

**The Negotiation of Equality of Opportunity for Emergent
Bilingual Children in the English Mainstream Class**

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Abstract

The thesis is based on the study of Chinese emergent bilingual children in English mainstream classrooms. Participants in the study include three children of newly arrived families and a group of 13-14 year old Chinese students who have lived in Britain for at least 5 years. I use a variety of ethnographic methods to highlight what it means to be a newcomer in the mainstream English classroom. Three themes - isolation, misunderstanding and frustration are highlighted in the pilot study, through which I illustrate the problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class, with particular interest in analysing what might be the root of the problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class, what 'equality of opportunity' really means to emergent bilingual children as they enter English schools with a limited knowledge of English and the dominant culture, how equal 'the same' curriculum is for them, and how far the provision for them in the present curriculum reflects generally accepted principles for successful second language learning. I conclude that it is the loss of individualism that promotes problems in the mainstreaming of the educational provision. In the main study I investigate the key questions that have arisen from the pilot study, through an ethnographic approach to studying EAL programmes within the framework of the mainstream provision, the role of bilingual peer support in second language learning and the role of parental involvement, I want to identify 'what is it that contributed to the success of those older bilingual children?', 'which features in L2 learning have been most significant in explaining some good examples of linguistic support for emergent bilingual children?', whereby I argue that the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involved some withdrawal EAL support out of the mainstream classroom: that an exaggeration of the advantages of bilingual learner diverts attention from the children's need for extra help in English; that the potential cognitive and linguistic advantages of bilingual learners can only be developed through an effective learning environment. Whether or not bilinguality is a positive asset depends on how those emergent bilinguals are treated in the mainstream class or in other words, recognition of the children's 'disadvantage' could lead to a more positive recognition of their 'advantage' in school.

This study is of prime importance to those concerned with the education of emergent bilingual children, including local education authority (LEA) officers, inspectors, advisers, teachers, community associations, parents, teacher trainers and policy makers. I hope the proposed work will make a contribution to our knowledge of the school experience of emergent bilingual children as well as possible curriculum and policy developments that might take place in future to serve better bilingual students.

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GLOSSARY

APU	Assessment of Performance Unit
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CUES	Centre for Urban and Educational Studies
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Science
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Educational Priority Areas
EMAG	Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant
ESL	English as a Second Language
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
IQs	Intelligence Quotients
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NCES	National Council for Educational Standards

NALDIC	National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum
OFSTED	Office for Standards in English
SATs	Standard Assessment Tasks
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SEAC	School Examinations and Assessment Council

PART ONE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 My Way into the Research: An Introduction

1.1 Introduction

For many years after I had obtained an MA, I never made up my mind to undertake a PhD study either in China or outside China, though I had the chance to do so when I was visiting the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1988-1989, when I was doing a post-doctoral research in the University of Newcastle in England in 1996 and when I was at Goldsmiths College as a visiting professor. One reason was that I had been so fully occupied with my teaching and research since graduation that I could not afford the time. On the other hand I did not think it highly necessary to obtain a PhD without any down to earth significance, as my academic contributions had been very well received in China. Of course, never did I think that I would do a PhD in the field of Bilingual Education in my early forties after I had been granted a full professorship in China in 1999. However, it happened! The decision partly arose from the fact that my husband moved with his parents to Britain from Hong Kong in 1999. He therefore urged me to join him on this new journey together. I simply could not find any reason not to join his journey, which, as compared with my well-established career in China, might be a risk in my academic life. Personally, upon my research experience abroad, I strongly felt that my potential as a pure educationist could be more fully developed in one of the western countries, where academic people, relatively speaking, enjoy more freedom of speech and are encouraged to be critical of present policies, which I think, is vital to research. I very much appreciate the academic atmosphere here, where 'there is always some tension between educationists and politicians: when the government is of the right, many academic educationists and teachers lean heavily to the left' (Hargreaves & Reynolds, 1989). In China things are just the contrary, therefore social research in China would be more or less a kind of compliment to the existing government, presenting a false picture of reality. My central concern used to be

the school curriculum, paying special attention to different curriculum systems existing in different countries, to various models of curriculum theories. But I am now extending my research purposely to the field of bilingual education, especially focusing on the educational provision for emergent bilingual children in the sense of equality of opportunities. This extension has much to do with my present anxiety as a mother of an emergent bilingual boy, but it is also closely related to my personal experience of moving from monolingualism to bilingualism. Very often, different encounters are interwoven in a decision and the decision has been very much an ethnographic option.

1.2 Family Background and School Education

A Happy Childhood before the Cultural Revolution

I was born into a family of intellectuals in new China, at the time of 'The Great Leap Forward' launched by Mr Mao Zedong (Chairman Mao) in order to prove to the world that Chinese people were determined and could manage to catch up with the western developed countries through their own efforts (as the relationship with the Soviet Union started to decline by that time). One of the campaigns was 'to increase production of iron and steel' because the tonnage of iron and steel symbolized the industrial strength of a country. All over the country one could see the slogan 'Catch up with Britain within Fifteen Years!' as Britain at that time was in the lead in annual output of the iron and steel commodities. The media replayed the same message, 'The people have a share of the responsibility for the fate of this country.' One of the practical actions taken by the mass was to collect as much waste iron as possible and send it to feed the furnaces, which were built everywhere in all shapes and sizes. The whole nation's enthusiasm was highly motivated, people were eager to see socialism overwhelm capitalism. Many households even contributed woks or any kitchen appliance made of iron when they had nothing else to hand over as waste iron.

My parents, being university teachers, also embarked on this campaign like millions of Chinese people. In schools and universities, classes were taught during the day and steel

making was organized in the evening. My mother, as a leader in her teaching group, had to play a leading role, though she was pregnant. She was present all the time even when she was about to give birth to me. That was why my father was always joking to me saying ‘You are one of the steel products of your mum and the country.’

However, the Great Leap Forward was much more than just steel making. It meant much to the intellectual class then, for throughout the first half of the 1950s, China’s intellectuals, particularly those from the old China, had been treated as one of the ‘black classes’ hostile or at best lukewarm towards the communist revolution. Differently, new intellectuals were highly valued and considered a vital force on the way to this national catch-up drive. Intellectuals’ salaries were raised; they were allotted better apartments; attempts were made to woo back Chinese professors living in the US and Europe. There were two factors for this dramatic change. One was the shortage of skilled manpower (scientists and engineers) and the other was the result of breaking up with the Soviet Union and the wish to stop mechanically copying Soviet methods. Therefore, my parents, the first numbers of graduates of a university in new China, were then considered as ‘Red Experts’. They were highly respected for their proficiency in a particular line. So were university students. They were considered the elite of the country and very well financed, not only free tuition but also free accommodation.

The Great Leap Forward was over before the end of 1959, by the time I was one year old. My mother was proud and happy to have given birth to a baby in the year of the Great Leap Forward - the year of intellectuals, she named me ‘Yangguang’ (meaning sunshine in Chinese) in the hope that I would have a bright future.

The happiest days of my childhood were spent before the Cultural Revolution. I stayed most of the time with my grandparents before schooling. They loved me as if I was a pearl in the palm of their hand as I was their only granddaughter. I learnt from my father later that my grandfather could speak Japanese, for he once studied abroad in Japan with my grandmother’s brother. During the war with Japan, he rescued his neighbours because he could speak fluent Japanese. But unfortunately he passed away when I was two years old.

My grandmother was typical of millions of Chinese women of her time because of her 'three-inch golden lilies' (the feet were bound up by bandages into a certain shape when girls were little, so as to hinder the feet from growing). This was considered a beauty when women walked 'like a tender young willow shoot in a spring breeze'. However, she was different from them because she was one of those rare women who left school with skills of literacy and numeracy for her time. She was married to my grandfather as soon as he returned from Japan. In my eyes, she was pretty, with an intelligent oval face and she was not old when she was reading Chinese classical literature with a pair of glasses on. I still can remember the happy time when she told me folk stories or read me one or two paragraphs from her book. This earliest influence plays a part.

When I was 3, I began schooling at the kindergarten, which was affiliated to the university where my parents worked. This was a weekly boarding school. There were similar schools in all the major universities of China, which ensured a good education for the children of 'red experts'. There were other key schools for the children of every important communist leader. I came home on Saturday afternoons and went back on Monday mornings. Home by then was the apartment in the university, where I stayed with my parents, but not with my grandmother because it was quite a distance away from where my grandmother lived. The only occasion that I could stay with her was school spring and summer holidays.

However, my parents' influence, during this period, was crucial. They were then both senior lecturers in the university, with my mother teaching philosophy and my father specializing in History. I can still remember mother and father walking hand in hand as they took me for a walk around the university campus. They loved playing ping-pong, so very often I acted as referee when they were in match. They loved music, but my mother always sang out of tune when she sang with us. However my father could sing beautifully and he taught me as many songs as he could, which gave me a world of love, truth and beauty. I learnt the music, words and expressions, and also developed emotion and imagination. By the time I was four or five, my father borrowed for me from the university library lots of cartoon, pictorial and simple story books but I always asked my mum to read the stories to me. She read them with great passion, and very often moved me to tears. I

think this is where my sense of sympathy developed. I think I inherited my parents' love for books. What I cannot forget is my father's study room where shelves of books aroused my curiosity of knowledge. I remember clearly the smell and the sense of peace.

I started my primary school in 1965, just one year before the Cultural Revolution. I was the youngest in the class as my birthday is in November. But I wanted to be at the top of the class. I followed every single lesson attentively and did all my homework diligently. Teachers loved me and encouraged me, which made me work harder and better. Towards the end of the first term I achieved almost full marks in all my examinations and was chosen by my teacher and my classmates to be the 'Three Good Pupil' (good virtue, good study and good health). When I handed my parents my school report, they gave me big hugs and kisses, then assured me I would go far if I continued to work hard. From then on, I was frequently asked to help those classmates who lagged behind in their lessons. I was really confident and proud of myself.

Nightmare of the Cultural Revolution

However, the peace was short-lived. In 1966, the inner war 'Cultural Revolution' broke out and lasted for ten years. It was not so much a kind of cultural construction or academic discussion as the term first appeared in the state newspaper – People's Daily, but rather a kind of cultural destruction which served to overthrow the power of those political dissidents within the Party. It had been a long-term conflict between Mao and Liu Shao Qi, the then Chairman of the country appointed by Mao in the late 1959 (while Mao himself remained as Chairman of the Party). Mao could not bear to see Liu's reputation increasing whilst his was in decline. Liu's words about 'Red Capitalists' and his policy of giving the peasants their own plots became his worst crimes. Liu's partner Deng Xiao Pin was branded the 'number two capitalist roader'. The two men were condemned as 'holding the red flag to oppose the red flag'. However everyone was involved in the Cultural Revolution, for the essence of this revolution was to touch everybody's soul as announced officially. Nobody escaped, not even the peasants. Almost overnight, wall posters in black

and white blotted out the sky and covered up the earth, with the outlandish and violent language, such as 'smash so-and-so's dog's head' and 'Annihilate so-and-so if he does not surrender'. In school and university, teaching stopped completely from the beginning of June, though students had to continue to go there. They were in school to study 'the little red book' or the editorials of the People's Daily, which only reported what Chairman Mao authorized.

Universities were the most severe battlefields. My father was one of the victims of millions known as 'capitalist-roaders' and 'reactionary bourgeois authorities', simply because he was honoured as 'red expert' and promoted as the head of the department following Liu and Deng's reactionary line. Father was detained. Mother was deprived of her right to fight as a revolutionist because she was the wife of a 'bourgeois intellectual'. When she was told this she cried and at the time she was five months pregnant. She was so tortured by this confusing adjudication and so worried about my father until one night she fainted and lost consciousness, and was finally sent by ambulance to the hospital. Because of losing too much blood, she had to labour my younger brother one month ahead of time by operation. Poor mother! Also my poor brother as his life was in danger. It seemed that he shouldn't have arrived in this world at this time.

