to make a more accurate judgment as to the child's general cognitive knowledge. Nevertheless, a lack of interpreters combined with parents' and children's lack of language skills made it difficult for schools to achieve the intended aims of the assessment.

Formative and summative assessments in the three schools were undertaken within the framework of the National Curriculum and national guidelines, in that EAL children were assessed on the same measures set for monolingual children. The importance of assessing EAL children has been highlighted in policy documents; however, in practice, the language barrier frustrated practitioners' efforts to assess children effectively and reduced children's ability to demonstrate their knowledge (Issa and Ozturk, 2008).

A Language in Common, the formal assessment to assess EAL children's proficiency in English, has been criticised by school practitioners in two schools for using structured and accurate descriptors that cannot apply to all EAL children at their different stages of language development. In parallel with these findings, NALDIC (2005) argued that *A Language in Common* approach ignores EAL children's knowledge and skills. On the other hand, a supportive view came from one school, which recommended using *A Language in Common* to assess the children in accordance with the curriculum descriptors.

Furthermore, concerns have been raised by school practitioners with regard to the inappropriateness of SATs for EAL children given the language barrier. School practitioners clarified that SATs do not reflect EAL children's individual needs and characteristics nor can they show specific strengths and weaknesses in their learning (Scott, 2007). Findings from the interviews showed that newly arrived children in two schools were excluded from SATs, and assessed through teacher assessment (Kotler et al., 2001). These findings demonstrated policies' failure in creating an

effective and flexible assessment system that is applicable to bilingual and monolingual children.

In response to the inappropriateness of current assessment system for EAL children, Issa and Ozturk (2008:31) recommended three guidelines for a more effective assessment: discussing challenging learning objectives with the children; using appropriate questions in the assessment to motivate purposeful thinking; and sharing success criteria to help children know the targets achieved.

Overall, it is clear from the findings that practitioners in schools found themselves caught between two tensions: responding to schools' policies which stressed the importance of assessing EAL children according to the national guidelines and facing difficulties when applying different assessment approaches due to the language barrier. It seems that there was a requirement for schools to support policies that did not respond to their everyday practice and children's needs. In particular, the requirement that EAL children should be assessed with the same measures used for monolingual children needs to be examined more thoroughly and accurately in future research.

7.2.1.2 EAL workforce and workforce development

As with previous research (Hall, 1995; TDA, 2009b; Wrigley, 2000), the findings from this study revealed that meeting EAL children's needs and supporting their language development were the responsibility of all members of staff, expected to contribute to leadership, coordination, teaching, support and interpretation. The Teaching and Development Agency (TDA) (2009b:3) pointed out:

The additional language development across the curriculum of EAL learners within mainstream classes is effectively supported by all members of the school workforce.

However, the findings showed that teaching EAL children was not always a shared responsibility and there was recognition that EAL was solely the responsibility of EAL teachers and bilingual staff. It was noted that EAL teaching in one school was left to the EAL coordinator who supported EAL children by withdrawing them from class. Further, sharing responsibility to teach EAL children in schools A and C could only happen when EAL teacher and the class teacher were working in collaboration. Teaching EAL children as constructed and practised in the three schools paint a picture of contradictions between policy and practice.

Schools' endorsement of EAL children's cultures was a response to schools' policies which emphasised the importance of supporting children's cultures and languages. As such, diverse staff from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds (e.g. volunteers and members of the community) made up the EAL workforce in schools (Demie et al., 2007; Demie and Bellsham-Revell, 2013; DfES, 2003; Ofsted, 2003), but their representation varied from one school to another. The diversity of staff was more notable in schools A and C possibly because they had a higher percentage of EAL children. It was evident that the three schools employed diverse staff "productively" (Sood and Mistry, 2011:210), in that they took on some important roles such as acting as a bridge between parents and schools to overcome the language barrier during social and cultural events.

It is worth mentioning that the deployment of diverse staff in schools was mostly apparent in the recruitment of multilingual assistants, who are interpreters or

professionals who are specialised in other fields (Graf, 2011). Specifically, the role of a Somali multilingual assistant in school B was effective and consistent with the Swansea Ethnic Minority Language and Achievement Service's (EMLAS) (2004) guide (cited in Graf, 2011:66), which specifies the multilingual assistants' responsibilities as follows: the language support took place in the classroom; the multilingual assistant worked in collaboration with the class teacher in terms of planning in advance for the child; and children's previous background knowledge and learning were activated.

As previous research has shown, the multilingual assistants in the three schools acted as a "source of emotional security" (Issa and Ozturk, 2008:20) for EAL children; however, some concerns were reported by school practitioners regarding the deployment of multilingual assistants, namely a lack of multilingual assistants, especially for languages which are new to schools and the short time they can stay in schools. In some instances multilingual assistants were noted to have difficulties in supporting EAL children's learning of subject knowledge and new words simultaneously due to the language barrier.

Further, there was a mismatch between multilingual assistants' qualification and skills and the curriculum content, which raised two important points: the unpreparedness/lack of training for multilingual assistants working in diverse schools and the extent to which EAL children's cognitive development might be affected. But it seems that schools' urgent needs for someone to speak EAL children's languages forced them to recruit multilingual assistants with limited

knowledge of the curriculum or subject area. Furthermore, schools' restricted funding determines the length of time multilingual assistants can stay in schools.

In light of this, it seems that more control over the recruitment criteria for multilingual assistants in terms of qualification and knowledge is essential. Moreover, multilingual assistants' working conditions need to be improved, since being a casual and temporary work, based on a per hour payment scale, may discourage interpreters or professionals to work as multilingual assistants.

EAL teachers in two schools were qualified teachers whose specialism in EAL was obtained through practice, experience or training provided by the LAs and universities (Creese, 2005). Nevertheless, there was no agreement across the three schools regarding using a specific term to refer to EAL teachers and it was noted that the title "EAL teacher" is not formally or regularly used in schools (Institute of Education and TDA, 2009). Instead, terms such as the "language support teacher", the "EAL coordinator" and the "inclusion teacher" were used in schools A, B and C, respectively.

In one school a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) was recruited to provide EAL provision. This practice has been criticised in the literature because it may contribute to perceiving EAL as an "ill-defined role that is often carried out, either formally or informally, by a TA" (Institute of Education and TDA, 2009: 7) and may impact negatively on EAL teacher status within schools (Mallows and Mehmedbegovic, 2010). Contrary to these views, it was evident from the findings that the HLTA has been a precious source of language teaching, and was appreciated by staff as a skilful teacher in terms of her knowledge of the curriculum.

Further, there was discrepancy between the number of EAL children and the number of EAL practitioners (IoE and TDA, 2009). In one school the EAL coordinator was responsible for all EAL children of all ages while in two schools EAL teachers were attached to each class or split between two classes to provide language teaching for EAL children.

It seems that EAL as a field has offered limited career opportunities (NALDIC, 2007) since the recruitment of EAL teachers is dependent on whether schools have a considerable number of EAL children. Furthermore, the National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC) (2007) raised some concerns around the ageing profile of EAL teachers in schools, in that a small number of newly qualified “young” teachers choose to specialise in EAL. In order to overcome these concerns, Mallows and Mehmedbegovic (2010:23) pointed out:

One way of increasing the status of a specialist role is through an agreed national qualification. Where there is such a qualification and it is accepted by the field, the recognition as specialists of those gaining the qualification is enhanced.

Most practitioners in schools indicated that they had received training in EAL either formally through training provided by LAs, or informally through staff meeting or in-service training (INSET). However, the effectiveness of training was perceived differently by practitioners in schools. In particular, input received during PGCE or the induction year was criticised by school practitioners for not providing sufficient theoretical understanding of EAL and for not informing everyday practice with regard to teaching EAL children.

In two schools in particular, Language in Learning Across the Curriculum (LILAC), which is a teacher development course in EAL, was highlighted as a useful course

because it involved information about scaffolding learning for EAL children and developing their language from a basic to an academic level. According to NALDIC (2013c), LILAC develops teachers' awareness of EAL children's needs, and focuses on EAL children's literacy skills, the academic and functional use of English and the learning of advanced learners of EAL.

