

Pulling the threads together: current theories and current practice affecting UK primary school children who have English as an Additional Language

Clare Wardman, University of York

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About the author

Clare Wardman is a PhD researcher at the University of York and a lecturer in English Language and Linguistics at York St John University. Her research focuses on the needs of children with English as an Additional Language in terms of provision of support and classroom interactions. She is also an English as a Foreign Language tutor, holding an MA in English Language Teaching, and has also researched in the area of motivation in learning foreign languages.

Contents

Abstract	2
1 Introduction	3
2 Review of the literature.....	4
3 The research study: current practice in northern England.....	9
4 Findings and discussion	10
5 Implications and recommendations	15
References	17
Appendix 1 – Participating schools.....	20
Appendix 2 – Full list of participating staff members, indicating school affiliation and level of participation in the study	21
Appendix 3 – Excerpts of relevant transcription data	22

Abstract

Provision of support for children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) in UK primary schools is geographically variable, due in part to a lack of centralisation of funding and resources, which is caused by EAL not being a National Curriculum subject. This paper considers a range of international and UK-based research and policy for educating children with minority languages. It reports on a qualitative study conducted in the north of England during summer 2011, which sought to analyse current practice in UK primary schools alongside the existing research findings, focusing on the linguistic and sociocultural aspects of being a bilingual learner. Participant schools were geographically widespread, providing diverse social and linguistic communities to consider. Teachers and teaching assistants were interviewed regarding their attitudes to: the provision of support for EAL pupils; the use of the first language in school; and their perception of attitudes towards immigration and bilingualism. Classroom observations and inspection data were also employed. Significant variety in provision for bilingual learners was observed; mainly due to the location of the school, the postcode of which affects the funding received, and number of bilingual learners in the schools. The decentralisation leads to: inefficiencies in funding distribution; time-wasting, due to teachers and managers repeating work already done by others elsewhere; and a lack of knowledge through a lack of an effective training programme. This deficit of training means that teachers tend to 'wing it', rather than offer an innovative approach to the education of bilingual children.

1

Introduction

The study of issues related to the linguistic and social support offered to children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) remains in its infancy in the UK. Consequently, UK policy has tended to draw on large-scale and well-known research from other countries, while the specific situation facing the UK is often not fully acknowledged. Although Oates (2010) argues against borrowing policies from other nations, research-informed decision-making in the UK is hampered by the fact that much of the recent UK-based research in the field of EAL is relatively small-scale and limited in its scope. As a result, researchers and practitioners often fail to find agreement on the provision for bilingual children in UK schools. An important example is the concept of withdrawal from the classroom for language study. This practice is not officially sanctioned, with children being expected by government (since the publication of the Swann report in 1985) to be taught in a whole-class teaching environment within a mainstream school for the entire teaching day. Many schools operate some withdrawal provision, however, despite its use being mentioned as a real cause for concern by some researchers (e.g. Franson, 1999), from both cognitive and social, as well as linguistic perspectives.

This report aims to pull together international and UK-based theories of best practice concerning the education of children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). The report is split into three main sections. The first comprises a review of the research literature, focusing on two key aspects: that of the linguistic nature of bilingual education, and of the sociocultural aspects of being a language learner in a mainstream classroom. The second part of this report presents the findings of an investigation into current practice in the provision of support for bilingual children in primary schools across northern England. The data is examined with reference to the theories highlighted in the first section. The third and concluding section of the report draws implications and makes recommendations for UK policy-makers, local authorities, teachers, and support staff.

A note on terms

The term EAL is commonly used in mainstream UK education to describe children who speak one or more languages in the home and who are learning much of their English in an educational setting. It has been adopted widely in research literature as one of the more inclusive of the acronyms in current use (Hawkins, 2005), although Carder (2008) notes that use of this term only persists within the UK, with the term ESL (English as a Second Language) used more widely internationally. There has been criticism of the term ESL for the implication that English is primary and because of the fact that for many children it is actually the third or fourth language. EAL/ESL children are often also known as 'bilingual'. For the purposes of this report, the term 'bilingual children' has been adopted to mean children who have at least two languages in their repertoire but who may not use both with full competence (Gibbons, 1991) although Chen (2007, p. 38) points out that 'emergent bilingual' may be a better term for those children who have yet to attain any level of competence in English, such as new arrivals into the UK.

2

Review of the literature

This literature review will be organised thematically, considering first aspects related to the nature of bilingual education itself, and then issues around both the linguistic and sociocultural aspects of being a bilingual child in a monolingual habitus.

The definition and development of bilingual education

Defining bilingual education

Our first challenge lies in defining the concept of bilingual education itself. Baker (2006, p. 213) considers it a ‘simplistic label for a complex phenomenon’ and before we go any further, we need to briefly consider the varying types of education which involve two or more languages. This will allow us to reflect on the challenges posed by the sheer diversity of the UK population (cf. Craig *et al*, 2010 for a review of the situation in the northern English city of York, where the diversity of the school population has grown enormously in recent years). Beginning with the challenge of defining bilingual education will also help us to understand why, traditionally, the UK has not practiced bilingual education in a truly meaningful way. Rather it has been more a case of educating bilinguals than offering bilingual education. Furthermore, a consideration of the varying types of education which involve more than one language provides a context for the growing interest in the debate around the cognitive benefits of being brought up bilingual. This debate has recently been taken up by the national media, prompted by research by, for example Bialystok *et al*, (2009) and Wodniecka *et al* (2010).

Internationally, a range of typologies and continua classifying different approaches, aims, and markers of success in bilingual education have been proposed over the years (cf. Mackey, 1970; Baetens-Beardsmore, 1993; Brisk, 1998; Hornberger, 2008), taking into consideration aspects such as the type of school, home situations (socially and linguistically), the status of the minority language, and national political educational aims. Some of the key features of bilingual education programmes are presented in Table 1 below. In UK mainstream schools we typically find submersion and transitional models, thereby sitting very much towards the ‘less multilingual’ end of Hornberger’s (2008) spectrum, with true bilingual education only really provided in Wales (Baker, 2006), and to some extent in Scotland and on the Isle of Man. In England, a bilingual education pilot study in Bradford (Fitzpatrick, 1987) was not taken up with much interest, with many teachers very negative about the use of the first language (L1). Research has shown that, even if bilingual support is offered, many bilingual staff are ‘untrained and unqualified’ (McEachron and Bhatti, 2005). But there are some success stories involving small-scale projects and strong-willed individuals making a difference (cf. Kenner, 2000; Conteh, 2003; Mellen Day, 2002) although minority languages are rarely being used as the medium of instruction, which is important for the academic and linguistic development of bilingual children (cf. Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty, 2007; Cummins, 2000; Osborne *et al*, 2009).