After my brother was born, my mother took us back to stay with my grandmother. I was overjoyed to stay with my grandmother again but I had to get transferred to a new school and leave my former teachers and classmates. And it was not a paradise any more, as life had changed dramatically. During that time, the whole family was haunted by anxiety, with my grandmother worrying over her son's safety; my mother dying for missing her husband and I waiting days and nights for my dad's return. I was no longer the only child in the family. I had to learn to share love with my brother, and learn to do some housework after school. As the situation of revolution developed, I left my school completely. This happened simply because my father was in detention and I was the offspring of capitalist roaders and reactionary intellectual authority. It lasted half a year before my father was released with a verdict of 'not guilty'. It was so good that we were finally a complete family again with a new family member (my brother) joining in. To avoid anything

unexpectedly bad happening again, we moved to live with my aunt, who was married to a family of Red Class (The Red Class were from the families of workers, peasants and soldiers), so we could be protected by them. There we spent a short period of safety and relaxation. My father, for the first time in his life, had so much leisure time with us. He taught me language and maths, told me his stories of childhood and of those great people in China and abroad and also many fairy tales. I would say that I learnt a lot more than in school and was better educated in the family. What was more important was that I learnt from my father how to be a person of integrity, ^{正直诚实} how to fight for one's fate. And also he let me know his love for me and his high expectation of me.

Exile with My Parents to the Countryside

However, the ^{庇护}asylum in my aunt's home was not a permanent solution. Soon my parents were asked to attend the political school for learning Chairman Mao's Supreme Instructions in order to draw a clear line of demarcation. This time my grandmother and I moved with my parents to live in the university. I was allowed to return to my former primary school. Things were not too bad until late 1969 when the whole university was to be disbanded under the order that the campus was to be occupied for military use as the tension in the border area was getting worse. University staffs were ordered to go to the countryside to receive re-education from the poor middle peasants. This big move was supported by Mao's belief that 'the more books you read, the more stupid you are' and 'Intellectuals can do a lot in the countryside through thought reform'. Soon this movement spread quickly over the country, millions of urban graduates of secondary schools and universities were expelled to settle down in the countryside. In this way, young people would not be roaming the cities with nothing to do, creating trouble out of sheer boredom and this was a temporary solution for the high unemployment. So in 1970, after the Chinese New Year, my parents packed up our luggage and set off with me from Fuzhou, the capital city, to distant parts of the Fujian wilderness. Actually, the place of exile depended on one's background. My father, though released with a verdict of 'not guilty', was still on the blacklist of those capitalist roaders and reactionary intellectual authorities. My brother was

too young to join our journey; my grandmother was aging and too frail to go with us. They were both left with my aunt, being looked after by a maid. I can still remember my brother crying desperately when we parted at the coach station. He did not let go of my mother even when the coach started to move.

We three finally, after a long journey, reached the area called 'Rich River' (in Chinese), which had been incorporated as the People's Commune into one of the counties in the province since 'The Great Leap Forward'. There was only one bus route connecting downtown every other day. Then we were further assigned to one of the most remote production brigades surrounded by mountains. It would take us one hour to climb hills and hills on foot from the Commune. The very first day when we arrived in the village it was raining, which made us feel gloomier. The village was really shabby, with dogs barking at us and the crowd of children, adults and aged people in a very sorry state following us to a very worn out hut with only one bedroom and a kitchen. There was no light at all inside when the window shut for it was not a window with transparent glass but a piece of opaque wood, no electricity supply, no water pump. People used candles or gas lamps for illumination, ignited firewood from mountains for cooking and carried on a shoulder pole two buckets of water from the mouth of a spring. I just could not believe this was the place we had to live in for the years following. But that was reality we could not escape. Later I understood that was always a punishment. As soon as we settled down, my parents had to learn how to labour in the fields; that is the way to be 'reformed'. Few peasants could read and write, many could not even write their own name. However there was a primary school in the village, but teachers changed all the time simply because of the poor conditions. Very often the school closed due to the lack of a teacher. I was lucky since I could go to school during my stay in the village. The school was simply a big room crowded with all classes ranging from year 1 to year 6. There was only one teacher to take care of all the children. I was in year 4 and the only girl in the school. Girls were not sent to school for 'What is the point?' people would ask. 'They get married and belong to other people. It is like pouring water on the ground, a complete waste of time for girls to go to school.' I stayed there for a year and then moved to a bigger school called a 'Centre School' affiliated to the Commune, where each grade had a classroom and several subject teachers. I enjoyed studying in this

school as I met a few children similar to my background (coming from the city). The only difficulty for me was the distance so that I had to get up very early in the morning and come home late at night. Normally I spent at least two hours on the way to and from the school. However, I was never late for my class and came out first in class. By that time I was so fascinated by fiction books, and I read as much as possible. Some of the books were banned but were available from my friends here. My reading and writing were profoundly improved and also developed into one of my favourite hobbies. This is when I was determined to go far in the future. My parents, though in their darkest days, never gave up hope and kept encouraging me by reading me a poem written by Longman (in Chinese translation): 'Let's be up and doing, with a heart for any fate, still pursuing, still achieving, learn to labour and to wait.' I benefited greatly from it.

During that time bad news would travel in no time, but the one that gave me a heart blow was the death of my grandmother. My mother, as the only member in the family, was permitted to go back for the funeral. My father could only pay a tribute to my grandmother miles away. When mother returned, she brought my brother along. It was good that we were finally a four-member family again. The memory of the bygone days in the countryside still remains fresh in my mind. There I learnt manual labour in the fields and learnt to cook and wash at home, especially I learnt to take care of my brother while my mother was helping in the summer harvest and I was on vacation. The cruel reality and the bitter experience accelerated my maturity. I thought I was really grown up during those days.

Return to the City

In 1972, the situation changed. The news came that the military base in our former university was going to move out of the campus, the university was going to re-open. Soon afterwards arrived the order that my parents should get things ready in a week for the return to the city and make preparations for the new term. We were in raptures over the news. I can remember the following few days when the whole family was immersed in the happy

atmosphere. We were busy packing up our luggage. My father was very good at packing; I was with him giving him a helping hand. In this way I learnt the skill, which benefited me a lot later when I was away from home. We set off in time and it became a landmark for both my parents and me. 'Let bygones be bygones!' was the sentence in our heart. We all looked forward to a new start in the city.

With society having been half paralysed for over six years, an enormous number of social problems had been created, and simply left unsolved. One of the most serious was the many millions of young people who had been sent to the countryside and who were desperate to come back to the cities. It began to be possible for some to get back, partly because the state needed labour for the urban economy, which it was now trying to revitalize. But the government also had to put strict limits on the number who could return because it was state policy in China to control the population of the cities: the state took it on itself to guarantee the urban population food, housing and jobs. So competition for the limited 'return tickets' was fierce. And getting into the universities was considered to be one of the best choices.

My parents were university teachers again, but the university still remained a battlefield of ideological struggle. What was different was that university students were no longer graduates from secondary schools who passed the national entrance exam for university but 'workers-peasants-soldiers' students (young people who had been sent to the countryside for years, who worked in the factory as experienced workers and who made contributions to the army) They got into university not through the selective exam but through recommendation from grass-root units, e.g. a commune or a factory. And that was a back door business most of the time, causing a lot trouble in all walks of life. Virtually, personal relationships played a large role in the business: the peasants with production brigade leaders or commune secretaries, the workers with factory bosses, and soldiers with commanders, if the candidates were not petty officials. The 'back door' was the only way in.

As soon as we returned to the city, I was transferred to the secondary school attached to the

university. Year in, year out I witnessed the vast amount of ‘workers-peasants-soldiers’ students entering universities. I admired them so much that I hoped I would get into university as one of them in the near future. With this dream in my heart, I worked really hard for my studies not only in school but also at home. I read extensively at my parents’ study as they had many books in store. This developed into one of my favourite hobbies. However, my mood changed from hope to despair and fury when I learnt that it would be impossible for anyone to get into the university if he or she did not go to labour in the countryside and receive re-education from the peasants for years. I was afraid it would be my fate, as I knew very well that my parents would not let me go to the countryside. Upon graduation I did try very hard to persuade them for permission. But they turned down my request. I had never ever seen in my life that my father lost his temper; but he did so terribly when he heard my plan. I learnt from him that a lot of girl students in the university confessed they were seduced, raped by local leaders; they sacrificed their bodies to pay for the ‘pass’ to go to university or return to the city. He told me strictly that the way into the university was not the way for my achievement. For quite some time I was really ill at home. Going to university had been a lovely dream since my childhood, but now it vanished like soap bubbles in the wind. Where was my future? I would rather shout loudly but I did not. I kept it in my heart.

It had been nearly half a year since my graduation in July 1975 when I got a work permit to work in a radio factory. At that time it was state policy to allow one secondary school graduate out of every household to stay in the city if his or her siblings were under 12. I was one of the luckiest. I started to work in the factory as an apprentice. I worked hard and I worked night shifts though it was very hard for a girl of 17. Then I got promoted as a qualified worker and the wages were doubled. Life and work in the factory were quite happy, but every now and then the question of ‘where was my future’ echoed in my ears. My mind was not peaceful at all. Then I came to my father again with this question. This time he seemed very pleased to discuss the question with me. He inspired me to figure out what were my favourite subjects in secondary school. I liked many subjects except chemistry. Comparatively speaking, I liked liberal arts better than other subjects and I was more gifted. I remember I was always at the top of class in reading and writing, in history

and geography, in political science and in music. And my English teachers especially appreciated me. They both agreed that I had a gift for learning foreign languages and I was often asked to read aloud before the whole class as they said my pronunciation and intonation were clear and good. This memory helped me to make a decision on what I would learn in my leisure time. This self-study plan was practical as well because at that time we had English programmes broadcast over the radio. English was no longer denounced as a capitalist pursuit; people were encouraged to learn English for mastering a weapon in order to fight against American imperialism and Soviet revisionism. What's more for me, the teacher who was in charge of the broadcasting was in the foreign language department in our university. Her husband used to be my father's student. So I could visit her whenever I had something to ask. This marked the very beginning of my way into bilingualism.

1.3 University- Moving from the Monolingual to the Bilingual

The year 1976 was an eventful period (troubled time) to Chinese people. It seems to have been determined by fate that Marshal Zhu De, Premier Zhou and Chairman Mao died successively, together with 242,000 victims in the earthquake at a coal-mining city near Peking called Tangshan in the same year. After Mao's death, there came an immediate arrest of the 'Gang of Four' ordered by Chairman Hua Guo Feng, who was appointed by Mao to succeed Premier Zhou. Hua, an ineffectual nobody, was the representative of important seniors in the Party and the Army, i.e. Mr Deng Xiao Ping and his exponents, Ye Jian Ying, Chen Yun. The removal of the 'Gang of Four' marked the end of the 'Cultural Revolution'. Only then did the majority of Chinese people realize that the Cultural Revolution had been a waste of their lives; the country achieved nothing but suffered a great disaster; youngsters learnt little and became known as 'the lost generation'. It was a great irony that my whole schooling from primary to secondary was idled away in the Cultural Revolution. However, my family's emphasis on the importance of education was crucial in those days. Without this, I would be one of the 'lost generations'.