Policy documents emphasised the importance of providing training in EAL for all members of staff in schools to meet EAL children's needs and support their language development (DfES, 2003; Ofsted, 2003; Qualifying to Teach, TTA, 2002b; Sood and Mistry, 2011). However, it was important to check these findings against school practitioners' perspectives on the training received. It was evident that schools faced problems of balancing practitioners' general training needs with the specific needs in EAL specialists. There was ambiguity in the findings about how many school practitioners received training in EAL every year and the number of training sessions provided.

This is important in that findings from the study revealed lack of training in EAL and discrepancy between the content of training and EAL practice in schools. It appears that some teachers put the onus on schools and professional bodies responsible for providing training, rather than on themselves in relation to their lack of knowledge of how to meet EAL children's needs. However, teachers may be criticised for not making efforts to educate themselves through reading specialist books about EAL pupils' needs and skills and obtaining advice from the Internet (DfES).

It should not be assumed that receiving training in EAL is *per se* an indicator of staff's knowledge of EAL, since the quality of training needs to be monitored in

terms of content (Butcher et al., 2007; Hall and Cajkler, 2008; Ofsted, 2006) and the effectiveness of tutors to convey skills and understanding (Ofsted, 2006). This raises the need for developing standardised criteria to monitor the quality of training provided to develop an EAL workforce by LAs and professional bodies. If the quality of training is to be monitored, standardisation of practitioners' skills, confidence (DfES, 2003: 17) and knowledge of how an additional language is acquired (Drury, 2007) can be established.

Overall, a decline in schools' capacity to recruit EAL specialists and to provide professional development opportunities can be attributed to reductions in funding, due to recession, (NASUWT Teachers' Union, 2012:14) which could have wider implications of hindering schools' ability to meet these children's needs and improving their language acquisition.

7.2.1.3 The curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy

In the light of previous research findings (DfES, 2003; Hall, 2001; Sood and Mistry, 2011), findings from the study revealed that the three schools adjusted their pedagogic practices and teaching strategies to avoid interruptions to EAL children's education, caused primarily by the language barrier. Schools differentiated the curriculum to suit differences in knowledge and language amongst EAL children but in some cases a variability of needs amongst EAL children made it difficult for teachers to control conflicting individual and common needs. Creese (2005:47) attributed such a juxtaposition of individual and common needs to the difficulties teachers face in schools with "working with the few, meeting individual needs" and "teaching the many."

Teachers in schools used inclusive teaching strategies which were addressed to the majority of children, including monolingual children from white British backgrounds (Conteh and Brock, 2006; Graf, 2011). This was attributed to the high percentage of EAL children in schools and the fact that these strategies were beneficial to monolingual children as well. These findings support previous research and add to the literature by providing a new direction to think of EAL as an area that can incorporate within its layers benefits to non-EAL speakers.

The use of a buddy strategy was indicated to be an inclusive teaching strategy to build children's confidence and encourage them to learn. Through a buddy, a child sharing the same first language was attached to the newly arrived child to interpret and provide support (Graf, 2011). The Milton Keynes Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (2004b) recommended that the use of buddy would be more effective if the child has a friendly personality and a good standard of English.

Practitioners in schools might be criticised for reporting views which contradicted everyday practice and in some instances the same participant introduced two different perspectives on the same issue. There were several examples of these conflicts in the findings. For example, while teachers reported that they were comfortable with having newly arrived children in class, they expressed concerns about teaching newly arrived children. The following contradictory extracts were reported by a participant during the interview: "I wouldn't know what do, with someone who speaks no English so it just worries me" and "I'm happy to have them (referring to newly arrived children). I would love to teach them." Such contradictions in schools points to the complexity of being inclusive and teaching

children with diverse needs in resource limited contexts. Creese (2005:46) argued that “conflictual bits and pieces” are common in educational settings and attributed such conflicts to the fact that particular pedagogical practices may present certain dilemmas for practitioners in their everyday practice.

There was evidence in the interview and observation findings that EAL children were not able to understand idiomatic and figurative expressions in reading and writing and that in some cases the language used in schools was not accessible for EAL children. EAL children relied on an adult to explain to them and lack of language led to difficulties in understanding the tasks. These findings opposed policy documents which emphasised “using language that is accessible for all children” and “avoiding language that cannot be understood” (Inclusion and equality policy, schools A and B: p. 9/10 respectively).

This is an example of how policy documents contradicted everyday practice since schools’ endorsement of using accessible language for all children was not reflected in the practitioners’ work. Creese (2005:64) argued that current educational policies did not assist practitioners in diverse schools “to solve these contradictions” nor they were open to similar interpretations by practitioners in schools. Creese and Leung (2003:17) commented:

We need to pay attention to the ways policy meanings are understood and taken up by practitioners/teachers. The implementation of a policy clearly does not entirely depend upon individual teacher interpretations and responses.

With regard to pedagogical approaches used in schools, the findings revealed instances of collaboration between the EAL teacher and the class teacher in terms of planning and preparing for the required resources, materials and strategies. The

collaborative teaching was delivered by the EAL teacher to the whole class or part of the class in order to improve EAL children's language and literacy. With collaborative teaching, EAL children were not withdrawn from the class, but they learned with other children in the mainstream classroom.

Collaborative teaching has been criticised in previous research for being ineffective since lack of time may hinder collaboration between the EAL teacher and the class teacher (Brentnall, 2010; Franson, 1999). Also, differences between the EAL teacher and the class teacher in terms of specialism and perspectives may impact negatively on how learning tasks might be approached and delivered (Arkoudis, 2003; Creese, 2004; Franson, 1999). These barriers may result in EAL teachers working "relatively autonomously" or being perceived as "someone who works outside the classroom, both physically and metaphorically" (Franson, 1999: 66).

Contrary to these conclusions, findings from the study revealed harmonious collaborative relationships between the class teachers and the EAL teachers in schools and that there were no obstacles to achieving a productive collaboration. EAL teachers gained an equal position alongside the class teachers and were involved in whole-class teaching alongside the class teacher.

However, there was a lack of clarity and confusion over terms used to refer to collaborative teaching in the three schools. Alongside the term "collaborative teaching", the terms "support teaching" and "partnership teaching" were used in one school to refer to collaborative relationships between the class teacher and EAL teacher. The use of the term "support teaching" may be criticised for positioning the EAL teacher's role differently within the class in that her/his role was to

complement the class teacher's role (Creese,2005) and it has the connotation that the EAL teacher was less involved in whole-class teaching compared to the class teacher.

Withdrawal teaching was another mode of teaching where the EAL child was withdrawn from the class to work individually or in small groups with adults, and to receive language teaching away from distractions and noise. It was perceived by policy documents and practitioners in schools that withdrawal teaching was a temporary transitional strategy used for EAL children until their "English language skills have developed sufficiently for them to access the national curriculum" (Newly arrived policy, school A: p.1). Withdrawal teaching provided optimal context for developing EAL children's literacy skills and was an example of EAL children learning subject content in different way from the rest of the class. However, these findings were at odds with previous research which criticised withdrawal teaching for having a negative influence on EAL children's learning and language development (Frederickson and Cline, 2009).

Overall, tensions and contradictions were prevalent in EAL pedagogy in schools. The implementation of educational policies did not conform comfortably with practitioners in their everyday practice given limitations such as the language barrier and the impracticality of some of these policies. Norwich (1996:3-4) justified tensions and dilemmas in educational settings by arguing that "there is no clear overall and coherent set of values which can justify policy and practice at all levels in education" (cited in Creese, 2005: 44).

7.2.1.4 EAL infrastructure

Three key issues were raised in the findings with regard to schools' EAL infrastructure: firstly, the importance of resources and materials to facilitate and support EAL teaching and learning; secondly, the importance of having an allocated space for EAL children; thirdly, the role of funding in covering the costs of bilingual resources, and multilingual assistants. The contextual information accessed about the three schools revealed that the percentage of EAL children in the three schools was above the national average, which reflects a higher concentration of EAL pupils in the Coventry areas in particular. This also means that schools' demands for resources and materials for EAL children are increasing (The Teachers' Union report, 2012:6) to facilitate EAL teaching and learning.