Type of programme	Support for L1	Elite/folk	Primary orientation
Submersion	None	Folk	Language as problem
Transitional	Temporary, until dominant language is mastered	Typically folk	Language as right
Maintenance	Strong, although mixed access to quality materials and well-trained teachers	Mixed	Language as right and resource
One-way immersion	Varies, but L1 not denigrated or threatened	Typically elite	Language as resource
Two-way immersion/dual	Strong	Elite/folk	Language as resource
Community language teaching	Strong, particularly at Secondary level	Folk	Language as resource
Heritage language education	Pupil’s L1 is often a dominant language	Elite/folk	Language as resource

Table 1: Key features of bilingual education programmes (taken from Hall, Smith and Wicaksono, 2011)¹

¹ The majority of bilingual learners in UK primary schools would be classified as ‘folk’ learners by Romaine’s (1999) terms adopted in this table, contrasting with the ‘elite’ learners that have formed much of the research into bilingualism to date, for example, those learners in Canada opting to learn a second (also high prestige) language in well-resourced schools.

Historical and current aspects of bilingual education internationally

Canada is one of the most oft-cited examples of how to get bilingual education right, principally known through the work of Jim Cummins (1984) and Virginia Collier (1992; 1997). There is, however, a great danger of generalising the results from the successful Canadian language programmes internationally. Much of the research coming from Canada does not deal with immigrant communities and Carder (2008) notes that the programmes to address the language needs of immigrants remain underdeveloped. The bilingual programmes known globally for their success concern two major international languages, namely English and French, so issues of status between the languages are less relevant. Bilingual education is part of a national ideology and there is mutual respect for home language and culture. Additionally, it should be noted that it is optional, with a relatively homogeneous group of children, all at a similar level linguistically in their L2, with enthusiastic teachers and parents of a mainly middle class background (Romaine, 1999; Baker, 2006). All of these factors must be taken into consideration when looking at the UK situation, with its diversity of languages, and social and political differences.

The Australian model only began to develop after 1971 with the establishment of the Child Migrant Educational Policy (CMEP). The CMEP, despite being a deficit model, did lead to a move away from assimilation, unlike policies in the UK (Carder, 2008). A push to educate bilingually, motivated by the country's long-standing commitment to language rights (Tollefson, 1991), has caused a focus on the exoticism of the 'heritage', leading ultimately to ineffective bilingual teaching. This translated into a mainstreaming pattern in the 1980s, as in the UK. Since then, however, specific goals for ESL learners (EAL learners in UK terms) have ensured that parallel, rather than 'withdrawal' classes provide a programme of support for all bilingual learners (Davison, 2001). Furthermore, two nationwide awareness-raising and skills-training courses that many teachers have now taken mean that staff are better equipped to work effectively as ESL teachers.

In the USA, there has been less focus on the terminology attached to English language learners, which may explain the status-loaded term 'Limited English Proficiency', which was authorised by the USA equivalent of Every Child Matters ('No Child Left Behind') and is still the term used in the USA for funding purposes (Carder, 2008). Historically, bilingualism was treated very negatively in the USA; the first language census in 1910 considered everyone born in the USA to be an English speaker and would only note another language if the person

responding to the census questions was unable to speak English (Baker, 2006). *Lau v Nichols* in 1974 remains the most influential language minority ruling in the USA, essentially providing a mandate for the Education board to initiate bilingual education in at least 500 districts across the USA. Bilingual Education has since had a chequered history, culminating in the 1998 California Proposition 227, which essentially said that English was the language of the 'American Dream' and that, since bilingual programmes had demonstrated limited success in improving literacy rates amongst immigrant children, and since children attain fluency rapidly with enough exposure, all children were to be taught English as quickly as possible (Carder, 2008). This was despite studies by Krashen (1999), who found that 'strong' bilingual education decreased drop out rates amongst Latino children in the USA.

In the rest of the European Union countries, second language work sometimes involves the teaching of English, but naturally this mainly reflects the teaching of the official language of the country involved to the speakers of the heritage languages of immigrants and settled communities with minority languages. There are some innovative multilingual programmes in operation around the EU, with some significant successes being recorded. In the Basque country, for example, Basque-speaking children did better than the Spanish non-multilingual educated children in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results of 2006 (Cenoz, 2009). This result was held in all subjects, leading to researchers suggesting that the use of the minority language as the medium of instruction results in more balanced bilingualism. Luxembourg is a particularly multilingual country but the languages being introduced are, for the most part, high status (French and German) and it is inclusive (Mick, 2011) so it is difficult to draw comparisons with the UK.

Research perspectives on the linguistics aspects of bilingual education

Even if the first language (L1) is used for instructional purposes in the UK, the monolingual nature of the country currently dictates that it is seen as transitional, as 'programmatically' (Alanis, 2000, p. 229) so that the child can be assimilated into the majority language (i.e. English) as quickly as possible. Mainstreaming and transitional models are considered to be less effective in developing a child's thinking. Some researchers claim that this means children sometimes end up as semi-lingual, having lost some of the native language ability or never really reaching potential linguistically or cognitively in English. There is some evidence to suggest that immersion in second language education environments does not necessarily lead to the loss of the first language.

Some suggest that there is a lag in the development of the L1 while early total immersion children are educated in the L2 but after approximately six years they tend to catch up again (Genesee, 1983), but Dutcher (1995) concluded that the very use of the mother tongue assists in the learning of English and, as far back as 1953, a UNESCO report on 'The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education' strongly advocated the use of the first language in education (Baker, 2006). Teachers are often fearful about allowing children to communicate in a language they themselves do not speak (Hélot, 2011), but a number of small-scale studies have highlighted the increase in motivation and the impressive grasp of language awareness that young bilingual children demonstrate when encouraged to speak with each other, whether they are communicating in one language, for example, Bengali, as in Kenner's (2010) research in southern England, or in three, as Martin's (2003) study in Brunei showed.

Baker (2006, p. 110) suggests that code-switching may be the most 'personally efficient manner' of communicating for bilingual children but despite recent research demonstrating how useful it can be it is often not accepted by teachers in the classroom and policy-makers (Moodley, 2007; Hélot, 2011, Willans, 2011). Trans-languaging and transliteracy projects often demonstrate the benefits of working heteroglossically (with more than one language or variety at a time) and are perhaps more reflective of the way that bilingual children actually use language outside the classroom (Mick, 2011). Careful planning of classroom language use was found to be critical by Pérez and Ochoa (1993) in their study of Hispanic-English bilingual programmes in the USA. The importance of planned classroom interactions (whether in the L1 or L2) was further highlighted by the teacher working with Mellen Day (2002) in her ethnographic work. She noted that teaching multilingual children requires more planning, more breaking down of language and structures, and more repetition. The importance of effective classroom teacher and peer interactions for bilingual learners has also been addressed by others (Smith, 2006; Hardman et al, 2008; Wardman, in press).