My spare time during my employment in the radio factory was fully occupied with books and English study. At the same time I worked very hard at my workshop. In spring 1977, I was sent to Shanghai for further study in one of the radio factories as a reward for my hard work. I spent three months there. When I returned home at the beginning of August, I found many of my peers were busy preparing the test for entering university as they learnt that the Central Committee, rehabilitated again Deng Xiao-Ping, who had decided to resume the selective university entrance exam. The exam was going to take place in September of that year. So time was very pressing. Many of my former classmates who were working in the countryside now returned to the city for full time revision. But I had to work full time as usual. What I could do was to seize every second in my spare time; sometimes I was so occupied as to forget food and sleep. Finally, I passed the National Entrance Exam and got enrolled into Xiamen University, one of the key universities in China, and English language and literature was my subject. I can remember the Sunday morning when the postman delivered a special delivery letter. My hands were shaking and my heart beat as I tore open the envelope. When I had read the contents, I jumped up and shouted at the top of my voice. 'I am in!' My parents rushed out, open mouthed in wonder, 'Are you all right? What did you say?' I could not help but burst into tears, they were real tears of happiness. There was a long pause before I could answer my parents, 'I passed the exam and I was selected into the university of my first choice.' It was a great event in my family. So my father went out to buy the best liquors for a celebration, my mother was busy in the kitchen for a family banquet and my brother, at his first year of secondary school, kept asking me about possible life and study in the university. The night before my departure, my father took me for a walk. I could see no words could express his high expectation of me.

The moment I entered the university, the beautiful campus of Xiamen University and its academic atmosphere impressed me. By that time, after the removal of the 'Gang of Four', the political situation in China had changed tremendously. The Central Party Committee transferred its working emphasis from ideological struggles to economic developments. Especially with Deng Xiao Ping in control, political campaigns were to end. Political 'studies' of dogmatism had to be stopped. Party policies had to be based on reality not dogma. And most importantly, it was wrong to follow every word of Mao's to the letter.

This idea was a revolution in China's course, which was very similar to the Renaissance in the West in the 17th century. Every speech by Deng was a blast of fresh air.

So, like many of my classmates from all over the country, I cherished the golden opportunity and was determined to put all my heart into study even at the sacrifice of my weekends. However, life was somewhat monotonous for us. I could not remember a single moment when we forgot the assignments. Study always came first in our life, and it was only study that could set my mind at rest otherwise I would feel pins and needles, especially when I went out with friends or on the way back from the movies. Anyway, I did not want to waste any second in the university. One thing worth mentioning was that, different from the time when I was in the factory, I now acquired many friends. We lived in a big 'family' as brothers and sisters. We shared both happiness and hardship on the way to bilingualism. However, my father was my best friend, always there to help me. I wrote to him every weekend and got his reply once a week. I had his encouragement constantly.

To be frank, students in English department did not have an easy time at all when compared with students from other departments. We had to take pains at every step, as we were not at the best age to learn a foreign language and we were not learning the language we used everyday. Occasionally, we had some English teachers from English-speaking countries, i.e. Australia, Canada, America and Britain, but most of the time we listened to the BBC or VOA (Voice of America) and tape recordings to get the correct pronunciation. However, colloquial English was really a problem as there was no way to practice in day-to-day talk. What we could do was to learn our skills from the textbooks. We had all kinds of textbooks on phonetics, grammar, idiom and proverbs, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, etc. People in the UK may not have much idea of a language laboratory, but we learnt English exactly in a kind of language laboratory where learning was under control, step by step very much in a stimulus and response way, tests taking place all the time. Different from native English learners, we began our learning by reading not speaking. That is what people say about 'silent English'. To improve our spoken English, the common practice was: we learnt dialogues from textbooks, imitated the way of native speakers when they spoke from the recording, then we worked in a pair or in a group until

we could talk in given situations. Morning reading aloud was highly valued, as it was believed to be the best way to memorize vocabulary and expressions, and it helped us to get the correct pronunciation and intonation.

The grammar course was very important for second language learners. It provided us with a short cut to understanding and commanding English language structures, which were so different from the Chinese language. First language learners do not have to learn grammar before they start to talk or to read and write because they are brought up in the language they speak everyday. But it is a different story for us. Even up to now, I still have trouble with English grammar, i.e. present tense, past tense, present perfect tense, past perfect tense, future tense, 'ing' form, regular and irregular verbs. Even though I understand the rules I often make mistakes when I am speaking and writing. Some of the usage, which is not regular, has to be learnt by heart. Thus there is always a delay in the brain. The problem is that we may write grammatically correct English but it might not be 'good' English since we cannot tell which style is better. In the university language laboratory we could not learn in an idiomatic way and it was hard for us to get the language sense. Out of the many courses we learnt, 'listening comprehension', 'reading and writing' and 'translation' were the three courses that were most practical and challenging. In the listening course, we were required to understand every piece of news over BBC and VOA and expected to dictate every sentence word by word. This was really a hard nut to crack. Very often we sat around the recorder for hours just to catch a single preposition used in the sentence when the sound was unclear. Cassette recorders were not available at that time, the big and old recorders we used were not enough for everybody, so we had to work in turn. This would cause a lot of trouble with the sound when we sat for the test because recorders were getting hot after long hours' use. In reading and writing, we were asked to read lots of classic English novels, plays and poems and make comments. Once a week, we were given a variety of topics to write a short essay or story within two periods of time (two hours). The writing practice was normally taught by a 'foreigner'- native English speaker to avoid Chinglish (Chinese English). We benefited a lot from these writing exercises. Finally in the translation class, we were given a collection of out-of-date documents from the United Nations as texts. We were taught to analyse the sentence structure and compare the

difference between English and Chinese. The ultimate goal of this course was to improve further our reading comprehension and equip us with techniques to translate from English to Chinese or Chinese to English. In comparison, colloquial English was our weak point for lack of use. However whenever we met foreigners, we were eager to talk with them, or just exchange a few words. We were curious to see if we could be understood as well. But the chance was rare since China had just reopened its door that had been closed between 1978-1982; there were not many foreigners around. However, one big occasion came when I was in my last year of university study. The memory remains fresh in my mind as if it happened only yesterday. A group of 40 American journalists of FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) visited our university, which made a stir in the campus. Students of foreign language departments were asked to be around as interpreters. We could also ask or answer questions without hesitation, but of course, in a positive way. It was a golden chance for most of us, who had the very first opportunity to speak to foreign visitors. We were overjoyed at the news and found it hard to fall asleep the night before the occasion. This meeting made so much impression on us and its lasting effect was more political than linguistic. From that time we started to worship the western culture and wanted to know more about the political structure in America, and how the country had developed from the first settlers to the present day. Then it became everybody's dream to go abroad for a visit to America or other English speaking countries. Soon it became a fashion among university graduates to sit for the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOFEL) or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) tests in order to find a possible open door. No wonder students from the foreign language department were considered to be spoiled by western values since when people imbibed the language they also imbibed the culture. From 1982 on, as the country speeded up its economic development and the cultural exchanges with the outside world, more and more foreigners came to China either for business or for cultural interest while thousands of young intellectuals went to America, Britain, Canada, Australia etc. for further study. Most of them stayed after the turmoil in Tian An Men Square in 1989.

The four-year study was only a short period, but it gave me a good opportunity to lay down a solid foundation for my future development. I came in as a freshman in English then

graduated as a qualified bachelor in English. It has been 20 years now since 1982 but when I recall my time at University, two factors were crucial for my language learning success.

Firstly, it was highly necessary for us to have an explicitly planned curriculum that took account of our home language in acquiring our second language. During the whole period of my study in the university, we were always told to think in English whenever we talked and wrote, but not to do translations in the mind since this was not the way to learn good English and that would cause a delay in decoding. So the common practice was to learn expressions, sentences and idiomatic usages by heart and then use them in speaking and writing. It was a simple and efficient way. However, in everyday learning, our mother tongue assisted us a lot in acquiring the second language. We used English-Chinese dictionaries all the time, teachers taught classes in both languages and we were trained to be bilingual and expected to be interpreters and translators. In a word, it was recognized that it is impossible for ESL learners to pick up a second language as if it were a first language.

Secondly, intensive interactions between teachers and students were of great importance in our successful teaching and learning. This meant that when teaching took place, motivation from both teachers and students was needed in which rigour, respect and ritual (the 3 R's) (Gregory, 2001) were the three essential factors to achieve expected and unexpected progress. In my English class, for instance, students, though, did not start their second language learning at the right age and they were not taught in the best cultural and linguistic surroundings, they passed various key stages from primary level to A level, and moved from monolingual, emergent bilingual to full bilingual within only four years. This tremendous achievement was due to intensive interactions between both sides.

Without the above two conditions, successful learning would have been impossible for people whose mother tongue was not English and who were not living in English speaking countries. This personal remark has been further testified through my son's experience many years later when he embarked on learning English as his second language in an English school.

1.4 Extending My Research to Bilingual Education

Owing to my past experience of being a university teacher and researcher in China and abroad for many years, in 2000 finally I obtained an opportunity to do my PhD study sponsored by the ORS grant at Goldsmiths College, where I had stayed before as a visiting professor in the department. So lucky I was in most people's eyes, but no one knew that I was then very puzzled what to do with this opportunity. On the one hand it was a golden chance for both my son and me to study in Britain while my husband moved along with his family to live and work in London, but on the other hand I worried about my old parents as they would be very sad and lonely if we, especially my son, left them for Britain. Besides, I was not sure about my son's education in Britain as I knew very well there would be a very difficult time for him before he became fluent in English, and it was hard to say if he could still keep and develop his Chinese by the time he picked up English. I was not confident and optimistic at all. The decision also meant that my husband and I would have to give up our posts in China, my title as 'full Professorship', together with some honorable names would vanish in this new 'journey'.

After a few months hesitation, my husband and I finally reached an agreement on emigration. In September 1999 we arrived in London. During this period, what concerned me most was my son's transfer to a British School if he was going to stay with me or I was to stay with him. And that really bothered me. First I encountered some semantic confusion when I started to find an appropriate school or 'language shelter' for him. I found that the word 'bilingual' used to label children like my son, who did not speak English at home and who had recently entered the country, did not correspond with my understanding and my experience. I knew very well from the beginning that my son was a monolingual child at that moment. He was now in the position of either being led into monolingualism in the second language or being led into full bilingualism. Obviously he was badly in need of extra help to become either of them. Then I became very interested in knowing whether there was anything like 'welcome class', 'reception club' with ethnic minority staff involved, either within or outside school, serving for children of recent arrivals, where the children's first immediate need of English support can be met. But to my great

disappointment, there was no such provision except those local mother tongue classes organized by communities on Sundays or Saturdays. However, these classes did not teach English. They taught mother tongue just for the purpose of cultural maintenance. Out of this disappointment and anxiety, I was getting more and more concerned with 'educational provision for bilingual pupils' with the way monolingual institutions defined and responded to what they saw as the 'needs' of bilingual pupils. As a former ESL student, I understood those children from within and I knew how difficult it would be when they first started and how their disadvantage that might impact on their personality and self-image if they were ignored in mainstream classes. To undertake a study on behalf of these children would be my future interest.

Another factor that helped to bring about my interest in this issue was due to my years of research on curriculum studies in cross-cultural perspectives. From what I previously studied, I found there were several educational paradoxes or incompatibilities, such as 'excellence' versus 'popularization', 'centralization' versus 'decentralization', 'collectivism' versus 'individualism', and 'uniformity' versus 'diversity' etc. Of these, 'equality of opportunities' was the key concept underlying each of the above. And different interpretations of this concept led to different theories and practices in the East and West. What was the English interpretation? What happened to British schools, especially since the Educational Reform Act 1988? Did the National Curriculum really ensure 'equality of opportunities' and individual attainment by providing the same broad and balanced range of subjects studies for all children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and different learning competence? These questions had been puzzling me for a long time. Therefore, for my study, I set out to investigate the field of bilingualism, language, culture and the curriculum in British schools.