A lack of allocated space to support children's language acquisition away from distractions was reported to be an issue in school A. This resulted in most of the EAL teaching and support to take place in school corridors or in the hall. An ideal example of an allocated space for EAL was exemplified by the EAL room in school B, where a motivating, quiet and productive learning environment with necessary EAL resources and materials was created away from crowding and noise. So far, there has been little research (Edwards, 1998) about the influence of space on EAL learning. As such, the findings from this study stress the importance of this issue, and recommend the need for further research to explore the issue in more depth.

Findings from the study revealed that schools had autonomy from LAs to spend funding according to children's needs. This arrangement gave school leaders more flexibility and control to allocate funding for EAL children whose achievement was

below the national average. However, grants given to schools were smaller than before the recession given the spending cuts carried out by the Coalition Government (Davies, 2010; DCSF, 2010; NALDIC, 2013a; NASUWT, 2012; Rutter, 2010) and hence cannot contribute to radical changes in EAL learning and achievement in the same way as in the past. Davies (2010:3) commented:

We believe that funding strands of work related to underachievement, additional language acquisition and race equality from a single pot has contributed to pathologising minoritised and bilingual learners as underachieving and has failed to capitalise on the advantages ethnic and linguistic diversity offer, both to the individual and to society.

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), aims to tackle underachievement amongst minority ethnic children (Graf, 2011; Howard, 2007), was reported as a key source of funding across the three schools to support newly arrived children who entered the school during the academic year. The fact that allocated funding is available for EAL children means that EAL children's eligibility for funding is "based on a right or entitlement" (Davies, 2010:4). Recently, the EMAG was mainstreamed and assimilated into the whole school grant, which means that there will be no separate grant to support EAL children's learning and achievement (NALDIC, 2013a).

Although it was demonstrated by the findings from policy documents and interviews that the key aim of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) was to raise EAL pupils' achievement, it seems that schools failed to achieve this aim considering contextual information about the three schools revealing that schools' KS2 results in English and Maths were below the national average in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011). These findings leave many questions unanswered: What impact did schools' funding have on EAL children's learning? Why did EAL children in schools continue to underachieve for several years despite

having allocated funding to raise their achievement? In response to these questions, it may be argued that there is a need for a renewed debate on whether schools' funding is key to EAL children's underachievement in diverse schools or whether there are other factors that may be more influential in determining EAL children's achievement.

NALDIC (2013a) argued that from 2013, schools should have the option to add the EAL factor to their funding formulae to provide the additional support for EAL children who have been to school for less than three years. But these changes are likely to affect EAL pupils who have been enrolled in schools for more than three years and have not developed adequate competence in English. Such changes in funding did not take account of the fact that EAL children need five to seven years (Cummins, 1984; Demie, 2011) to acquire academic English to access the curriculum.

There were references in the findings for the need to prioritise spending in relation to EAL children, being cost-effective in spending and having a clear funding formula. In their funding plans, the schools benefitted as many children as possible by considering shared use of materials and resources and taking account of "a workable contingency element" (Rutter, 2010:6), by being considerate to sudden and unforeseen circumstances, such as the casual arrival of EAL children by providing the bilingual resources, materials and staff necessary for their learning. The National Union for Teachers (NUT) acknowledged the importance of providing a coherent and adequate framework for funding in order to ensure stability of the EAL

infrastructure in schools and to avoid any unexpected circumstances in relation to EAL children's learning (cited in Garg, 2010).

The deputy head teachers in schools reported that EAL children were the central goal of schools' funding policies and argued that they received more funding than non-EAL children from White British backgrounds. Schools found themselves caught in a tension between allocating funding for EAL children and meeting monolingual children's needs. But limited funding allocated to schools has slowed down schools' capacity to meet a variety of needs and could put more pressure on monolingual children who may not receive appropriate support given the presence of high numbers of minority ethnic children in the same school.

It is worth mentioning that findings from this study support recent criticisms of the educational policies affecting monolingual children. It has been argued that the government has neglected white working class communities in its policies (Rutter, 2010) and that White British children from disadvantaged backgrounds are the lowest attaining groups of children (Strand, 2010). Thus, there is a need for schools to pay an equal attention to address monolingual and bilingual children's needs in their financial plans and educational policies.

7.2.2 The wider social and cultural context of EAL

The study explored perceptions of the facilitative and hindering factors to minority ethnic parents' participation in their children's education, based on the views of EAL children, minority ethnic parents and school practitioners. Findings from this study offered evidence of the substantive efforts of both parents and schools to develop a home-school partnership (DfES, 2003, 2004; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007).

For their part, schools have provided various types of support for parents (e.g. phone calls, letters and home visits) to reinforce their participation and strengthen home-school partnership (Demie et al., 2007; DfES, 2003; Drury, 2007; Hornby and Lafaele, 2011; Ma, 2008; Parker-Jenkins et al., 2007; Tikly et al., 2005). Also, schools established links with parents through language classes, parenting clubs and recruitment of human resources such as liaison officers and learning mentors, who acted as a bridge between parents and schools. Through these approaches, “the reciprocal communication” (Mcwayne, 2004:374) between parents and schools has been achieved across the three schools.

Parents strengthened collaboration with schools through home learning (e.g. homework guidance, reading books) (Hornby and Lafaele, 2011; Lee and Bowen, 2006); however, there was mixed evidence in the findings about parents’ support at home. Some parents said that they supported their children by doing homework, and others said that they encouraged their children to read and do homework. The difficulty of the learning tasks and lack of language were reported by some parents as barriers to supporting their children, which reflect parents’ lack of basic skills (DfEE, 1999).

All parents reported that they were pleased with the support and teaching provided for their children, and that they liked to be involved in school events. These findings opposed the previous research findings that minority ethnic parents are “uninvolved” (Cork, 2005) in their children’s education, and agreed with Peters’ et al. (2008) findings that non-white parents are involved in their children’s education even more than their White counterparts. As such, the study offers support to a

view of minority ethnic parents as being active members in reinforcing home-school partnerships.

Although the three schools made an effort to adapt to the specific needs of minority ethnic parents, some parents of newly arrived pupils were perceived as “hard to reach” (Cork, 2005; Crozier and Davies, 2007) given the language barrier. Difficulties with the English language were found to hinder these parents’ communication with schools’ staff and resulted in these parents being reluctant to take on a relationship with schools. In parallel with these findings, Fredrickson and Cline (2009) argued that minority ethnic parents are more likely to have uncertainties about the use of language and Laroque et al. (2011) found that lack of language can affect parents’ understanding of the language spoken at school.

Yet no consensus was reached amongst school practitioners in the three schools that language can be a barrier to minority ethnic parents’ participation. For instance, two participants in one school talked about a situation where a Polish parent’s lack of English did not stop her from taking part in schools’ events. They reported that this parent relied on her child to interpret for her.

It is worth mentioning that relying on the child as an interpreter has been previously criticised. Laroque et al. (2011:119) has problematized this practice because it may affect “the balance and authority in the parent-child relationship” and Hansson et al. (2002:48) argued that the whole practice is “difficult and sensitive” especially when discussing issues related to children’s progress and learning. In the light of these implications, there is a need for schools to avoid such a practice, by strengthening

collaboration with ethnic based organisations to provide multilingual assistants and interpreters.

The contextual information about the three schools showed that they were situated in disadvantaged areas, and that the percentage of children eligible for Free School Meal (FSM) was above the national average (DfE, Performance Tables, 2011). However, there was little evidence in the findings with regard to the role of poverty in restricting parents' participation across the three schools (Civita et al., 2004; Dahl and Lochner, 2005). It was reported by the deputy head teachers that some parents may lack the financial resources to provide the necessary learning resources and materials to support their children's learning and that poverty can impede monolingual and minority ethnic parents' linguistic capacity to support their children's learning and language development.