Of course, provision for bilingual children is not limited to in-classroom situations. Outside the classroom, parents are essential for successful bilingual and multilingual education. Research has shown that using parents as resources, building strong relationships between schools and families, and understanding how literacy works in the home are all key components for success (Riches and Curdt-Christiansen, 2010). Brisk (1998) went further in claiming that success in dealing with bilingual children could only come from focusing on all of five key areas: linguistic, cultural, economic,

political and social. Having considered some of the linguistic aspects above, it is to the remainder that we now turn.

Summary

So, taking into account research perspectives on the linguistic aspects of bilingual education we might expect to find the following features in a classroom offering strong provision of support for children in the UK:

- Enthusiastic teachers who are positive about the benefits of L1 use in the classroom and aim to prevent language loss (Mellen Day, 2002).
- Children being allowed to be silent (Krashen, 1985).
- Using the L1 more extensively in Foundation and Key Stage 1, especially in schools with a majority of one heritage language (Collier, 1992).
- Lots of one-to-one interaction in the classroom (Conteh, 2003).
- Planned peer activities (Mellen Day, 2002).
- Good resources available (Baker, 2006).
- Planning L1 use carefully and strategically for instructional purposes (Pérez and Ochoa, 1993).
- Trained and qualified staff (McEachron and Bhatti, 2005).

Research perspectives on the sociocultural aspects of being a bilingual learner

Much of the research conducted into bilingual education effectiveness in the 1970s and 1980s has been criticised. Two meta-reviews of the research (Baker and de Kanter, 1983 and Dulay and Burt, 1978) have come to very different conclusions, possibly implying that the reviewing process was subjective but also that, potentially, the original studies being reviewed did not clearly state the effectiveness of particular programmes, and were narrow in their focus, i.e. usually on high-stake outcomes (testing, etc.) rather than more sociocultural outcomes such as self-esteem and identity issues (Baker, 2006). The Ramirez report (1991) was one of the most famous studies undertaken in the USA. It was mandated by Congress but has been heavily criticised for failing to consider the full range of educational options for bilinguals. For example, withdrawal from the mainstream was not included (which means drawing comparisons with the current UK situation is difficult, as that model is so prevalent here). Additionally, outcomes or success measurements were limited, with no focus on attitudinal, self-esteem or cultural heritage issues (Baker, 2006).

As Vygotsky (1978) tells us, language learning cannot be seen as a general phenomenon but rather as dependent on the social and cultural contexts in which it occurs, meaning that the process may well be different for each child. A one-size-fits-all strategy to the development and inclusion of children who have EAL is therefore unlikely to be effective. Furthermore, Vygotsky's sociocultural model shows that interaction between 'expert' and 'novice' is key in learning, which has more recently led to a focus on the benefits of dialogic teaching for bilingual children (Haneda and Wells, 2010).

Inclusion has been the focus of the current approach to EAL, as well as for a range of other issues presented by children in schools, including Special Educational Needs. The 'rhetoric of inclusivity' that can be found in some institutions (Barwell, 2005, p.318) is challenged in others which adopt an approach akin to that found in the work of Lave and Wenger (1991). Their framework of 'legitimate peripheral participation' mirrors the efforts made by schools which successfully deal with diversity in their populations. They ensure that everyone within the 'community of practice' has a voice, often with regularly changing membership requiring that new viewpoints be absorbed.

Identity in language learning is a growing area of interest for researchers, with many choosing to consider adult learners and the impact of life changes and learning new languages on their identities, for example Peirce (1995) and Dornyei (2009). Mellen Day (2002) also points out that children can often be embarrassed to speak the L1 even if the teacher didn't do anything to particularly encourage English or discourage L1. It is something that just seems to happen to some children over time, although not to all and it is simply part of making a decision regarding one's identity (Peirce, 1995). Of course, it is possible that these decisions are made by children to avoid racism and social problems including bullying, and Creese (2003) considered the challenges faced by teachers in dealing with these kinds of problems. Reported cases should be handled sensitively despite differing opinions amongst teachers of meaning that 'one person's racist incident is another's inconvenient break time squabble, not serious enough to warrant the additional paperwork' (Coles, 2008, p. 90) since, if badly dealt with, they can adversely affect pupils and their communities for many years.

International research focusing on identity development in children and adolescents has often been focused on the African American communities (Brice Heath, 1983; Sellars et al, 1998; Chavous et al, 2003) although Phinney (1989) broadened the scope with her model of racial identity development, that used the terms developed by Tajfel and Turner in their Social Identity Theory of 1979. Caldas (2008) offers an intimate study of his own children's development of identity as bilingual learners, with the non-too-surprising results that they 'grew into it'. Cummins (1996) talks of the classroom as an important place for identity building and employs the now well-used term 'negotiating identities' to describe what teachers should be doing with bilingual learners. UK research is currently limited to relatively small-scale pieces of ethnographic research (cf. Conteh, 2003; Kearney, 2005; Basit, 2009), which is beginning to build an encouraging picture of successful projects on bilingual children's self-concept and self-esteem.

The importance of using the L1 in the classroom is made clear through a number of studies, which highlight that it can enhance the children's sense of identity, self-esteem and self-concept (Duquette, 1999; Johnstone et al, 1999; Krashen and McField, 2005). Mellen Day (2002) talks about the experience of secondary school teachers positively reinforcing the importance of her L1 for her identity and she remembers liking this and feels it now shapes who she is. For many teachers, knowing how to do this may be one of the key problems. A teacher sets norms in the classroom and the wider school and if those norms are established through their own cultural lens, then perhaps what happens more often is a subconscious 'symbolic domination' (Bourdieu, 1991). Some children use their L1 as part of their linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1977) to subvert the power dynamics of the school or classroom (Martin, D. 2003) in order to gain back some of that relinquished control.

Mellen Day (2002) points out that many bilingual learners of English are quiet in class but do not seem particularly unhappy. This may be associated with the 'silent period' that is widely understood as a common reaction for bilinguals (Krashen, 1985), and acknowledged within many of the governmental guidelines on supporting bilingual children (DfCSF, 2007).

Summary

So, research perspectives on the sociocultural aspects of being a bilingual learner would lead us to expect to find a successful classroom teacher:

- Offering personalised approach to provision of support – acknowledgement that there is no one-size-fits-all (Vygotsky, 1978).
- Allowing and encouraging the use of the L1 (Duquette, 1999; Johnstone et al, 1999; Krashen and McField, 2005).
- Allowing silence and not worrying about children being quiet (Krashen, 1985).
- Actively avoiding stigma when a child needs support (Baker, 2006).
- Discussing language and cultural values from a young age (Martin, D., 2003).
- Providing teachers working openly on positive social and racial attitudes (Creese, 2003).
- Offering something more than tokenistic gestures towards inclusivity (Barwell, 2005).
- Encouraging peer support and socialisation through mentoring and buddy schemes (Vygotsky, 1978; Lave and Wenger, 1991).
- Creating a community with a positive attitude towards (or at least an acceptance of) immigration (Brisk, 1998).