1.5. The Structure of the Thesis

My study sets out to investigate how beneficial it is for children aged 8-11 with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to be plunged into mainstream classrooms upon their

recent arrival or in other words, what equal opportunities really mean for them when they have just entered British schools and are learning in a language they cannot yet speak as late as KS2 mid-phase; how 'equal' is the same curriculum for them and how far does the provision in the present curriculum reflect generally accepted principles for successful second language learning. The thesis is based on the study of Chinese emergent bilingual children in English mainstream classrooms. It consists of eight chapters, which follow.

Chapter one provides an autobiographical description of my way into the research, telling much about my unique life story from the early childhood till the present commitment in the field of bilingualism. It strongly justifies my marginal position as both an insider and outsider in this ethnographic research, and it also highlights what enabled my own learning as an emergent bilingual in difficult circumstances. Finally the structure of the thesis is sketched, which outlines the theme of each chapter and its relations within the framework.

Chapter two highlights three themes - isolation, misunderstandings and frustration through which I aim to begin my investigation of problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class. Participants in the investigation include three children (aged 8-11) of newly arrived families and a group of 13-14 year old Chinese students who have lived in Britain for at least 5 years. Through an ethnographic approach, I want to formulate a number of key questions that will be the starting point for the main study.

In order to investigate the interrelated questions, chapter three provides a historical literature review by examining the background of education for emergent bilingual children in the UK. In this chapter, I begin by presenting a brief historical overview of the traditional values of English School Education so as to give a general idea of what accounts for 'British Heritage', then I review the literature concerning the British government's school policy on how to respond to individual differences, particularly to a new kind of 'difference' as a result of immigration. My aim, therefore, is to highlight the different trends in educational provision for immigrant children since 1960s.

Chapter four discusses and justifies the distinct forms of this study in terms of the methodology. The discussion begins with an examination of general features of the research approach within which this study has its origin, and then proceeds to justify details about the particular methods employed for data collection and, the specific approach taken for analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Having investigated the problematic nature of the inclusion in the mainstream class, chapter five goes on to explore what are the key features of a supportive classroom, what might be considered as good practice in developing support for emergent bilingual children in the context of the mainstream provision. The study begins with a literature review of recent research on second language acquisition, and then goes on to highlight some examples of EAL programmes in mainstream schools. By illustrating the special learning process of EAL, I want to convey the message of what is the principle of inclusion, where some positive withdrawals within the mainstream context are applicable.

Chapter six is an investigation into the role of peer interaction inside and outside the classroom in which I propose a new point of view on the role of bilingual peer support in second language learning. The literature review covers three main areas of research: bilingual teaching, literacy and peers interaction. Evidence collected from field notes, interviews and participant observation, particularly in the form of video-recordings may have much to teach us about what may contribute to the progress of emergent bilinguals in the mainstream class, and what may account for bilingual exchange teaching between peers. The findings also may contribute new theoretical insights into the nature of 'scaffolding' between bilingual peers.

Chapter seven begins by reviewing existing literature on home background and minority expectations so as to give a general picture of minority parents' involvement in their children's school education, and then goes on to identify Chinese parents' role in the children's learning process through an ethnographic approach to studying parents' attitude to their children's education, parents' expectations of English schools and teachers, and parent's full support at home. Parents' educational background is taken into account so as

to support the argument that an active involvement often depends on parents' knowledge of the education system.

Finally in chapter eight, I summarise the main findings of the study and discuss what might be the root of the problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class; what 'equality of opportunity' means to emergent bilingual children; and what might have contributed to the linguistic and cultural success of bilingual children. Thus I conclude it is the loss of individualism that promotes problems in the mainstreaming of educational provision. I argue, through an ethnographic approach to studying EAL programmes in schools, bilingual peer interaction and parental support, that the mainstreaming of provision for children of recent arrivals does not necessarily mean equal opportunities; the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involved some withdrawal EAL support out of the mainstream classroom; emergent bilingual children need to be taught step by step, and an exaggeration of their advantages diverts attention from the children's need for extra help in English; the potential cognitive and linguistic advantages of bilingual learners can only be developed through an effective learning environment. Whether or not bilinguality is a positive asset as we hope, in theory, depends on how those emergent bilinguals are treated in the mainstream class or in other words, recognition of the children's 'disadvantage' could lead to a more positive recognition of their 'advantage' in school. To conclude, I put forward some suggestions on what I consider to be good practice for developing and supporting emergent bilingual children.

Chapter 2 Emergent Bilingual Children in the Mainstream Class

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I begin my investigation on emergent bilingual children aged 8-11, who entered English mainstream schools a short time ago and are now learning in English at KS2 mid-phase. For clarity, when I use the term 'emergent bilingual children', I am describing children who have recently entered new schools and are learning in a language they cannot yet speak. In particular, I want to identify research questions which are relevant to the Chinese community.

This chapter highlights three themes - isolation, misunderstandings and frustration through which I aim to begin my investigations of the problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class. I begin by setting different contexts for my research questions, where data was collected through formal or informal interviews and participant observation. My role as a language teacher in the London Mandarin School gave me easy access to both community schools and local English Schools. This pilot study raises questions that will be the starting point for the main study.

2.2 Backgrounds and Settings

The study is taking place in different contexts, between two groups of children - older children in the London Mandarin School and younger children of recent arrivals in English schools; I introduce the children and begin to analyse my data presented. The children's family backgrounds are also considered as a background to highlight my research questions.



2.2.1 Older Children and the London Mandarin School

The London Mandarin School is a Sunday school, set up 5 years ago. It is one of the few Mandarin speaking schools in London, with nearly a hundred students and ten teachers and staff. There are six classes from year one to GCSE level. Being independent of any LEA in London, there is no way to have any funding from local resources. Due to the lack of funding, the school site changes all the time. It was at first housed in one of the churches in Soho, then moved to the London Business School in Fulham, and is now settled in Babage Primary School in the area of Old Street. However, the school is famous for its excellent education and strong teaching staff. Most of these are parents themselves. Those Mainland Chinese first came to the UK as students and scholars with the open-door policy of the late 1970s. Children and spouses began arriving as dependents from 1980s. Many who came as students in the 1980s now find themselves as parents in the 1990s. Most Mainland Chinese graduated from universities, especially the men, many of whom have completed doctoral studies. They are very keen for their children's education in two languages and cultures, but living on small incomes, they could not afford to pay the teachers, therefore they offered to become volunteer teachers. In order to investigate the features of successful bilingualism and biculturalism, I embarked on teaching in the GCSE Chinese class.

Eight students in my class are aged 13-15. They all have been studying in English secondary schools for many years. All of them were born in China but came to the UK when they were approximately 7-9 years old. Basically they speak Chinese at home, and could also read and write some Chinese before they moved to the UK with their parents. Since they have moved to Britain, they have both continued their literacy development in Chinese and pursued the acquisition of the English language and academic success. All are doing well. It has been proved they are doing very well in their English schools. However when asked to recall their early days in English mainstream classrooms, all had tearful stories. What they have told me either in writing or speaking on video camera, or even chatting freely, has begun to inform my thinking on the question of 'educational provision for emergent bilingual children' and 'equalities of opportunities'.

2.2.2 Two Families of Recent Arrivals

The two families who have arrived recently in the UK come from very different backgrounds.

The Family from Mainland China

The Mandarin speaking family is from Mainland China. The parents are university graduates although their spoken English is not very fluent.

Shan and her family

In the Winter of 2000, Shan, their only daughter of 10, came with her father to join her mother, Ms Wei, who is doing an MA in the preservation of cultural relics at the University of London. They are housed in one of the flats on the top floor of an old building in the Islington area. Shan goes to Gillespie School, just 15 minutes walk from where they are living. Our first meeting was very successful indeed and when they knew my research proposal, they, to my great joy, agree to take part in all my study. Since then my relationship with the family has been established.

Shan and her school

Gillespie School is a church primary school situated near Arsenal tube station in the Islington area. There are nearly 160 children and six mainstream classes, ranging from year one to year six. Currently there are 5 Chinese children in the school, two of them are in year 5, and the rest are in year two and year one. They were all born and have been brought up in the UK. Only Shan has come here recently. She was plunged into the year six classroom immediately she entered the school. Mr Jake, the head teacher, accepted my request of coming to observe and help her with her lessons in her mother tongue, and Miss Luise, the secretary arranged dates for my visit to the class. I was first introduced to Mrs White, the class teacher of year 6, then to Miss Caroline, the class teacher in year 3, and

lastly to Mrs Paker, the learning support teacher. Mrs White told me that it was an agreement between Shan's parents and the school that Shan joined the year three class for her English, stayed with the year 5 class for her Maths but remained in her own class the rest of time.

As far as I have observed, life in the mainstream class, where Shan stays for most of her learning, is organised around specific targets set up in the National Curriculum. Everyone in the class is given the same instruction and does the same class work, which, most of the time, would be teamwork. Shan is no exception. At present she does not have the English language skills to understand or engage in any of the class activities. She sits silently alone or outside the group discussions. I have participated in most of her classes but concentrated more on her English lessons. When I was with her in the year three classroom, I usually sat beside her and helped her with pronunciation, words and expressions, and some basic grammar rules. When in her other classes, I did translation for her and explained in Chinese what she could not understand. Classmates were friendly to her but they did not understand her, teachers paid little attention to her since she was being nice and quiet, and they had no idea how to deal with Shan's language need. For that reason, I have been mostly wanted by the school and got more and more involved in the situation. My identity as a bilingual helper has allowed me to share a number of aspects with Shan that her teachers and parents could not.

The Family from Hong Kong

The Cantonese speaking family is from Hong Kong. The parents, like the majority of new immigrants from Hong Kong, are working in the kitchen of a restaurant in China town. They have had little education and are totally illiterate in English.

Two sisters and their family

Mr Li, the father, came to Britain about two years ago, in 1998. His wife and his two daughters have joined him recently. They rent a small room in 'Nine Dragon Building' in

China Town in the West End, living a very modest life. Both parents work in the restaurant, with the father working from 11:30am to 12:30 after midnight, the mother working from 6:00pm to 3:00 am in the morning. The two daughters, one 8 years old, the other 11 years old, both go to the same primary school in the Soho area. Obviously the elder sister takes care of the younger one when father and mother are both away at work. Our first meeting was in a restaurant on Wednesday when both Mr and Mrs Li were off work (only one day off per week). Eating out in a restaurant is one of the most common relaxation for Chinese workers here. Soon after we introduced each other, we chatted and chatted over cups of tea. When they knew who I was and what I was doing, they seemed to be more interested in me, and I think they are only too eager to have me as a helper. I did not stay long with them that day but it turned out to be a successful occasion. We exchanged telephone numbers, and I could feel that we were all looking forward to our next meeting.

Two sisters and their school

Soho School is a parish school situated around the area of Soho open market, accommodated in a four-story high old Victorian building. I remember that I have made some effort to find the way to the school as there are lots of twists and turns in the area. The entrance is in the front yard, where children play games after class or have PE lessons. There are nearly two hundred children in seven classes from reception to year six. Mr David is the head teacher; he told me there were two Chinese children in year four, some more in year three and year two. Different from Kapo and Wington, they were all born and brought up locally. Mrs Judith is the deputy head. She worked out some possible times for my visit and introduced me to Miss Francis, the year six teacher, Mrs Crista, the language support teacher, who works part time in the school, and to Mrs Hall, the year one class teacher. Mrs Judith, apart from her administrative duty, is the year four class teacher. I had the impression that I was welcome and expected, and I would have frequent visits here during the following weeks and months. In fact I was very happy to be expected since it meant that I could easily carry out participant observation.