In two schools, certain aspects i.e. long extended holidays, irregular attendance, and orientation of community institutions acted as cultural barriers that hindered schools' efforts to develop EAL children's literacy and language skills. The language support teacher in school A explained how the concept of school was constructed by minority ethnic parents as an educational institution whose key role does not go beyond teaching different subjects, and that any extra-circular activities (e.g. residential trips) are unnecessary. The language support teacher explained how messages and values delivered by religious and community institutions might be seen to be more important than schools' norms and rules.

Cultural barriers to children's learning, discussed above, existed because some parents' cultural capital (Brubaker, 2004), attitudes and values (Sullivan, 2002), did

not appear to be in a state of concordance with schools' norms and values.

According to Lee and Bowen (2006:197), cultural capital is defined as:

A function of the concordance of the educational aspects of the family's habitus with the values and practices of the educational system with which the family interacts.

Bourdieu (1977:495) argued that parents' positive attitudes towards schools are important, and can be embodied by "investments in time, efforts and money" (cited in Sullivan 2002:149) to support children's learning and language acquisition. In the light of differences between parents' and schools' cultural values, schools found themselves caught between two tensions: supporting schools' staff to be familiar with the dominant cultures available in schools together with their traditions and norms and supporting parents to accommodate to the wider dominant culture.

It was evident from the findings that staff had cultural awareness of the differences in languages, religions and cultures in schools. Such awareness was translated into practice through having cultural and religious events and festivals in schools. Furthermore, there were references in parents' interviews to school staff's friendly and helpful approach towards facilitating parents' involvement in schools. This understanding of minority ethnic communities' cultural capital created stronger links between schools and parents (Hartas, 2008), and was in line with the DfES's (2004:10) conclusion that:

Educating pupils with English as an Additional Language is not a one-way process. Schools have much to gain from the experiences and understandings of pupils, their families and communities. Drawing on their funds of knowledge enriches a school in a range of valuable ways.

Parents' perceptions of learning an additional language and degrees of cultural affiliation with the English language were different across the three schools, and can

be categorised according to three views. One view has looked at learning English as a social necessity and economic investment (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981), in that it would enable easy integration into the community in terms of securing a job and communicating with people. A second view looked at learning English as a threat to their home language and cultural identity. According to Snow (1992), some bilingual speakers may feel that their personal and cultural identity is threatened when they become proficient in an additional language. A third view referred to the difficulty of learning an additional language, and agreed with Snow's (1992) conclusion that a degree of difficulty is normally expected when learning an additional language.

These findings lend partial support to Skutnabb-Kangas's (1981) framework which describes bilingual people's motives for learning an additional language. Three main motives have been cited in Skutnabb-Kangas's framework: cultural enrichment and communication with people; the political requirement for occupations; and social and economic necessity. Irrespective of parents' motives for learning an additional language, it may be argued that parents' willingness to learn an additional language is *per se* a positive contribution to their children's education and the home-school partnership.

It was evident from the findings that there were "homogenous ties" amongst parents from the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds, in what scholars refer to as "bonding social capital" (Gewirtz et al., 2005, Putnam, 2000). Bonding capital refers to "dense, tight-knit, homogenous social networks of family or friends" (Gewirtz et al., 2005: 668). The findings from this study showed that each group of parents from the same ethnic and cultural background sat together, had a chat in

their first language and wore traditional dress. Such communities were described as “healthier communities” (Blair, 2002:11-12 cited in Gewritz et al., 2005:654) since they pursued homogenous objectives in the form of attending school events, and had an awareness of their roles as parents.

Nevertheless, having access to a big community speaking their native language may minimise the bonding communities’ engagement with society and their affiliation to the dominant language. For instance, one Bangladeshi parent who had lived in England for 15 years spoke very little English and during the interview the parent asked her relative to interpret for her. The parent explained that she did not have any need to learn English because she could access different services using her first language.

In many respects, parental participation can be looked at as a broad term with multiple applications. It may be looked at as a form of assimilation and “a process of convergence”(Dickens and McKnight, 2008:1) between minority ethnic communities and the British society, in that these communities are aware that their responsibility goes beyond sending their children to school. Although the language barrier continued to inhibit parental involvement in its various forms, minority ethnic parents’ involvement could be improved through parents and schools being responsive to each others’ needs, and through an awareness of shared responsibility.

7.2.3 Educational policies

An explicit reference has been made in policy documents to EAL children's language and literacy skills, and it was evident that schools' policies were not always consistent with EAL practice at a class level. Practitioners in schools were aware of school policies surrounding EAL but found it difficult to implement these policies in practice, given the language barrier and some limitations in provision such as a lack of multilingual assistants and limited resources. There was little evidence in the findings of how schools monitored the implementation of policies, and determined their success.

Policy documents findings revealed some contradictions and in some instances evidence emerged from policy documents analyses contradicted the findings emerged from other methods. While policy documents explained that EAL children's emotional well-being was a priority for schools and required schools to have particular procedures to address EAL children's emotional and social needs, there were examples in the findings of EAL children having social and emotional difficulties given the language barrier and of practitioners struggling with overcoming these difficulties in EAL children.

Conflicts and tensions between policy and practice were expressed in the dilemmas practitioners faced in their daily practice (Creese and Leung, 2003) and the fact that practitioners may disagree with particular policies given their inappropriateness to meet particular needs in EAL children (Creese, 2005). Creese and Leung (2003:5) commented:

Teachers within their school communities will operate policy according to their local contexts, experiences and values, even where there is a strong element of statutory compliance.

Links were drawn between school policies and the wider policies the schools abide by. The aims of the schools, as reflected in educational policies, were to raise minority ethnic children's achievement and remove barriers to their learning and language development. These aims emanated from the national guidelines set by the National Curriculum (2000) and the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which placed a statutory duty on schools to monitor their policies, and to focus on minority ethnic children's attainment. The fact that school policies were linked to the national policies and legislations means that advances made over the years to improve minority ethnic children's education were reflected locally in schools, and that "*de facto*" policies are currently affecting EAL children's learning (NALDIC, 2013d).

At the core of policy documents, there has been a strong emphasis on tackling any form of discrimination and harassment. This went hand in hand with the regulations and laws stated in the Equality Act (2010:55), which has acknowledged that schools should not discriminate against pupils by:

The way it provides education for the pupil, and in the way it affords the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service, by excluding the pupil from the school, by subjecting the pupil to any detriment.

School practitioners responded to educational policies that sat comfortably with the pedagogical practices and capacity of schools. For instance, in one school the deputy head teacher raised issues of racism and discrimination through the homework club in order to develop trusting relationships with parents. She invited two police

officers to the homework club to discuss the necessary procedures for reporting discrimination incidents.

School policies were inclusive, since they recognised differences in language and culture amongst minority ethnic children as “normal and healthy” (Creese, 2005:30). However, schools in the study could be criticised for adopting some pedagogical practices that were rejected in the national guidelines. For instance, withdrawal teaching was viewed by schools as an appropriate technique to meet children’s needs away from noise, and not as a type of exclusion.

According to Creese (2005:35), withdrawal teaching is “an example of institutional racism” because it denies children’s needs for integration and belonging. Withdrawal teaching presented tensions in schools: whether to recognise withdrawal teaching as appropriate to meet individual needs or recognise withdrawal teaching as an exclusionary practice that denies children’s right to receive education alongside other monolingual children. Billig et al., (1988:46) explained that teachers in schools should not be blamed for using some pedagogical practices that may violate national guidelines and policies, since “teachers have to accomplish the practical task of teaching which requires getting the job done”.