3

The research study: current practice in northern England

The research questions

This study was conducted to consider the following research questions (RQs):

1. What are teachers' current and past experiences of working with EAL children in terms of a) provision of support, b) L1 use, and c) attitudes towards bilingualism?
2. To what extent are teachers aware of, and making use of, research findings in the field of EAL research?
3. If research findings are not being put into practice, are there explanations for this, which could, in turn, inform research practice in the field?

Methodology: data collection and analysis methods

The current paper presents a qualitative study, with the results triangulated through a mixed methods approach which involved the use of semi-structured interviews and informal conversations, classroom observation field notes and inspection documents.

Eight primary schools took part in the study, ensuring that there was a good geographical spread of settings from across northern England. Details on the participating schools can be found in Appendix 1. There were 41 individuals involved in the study. The key participants were usually the headteacher and/or the EAL co-ordinator, a class teacher, an EAL teacher and an EAL support staff member in each school. For more detailed information on the staff involved and their level of involvement, see Appendix 2.

The semi-structured interview was divided into the three broad themes highlighted in RQ1: provision of support for EAL children, an assessment of attitudes towards bilingualism, and the use of the first language in the classroom. These tie in with the over-arching themes of this investigation into the linguistic and sociocultural aspects of EAL provision. Whilst acknowledging that the connection between families and schools is a very fertile area for research, it falls outside of the scope of this study, which will focus on in-school aspects. The interviews were audio-recorded, as were informal conversations when possible, and then subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis. Some transcription data is included in

later sections. Transcription conventions have been kept to an absolute minimum, with the only symbols used being (.) and (...) to indicate a hesitation and a longer pause respectively.

Classroom observations were also possible in most of the schools and field notes were taken during these sessions to allow the researcher to draw links between observed behaviours and interviewees' responses or research findings, when any were observable.

All schools and individuals were assured anonymity to encourage full and open participation. A numbering approach has been adopted when talking about participants (i.e. P1. is participant one) in order to avoid the issues of researcher subjectivity that are possible when using pseudonyms. A consent form was obtained from each participant interviewed regarding limitations on what would happen to the recorded data.

There were, of course, sampling limitations in this study. In common with much of the research into bilingualism and bilingual education, the sample is small and essentially non-generalisable, although effort has been made to take data from as wide a demographic of schools and provision as possible across the north of England to offer a range of findings. This means that findings are likely to be transferable to some extent to many other settings. Attempts have been made throughout this report to 'interrogate the context' to such an extent that the data offered is dependable, in Guba and Lincoln's (1985, p.13) terms.

Research that focuses heavily on interview data, such as this study, must also acknowledge that the interview process itself has the potential to be flawed, if the interviewer is not aware of the idea of an interview as social practice, meaning that participants' contributions should not necessarily be taken at face value at the analysis stage (Talmy, 2010). The analysis of interview data here adopted a fairly traditional thematic approach with the themes being drawn from the interview guide as well as from the data itself.

Having considered the methods adopted for this study, findings are now presented followed by a discussion of their implications. Interview data is principally summarised in the following section, with some additional verbatim responses presented in Appendix 3.

4

Findings and discussion

The provision of support for bilingual children, L1 use in school, and attitudes towards bilingualism were all key themes raised in the interviews that are relevant to an exploration of the links between research and current practice in northern England.

We shall first consider the provision of support available for EAL children across the participating schools, attempting to draw conclusions about regional differences in terms of the nature of the bilingual education being offered.

Provision of support for bilingual learners

Taking a look back at the summaries of the linguistic and sociocultural research perspectives, we might expect to find the following in our schools:

- Trained and qualified staff.
- Good resources available.
- A personalised approach to the provision of support, with one-to-one interaction common.
- Actively avoiding stigma when children need support.

Appendix 1 shows that the EAL population varies hugely across the eight schools and we might expect this to have a bearing on the level of support and knowledge found in each school. Most schools in this study had one nominated staff member as a co-ordinator for the provision of support for bilingual learners, but this was not always clear-cut and differed across the schools, as shown in table 2.

Schools	Responsibility for EAL
S1, S2, S8	EAL co-ordinator but no staff management responsibility
S3	Deputy Head, who is Inclusion Manager and SENCo
S4	Headteacher, as there is no defined provision (her response regarding who is responsible was 'everybody and nobody')
S5	Unclear but most staff refer to the specialist TA from the Local Authority (LA)
S6	Inclusion/ SEN Manager
S7	No co-ordination; individual class teachers' responsibility

Table 1: Staff responsibilities for EAL in the participating schools

As McEachron and Bhatti (2005) note in their report on language support, many staff supporting bilingual learners are not qualified teachers, and their finding is borne out by this current study, with teaching assistants providing the bulk of personalised support for bilingual children across all the schools. This growth in the role of the teaching assistant has been prevalent across the country (Blatchford et al, 2009, Wardman, in press) so it is no surprise we find it here. What does differ between the schools is the level of training on issues pertaining to second language acquisition and teaching provided for their teaching assistants, as well as for the teachers. This is where the local authority provision comes into play and it is where some significant differences can be found. All schools were aware of the services offered by the local authority, although some had clearly found it to be limited, especially in the two north eastern schools, where 'somebody came to visit [new arrivals] initially. I don't think there was a follow up visit or anything like that (.) I think we were just told to get in touch if I thought there was a problem' (nursery teacher, S7).

There were six local authorities involved in this study, with the level of support varying from the occasional translator being provided on request (mentioned particularly by teachers in schools 3 and 7 in two different Local Authority regions) to the regular provision of teaching or support personnel (most prevalent in schools 5 and 8). This level of support was generally provided through the now-limited EMAG funding (Rutter, 2008). There was a strong sense in most schools that financial cuts were reducing the support offered by local authorities, and this was mentioned in most interviews, with an accompanying sense of worry about the future, particularly in S1 and S4.

Teachers in schools 1 and 2, which are in the same Local Authority (LA) region in north-west England, benefit from an extensive and popular accredited training programme currently offered by the local authority. This follows decisions taken at the time of devolution of funding to the schools, which lead to all of the teaching and support staff employed by the authority being re-employed by individual schools. This training and individualised support of staff from the local authority has had a significant effect on the confidence of staff here to deal with bilingual learners, one of whom reported that she feels like she has learnt a lot. She said: 'it's changed my style of teaching and

the way I perceive things in school is very different (.) you [the class teacher] carry on teaching whatever you're teaching and she [the EAL LA advisor] builds up on the skills that she's got and helps you develop them in whatever you're teaching' (class teacher and EAL co-ordinator, S1). The teachers and bilingual assistants in this LA all described themselves as 'lucky'. However, even here where the support seems strong, there are issues of under-resourcing from the perception of co-ordinators and managers.

The sense of injustice about not receiving what feels like a fair amount of funding is widespread, whether this is due to a growing school being historically classified as 'small' (S1), or because a school located in a fairly affluent suburb receives less funding, despite the fact that nearly all the pupils travel from a far more deprived area to get to the school (S6). In a number of northern towns and cities, the fact that the population of bilingual learners has grown very quickly is something that LAs have not necessarily been able to keep up with (Craig et al, 2010) and this has affected provision in S5 and S8.