According to her age, Wington, the younger sister was placed in year four while Kapo, the

elder sister, in year 6. They are all in the mainstream class. However, as Mrs Judith told me, Wington was sent to the year one classroom for literacy lessons every morning because she was somewhat at a loss as to what to do in her own class. Kapo was said to be all right in her class, but twice a week she stayed with Mrs Crista in a group for a period of extra English tuition. Nevertheless, I could see from Kapo's eye that she would like me to come and sit beside her helping with her lessons. In order to live up to both the school's and the children's expectation, I tried my best to split my time between both of their classes as often as possible. In their class I always helped them with their lessons in their home language, translating and explaining what they could not understand. Occasionally I also followed Wington to her year one language class, where she also asked for my translations. I had a feeling that all the class teachers were very pleased with these two sisters' presence so long as they were not trouble-makers, and they were quiet; and indeed they were nice and willing to copy things from the board or do some pictures work on their own. Superficially the two sisters were never alone in the class but they were not as included as they should have been because they had problems in communicating with both teachers and classmates verbally.

2.3. Three Themes to Be Investigated

In order to investigate what I shall argue to be the paradoxical nature of the teachers' beliefs and problematic site of inclusion in the mainstream classroom, I highlight three themes - isolation, misunderstandings and frustration as patterns that have emerged from both the older students and younger children of new arrivals so far, and hope my analysis will help me to pose new, more focused questions. My data consists not only of formal and informal interviews with parents, children and teachers but also children's diaries, memories and my field notes of participant observation.

2.3.1. Isolation from the Class

Isolation is a very common feeling shared in both the older children's memories and the younger children of recent arrivals. They were unanimous in stressing their feelings of loneliness by sharing with me their memories and diaries.

The older children's memories of isolation in their early days in English mainstream classes are indicated in their writings below (see Appendix I)

In the first 8 weeks after coming to London, I went to the local primary school where together with several other students, I had a learning support teacher. I spent most of my time with her. However, I remember one of the boys among us who had learning disabilities was always winding up the teacher. Once, he stole my jacket, which I only discovered after school. I had a hard time trying to communicate with the teachers and tell them what had happened... After two months, my family and I moved to where we presently live - Islington. I changed schools and started attending the Ring Cross Primary School, which has since been shut down by OFSTED inspectors due to a poor education system in the infant department. At first, I was bullied at school by some of the older boys. They pushed me around and saw me as an easy target because I had no way to defend myself. I was physically weaker and my language skills were much poorer (Joy-Chen, aged six, a passage from 'Early Days').

A little girl of seven stood in the school playground. The other kids were playing and laughing around her but she stood there, lost in thought, in a world of her own... That was I when I first came to England from China. . Coming to join my parents here in England was, and still is the biggest turning point in my life. Even now I cannot forget the experiences that faced me in this new country and culture that is so different from the Chinese traditions I was brought up in.... In England, life was hard, as I did not understand a word of English. Not knowing English, I had no way of communicating with the rest of my classmates. Breaks from lessons at school would be a time for daydream, a time to reflect and a time to imagine. ...Being in a class full of strangers to whom I could not communicate with made me feel like an alien, as if I did not belong. . I felt lonely; as I did not understand what my classmates were saying or doing leaving me very left out. I could only stand there and think of China, a distant land that I missed very much. ...In fact, the school was quite helpless at giving me extra support with the English language as there was no way the teacher could communicate with me. Learning English was all up to me... However, to help me, I was put into year one class for a week so I could settle and moved up soon after... (Xi-Lin, aged seven, a passage from 'Learning English').

My first year in England was extremely difficult, as there was a language barrier between the other people and me. I was in the mainstream class and I found it very hard to communicate with teachers and other kids. If I wanted to do something, I had to draw a picture or mimick actions to make myself understood. To be honest, I did not learn very much in school for the first year. Normally I copied the work of others during the day and after school my father explained the work to me in Chinese. My English has actually improved much since my second year in England with the constant help of my father. He is the one who had been most influential to me and he played a great part in getting me into a grammar school. Without him I even couldn't have survived in English (from Yueyang Hou's 'My Bygone Days')

The younger children's diaries reflect exactly the same feeling as shown below (a translation from Chinese - see Appendix II):

老师叫我以后每星期三、四、五都到三年级班上上英语课。今天是我的第一堂课。只见小同学们个个看着我，目瞪口呆。他们一定纳闷：这个姐姐为什么来我们班？她这么高，这么大，该不会是我们班新来的同学吧？不知怎么搞的，还没等凯瑟琳老师介绍，我的脸一下就红了。课开始，我只好在他们旁边坐下，尴尬极了！凯瑟琳老师讲课很风趣，小朋友非常开心，也很认真。可我却觉得没意思，也听不懂，唯一可做的就是抄黑板上面的英文单词：fable, myth, moral traditional, character, introduction, animal, powerful...这些都是生词。凯瑟琳老师的课讲完，帕克老师接着上。帕克老师是1-3年级的学习辅导老师，她给小朋友们讲语法，比如：名词复数的词尾加's'或'es'。这些规则我已经会了，因为我在家学过。老实说，我对这些重复练习已经厌烦了。尽管如此，我还是喜欢两位老师，她们总是鼓励我，让我放下思想包袱(宋珊(十一岁)日记 2001年3月7日星期三)。

I was told to attend the year 3 class for the literacy hour on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings every week. This is my first lesson in this class. When I first walked in the classroom, the children all stared at me with open mouths. They must have some strange thought in their mind 'Why is she here in our class? She is big and tall, is she going to do something special for us'. I was very embarrassed that few minutes before Mrs Caroline, the class teacher, introduced me to the class. ... the lesson began, I was sitting among those babies very uncomfortable. When Caroline started talking to the children, they were all very happy and attentive. But I didn't feel that interested, as I couldn't understand what she was talking about. I could only copy down some words and expressions on the board: fable, myth, moral, traditional, introduction, character, animal, powerfull... They were all new to me. When Mrs Caroline finished, Mrs Parker came in. She is a learning support teacher in key stage one. She was teaching some grammar to the whole class. Something like plurals and single form, adding 's', 'es' 'ies' to nouns with specific endings. That is easy to me, for I have learnt some rules at home. To be frank, I was getting bored with this kind of pattern drills. However, I like Mrs

Caroline and Mrs Parker, for they always encourage me and make me feel less embarrassed. (Wednesday, 7th March 2001- a passage in the diary of Shan, aged 11).

今天下午是历史课，白老师讲英国历史人物亨利八世。全班同学都象平常一样，围坐地毯上。老师说话生动活泼，面部表情丰富。只见她时而写板书，时而提问。班上同学个个积极举手发言，就是我例外。当白老师讲到精彩处，大家都开怀大笑，我也跟着笑，因为我不想让他们看出来我听不懂。我知道，这样做是自我保护，其实我心里很难过。我不知道什么时候才能成为他们中的一员。好在每次课后，我都可以向白老师要些材料，让我爸晚上在家帮助我补习(宋珊(十一岁)日记 2001年3月22日星期四)。

This afternoon in history lesson, Mrs White was talking about Henry VIII. We children were sitting around her on the carpet as usual. She was talking with a rich expression on her face. Sometimes she wrote down a few words on the board, sometimes she raised some questions for us to answer. Many of my classmates, except me, put up their hands, eagerly to put forward their opinions. When Mrs White said something very interesting, the whole class burst out laughing, I just followed suit without knowing what they are laughing about and why I want to do the same. Maybe this was to cover up my ignorance by instinct. Actually I felt sad at heart. I wonder when I can be real part of the class. After each lesson I would usually ask Mrs White for materials so that my father can help me out at home. (Afternoon, Thursday, 22nd March 2001 - a passage in the diary of Shan, aged 11).

我想有一個英文名字，但我不知道給自己取什麼名字好。我喜歡湓 FRANCES 老師的名字。她的名字跟她的人，一樣漂亮。可是我不能叫這個名字，因為我是中國人，有著東方人的臉。如果名叫 SOPHIA，怎麼樣？我爸媽一定會覺得怪怪的。那麼叫 KEPPLE 呢？也許這個名字與我的中文名字‘家寶’的潛音，但 KEPPLE 恐怕不是女孩的名。總之，我希望能想出個好的英文名字來，因為我不想別人老把我當外國人，也不想讓同學拿名字開玩笑(李家寶(十一歲)日記 2001年4月3日星期二)。

I like to have an English name but I have no idea what I shall name myself. I like my class teacher Francis, she is beautiful but I can not be called Francis as I am a Chinese girl with very different appearance. What if I am named as Sophia? It may sound strange to my parents. What about Keppel? It sounds similar to my Chinese name Kapo though, it is not a girl's name, I am afraid. Anyway I wish I could think of a good English name for myself because I don't want people to see me as a foreigner and make fun of my Chinese name (Tuesday, 3rd April 20001- a paragraph of the diary of Kapo, aged 11).

我覺得自己還不是班上的一分子。老師對我很不錯，因為我是外國人，也是客人。最近全班同學都在忙著準備考試(SATs)而我不參加，我是班上唯一不用考試的學生。因為老師說，有文件規定，像我這樣來英國不到兩年的學生，不要參加這個考試。我為此高興，覺得幸運，但同時又不知道去哪求助，以便盡早趕上班上同學，成為他們中的一個……(李家寶(十一歲)日記2001年5月11日星期一)。

I don't think I am part of the class. Teachers are nice to me just because I am a foreigner, a guest. Recently, the whole class is very busy with SATs' revision, but I am not. I am the only one who doesn't have to sit for the test because I haven't been in Britain long enough to take this test. I am glad to be lucky and special, but at the same time I wonder where I may get some extra help in my English so that I can catch up with my classmates. I want to be one of them... (Monday 11th May 2001- a passage from the diary of Kapo, aged 11).

2.3.2 Misunderstandings between teachers, parents and children

Interestingly, coupled with the feeling of isolation is that of desperation to get extra help with their English. In other words, neither child expected to learn simply through being in the class but wanted actively to promote their own learning. Although the children feel very left out and disadvantaged in their mainstream class, this appears to be understood by neither teachers nor parents. There seem to be strikingly different expectations by teachers and parents. What is being neglected is the children's urgent need for English support and how this need can best be met. As a result there exists a vicious circle of misunderstandings: parents / teachers, children / teachers, children / parents. My data is drawn from the children's writing and talk, and from interviews with parents and teachers.