Inclusion was perceived by schools as “a movement away from the kind of segregation” (Frederickson and Cline, 2009:69). In some instances, the implementation of inclusive policies required schools to “restructure themselves” and be “responsive” to EAL children’s needs (Frederickson and Cline 2009:71) by having the appropriate resources and arrangements in place to be accustomed to EAL children’s language needs. As Sebba and Sachdev (1997:9) pointed out:

Through this process the school builds its capacity to accept all pupils from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduces the need to exclude pupils. (Cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2009: 71)

It has been argued that literacy was perceived within the policy context as a “tool” to increase national and local levels across the country (Purewal and Simpson, 2010:14). But this use of literacy is more likely to neglect EAL children’s language backgrounds and their previous knowledge, because it has been placed within a standards and measures context, rather than skills to be learnt. This places pressures on teachers who will be expected to meet national standards, rather than taking account of “the complex variety of literacy needs” (Street, 1995: 24).

Contrary to Purewal and Simpson, 2010, and Street, 1995, the three schools’ English and literacy policies included guidelines for developing EAL children’s capacity in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The three schools’ policies were comprehensive, but did not always reflect the issues EAL children are facing. For example, challenges such as lack of comprehension skills and vocabulary in the advanced learners of EAL and issues of attendance and interrupted schooling were not highlighted in schools’ policies. Moreover, no alternative approaches were given in schools’ policies to deal with limitations in provision, such as the lack of multilingual assistants or training opportunities.

Essentially, what the three schools’ policies lacked was “a comprehensive programme of language education for all children” (Swann Report, DES, 1985: 426) at different stages of language development, namely newly arrived children, advanced learners of EAL and gifted and talented EAL children. The fact that some

recommendations mentioned in old reports such as the Swann Report have not been achieved yet has meant that the gaps in educational policies affecting EAL children remain the same as those decades earlier.

Finally, in order to minimise the conflict between policy and practice, schools should pay particular attention to how policies are interpreted and implemented by practitioners in schools:

For an educational policy to be something that teachers can work with productively, and not just a requirement to be carried out as a kind of “performativity”, then it has to resonate well with teachers’ perceptions and concerns. (Creese and Leung, 2003:17)

7.3 An ecological approach to EAL children’s learning

Links are drawn between Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model and the two overarching frameworks, namely child-related and situational/systemic factors, to take an ecological approach to EAL children’s learning. The two conceptualisations interact, overlap and complement each other, and neither perceptions of child-related, nor of situational/systemic factors are sufficient on their own, but rather, a combination of both is necessary to explore the contributory influences on EAL children’s learning.

The dynamic nature of Bronfenbrenner’s model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) refers to how the child affects the interactions between multiple external systems, and is also, crucially, affected by them. It provides a starting point for exploring the interrelatedness and interactions amongst factors influencing EAL children’s learning.

The findings emerging from the study have illuminated Bronfenbrenner’s multiple systems at a number of levels. EAL children’s individual characteristics and

attributes made a substantive contribution to modifying specific aspects of the school learning environment, namely the microsystem within which children actively participate (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), to comply with their language needs. At the same time, specific aspects of schools' organisational structures have influenced EAL children's integration into school, facilitated their learning and removed linguistic and cultural barriers to education.

The interaction between children's attributes and characteristics and schools' organisational structures has been found to be primarily dependent on EAL children's proficiency in English and literacy skills, as well as on a number of school factors such as the availability of bilingual support and funding. The research findings have shown gaps such as the shortage of training to inhibit schools' efforts to respond effectively and regularly to children's needs.

Findings related to the wider social and cultural context of EAL illuminated two systems of Bronfenbrenner's model, namely the mesosystem and the exosystem. The mesosystem was exemplified by the interaction between two micro settings, home and school, in which the child is actively involved (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), and the exosystem was embodied by the wider community settings and their cultural influences. Although these settings may not necessarily involve the child, they can influence the child's learning, and may be influenced by his/her attributes (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

At a macro level, the wider political and societal layers exemplified by educational policies (e.g. inclusion, equal opportunities and equality) and their implementation

supported the EAL child's learning and integration into schools' learning environment and the wider community.

Contradictions and tensions were identified in the findings at the micro-macro levels and across perspectives on different issues (e.g. the use of first language, EAL children's cultural values and lifestyle, the distinction between EAL and SEN, inclusion and equality issues and the use of EAL resources and materials). Policies were interpreted differently by different participants and situations occurred where pedagogical practices contradicted what participants reported in the interviews while they described their roles and responsibilities. Different perspectives and views that emerged from different methods and participants highlighted conflicts and discrepancies in various layers of the data which contributed to delineating the influences on EAL learners and the dilemmas of practitioners in diverse educational settings. Identifying contradictions and tensions in the findings appeared then to be an important contribution of the research to the EAL field.

Through Bronfenbrenner's model, the interplay between policy, practice and theory has been identified at the micro-macro levels: educational policies were created to inform pedagogical practices, which were based on theoretical understanding and empirical research findings. However, the relationship between policy, practice and research was never clear-cut since it entirely depends upon practitioners and schools. The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC) summarises the interaction between policy, practice and theory by commenting:

EAL pedagogy is the set of systematic teaching approaches which have evolved from classroom based practices in conjunction with the

development of knowledge through theoretical and research perspectives.
(Cited in Creese, 2005: 39)

Overall, by adopting an ecological perspective, an initial understanding of the reciprocal influence of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL learners has been achieved. Understanding EAL children's learning is a complex issue, which requires researchers and educationalists to move beyond simplistic approaches to understanding issues surrounding EAL.

7.4 Validity of the study

A key principle in educational research is that "it is impossible for research to be 100 per cent valid" (Cohen et al., 2007:133) since mistakes can never be completely avoided. However, these mistakes can be "attenuated by attention to validity" throughout the study (Cohen et al., 2011:179). A wide definition of validity is based on illustrating the fact that a certain method "measures what it purports to measure" and describes, explains or theorizes different features of the phenomenon accurately (Winter, 2000: 1).

In this study, internal validity, which concerns accuracy and describing the phenomenon reached accurately (Cohen et al., 2007, 2011), has been achieved by being considerate to the following procedures. Firstly, triangulating the study theoretically by considering the different perspectives of children, parents and school practitioners, and methodologically by employing different methods for data collection (Winter, 2000). Triangulation enabled the researcher to identify inconsistencies and conflicts in the data and to compare different perspectives from different methods and to find discrepancies (Gray, 2004; Yin, 2003). Situations occurred where it was difficult to accept practitioners' responses at face value since

their responses contradicted common practice. Secondly, making sure that the participants understood the interviews' and questionnaires' questions; and thirdly, ensuring that the emergent findings from the study have been sufficiently sustained by the data (Cohen et al., 2011).

Additionally, cultural validity, referring to the appropriateness of research to the cultural setting (Joy, 2003), has been achieved in the study by being considerate to differences in language capacity amongst participants; using simple and clear language in interviews with parents and EAL children; and involving multilingual assistants in the interviews. Through these procedures, accuracy and consistency in the answers were obtained.

7.5 Limitations of the study

There are certain limitations to this study. The study was confined to three primary schools, which were similar in terms of having high numbers of EAL learners and being situated in areas of socio-economic disadvantage in specific geographical areas in the West Midlands, Coventry. As such, the study did not provide information about schools with small numbers of EAL pupils in mainly white schools in rural areas, for instance, since practical reasons such as lack of access did not allow me to explore the EAL status quo in these schools. If such schools had been accessed, a broader picture of EAL policy, practice and provision would have been obtained.

Despite the fact that case study research has limited generalizability (Yin, 2009), the findings generated from the current research may possibly be extended to other schools with similar features operating under similar circumstances.

Power differentials restricted accessing information from two Somali parents who viewed me primarily as a researcher rather than being a minority ethnic member. This was considered as a limitation to the study for two reasons: firstly, although these parents took part in the study, they provided very short answers; secondly, their feeling that we were different was a barrier to the building of rapport during the interviews. Some important procedures such as the assurance of voluntary participation and the right to withdraw, together with the assistance of the multilingual assistants, were important procedures to minimize power differentials between the researcher and the researched.

While the study relied largely on qualitative data to address the research questions, the role of quantitative data was to complement and support data generated from qualitative methods. This means that quantitative and qualitative data were unequal in terms of quantity. If more quantitative data had been accessed, the findings from the study would have been generalizable to a wider population.