In S6, it was observed that there were classroom assistants in each room, although it was unclear from observation whether they were full time (as the head in S1 said they would like to see). Observations showed that the staff in S4, a junior school in the north-east of England, would have been grateful for that level of TA support however, whether monolingual or bilingual, since they have only three TAs altogether. They have, in the past, had limited support from the LA for extreme cases but most bilingual children 'didn't have a lot of extra support (.) they were thrown in the deep end...' (class teacher, S4). The provision offered by staff in S7 is similar and they acknowledge that it is lucky that the children they have seen through the school have been well supported by parents and fortunate enough to be intelligent enough to cope.

In terms of the resources for bilingual learners and their teachers, there is a mixed picture across the region. There are schools where obtaining resources, such as dual language books, from the LA is easy, as in S2, but this is not usually the case, where the school needs to take responsibility for the purchasing. This can be difficult when staff do not have the expertise or the patience to deal with the suppliers (as mentioned by both key participants in S1). Materials and resources have been provided in the past through government initiatives into schools but they have often under-used or have had to be heavily adapted. Staff often report these materials to be low quality ('drivel', as the headteacher from S4 said), prescriptive and impractical, with referenced story books not being provided, and extra planning time being required to adapt the resources (particularly noted by a TA in S3).

Across all schools, individual staff members had created materials that better suit their particular learners and settings. The headteacher in S4 points out that 'the staff now go into a classroom and they're on the whiteboard and they're producing glorious things'. The specialist LA-provided EAL teacher in S8 brings in her own resources, including very personalised realia, like a classical guitar. This demonstrates a real focus on children as individuals and an attempt to personalise the curriculum and acknowledge that 'there's not a panacea that'll work across the board' (headteacher, S1). Resources need to be suited to the settings, the staff and the children, as when they are not, or when good training in how to use them is not forthcoming, they remain unused and gather dust. This seems especially true of resources such as dual language books. When teachers were asked about their use of these books, the responses ranged from an embarrassed acknowledgement that they existed in the school but had never been used, or they couldn't have been located by the staff member being interviewed, to claims that they were on display in the library but not used as extensively as they might be (S2, S3 and S4). Only in S1 were these books being actively used with events such as 'a reading morning recently where they had all the parents in and read the dual language books with them' (teacher, S1).

In the majority of the schools visited, personalisation of the curriculum is seen as extremely important. One-to-one and small group support is offered to most children, and so the stigma that Baker (2006) is concerned about bilingual children feeling is not considered to be an issue in most of the schools visited. It was only in S4 that any sense of the embarrassment about being taken out of the classroom was mentioned by the class teacher. There has been a move away from withdrawal provision for EAL in some of the schools, with teachers in the north-west acknowledging that children 'need to listen to the other children in the class, they need the good role models, so I think that's what happens a lot more than it has ever happened before' (EAL co-ordinator, S1)

However, away from the north-west, withdrawal is practiced more commonly for those who 'can't [cope in the classroom environment... with the noise levels and trying to concentrate]'. They do 'go out and practice vocabulary and sentences and those types of things' (class teacher, S3).

The official line from school management can be that withdrawal from the classroom does not happen. In schools more accustomed to dealing with EAL, there seems to be a growing awareness that inclusion can offer the role models and the sociocultural development opportunities required and that withdrawal can take away from curriculum

knowledge, as we can see from S3 above. However, despite the insistence from the headteacher in S5 that the specialist TA works in the classroom, observations in the school showed that this is not always the case. Withdrawal is often felt to be the most practical option, especially in schools where the support is provided by external teachers (who, moreover, have their sense of status to protect) and TAs through local authority provision, as the hours offered are limited.

First language use in school

The summaries detailing research perspectives have suggested that in a school dealing effectively with bilingual children we would expect to find:

- Enthusiastic teachers who are positive about the benefits of L1 use in the classroom and aim to prevent language loss.
- Children being allowed to be silent.
- Using or allowing the use of the L1 more lower down the school, especially in schools with a majority of one heritage language.
- Planning L1 use carefully and strategically for instructional purpose, with peer activities to use L1 role models.
- Something more than tokenistic gestures towards inclusivity and the L1.

The opportunities for children to use the first language differ greatly across the eight schools in the current study, and also within the schools themselves. S1 and S2, both schools with a high proportion of children with the same L1, function quite differently from the others in this respect, with S1 having a bilingual teacher employed for all classes bar one and the L1 being employed extensively in the Foundation and Early Years' classrooms in both schools. Classroom observation in the S2 nursery picked up on a story being told bilingually between a teacher and bilingual TA and it is used as a matter of course in S1 too, with the EAL co-ordinator saying 'in my normal day to day teaching anything I can say in Panjabi whether it be a story or whether it be telling them what to do next or explaining a concept I try to use as much of it as I possibly can'.

The EAL co-ordinator in S2 noted that there was a strong awareness of the way that the L1 should be used in the classroom, but highlighted the differences between S1 and S2 by commenting 'it should be that it's said in the first language first but obviously you're teaching a science lesson you can't do that because the bilingual assistant is translating what the teacher's said'. This led on to a comment about the trust that teachers need to have in the teaching assistants to express the concepts clearly enough.

Even in these schools that so strongly encourage the use of the L1 in the Foundation and Early Years stages, there was acknowledgement that this changes further up the school, with staff in both schools mentioning that children can get embarrassed to use the L1 from around Year 5. There was little discussion of the reasons but it is possible that it stems from the attitudes of the staff towards spontaneous and informal use of the L1, since it was claimed that 'they've got to learn to use it appropriately so in our school at the moment there isn't a culture (.) of children being allowed to use it [the L1 in Key Stage 2] without there being a bilingual member of staff there to sort of oversee it' (EAL co-ordinator, S2)

Schools with greater diversity find things even more difficult. The staff are less likely to speak other languages, the L1 is rarely used for instructional purposes and there is a greater confusion over the benefits or reasons for using the L1 in the classroom. Many of the staff fear allowing children to speak in a language they do not understand, as previous researchers have acknowledged (Kenner, 2000; Hélot, 2011). The Inclusion Manager at S6 reported that the L1 was only used for translation and on-the-spot difficulties and that only happened in Foundation and Key Stage 1 as there was no bilingual support further up the school. This ad hoc and non-curriculum related use of the L1 is echoed in many of the other schools, with discussion of various ways of using the L1, including:

- children speaking 'a mixture of some English words(...) and some of [their] own language' (class teacher, S3)
- 'get[ting children] to say good morning, good afternoon and [teaching] the class how to say goodbye and that kind of thing' (class teacher, S4)
- creating 'a like a Polish area with a table and things [and] set[ting] up an area with a table and things like that' (teacher, S7)

It was acknowledged by a number of respondents that their pupils 'could have had more support' or that it could have been 'made more of a two way thing' rather than the children simply learning the English language and culture and following an assimilation model (teacher, S7).