Parents / Teachers

Parents' talk

Both sets of parents came to Britain expecting to improve the education and life chances of their children. They believe that English-medium education will lead to social and economic advancement and they fantasise over the high aspirations of English teachers for their pupils. The following comments made by both sets of parents through informal

interviews with them reflect this fantasy in the perception of British education system (see Appendix IV)

Extract one: Setting – Sunday, 11 / 03 / 2001, meeting with the Hong Kong parents at their home

- 1 Chen: *Dingai nidei guozhuo Yingguo, Hong Kong ng mai haohao mye?* / Why does the family want to move to the UK since Hong Kong is quite a good place?
- 2 Mum: *Hong Kong mo mieye hao quzuo ren duo. Yiga hao nan wen dao gong.* / Well, Hong Kong is overcrowded; there are too many people and limited job opportunities for adult.
- 3 Chen: *Hong Kong gaoyu du ng cuo.* / But the education in Hong Kong is also quite advanced.
- 4 Mum: *Danhai, tai ginjiong, yali tai da, gongfo tai duo, sailao zai ting ng xun.* / But schools put too much pressure on children, too much homework, too much for kids.
- 5 Chen: *Kudei dude hao ng hao?* / How about your daughters' performance?
- 6 Mum: *OK du hai ok, buguo qidi du yao mafan.* / Generally speaking, they are ok, but I think they would have problems sooner or later.
- 7 Chen: *Dingkai?* / Why ?
- 8 Mum: *Yingwei hao duo wuki du hai qiang ciga laoci, fanhou jihao dabien gao kudei zainu, buguo wodei ngda* / Because many households have to employ a private tutor for extra tuition after school but we could not make it.
- 9 Chen: *Hai ng hai bu za?* /What for, is it for making up a missed lesson?
- 10 Mum: *Ng hai, nidi hai dabie gao cu lai de, du hai bang ju kudei zainu shang daihou.* / Not really, it is kind of extra teaching and learning, lessons are tailored to the child's needs of going to university.
- 11 Chen: *Nidei ng bei kudei liang fen shang daihou mye?* / Don't you want your daughters to go to university?
- 12 Mum: *Xiong hai Xiong la, danhai mo banfa, wodei jigi mo mieye menfa, yao mo qian, din yao banfa?* / Of course we wish they could go to university, but we are exactly those parents who are illiterate and who cannot afford this extra tuition.
- 13 Chen: *Nidei hai ng hai himan kudei zai liduo du daihou?* / Do you expect them to go to university here in Britain?
- 14 Mum: *Danhai la. Wodei sai genxi mo tiugian du duo di xu, yiga du wen ng dao hao gongzuo.* / Yes, of course. When we were a child, we did not study much. Now we cannot find a good job.
- 15 Chen: *Mieye hai hao gong?* / What do you mean by a good job?
- 16 Mum: *Danhai xiezi lao gogo gongzuo, cigan duan, chuliang gao gou zhong luo.* / Well, some jobs in the office, work less hours but get more paid. In Hong Kong those office jobs either in the company or in the civil service are normally filled by university graduates. (she sighed in despair and continued) *Yingwei wodei duxu xiu, sanghuo fanging du hao nan*

gaoding luo, dang hai wodei du himan kudei hao duo guo wodei luo. / Life is hard on us because we do not have a good education, but we want our children to be better off than us.

17 Chen: *Nidei dui Yingguo yiu mieye liugai?* / How much do you know about Britain?

18 Mum: *Ren bi Hong Kong xiu luo, gihui duo di, Yingguo jian hao di luo.* /

Yes, Britain has less population, more opportunities, and money is better valued.

19 Chen: *Yingguo houhao ding yong?* / What about English schools?

20 Mum: *Yinggai houhao hao guo Hong Kong, ying wei Hong Kong du hai hou Yingguo, hai ma?!*

I think English schools should be better than Hong Kong's as Hong Kong was following Britain during those years, wasn't it?

21 Chen: *Hao duo Hong Kong ren bei jigi zainu lai Yingguo duxu, hai ma?* / Lots of Hong Kong people have sent their children over here to study in English schools, why?

22 Mum: *Mocuo, yuguo nidei zainu xiong du daihou, ku yiding yao duxu hao hao, yingwei hao duo ren tong ni zan ma, zongyao hao duo ren hua: Yingguo gaoyu mo bei sailouzai gandaidi yali, xiu ren tong ni zan, yao ng sai bei jian, mie gei hao luo!!* / Yes, in Hong Kong, a child has to demonstrate an outstanding performance in all the examinations at various stages of schooling in order to enter a university, besides people in Hong Kong all say: British education is better valued and less competitive, and parents pay almost nothing for schooling.

23 Chen: *Ni lao gong hai ng hai tong ni yi yong lan fa?* / Does your husband have the same idea as you?

24 Mum: *Hai, Kyu hua, gan duo yao jian lao, du hai bei jigi zaimu guo zuo lituo duxu, sai ji duo jian du da, wo dei yiga yao tiugian lai lituo dagong, danhai bei kudei lai luo.* / Yes, my husband said that many rich people were mad about sending their children to British A level colleges or universities even at very high expenses. Now that he was employed here, of course we should make best use of the opportunity. ...

25 Chen: *Kydei sailouzi yao meiyee gango?* / How do the kids feel about this change?

26 Mum: *Kydei haokaixiang, biyao yao xinxiang gan luo* / They are happy as everything is new and interesting to them

27 Chen: *Zhong ng zhong yi niduo houhao?* / Do they like their school?

28 Mum: *Yinggai dou zhongyi luo. Kydei hua laoci dui kydei hao hao, momeiye pih, ng qi Hong Kong laoci.* / I think they are quite happy about the school. Kapo (elder daughter) told me teachers were nice and patient, not like teachers in Hong Kong, they were shouting all the time.

29 Chen: *Kydei houhao gonghuo ding yang? Kydei ming ng ming laoci gong mieye?* / How about their school work? Do they understand the teacher?

30 Mum: *Wo ng hai gi mingba kydei houhao de ci, danhai wo ji kydei yeye fan lai mo mieye gong fu zuo.* / I don't know much what is going on in school but I can see they normally don't have homework after school.

31 Chen: *Ni ng danxiang kydei mo xu du mie?* / Don't you worry anything because the kids are too relaxed?

32 Mum: *Wo du mo land ao lidi ye, wo guede houhao du hui fuza kydei, wo du ng ci.* / Well... I haven't thought about this yet. I guess the school has its method, I know nothing myself.

...

Extract two: Setting – Saturday, 03 / 03 / 2001, meeting at Shan's home

- 1 Chen: *Shi shenme yuanyin rang nimen jue ding dai Shan lai Yingguo?* / What has made you bring Shan here in Britain?
- 2 Mum: *Women cong shu ben li he dian shi shang dezhi, Yingguo jiao yu shi hen yixiu de, tebie zhuzhong gebieha jiaoxu, bing yici wei jian chang de* / We have learnt from books and TV that British education system is excellent, especially famous for its individualised teaching.
- 3 Chen: *Shixian nimen zhi bu zhidao Yingguo jiao shi shi zenme yang de?* / Did you have any idea about school teachers before you came over here?
- 4 Dad: *Women tingshuo Yingguo de laoshi shuiping hen gao. Jiulian xiaoxue lao shi ye shi daxue biye de* / We heard that English teachers are of high qualities, even primary teachers have a university degree.
- 5 Chen: *Name, Ni jue de zhongguo xiao xue laoshi zenyang?* / What do you think of primary teachers in China?
- 6 Mum: *Tamen hen fu ze keshi tamen de xueli zhishi Zhong zhuan, xiang dan yu zheli de di liu xueji.* / They are very responsible but most of them have only graduated from 2-year teachers college, equivalent to graduates from six form colleges in Britain.
- 7 Dad: *Danshi ta bu tong yu Yingguo de zhidu, dui ma?* / But it is a system different from the British one, isn't it?
- 8 Chen: *Dui, Zhongguo de jiaoshi peixun shi yi zhong fengui jieyou, 1949 nian xuexi sulian de moshi.* / Yes, the teacher training system in China can be understood as a multiple-tier structure, which has been modified on the lines of the former Soviet model since 1949.
- 9 Mum: *Shi, zenme yang de?* / what does it look like?
- 10 Chen: *Zai zhe zhong zhidu li, you si zhong jiben de jigou fuze peixun shizi.* / Within this structure, there are four main establishments responsible for all levels of teacher training, for instance...
- 11 Dad: *Wo zhidao you san nian zhi de shifan xueyuan, bi ye sheng fen pai qu na, haiyou liang nian zhi de shi fan xue xiao you shenme jubie?* / I know there is a school called 3-year teachers college, where will these graduates be assigned? And there is another one called 2- year normal school, what is different?
- 12 Chen: *Biru, liang nian zhi de youshi shi peiyang you er yuan laoshi de, liang nian zhi de shifan xuexiao shi peiyang xiao xue laoshi de, san nian zhi de shifan xueyuan ze peiyang chuzhong laoshide, er si nian zhi de daxue shi pei yang gaozhong laoshi.* / For instance, 2- year special schools for the training of Kindergarten teachers; 2-year educational colleges for training primary school teachers;

3-year teachers colleges for the training of teachers in lower secondary schools; and 4-year teachers universities responsible for training teachers working in upper secondary schools.

- 13 Dad: *Name, zheli de shizi shuiping hai shi yao gao dian* / In comparison, the English teachers's level is really higher.
- 14 Mum: *Wo tingshuo, tamen dou you hen sheng de ertong xinlixue he jiaoyuxue zhishi.* / I hear they all have profound knowledge of child psychology and pedagogy.
- 15 Dad: *Ling yi ge yiyue tiaojian shi, zheli de banji ren shu shao.* / Another advantage here is the size of each class, there are much fewer children in a class.
- 16 Mum: *Zhongguo banji ren shu tai duo le, yi ge ban you 50 ren, yige ban zhu ren he jige keren lao shi.* / China has got a wrong size of a class, as big as over 50 pupils in a class, with one tutor and several subject teachers.
- 17 Dad: *Zhe yang da de banji genben bu keneng zhuyi xuesheng de ge bie chayi.* / This makes it impossible for teachers to take care of every individual differences.
- 18 Mum: *Women xiwan Shan neng deli yu zheli de xuexiao.* / We hope Shan will benefit from her English school here.
- 19 Dad: *Wo zuichu de xiang fa shi, jiran yingyu shi shijie yu, women yi zhi sheng shou ji hai, name, wei shenme bu rang Shan you yi ge zai bentu xuexi yingyu de jihui?* / My primary thought is that since English is a global language, and we suffer a lot from being poor in the language, why not let Shan have an opportunity to learn English in the native country?
- 20 Mum: *Zhishao ta keyi xuexi dao hao de yingyu, jianglai hui qu neng shuo yi kou hao ying wen, bi shenme dou qiang.* / At least, she will learn good English here, and return someday with a good command of fluent English, nothing could be better.
- 21 Chen: *You daoli, xian zai hen duo nian qing ren lai guo wai xue yingyu yingwei zhongguo yao yu shijie jiegui.* / You are right, nowadays lots of youngsters are sent abroad learning English as China is becoming a part of the world.
- 22 Chen: *Nimen da sun zai Yingguo dai duo jiu?* / How long are you going to stay in this country?
- 23 Mum: *Kan kan Shan xuexi Yingwen de Qingkuan zai ding.* / It depends on how well Shan learns English.
- 24 Chen: *Nimen ziji de Gongzuo jian jing ruhe?* / How about your job possibility?
- 25 Dad: *Dagai mei wenti ru guo women xiang lu xia lai.* / We don't think there is a problem if we would like to stay on.
- 26 Mum: *Ke tou teng de shi women wufa zuo chu jue ding.* / But the problem is we just cannot make a decision.
- 27 Dad: *Kanlai Shan yao xiang xue hao Yingwen kongpa bu name rongyi.* / It is really not easy for Shan. She has lots of difficulties in the class.
- 28 Chen: *Na laoshi shuo shenme?* / How did her teacher say?
- 29 Mum: *Laoshi ye mei shuo shenme, zhishi shuo mei guanxi, xiaohai xue yuyan hen kuai.* / She didn't say anything really, but always asks me not to worry as kids would pick up language quickly.

30 Chen: *Shan shuo shenme?* / Did Shan say anything about it

31 Dad: *Shan shuo laoshi dui ta hen hao, buguo mei shuo shenme hua.* / Shan said the teacher was very nice to her but did not talk much to her.

...

What we can see from the above is the belief shared by both sets of parents, either well educated or less educated, that British education is individualized, balanced and better valued. Teachers are well trained; therefore children who are educated through English - medium will have better prospects in the city or abroad. The difference is that the parents from the Mainland China are keener to find out the reality in their daughter's school while the parents from Hong Kong trust that their daughters' education and prospects are secured once upon they entered the UK.

Excerpts from teachers

However, paradoxically, the parents' educational values and expectation do not accord with the reality in the children's English classrooms. The teachers in Shan and the two sisters' schools both hold low expectations of the capabilities of children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They appear to have no awareness of linguistic differences and training for these differences. The following translation of the dialogues and diaries reflect this paradox (see Appendix V).