Furthermore, the quantity of qualitative data addressing different themes varied from one school to another. For instance, the interview data generated from the interviews with school practitioners constituted a bigger part of the data generated from interviews with parents and EAL children, because of the language capacity of participants and the fact that some participants provided long and detailed answers, whereas others could not. Although issues related to lack of language were overcome by using multilingual assistants who were competent in first language and English, the lack of language continued to be a limitation to the study, because it

restricted the quantity of data generated and the extent to which the participants were able to articulate their views.

The fact that the gatekeepers, the deputy heads in the three schools, had control over questionnaire distribution did not pose challenges to validity because I made it clear to the gatekeepers that questionnaires should be circulated to all members of staff with EAL support and teaching roles. Furthermore, the language used in questionnaires was simple and clear.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter brings together the conclusions emerging from the study. This study explored perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL children's learning and language development, as rated by EAL children, parents and school practitioners. The contributions of different participants together with the discrepancies across perspectives on several issues (e.g. the use of first language, EAL children's cultural values and lifestyle, the distinction between EAL and SEN, the use of materials and resources and inclusion and equality issues) identified in the data from different sources made a contribution to the EAL discipline, especially with regard to highlighting its complexity and the dilemmas faced by practitioners as well as the disjunction between policy and practice, especially in an age of austerity.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective has illuminated how child-related and situational/systemic factors were perceived to influence, and be influenced by each other through multiple systems.

It has been found in the study that EAL is an ever evolving and a topical area of research that requires up-to-date literature and official policy to integrate recent changes in EAL, such as changes in EAL funding and their influence on children's learning. Furthermore, the findings from this study support EAL as being a multidisciplinary field that incorporates theoretical perspectives from different disciplines, such as, social, ethnic and educational studies and applied linguistics. For instance, the study benefitted from theories about second language acquisition and cultural capital. This ensured the richness of the study by accessing different

theoretical perspectives and sorts of evidence to support some stages of the research, such as writing the literature review and presenting the findings.

Various aspects of EAL were examined in more depth by addressing the question of whether EAL children are SEN children, whether EAL as a term is applicable to newly arrived children only, and whether EAL children have gifts and talents. These dimensions need to be embedded more comprehensively into future research, in order to ensure effective planning and development for all EAL pupils at different stages of language development.

Swain et al. (1998) argued that marginalised people, referring to minorities, should gain benefits from taking part in educational research, and that their voices and concerns should be highlighted. In including participants from different social and cultural backgrounds (e.g., EAL children and minority ethnic parents), the study has added to current literature on minorities and offered a platform to voice their views and needs.

The current study is of an exploratory nature, since perceptions about different factors have been explored, but their specific influence has not been explained. As such the study did not aim to build a theory or to generate implications for current EAL practice but rather to examine influences on EAL children's learning. For instance, the study has not thrown light on the mechanisms by which the language barrier can hinder EAL children's learning, which would support a deeper understanding of why some EAL children lag behind. This means that "explanatory" research is needed in EAL to measure the specific influence of different factors on EAL learners' language and academic progression.

A number of messages are embedded in the study for policy makers however. Policies are integrally responsible for supporting teachers to specialise in EAL by improving the professional status of EAL as a profession, in terms of qualification, responsibilities and job titles, in order to avoid confusion over EAL across schools. Within the same context, a large scale research is needed to examine the influence of recruiting EAL teachers in schools with a high number of EAL children on EAL children's learning.

Furthermore, if we are to remove barriers to EAL children's learning, educational policies need to pay more attention to unresolved issues in EAL, such as the absence of a standardised framework for assessing EAL children and a lack of interpreters. As the overall funds assigned for additional language acquisition have been progressively reduced in light of the Coalition government's spending cuts, schools may find themselves without a regular ring-fenced budget to allow them to provide bilingual materials, resources and multilingual assistants. In such a case, more pressure will be placed on teachers who cannot meet the variety of the complex needs of EAL children, while EAL children may be in danger of underachievement.

To sum up, in order to remove barriers to EAL learning and language development, bridging the gaps in EAL policy, practice and provision needs to be accompanied by appropriate levels of monitoring and effective implementation, at both local and national levels.

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Appendix A: Informed consent for school practitioners and parents

Title of project: The influences of child-related and situational/systemic influences on EAL learners

Name of student: Lina Shaheen, Warwick Institute of Education

Contact details: email *l.m.w.shaheen@warwick.ac.uk*

As a participant in this study, you have the right to answer as many or as few of the questions asked during this interview. Please note that any data collected, including your name that may link you to your data will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will remain separate from the final report.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reasons. I agree that anonymised quotes from my answers will be used in research publications.

For easiness of the interview, a tape recorder would be used.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the study or your role as a participant, please do not hesitate to ask me and I will be happy to assist you in any way possible. Thanks again for your participation, all help is very gratefully received.

If you are agreeable to the terms that have just been described, please sign below.

Name of participant:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B: Participants information

Title of research: The influences of child-related and situational/systemic influences on EAL learners

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to explore perceptions about the influences of child-related and situational systemic factors on EAL children learning and language development.

How will this be achieved?

A number of methods will be used in this research as follows:

Interviews with parents, EAL children and school practitioners.

Questionnaires will be circulated to all school practitioners with support or teaching roles in relation to EAL.

Observations of Y6 children.

Schools' policies in relation to EAL will be reviewed and analysed.

How will it affect schools?

It is expected that the findings from this research will contribute to improving EAL practice and provision in schools. Based on the evidence you provide, EAL children will benefit from your contribution in relation to EAL.

Appendix C: Head teacher requesting access

Head teacher:

School address:

Date:

Dear....,

Research: The influences of child-related and situational/systemic on EAL learners

I am a PhD student at Warwick Institute of Education and I am undertaking research into learning and language development of English as an Additional Language (EAL) children.

In particular the research is about Y6 children with EAL and I hope to collect data from school practitioners, parents and EAL children at your school. Therefore I will be very grateful if you might give me permission to carry a case study research in your school. This would involve the following:

Preliminary phase of research: (a three days observation of all Y6 children)

Main phase of research: (Seven days)

Case studies of Y6 children with EAL.

Interviews with school practitioners, Y6 children and parents.

Questionnaires

If you are agreeable to this, I wonder whether I could arrange a meeting with you as appropriate to discuss the details of the research. My contact details are as follows:
My mobile number (xxxx) Email address: (xxxx)

I look forward to hearing from you and thanks for your time.

Yours sincerely

LinaShaheen

Appendix D: Informed consent form for parents to request children's participation

Dear parents/carers,

My name is Lina and I am studying at Warwick University, completing a research project focusing on learning and language development of children with English as an additional language.

I am writing to you to request your permission to work alongside your child while they are learning at school, observe them and talk to them about their learning. In order to make the interviewing easier, a tape recorder will be used. Child would also be asked if he/she is happy to be observed and talked to in school. However, if the child indicated that he/she did want to take part in the study, so he/she is free to withdraw at any time, without giving reasons and any data collected would not be used.

I do hope that you will give permission for your child to be part of this project. If you would like to ask me any questions, I can be contacted through the school.

Please return the slip below as soon as possible to give your consent.

I give permission for my child _____ Class _____

to take part in the study.

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix E: Questionnaires

Title of research: The influences of child-related and situational/systemic influences on EAL learners

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect quantitative data on different aspects of English as an Additional Language (EAL) children's learning and language development. Please note that your responses are voluntary and confidential. I hope you will answer as many questions as possible. No individual participants or schools will be identified in any reports. If you have any questions or concerns about how data I collect will be used or if you need any more information about my research, please email me at:

Name of researcher: Lina Shaheen Email: (xxxx)

Introductory questions

1) Which one of the followings best describes your current position in school?
(Please circle as appropriate)

- a) Experienced class teacher
- b) Newly Qualified Teacher
- c) Teaching Assistant
- d) Higher Level Teaching Assistant
- e) EAL Teacher (Language Support Teacher/inclusion teacher)
- f) Other. Please specify _____

2) I work with.....