Most teachers agree that language loss is to be avoided if possible but curricular ideas about ways of developing additive bilingualism are limited, mainly involving teachers thinking they should be 'trying to learn a little bit of it and trying to show that it's you know not one over the other' (class teacher, S3). Teachers regularly express a sincere wish to be able to speak the languages of the children in their care. The nursery teacher in S8 says that she wants

to learn Polish and searches for nursery rhymes on the internet for the child in her group. Another very common theme is the admiration expressed for bilingual children and, to some extent, a sense of jealousy at the skills that those children have had the chance to develop (particularly noted in S1 and S3).

Apart from S1 and S2, other schools use the L1 within certain curriculum areas in order to develop bilingual children's self-esteem and self-concept. A good example was in S8, where the observer could see poems by the children in heritage languages on the wall, which has been used to great effect in a number of studies on the literacy of multilingual children (Mick, 2011). This was also said to happen in S7.

The use of the L1 around the schools differed greatly, with some schools (S4) acknowledging that it was essentially tokenistic and, in fact, was increased strategically around the time of an Ofsted visit. Other schools genuinely believe in the importance of such displays, especially for the purpose of making parents feel welcome (S2), with displays 'fit [ting] in with the bigger holistic picture (headteacher, S5), although sometimes the displays' purposes can get a little lost, amongst vague comments about the multicultural benefits.

The class-teacher in S1 noted the importance of careful planning of language in the curriculum for bilingual children (whether it be English or the L1), and discussed the fact that this was a very time-consuming task. Producing resources in the L1 for specific children in their care was something that a number of teachers mentioned doing. The nursery teacher in S8 talks of making her own materials, and searching for Polish language resources on the internet outside of class time. However, this reinventing of the wheel could be said to be a waste of the limited time that staff have for EAL provision.

Attitudes towards bilingualism and immigration

As the earlier summary on research perspectives suggests, a school dealing effectively with bilingual children would typically provide:

- A community with a positive attitude towards (or at least acceptance of) immigration.
- Teachers working on social and racial attitudes openly, through discussion of language and cultural values from a young age.
- Encouragement of peer support and socialisation through mentoring and buddy schemes.

When asked about their perception of school, local and national attitudes towards immigration and bilingualism, many participants drew a very clear

distinction between the positive attitudes of the school community and a more negative view amongst the wider community, especially on a national level (this was explicitly stated by staff in S1, S2, S3, S4 and S5, and implied elsewhere). Staff are highly aware of the pressures that are put on children to assimilate into British culture and feel that they play an important role in offering transition. However, all the schools felt that they projected a very positive outlook on immigration and bilingualism and many felt that their immediate communities shared this, with the exception of S2, S4 and S7, where there was either mention of racism experienced locally (S2 and S4) or a sense of isolation from multiculturalism (in the case of S7). The headteacher in S1 said that he felt that the national direction on multiculturalism has been 'very woolly' and that there needs to be more focus on the nature of the different minority communities and the effect that this has on community engagement, which he feels has an enormous impact on the aspirations and achievement potential of the children in his care.

Most staff expressed pride in their record on social and racial matters, with few such problems reported. Most of the schools have an open approach to talking about social and racial attitudes, often using literacy lessons as a tool for this (S5 and S7 noted this particularly) although the S7 Ofsted report (2011, p.5) noted that 'not all pupils have enough understanding of other cultures and all forms of diversity' so there is probably some work to do to ensure that the discussions are fully developed.

Establishing relationships with other children, specifically native English-speakers, is mentioned frequently as being a positive action, but this is not without its difficulties since there are cases when 'the indigenous white children also have unenriched language so their role models are poor' (headteacher, S1). There were frequent comments made about how well integrated bilingual children become into the class group and how well both teachers and TAs understood the importance of this, both socially and linguistically.

The concept of official mentors seems not to have been picked up in many of the schools, with the exception of S1. A class teacher in S3 suggested that anybody and everybody would be performing this function in the Year one class that a new arrival had recently joined, saying that having a new arrival with limited or no English 'brings out the best' in the rest of the class and that they find it to be a 'real learning experience'. This idea of mutual benefit for both bilingual and native English speaking children was echoed across a number of the schools, although, as we have seen, it only occasionally was used linguistically. However, when children are encouraged to use the first language, staff comment on how much

confidence it gives them, when, for example, ‘we used to get it [Russian] wrong and he’d be like no you’re saying it all wrong (laughs) (...) all the children loved it you know they were saying what can you teach me what can you teach me’ (teacher, S3).

This acknowledgement of the power of the L1 and the confidence gained in using it generally only seems to extend as far as the children teaching the class ad hoc words (also evidenced in S4). However, it does lead to both bilingual and native English speaking children gaining in awareness of linguistic and cultural issues and is found to some extent in all the schools (although significantly less often in S4 than the remainder). A more typical approach to a formal mentor and buddy was to use a fellow L1 speaker, whether this be from the same year group or not. This has positive and negative repercussions, as the TAs from S3 acknowledged, when they discussed their worries for a Russian girl who was missing some of her own class time to translate for a younger boy. This practice was opposed strongly in S5, with the headteacher there being concerned that ‘when they first come here if you’ve got two Spanish speakers together they will still be Spanish speakers and their minds and ears will not be open to absorbing the language’. This, along with many of the discussions above, highlights the differences in approaches taken across the diverse schools of northern England, and their lack of certainty and knowledge about what best practice might be.

5

Implications and recommendations

In considering provision of support for bilingual children, the use of the L1, and attitudes towards immigration and bilingualism, we have seen that the schools in this study adopt different approaches to the challenges they face. This is unsurprising given EAL's lack of a position within the curriculum and the consequential lack of centralised support or strategy. Some of the opinions expressed by participants in this study reflect the monolingual habitus (to adopt Bourdieu's term) of the UK education system, and are not likely to change in the foreseeable future. However, it is possible to draw recommendations for action from this study.

1. Initial Teacher Education should train new teachers on EAL issues and more appropriate CPD and training is needed for existing teachers and TAs, to ensure that all staff responsible for EAL have an understanding of Second Language Acquisition processes, research in the field of EAL, and an understanding of the importance of using the first language in the classroom.

Most teachers in this study remain convinced that they have not received adequate local authority training in dealing with bilingual children (with notable exceptions in S1, S2 and S5). TAs feel significantly worse in this respect, especially in S3, although the TAs in S1 and S2 have benefited from more training than many of the teachers elsewhere have received. This is clearly related to the number of bilingual children in the local area but there may well be lessons to be learnt from the north-west in terms of an efficient approach toward the provision of support for teachers and children. Forthcoming funding cuts will potentially further erode the already minimal training on offer.