Extract three: Setting - Morning, 22 /05 / 2001, the Year 6 classroom in Gillespie School

1 Chen: *Would you mind saying something about Shan before the camera?*

2 White: *No, I am pleased. Since Shan joined us, she has developed a lot of language skills because when she first arrived she was not able to speak and understand English, but now she can understand lots of instructions, can talk to children quite a lot ... a lot more communication.*

3 Chen: *Shan sometimes goes to other class for her lesson, doesn't she?*

4 White: *Yes, she has been going to a younger class for literacy lessons and she is getting along very well. She has been doing lots of writing and she has been able to write a lot in English.*

5 Chen: *She told me she was in Year 5 class for quite a while, why?*

6 White: *Yes, she didn't do the SATs test as the rest of the class did because she hasn't been in England for two years. Children have to do the test when they follow the National Curriculum for two*

years and English language for two years. So Shan didn't do it because she hasn't fitted that criterion. ... I believe she could do very well in Maths for she is in the higher Maths group and it is a matter of time, as soon as she's got used to English writing and speaking, she will be doing very well. She's learnt a lot quicker than expected.

7 Chen: *Do you think at the beginning you found it very difficult to communicate with her?*

8 White: *Yes, quite difficult and she felt the same as she didn't come to ask me questions, though she tried to talk to the children. Now she's been more confident. Well, I notice she has got some help from a Chinese girl and a Chinese boy who are in Year 5. Shan stayed with them in their class while we were practising SATs test, which was quite nice, wasn't it?*

9 Shan: *Yes (nodded)*

10 White: *...they could help her in her own language. On the whole Shan is really making a huge progress in such a short time.*

11 Chen: *Has she got any language support teacher?*

12 White: *No, not as such, no.*

13 Chen: *She told me she did a lot of drawing to communicate with people?*

14 White: *We got her a bilingual dictionary and it has English words as well as Chinese words and she just copied down the Chinese one and then the English one, and that helps her a lot.*

...

Extract four: Setting - Morning, 25/05/01, Wington's classroom in Soho School

1 Chen: *I heard that you are also deputy head here, aren't you?*

2 Judith: *Yes, you are right, but most of the time I am Wington's class teacher. Wington is doing really well. At first she was a little bit withdrawn but now she is really joining in and her English has really come up and much improved. She can communicate well with mature children now and her work is getting much better and she would ask me for a favour or other children for a favour if she doesn't understand the work. She recognises a lot of words in English.*

3 Chen: *I hear Wington joins the Year one class, right?*

4 Judith: *Yes, we let Wington join the year one class as children there are doing a lot of rhyming work and lots of basic things of how the English language works. We think it is good for her to be able to repeat things and the level of the work in this class is still a bit high for her to understand. That's why ...*

5 Chen: *Does the school provide language support teachers?*

6 Judith: *Well it depends. We've got quite a good amount support most of the days, we've got a language support teacher. Wington sometimes works with a small group of the Year three children when Mrs Crista, the support teacher, is in the school, but not all the time because it is hard when she first came here because it is hard to organise as Mrs Crista works only part time here in*

the school but not all the time. That is why we have tended to organise the resources in the younger classes...

7 Chen: *In her case, will she move up to Year 5 after September ?*

8 Judith: *Yes, she will move up to Year 5 next term but she is still in this classroom as we've organised a big section for Year 4-5. There will be not much difference to her.*

9 Chen: *Thank you for telling me so much about Wington.*

The impression we have had from the excerpts above is that teachers do not expect much from these children and that they take a carefree attitude towards the children's inclusion in whatever class. The paradoxes are not just between the teachers' views and what actually goes on in the class, but in their words themselves: on the one hand, the teachers say the child goes to the younger class for literacy lessons as in any other case it would be assumed that the child is 'behind', but on the other hand they say the child is doing very well in English.

Children / Teachers

However, the teachers' self contradictory attitude worries the children, because neither child expects to learn simply through being in the class but wants actively to promote their own learning. Misunderstanding occurs anyway between the children and teachers; and especially when the policy of sending children down to learn in much younger classes is applied. To the children concerned, such a policy amounts to exclusion. The following data as indicated in their talk and diaries (translation from Chinese - see Appendix II, III) show the impression that the children have of their teachers and the embarrassment those children have experienced in the class.

Extract five: Setting - On 25/ 05/ 2001, before half term holiday in Gillespie School

...

1 Chen: *Ni zai zhe suo xuexiao kuai yinian le ba. Ni dui yingguo xuexiao yingxiang ruhe?/ You have been in this school for nearly a year by now. What is your impression on English schools?*

2 Shan: *Er, zheli de xuesheng bi zhongguo xuesheng fangsong de duo. Yiban meiyou jiating zuoye, xuesheng zai jiaoshi li keyi suibian jianghua, zou lai zou qu, yong bu zhao mian dui laoshi yi paipai zuo zhe, laoshi ye wu suo wei xuesheng xue hai shi bu xue, quan kao xuesheng ziji he jiazhang. /er... Students are more relaxed here than students in China. Here we don't have regular*

homework, students can talk and walk here and there in the classroom, they don't have to sit by the desks row by row facing the class teachers. Teachers here don't really care much whether students study hard or not. It is all up to us students and our families.

3 Chen: *Ni zai ban shang biao xian zenyang?* / How do you behave in the class?

4 Shan: *Wo ting anjing de, ye ting dan xiao, hulihudu de.* / I am very quiet in the class, very often I am quite timid and puzzled as well.

5 Chen: *Ni jue de zhe he nide yingwen nengli you guan ma? Ruguo ni hui shuo duo yidian jiu hui zixin de duo.* / Do you think it is due to the language? If you could understand English better, you would be less timid and more confident?

6 Shan: *Wo xiang shi de.* / I think so.

7 Chen: *Ni jue de zai ban shang you dedao teshu de banzhu ma?* / Do you think you've got an extra help in the class?

8 Shan: *Mei shenme banzhu. Laoshi zong shi gei wo yi xie ruyi de dongxi, huozhe ba wo fangzai di nianji ban shang. Meiyou ren gei wo zhijie de banzhu. Wangwang wo dei ziji xiang laoshi yao jiating zuoye, zheyang baba keyi yong zhongwen zidian gei wo jiangjie.* / Not really, I am just given some easier texts or sent to younger class. No one can give me any direct guidance. So I would rather ask for some homework, in that case my father can explain to me with a Chinese and English dictionary.

9 Chen: *Ni zui xihuan sheme kemu?* / Which subject do you like best?

10 Shan: *Dou be zenyang.* / None of them

11 Chen: *Zai zhongguo ye shi yiyang ma?* / What about in China?

12 Shan: *Bu, wo xihuan yuwen, ye xihuan kan shu he xie zuo.* / Language, I enjoy reading and writing Chinese.

13 Chen: *Bijiao er yan, shuxue shi bu shi qiang dian?* / In comparison, Maths could be your strong subject, am I right?

14 Shan: *Ni shuo de dui, danshi hai shi you xuduo ying wen wo kan bu dong, tebie shizai zuo yingyong ti.shi* / You are right, but there are still a lot of English words, that I don't understand, especially when doing problem-solving things.

15 Chen: *Kexue ke zenyang?* / What about science?

16 Shan: *Kexue hen nan, cihui liang ye da. Laoshi jiang de tai kuai, gen bu shang. Haihao laoshi gei wo yixie ruyi zuo de ti, biru, naxie dai cha du de zuoye, wo zuo bu wan, keyi dai hui jia.* / Oh, science is quite difficult and as it has a big vocabulary which I could not understand at all. The teacher speaks very fast in class. I could't catch a word. So the teacher always gives me some easier one, something like pictures with a little explanation. Sometimes I am allowed take the sheets back home as my parents request.

17 Chen: Name, ni zui ai zuo sheme? / Then what do you find the most enjoyable thing to do?

18 Shan: *Wo xihuan huahua, shougong. Wo zuo le bu shao, tongxuemen dou shuo wo zuo de hao.* / I like drawing and handcraft and I did a lot. They quite appreciate my work.

19 Chen: *Ni jue de huahua dui ni you banzhu ma?/ Do you think you are better understood in this way?*

20 Shan: *Youde./ Yes.*

.....相比較，香港的老師對教學很負責任，也關心學生的進步，而英國老師則比較民主、開放，鼓勵我們自由思考。香港的學生必須勤力、刻苦，而英國的學生則享受自由放鬆的氣氛。我覺得各有各的好處，應該互相學習(李家寶(十一歲)日記2001年5月11日星期一)。

... As compared, I've got a strong feeling that teachers in Hong Kong are more responsible for what they are teaching, more concerned with discipline and students' progress, while teachers here are more tolerant and liberal, leaving more room for children's creativity. Children in Hong Kong have to be hard working while children here enjoy much more freedom. I think they are both good and they should learn from each other (Monday, 11th May 2001 - a passage from the diary of Kapo aged 11)

我非常想念中国学校和老师，尽管这里的老师和同学都对我不错。印象中，老师总是客客气气，同学们总是礼貌友好，可是我却无法真正接近他们。这里上课的方法不同中国，老师讲的不那么多，同学们经常分小组做课堂作业。学不学是学生的事，老师不负这个责任。你想学，你用功，老师就在一旁鼓励，但也不象中国老师那样上心。你不想学，老师也无所谓。对于我这样一个不会说英语的新生来说，老师并没有把我当回事，更不用说急我所急。老师当然希望我快快进步，可是并没有什么好办法，但她相信一切都是时间问题，我自己很快就可以学会的。校长也是这么同妈妈说的。我不知道是不是这样，但我觉得庆幸，我父母多少还有点英语基础，否则真不知道怎么办才好。(宋珊(十一岁)日记2001年4月14日星期六)。

I very much miss my primary school and teachers in China, though teachers and classmates here are polite and friendly to me. There seems still no way for me to get closer to them. Different from China, teachers here do not lecture a lot in the lesson but leave a lot of time with us doing class work, mostly teamwork. Learning is a matter of individual interest, but not always teachers' responsibility. If you want to learn and work hard, teachers will encourage you along, but if you do not work hard, teachers are not bothered by you so long as you do not make noise in class and do not play truant. Ms White does not expect much of me as I am a new student with little knowledge of English and the culture, and also because she could not understand me, she will never know what I am worried about being a disadvantaged child in the class. She is happy if I can catch up quickly, but again she finds no better way to help me in the lesson, believing that time is best curer, I will pick up English quickly myself. This is what Mr. Jake, the head teacher said to my mum as well. I do not know if it is true, but luckily my parents know a basic bit of English, they help me after school, otherwise... (Saturday, 14th April, 2001, a passage from the diary of Shan aged 11).

学校里的一切都是英文。当然，我并不是报怨什么，因为这是英语国家，理所当然。可是我常常觉得自己在班上活象个傻瓜。班老师，Frances 对我一直很好，可是她不了解我。英国老师可能听说过香港，但听不懂香港话。我比较喜欢数学，只是因为我不一定要懂英文就能看懂数字和公式，有时我还能猜。老实说，我根本听不懂英语课和科学课。有时上语言课时，英语辅导老师 Crista 到我班上，坐在我旁边，可是她也帮不上什么，至少她比不上英汉词典。刚开始我总是画很多画来表白自己，来提问题，但发现太花时间了，我因此变得很烦。后来我学会了查词典，用它和老师同学交流。我发现这样学习更好(李家寶(十一歲)日記2001年4月27日星期五)

Everything in the school is in English, of course, I shouldn't have complained about this as it is an English speaking country. But I just hate myself being a fool in the class! My class teacher Miss Frances has been very kind to me but she just could not understand me well. Teachers here may hear about Hong Kong but they do not understand the language. I like Maths best, relatively speaking, just because I can read numbers and formulae without necessarily understanding English, and sometimes I can guess between the lines. To be honest, I find it very difficult to follow the teacher in the language lesson and science lesson. Sometimes Mrs Crista, the language teacher, is sitting beside me together with some other classmates, but she can't be very helpful, at least no better than my English-Chinese dictionary. At the beginning I did a lot of drawing to express myself or to ask questions but it took too much time. By and by I've learnt to use a dictionary to communicate with my teachers and classmates. In this way I am learning English better... (Friday 27th April 2001 - a passage from the diary of Kapo aged 11).