(Please circle as appropriate)

- a) Key Stage 1
- b) Key Stage 2
- c) Key stage 1 and 2
- c) Other. Please specify _____

The curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy

For the statements below, please tick the box that best corresponds with your daily practice with regard to teaching EAL children.

3) How often do you engage with the following teaching practices when you teach /support EAL children during "literacy lessons"?

Theme	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
I use specific teaching strategies for EAL children					

I use specific materials for EAL pupils					
I use specific resources for EAL pupils					
I benefit from human resources available in the school such as multilingual assistant, the EAL coordinator or the SENCO.					

Workforce Development

4) Have you received any training on subjects such as bilingualism, second language acquisition, or EAL? *(If answered "Yes", please answer question 5, if "No" please go to question number 6)*

a) Yes b) No

5) What type of training have you received on subjects such as bilingualism, second-language acquisition, or EAL? *(Please circle as many as appropriate).*

To what extent have you benefitted from the training *(Please tick one box).*

Training Type	Not at all	Lesser extent	Somewhat	Great extent
INSET training				
Training provided by the LA				
Sessions taken as a part of the PGCE				
Training provided during the Induction Year				
Training provided by the MGSS				

Other. Please specify				
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Language and literacy skills

6) In general, to what extent each one of the following literacy skills is important for EAL learners? *(Please tick one box)*

Literacy Skills	Not at all	Lesser extent	Somewhat	Great extent
Reading				
Writing				
Listening				
Speaking				

Different aspects of EAL practice and provision

7) Please tick the box that best describes the importance of the following themes in relation to EAL children.

Themes	Not at all important	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
Assessing EAL pupils when they first arrive.					
Understanding the difference between EAL and SEN.					
Building more confidence and self – esteem.					
Awareness of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of EAL learners.					

Better communication with EAL learners and their parents.					
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8) In your daily teaching, what challenges are you facing when teaching/supporting EAL pupils? *(If this question is applicable to your current situation could you please offer one suggestion to overcome these challenges/difficulties?).*

9) If there is anything else you would like to add in relation to teaching/supporting pupils with EAL, please write your comments here.

Thanks for your time to complete the questionnaire. Your participation is very much appreciated. You do not need to mention your name on the questionnaire. However, if you would like to take part in the interview as a follow-up to the information you have written here please put your name below or let me know.

Your confidentiality and anonymity will still be respected.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F: Interview schedules for school practitioners.

The following abbreviations were used to indicate which school practitioners were asked which questions: deputy head (DH), class teacher (CT), EAL teacher (EAL T), EAL coordinator (EAL C), teaching assistant (TA), Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Special Educational Needs Teacher (SEN T), multilingual assistant (MA).

Situational/Systemic factors

Identification and assessment	D H	CT	EAL T/ EAL C	TA	SENCO/SEN T	MA
How do you support newly arrived children? What are the obstacles to achieving a successful admission and induction process?	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
What are the procedures for assessing newly arrived children when they first arrive to school?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Can you distinguish SEN from language needs in EAL children? How?		✓			✓	
How do you assess children's understanding of different lessons? What are the procedures or mechanisms for assessing EAL children's progress?		✓	✓			
What are the obstacles to assessing EAL children's needs?		✓	✓			
What are the procedures/mechanism for assessing EAL children with SEN? Or EAL children who are thought to have SEN?		✓			✓	

EAL workforce and workforce development	DH	CT	EAL T	TA	SENCO	MA
What is/are your role/responsibilities in supporting/teaching EAL children?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How do you facilitate staff's training? What hinders disseminating training for all members of staff?	✓					
Have you attended any training on themes such as EAL, bilingualism, second language acquisition?	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Have you found the training useful?	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Do you use human resources available in your school to support/teach EAL children?	✓	✓				

The curriculum, teaching strategies and EAL pedagogy	DH	CT	EAL T	TA	SENCO	MA
What are the organisational structures in your school that support EAL learning and teaching?	✓					

EAL infrastructure	DH	CT	EAL T	TA	SENCO	MA
Is there allocated funding for EAL? How is the EAL funding managed in your school?	✓					
What are school priorities in spending the EAL funding?	✓					
What are the types of resources and materials you use to teach/support EAL children in your school?		✓	✓	✓		✓

The wider social and cultural context	DH	CT	EAL T	TA	SENCO	MA
How are EAL children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds valued in your school?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Do parents support their children at home? Do they attend school events? What are the barriers to their involvement?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix G: EAL children interview schedule

EAL children were asked the same questions. However, some questions were directed to newly arrived children in particular. This table identifies which questions asked of EAL children during the interviews. The following abbreviations were used to indicate which EAL children were asked which questions: newly arrived children (NA), advanced learners of EAL (AL) and gifted and talented EAL children (GT).

Questions	NA	AL	GT
Do you like to come to school?	✓		
How did you feel when you first arrived?	✓		
Do you understand what the teacher or other children say?	✓		
Do you have someone at school who speaks your language? Who?	✓		
Do you like to learn English? Why? Do you think learning English is fun? Do you like literacy time? Why?	✓	✓	✓
Do you speak English at school? /at home? (If not why?)	✓	✓	✓
Who helps you with doing homework at home? Who helps you with doing your literacy activities at school?	✓	✓	✓

Appendix H: Parents interview questions

1. Is your child happy at school? Why? Why not?
2. Are you happy with the level of support offered to your child at school? If not, why?
3. Do you understand English? (For example, do you understand school letters/ reports?)
4. Do you attend school events such as parents' meetings/ parties etc....? Give one reason that stops you from attending?
5. If you have any concerns about your child's progress/settling etc.... How do you contact the school? Who do you ask for help?
6. Is learning English important for you and your children? Why?
7. Do you help your child with doing his/her homework? If yes, what other types of home learning that take place at home? For example, reading stories during bedtime, extra spelling?
8. Do you speak English with your child at home?
9. Do you want to say anything in interest of your experience as a mum/dad of a bilingual child/ren?

Appendix I: Application for Ethical Approval for Research Degrees, PhD

Project title: “Influences of child-related and situational/systemic factors on EAL learners”

Supervisor: Dr Dimitra Hartas

Please ensure you have read the Guidance for the Ethical Conduct of Research available in the handbook.

Methodology

Please outline the methodology e.g. observation, individual interviews, focus groups, group testing etc.

In my research I will use the following methods: observation, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis.

Participants

Please specify all participants in the research including ages of children and young people where appropriate. Also specify if any participants are vulnerable e.g. children; as a result of learning disability.

The sample will consist of Year Six pupils with English as an Additional Language, parents of EAL pupils and school practitioners.

Respect for participants’ rights and dignity

How will the fundamental rights and dignity of participants be respected, e.g. confidentiality, respect of cultural and religious values?

Confidentiality of participants will be respected in my research. As such, any personal data will be stored in such a way as to preclude any unauthorized access. Also any personal identifying details and responses to participants must be kept separately. As a researcher, I should bear in mind different cultural and religious backgrounds of EAL children and parents. Therefore, I have to make an initial judgment on whether or not interview questions are sensitive or cause any discomfort.

Privacy and confidentiality

How will confidentiality be assured? Please address all aspects of research including protection of data records, thesis, reports/papers that might arise from the study.

In order to protect participants, research data will be kept confidential. All responses will be held in the strictest confidence and any data that is presented in the thesis will be anonymised. All the materials collected from participants or schools such as copies of schools’ policy, practice and provision and any data that is displayed in the thesis will not attributed to any participant or to any school. Also in order to protect the privacy of participants, it is highly desirable that personal identifying details and the responses relating to participants be kept separately. Finally, participants will be sent reports on the main findings if they request this.

In general, providing assurances of privacy and confidentiality is important for methodological as well as ethical reasons. If participants are confident that their responses are truly confidential I expect that people are more likely to participate in the study. I can also expect that if a person feels that their answers are truly confidential they will be more likely to provide frank and honest answers.

Consent: will prior informed consent be obtained?