Additionally, training more sensitive to the needs of either particular settings or teachers could lead to more inclusive practice, such as that seen in some of the research projects mentioned earlier. For example, teachers could seek to find ways to make EAL children feel comfortable, rather than 'embarrassed' (as some of the participants in this study reported) as bilinguals. By learning to employ a more heteroglossic approach in the classroom, better trained teachers could facilitate pupils being able to embrace their own identity as bilingual rather than as two monolinguals within one body (Hélot and Ó Laoire, 2011; Rice, 2008), which is important in that it may well prevent some of the potential alienation that the headteacher

in S1 spoke of. This approach would take into account the positive results of research into the benefits of trans-linguaging and code-switching for all children in the classroom and, furthermore, is important since ignoring the first language competence of bilingual children could well be considered as being discriminatory (Hélot and Ó Laoire, 2011). The fear that many monolingual teachers have over blurring the boundaries between languages has been shown to be unfounded and unhelpful (Mick, 2011) and working more freely with other languages may help break down these barriers.

2. The dialogue between schools who have similar requirements should be enhanced to limit the time- and money-wasting inherent in a decentralised approach.

The lack of centralised control or forums for dialogue has a negative effect on provision for children and staff. Organisations disseminating information and research on EAL do exist, such as the National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum, who do sterling work in making the voices of bilingual children and their teachers heard at a national level. However, they do seem to struggle to reach the class teacher, possibly due to the financial cost of membership. This means that many school staff report a general sense of 'winging it', against a background of not enough money, time or knowledge. A co-ordinating force to link schools with similar needs across regions could share best practice and materials, thereby tackling to some extent the key problems of time-wasting and lack of knowledge, which would avoid teachers feeling isolated in dealing with the challenges this group of pupils presents.

3. The terminology used around the issues pertaining to bilingual children should be reconsidered and streamlined, to avoid social stigma.

It is worth considering the effect of standard labels such as 'support' that the system in the UK currently adopts, and indeed that the present report has therefore adopted. 'Support' is a term that implies sympathy or pity, and is often a temporary state related to getting over an injury or illness. It is perhaps, therefore, not 'support' that bilingual children need, but rather a 'programme' (cf. Carder, 2009) in order to avoid potential social stigma within schools.

The discussion on the labelling of the children themselves was briefly dealt with at the beginning of this report but is also something worthy of review given the fact that it is really only the UK and Ireland which adopts the term EAL, which may be limiting the options in terms of disseminating and finding research work in the field.

4. The policy of previous and continuing funding cuts in EAL provision needs reconsideration in the face of increased need for support and the potential consequences of an unsupported generation.

Funding cuts, of course, are key in most of the participants' discussions within this study, as well as within the wider public sector at the moment, but some of the concerns expressed about the potential long-term alienating effects within UK communities if EAL is not dealt with effectively at the school level are worthy of further consideration. With all headteachers being increasingly aware of an existing and forthcoming programme of cuts,

there is a sense of worry about what the future holds. Given the media interest in the cognitive benefits of bilingualism (*Guardian*, February 2011), it is important that the public is made aware that these benefits cannot possibly be realised if the provision for these emergent bilinguals is not adequate.

5. Further research is required.

The scope of this report is necessarily limited, as the issue of EAL provision is complex and multi-faceted. There is an urgent need for further research into the effect of funding cuts, as well as more contributions to the growing body of research on the benefits of using the first language in and out of the classroom. Testing and assessment of bilingual children is an area ripe for research too, especially discussion of the appropriacy of testing children in relation to monolingual norms (cf. Grosjean, 1997). Finally, further research into the importance of connections between schools and families, as well as local community involvement with schools, is urgently required.

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Appendix 1 – Participating schools

School	Location	Number of pupils	Ofsted rating
S1	Lancashire	141 (2006)	Good (2006)
Ofsted descriptor: 'The vast majority of pupils are of Asian/Pakistani origin and a high percentage of pupils live in homes where English is not the mother tongue... [H]igh number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual admission or transfer to secondary school. When children start in the nursery, the majority have skills and knowledge that are well below national expectations for children of their age, many starting school with little or no spoken English.'			
S2	Lancashire	441 (2009)	Good (2009)
Ofsted descriptor: 'The proportion of children who come from homes where English is not the first language is high and has increased since the previous inspection. The majority of children are of Pakistani heritage but almost a third are White British... More pupils join and leave the school at different times in the school year than is usual.'			
S3	West Yorkshire	196 (2011)	Satisfactory (2011)*
Ofsted descriptor: 'This is a slightly smaller-than-average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. A minority of pupils are of White British heritage. However, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.'			
S4	North East	330 (2009)	Satisfactory (2009)*
Ofsted descriptor: 'The school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than that found nationally. Although there are increasing numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups, most pupils are from a White British background and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low.'			
S5	North Yorkshire	209 (2008)	Good (2008)
Ofsted descriptor: 'The school is situated in a village on the outskirts of [city], very close to the university. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average... Many of the pupils are from families connected with the University (...) and many of these are from overseas. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high and so is the proportion speaking English as an additional language. A higher than average proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school at times other than the usual.'			
S6	West Yorkshire	384 (2010)	Good (2010)
Ofsted descriptor: 'This is a larger-than-average size primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average and the majority of these speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just above average. A lower than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils on roll has increased recently and this has affected the organisation of some class groupings.'			
S7	North East	444 (2011)	Outstanding (2011)
Ofsted descriptor: 'The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average but increasing. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs.'			
S8	North Yorkshire	405 (2011)	Satisfactory (2011)*
Ofsted descriptor: 'This larger-than-average school serves a diverse area to the west of (...) city centre... Most pupils are of White British heritage, but there is a small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds or who have English as an additional language... A very small proportion of pupils is looked after by the Local Authority.'			

Table 1: Demographic and audit information pertaining to participating schools

* Ofsted ratings may now not be comparable between pre- and post- 2009 following changes to the audit process.

Ofsted reports for the participating schools have not been fully referenced in order to protect the anonymity of the individuals and institutions involved in the study

Appendix 2 – Full list of participating staff members, indicating school affiliation and level of participation in the study

School	Participants		Nature of participation
1	P1	EAL Co-ordinator	interview
	P2	Class teacher	observation
	P3	Headteacher	interview
2	P4	EAL Co-ordinator	interview
	P5	Bilingual Learning Assistant (BLA)	group interview/ observation in community project
	P6	BLA	group interview
	P7	BLA	group interview
	P8	BLA	group interview
	P9	Class teacher	interview
	P10	Nursery class teacher	observation
	P11	Headteacher	interview
	3	P12	Class teacher
P13		Class teacher	group interview/ observation
P14		Headteacher	interview
P15		Teaching Assistant (TA)	group interview
P16		TA	group interview
P17		TA	group interview
P18		TA	group interview
P19		TA	group interview
4	P20	Class teacher	interview
	P21	Class teacher	observation
	P22	Class teacher	observation
	P23	Headteacher	interview

School	Participants		Nature of participation	
5	P24	Local Authority EAL TA	informal conversation/ observation	
	P25	Class teacher	interview	
	P26	Class teacher	observation	
	P27	Headteacher	interview	
	6	P28	Class teacher	observation
		P29	Class teacher	observation
P30		Deputy headteacher	interview	
P31		SEN Co-ordinator	group interview	
P32		Family Liaison Manager	group interview	
7	P33	Nursery teacher/ member of Senior Management team	interview	
	P34	Class teacher	interview	
	P35	Class teacher	interview	
	P36	Class teacher	observation/ informal conversation	
	P37	Bilingual TA	informal conversation	
	8	P38	Class teacher	observation
P39		Local Authority EAL teacher	observation/ informal conversation	
P40		Class teacher	observation	
P41		Nursery class teacher	observation/ informal conversation	

Appendix 3 – Excerpts of relevant transcription data

Comments on: Training and Local Authority support

‘I feel like I’ve learnt a lot and it’s changed my style of teaching and the way I perceive things in school is very different... you carry on teaching whatever you’re teaching and she builds up on the skills that she’s got and helps you develop them in whatever you’re teaching’ (class teacher and EAL co-ordinator, S1)

‘I don’t know that many authorities have anything like our support (.) we’re very lucky to have it so one or two of our teachers have had people working alongside us to develop things further you know’ (EAL co-ordinator, S2).

‘and I’d entered this academic year hoping that every class was gonna have a full time classroom assistant which to us is a luxury because [LA] has historically been fairly under-resourced as regards pupil ratio number money so we’re playing catch up (.) until recently we were classed as a small school which has impacts on how much money you’ve got to spend on things’ (headteacher, S1).

‘we can always borrow things from the [LA service] so occasionally especially during that story telling week we did borrow loads of books you know different languages’ (EAL co-ordinator, S2).

‘she’s [the local authority advisor] made me realise that isn’t how it works [withdrawal from the classroom]. They need to listen to the other children in the class, they need the good role models, so I think that’s what happens a lot more than it has ever happened before’ (EAL co-ordinator, S1)

Comments on: Government EAL resources

‘it came in a plastic box because it was for a project (.) I can’t remember whether I threw it out in the last clear out (.) you’re welcome to borrow that... we’ve plodded through it and it was such a drive (.) the quality of the stuff is not very high’ (headteacher, S4)

‘We’ve got a big EAL [LA] file that’s been passed down through the school which kind of tells you what you should be doing the first unit was All About Me that’s got lesson plans and it’s got worksheets (.) but the thing I was finding difficult is that it was saying get such and such book and I was thinking well I’ve got an hour to plan the whole week I don’t have time to go to the school library for the book so I try and use different stories’ (TA, S3)

Comments on: Dual language books

‘we do have a lot of dual language books they’re put in there as a main area where teachers can go over and get them (.) they had a reading morning recently where they had all the parents in and read the dual language books with them’ (teacher, S1)

‘we haven’t got that many I don’t know why (.) it depends on the story because they [the bilingual language assistants] can’t all read it you see... I’m not sure how much they’re used and how many there are in KS2’ (EAL co-ordinator, S2)

‘we put them (.) they’re out in the reading corner but I’ve never read any of them’ (class teacher, S3)

‘I think we’ve got quite a lot of them in the library area but I possibly couldn’t just go and put my hands on them (...) I couldn’t honestly tell you [if the children use them]’ (headteacher, S4)

Comments on: ‘Winging it’ and producing own materials and resources

EAL children ‘didn’t have a lot of extra support they were thrown in the deep end...’ (class teacher, S4).

‘the staff now go into a classroom and they’re on the whiteboard and they’re producing glorious things’ (headteacher, S4)

‘there’s not a panacea that’ll work across the board’ (headteacher, S1).

‘those who can cope in the classroom environment and then the others with the noise levels and trying to concentrate some of them can’t do it can they and with EAL that do go out and practice vocabulary and sentences and those types of things’ (class teacher, S3)

Comments on: Using the first language

‘in my normal day to day teaching anything I can say in Panjabi whether it be a story or whether it be telling them what to do next or explaining a concept I try to use as much of it as I possibly can’ (EAL co-ordinator, S1)

‘it should be that it’s said in the first language first but obviously you’re teaching a science lesson you can’t do that because the bilingual assistant is translating what the teacher’s said’ (EAL co-ordinator, S2)

'they've got to learn to use it appropriately so in our school at the moment there isn't a culture of it [using the L1 in Key Stage 2] (.) of children being allowed to use it without there being a bilingual member of staff there to sort of oversee it' (EAL co-ordinator, S2)

'sometimes they like like Khaled will sometimes I think it's almost like a mixture of some English words he'll slip in there and some of his own language and some of it is it sounds to me like what he thinks English sounds like' (class teacher, S3)

'I think that's fallen by the wayside I think because I haven't felt this year that I've needed to there was a few years ago when I made more of an issue of it when I was in year three erm there was a couple of boys who I felt would they liked that you know they wanted to speak in their language so I would just get them to say good morning, good afternoon and they taught the class how to say goodbye and that kind of thing' (class teacher, S4)

'I don't think they did [speak in L1] we did a erm I think with Mrs M we did a like a Polish area with a table and things cos he used to go and see his family for maybe three or four weeks and the same with Jenny did that we asked them if they'd bring some things back with them and we'd set up an area with a table and things like that but I must admit no we didn't really we said hello and goodbye in their language and things but as a whole no (.) I'm really you know in hindsight really we erm maybe sh- could have had more support on made it more of a two way thing rather than them just learning the English language and cul- and fitting in with us really' (teacher, S7)

it's good to 'try to learn a little bit of it and trying to show that it's you know not one over the other' (class teacher, S3)

Comments on: Attitudes towards bilingualism and bilingual children

'I think they're great they're miles better than me (.) I always tell them that brazenly you've got so many more skills than I've got I wish I was like that' (headteacher, S1)

'I think it's sort of admired by like everybody (laughs) (.) we're very ignorant we can't (.) it's like when we go on holiday you expect people to speak English you don't learn Spanish to go on holiday and so you (.) I feel it's very important that they keep who they are but then they do have to (.) learn English to be part of the social network in the school area (class teacher, S3)

Comments on: Peer support

'the indigenous white children also have unenriched language so their role models are poor' (headteacher, S1).

'if they become friends with children with different languages and abilities it will bring them right round so it is important' (teacher, S3).

'another boy in the class who spoke Russian at home (.) he used to teach us sort of words every now and then (.) we used to get it wrong and he'd be like no you're saying it all wrong (laughs) (...) all the children loved it you know they were saying what can you teach me what can you teach me' (teacher, S3).

'when they first come here if you've got two Spanish speakers together they will still be Spanish speakers and their minds and ears will not be open to absorbing the language' (headteacher, S5).

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