- From participants? Yes/No from others? Yes/No
- explain how this will be obtained. If prior informed consent is not to be obtained, give reason:

Informed consent designed for the study will be obtained from participants in writing, but in some cases oral consent will be obtained. For example, interviewing parents who cannot fill in the informed consent forms due to lack of English.

- will participants be explicitly informed of the student's status?

Yes, all participants will be explicitly informed of my identity as a research student.

Competence

How will you ensure that all methods used are undertaken with the necessary competence?

Questionnaires: Firstly, the designed questionnaire will ensure complete anonymity and confidentiality as no identifying personal details such as participants' names, occupations; addresses or contact details will be mentioned. Secondly, I should make sure that language used in the questionnaire is simple without vague and over-general terms that are likely to be interpreted differently by participants. In general, my questionnaire will be short, and the questions will be clear, concise and unambiguous.

Interviews: Written or oral informed consent will be obtained prior interviews. I will explain for participants the nature and aims of my study. I will make sure that interview questions do not raise any confidential or sensitive questions.

Observation: When undertaking observation, I have to inform participants of my identity as a research student and I will get their permission first. Also I have to clarify the purposes of observing participants.

Documents Analysis: My selection of documents will depend on whether access will be allowed to obtain data from documents. Also data obtained from documents should be authentic, representative, accurate, and relevant to my research questions.

Protection of participants

How will participants' safety and well-being be safeguarded?

As a researcher I have the responsibility to protect the safety of participants from any harm arising from my research. Therefore, I am fully CRB checked and I have working knowledge of child protection legislation. For example, participants may feel stressed or they may have the feeling of loss of self-confidence. Some participants may feel that some questions intrude their comfort and privacy. I will safeguard participants' safety by reviewing the content of my interview questions. Also, participants must be informed of how to contact University Secretary's Office if they have any concerns.

Child protection

Will a CRB check be needed? Yes/No (If yes, please attach a copy.)

Addressing dilemmas

Even well planned research can produce ethical dilemmas. How will you address any ethical dilemmas that may arise in your research?

In my research I expect that voluntary participation can produce a number of problems. It can threaten the external validity of the data. Since some certain types of people (e.g. parents with lower levels of education, parents from non-English-speaking backgrounds, parents from minority ethnic groups) are more likely than others to decline to participate in studies because they may not value the importance of this study. It is the right of all participants to withdraw consent at any time. If parents are withdrawing consent, then the data collected from them will not be included in any further analysis.

Some factors that relate to cultural differences and lack of language are very important in this study. For example, interviewing parents of EAL pupils may need some additional practical arrangements such as interpretation provided by multilingual assistants. But even if interpretation will be provided, to what extent it is accurate and correct. Also cultural differences would be another important issue. Will parents understand the importance of this study? Will they be cooperative? Accuracy in this study means ensuring that at every stage, issues of cultural and linguistic difference are considered.

Misuse of research

How will you seek to ensure that the research and the evidence resulting from it are not misused?

No details that could identify specific participants will be made available to anyone not involved in the study. Also all participants have the right to request a copy of personal information that relate to them.

Support for research participants

What action is proposed if sensitive issues are raised or a participant becomes upset?

Firstly, I will provide participants assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Secondly, I will remind participants that they have the right to withdraw from the

study as they participate on a voluntary basis. Also participants are free to answer or not to answer any of the questions especially if they find that the questions deal with sensitive issues.

Integrity

How will you ensure that your research and its reporting are honest, fair and respectful to others?

Any confidential and personal data that would allow participants to be identified must not be published in the study. Also, I will make sure that all quotations and contributions from other sources will be acknowledged every time they occur by including the sources from which they are taken in the bibliography.

What agreement has been made for the attribution of authorship by yourself and your supervisor(s) of any reports or publications?

All substantial contributions from other authors will be acknowledged and referenced properly in my thesis and any resulting papers or individuals will be given co-authorship if appropriate.

Other issues?

Please specify other issues not discussed above, if any, and how you will address them.

Note: My research will be undertaken in accordance with BERA's guidelines on ethical practice and Warwick University Ethics Committee directives (2010).

Signed: LinaShaheen (PhD student) Date: 03. 06. 2010

Supervisor: Dr DimitraHartas

Please submit to the Research Office (Louisa Hopkins, room WE132)

Action taken

X	Approved
	Approved with modification or conditions
	Action deferred. Please supply additional information or clarification

Appendix J: Extracts from parent interviews

Interviewer: Do you understand written and spoken English? Do you have any problems with understanding English? (For example, do you understand school letters/ reports?)

Interviewee: Yes. I have no problem understanding English.

Interviewer: Is learning English important for you and your children? Why?

Interviewee: Yes. I love English when I was little and I am an English teacher it is important for me to keep learning English. It is also very important for my child to learn English because English is the lingua franca in the world and it is important for my child to come to study in the UK and learn most advanced knowledge and information. It will help to increase job opportunities if my child can speak and write very good English.

Interviewer: Is your child happy at school? Why? Why not?

Interviewee: She is happy now but she was not very happy, especially when she first came to the school in this country because she could not make true friends and it was really very difficult for her to be accepted by her peer groups.

Interviewer: Do you attend school events such as parents meetings/ parties etc...? If not, what are the reasons the stop you from attending?

Interviewee: Yes, I did attend parents meetings.

Interviewer: If you have any concerns about your child's progress/settling etc.... How do you contact the school? Who do you ask for help?

Interviewee: I have tried to contact the relevant teachers via telephone or email first and then I tried to make an appointment with the teachers and talk with them.

Interviewer: Are you happy with the level of support offered to your child at school? If not, give one suggestion please?

Interviewee: Yes, most of the teachers are very helpful and supportive. I suggest that some of the staff at school should give more encouragement to pupils rather than discourage them, especially when children first came to this country. At first it was really very difficult for children to get used to study and life in this country. The staff should understand children and give them some time to get used to life in this country.

Interviewer: Do you help your child with doing his/her homework? If yes, what other types of home learning that take place at home? For example, reading stories during bedtime, extra spelling? If no what are the reasons that stop you from supporting your child at home?

Interviewee: Yes, I did offer some help. I helped her with the language when she wrote her homework.

Interviewer: Do you speak English at home with your child?

Interviewee: Very seldom, but we often took my child to see British people and talk with them in English.

Interviewer: Do you want to say anything in interest of your experience as a mum/dad of a bilingual child/ren?

Interviewee: It is really very important to understand and be patient with children and try your best to encourage them to speak English as much as possible and try to help children to make friends with native English people and take part in parties as much as possible and talk with English people.

Appendix K: Extracts from school practitioners interviews

Interviewer: What's your role in supporting EAL children?

Interviewee (Language Support Teacher, school A): It depends very much on what their needs are. Differences between newly arrived pupils depend largely on where they come from. Some countries have developed educational systems, while other countries have no schooling experiences at the age of 6 or 7. In fact it's much broader and wider than this, so you've got some children who're newly arrived, who've got little or no English and even there can be a wide variety because depending on which culture and country they come from. There will be quite big differences. This makes the task more difficult. So they aren't used to a school environment and this obviously has an impact on their ability to learn and to mix with other children and so on. So even with the newly arrival, you've got a wide range of needs. If they are coming with the English style alphabet knowledge, obviously they've got that as a basis to build on, but of course coming from a language where the alphabets and sounds are completely different then this is another issue that impacts on their ability to acquire English. It actually takes about 6 or 7 years to get to a near enough equivalent standard of English as a native speaker.

Interviewer: Have you attended any training on themes such as EAL, bilingualism, second language acquisition? Do you think that you need more training in EAL? Why?

Interviewee (Y6B class teacher, school B): I do think, yes, if I'm honest. I do need extra training and I would be gratefully received that because there would be a chance for me to delve more into the subject and have more knowledge on it and then probably I would increase my confidence. I do think, yes, if I'm honest. We had a staff meeting where someone came from outside and talked a little bit into EAL, but aside from that, no, we have not had much training on it."