Parents / Children

Lastly, misunderstandings still emerge between parents and children. Having made the decision to migrate, the parents want to ensure that their children get along well in school, later get on well in the society of settlement as they must accept the fact that English is the key to equality of opportunity, academic success and to full participation in British life. The data comes mainly from informal talks with children.

Extract six: Setting – Sunday, 06/ 05/2001, Lunchtime in the London Mandarin School

When we were having lunch together, Shan also told me that her parents were thinking of sending Shan back to China in order to continue her primary schooling there. They think Shan's English is not good enough for her to get in Secondary school. While in China, Shan is in year six in September. She can have one more year

to go before starting the Secondary. But Shan this time seems reluctant to leave England, to leave her parents and stay with her grandparents in China. She asked me to persuade her parents about this matter. It is a real hard nut for me to crack, as I share the same view with her parents personally but I have been very quiet because I would like Shan to stay for my research purpose (field notes).

Extract seven: Setting – Monday, 21/ 05/2001, St. James Park.

During the half term holiday, my son and I invited both Kapo and Wington out for sightseeing. On the way,

Kapo told me she would love to return to Hong Kong, but her parents insisted that she finish education here in Britain. But she could not see the point and believed she could still learn English in Hong Kong as Hong Kong is an international harbour, where she thought she could learn English even better as teachers would talk in both English and Cantonese. But now she said: 'My Chinese is deteriorating day by day and my English is still very poor.' I could see she was really worried. Besides, she also told me she and her younger sister felt very lonely at home because her parents worked days and nights, they could hardly have time to talk with their parents. The only day for the whole family to get together was on Wednesday when their father and mother both had a day off. She said 'Although we are crowded in a small room, we are a world apart' (foot notes).

2.3.3 Frustration - the result of isolation and misunderstandings

Isolation plus constant misunderstanding have resulted in frustration. The children new to the UK have withdrawn more and more from class activities with the excuse only of poor English; their confidence is dampened, which also has an impact on their personality and self image. As a result, their academic achievements suffer a great deal due to this frustration. The following data from talks and diaries reflect the feeling.

Extract eight: Setting one - Sunday 20/05/2001, the London Mandarin School (Appendix IV).

1 Chen: *You hao xiaoxi ma?* / Any news about the secondary entrance?

2 Mum: *Xuexiao shangge xingqi si gaosu women, High Fields Girl School shi zhege diqu weiyi yige bu yong kaosh jiu keyi qu de zhongxue.* / The school told us last Thursday that High Fields Girl School was the only possibility in the Arsenal area because it didn't require any entrance exam as the rest of the schools in the area.

- 3 Chen: *Nimen qu kanguo ma?*/ Have you ever visited this school?
- 4 Mum: *Hai meiyou, buguo women chang jingguo nali, yinxiang zhong zhege xuexiao you xuduo yinba ren he hei ren.*/ No, we've just passed by several times and found the school quite mixed, for there are quite many Asian and black girls playing on the playground.
- 5 Chen: *Nimen dasuan qu ma?*/ Are you going to accept the offer?
- 6 Mum: *Women kanlai meiyou xuanze, buguo hao zai xuexiao li jia bijiao jin.*/ We have no choice but fortunately it is very close to where we are living now.
- 7 Shan: *Ni xuede you keneng rang wo zai Gillespie duo dai shang yi nian, di er nian zai canjia gaoshi, keneng jiu you geng duo de xuanze?*/ Do you think (towards me) it possible for me to stay in Gillespie for another year, then I am able to take part in all kinds of tests and try some more secondary schools?
- 8 Chen: *Hao zhuyi, rang wo shishi tong xiaozhang shuoshuo kan.*/ A good idea, but we have to talk to some authority to see if it can be the case.
- 9 Shan: *Wo hen xiang he wu nian ban na liangge Zhongguo pengyou zai yiqi, yao bu ran you shengxia wo ziji yige ren, guai gu dan de.*/ I enjoy very much working with my Chinese friends in year 5, otherwise I would suffer a lot of loneliness.

(There was a long silence before I asked Shan)

- 10 Chen: *Ni xianzai hui dao liu nian ban le ma?*/ Have you returned to your year 6 class?
- 11 Shan: *huilai le, yiqie dou hai shi lao yangzi. Tingshuo wu yue 25 r qian dou meiyou ke, women lai xuexiao zhishi wan.*/ Yes, I have returned already but there will not be any subject teaching before the 25th May (half term). We just go to school for fun.
- 12 Chen: *Wo xiage xingqi er shangwu hui lai kan ni, hao ma?* / I will go and see you next Tuesday morning, is it ok?
- 13 Shan and Mum: *Taihao le.* / Good! (The bell is ringing)

Kapo's diary also tells me her feeling of anxiety and frustration (see Appendix II).

.....尽管如此，我还是担心生中学的事Carol老师负责这件事。她昨天告诉我，说她仍然在找，或是在本地区或是在隔壁区找。只怕没有好学校要我。我妈建议让我在六年级多呆一年，可我不愿意，我想学校也不可能同意(李家寶(年紀十歲)日記2001年4月27日星期五)。

... Yet I am worried about my secondary school transfer. Mrs Carol, who is in charge of that matter, said to me yesterday that she kept trying for me lots of schools either within the borough or neighbour boroughs. I am afraid that there would not be any good secondary school willing to accept me. My mum suggested if I

could stay in the primary for another year, but I don't like it, and I don't think it is possible to do it. (Friday 27th April, 2001 – a passage from the diary of Kapo aged 11)

2.3.4. Summary

It is clear from the examples above that these emergent bilingual children are suffering considerable disadvantages in the mainstream class, which are highlighted in feelings of isolation, misunderstandings and frustration. Particularly the data on Shan, Kapo and Wington in their mainstream class have unanimously revealed the paradoxical nature of inclusion, which is believed, by many school teachers, to be the common practice of ensuring what is called 'equality of opportunity'. In this 'inclusion', although the children are given the same curriculum and the same teaching as the rest of the mainstream class, it is apparent that they are not on an equal footing. Ironically, it seems that the aim of 'inclusion' might mean they are being included in the mainstream school but being excluded from their chronological age group, which is physically evident in the cases where children are sent to younger classes for literacy and numeracy work.

On the other hand, the data have also indicated that the children's friends and family backgrounds have played an important part in saving those children from academic failure. As has been proved by the older children in the GCSE Chinese class in the London Mandarin School, wouldn't it be very important to ask also: What was it that contributed to the success of the older children? After all, they might have much to teach us. We might need to examine more closely what contributed to those older pupils' success.

What I have discovered through my investigation leads me to a number of key questions, which will be the subject of this study:

- Numerous studies have pointed to the cognitive advantages of bilingual learners since the 1960s, why then are so many children with different linguistic backgrounds disadvantaged in British schools?

- Does the word ‘bilingual’ used to label children like Shan, Kapo and Wington who do not speak English at home and who have recently entered the country, correspond with the reality?
- Does the terminology used in the National Curriculum have any implication for the issue ‘equality of opportunities’ and the mainstreaming of the educational provision for emergent bilingual children?
- How beneficial is it for emergent bilingual children to be plunged into mainstream classrooms with limited attention and be faced with the same test-oriented National Curriculum?
- How did these notions of ‘sameness’ = ‘equality’ arise in Britain? And what does equality of opportunities really mean for those children?
- What might provide those children with equal access to the National Curriculum? And what is considered as good practice in developing support for emergent bilingual pupils?

The next chapter sets out to examine how these questions have been addressed through past and present policies in the UK.

PART TWO THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Chapter 3 Different Trends in Educational Provision: An Historical Review

3.1 Introduction

To investigate the interrelated questions in chapter 2, it is necessary to examine the background of education for emergent bilingual children in the UK. In this chapter, I shall begin by presenting a brief historical overview of the traditional values of English school education so as to give a general idea of what accounts for 'British Heritage', then I will review the literature on the British government's school policy on how to respond to individual differences, particularly to a new kind of 'difference' as a result of immigration. My aim, therefore, is to highlight the different trends in educational provision for immigrant children since 1960s.

3.2 The Traditional Value of English School Education

Traditional education practice in England can be understood in terms of the essentialist view, derived from Plato (427- 347 BC) and Aristotle (384-322 BC). This philosophy, which came to predominate in the nineteenth century, held that the aim of education was to train future political leaders in order to maintain a just society, the main feature of which was its stability. A truly liberal education could best serve this purpose by the provision of certain selected subjects incorporating 'high-status knowledge', which would be acquired only by future 'philosopher-kings', namely the political, social and intellectual elite. This reflected Plato's theory that people are intellectually different, that among people inequality was simply a biological fact, and that people inherit qualities, which fit them for an assigned role in society. Therefore, choice between subjects has been encouraged by student interest and ability, which reflects class-based family backgrounds. From this point

of view emerged some key generalisations, referred to by Holmes and Mclean (1989) as dominant principles of school curriculum development. They are moralism, specialism and individualism, of which, individualism has been at the core.

3.2.1 Individualized School Curriculum

In the English essentialist tradition, the idea of individuality, which was first expressed by John Locke (1632-1704) in the eighteenth century, was later further developed in the child-centred philosophy of education in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It has been well matched with English localism. Until 1988, individualism, was customarily exhibited in multiple autonomies, e.g. of the local authority from the central government, of the school from the LEA, of the teacher from the school, and of the student from the teacher in the choice of curriculum. Obviously the principle of individualism has been at the core of the essentialist tradition. This proposed that each individual's wisdom and cleverness were potential and different. It also argued that the acquisition of knowledge was not logical, sequential and standardised as rationalists claimed but was the outcome of interactions between the innate qualities of the learner and potential sources of education. The proposed aim of education was to bring out individual potentialities, therefore each person might find different material appropriate to his or her development, and the content of education should be selected in the light of individual differences (Holmes & Mclean, 1989). In primary schools a great deal of individual work was done in class. The methods used varied with the age and ability of children. At the secondary level, individualism tended to become reduced to specialism. The 1944 Education Act led to the provision of universal secondary education in a 'tripartite' system, which differentiated students into three different groups on the basis of the 11 plus selective examination. The curriculum in the three kinds of schools (grammar, technical, secondary modern) had different emphases and broadly prepared students for three different school certificates, e.g. GCE 'A' level, GCE 'O' level, CSE. It seemed that the post-1944 developments of secondary schooling in some way reflected and perhaps strengthened the prevailing philosophy of specialisation and individualism. This tradition of individualism was also reinforced by the time-honoured

localised administration system which possessed a considerable autonomy since the 1902 Act, which empowered the one hundred or so local education authorities (LEAs) the legal and actual power to raise and allocate financial resources, to decide the location and organisation of schools, to appoint teachers and to control all matters of internal school organisation including the curriculum (Dent, 1982). This eventually became the working principle in school practice and has been considered one of the merits of English education until the 1988 Educational Reform Act when finances began to be allocated to schools and the curriculum was becoming centralised under the National Curriculum Committee.

3.2.2 Official Recognition of Individual Differences

This working principle was fully recognised in both the Hadow report (1931) and Plowden Report (1967) as an approach to education, and has been justified by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) for the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) and by other associations for similar research projects. One of the strongest points in the Hadow and Plowden Reports was the concern for children as individuals. They drew great attention to differences between children of the same age, and placed emphasis on the importance of taking children's nature into account when deciding how best to educate them.

'...at the age of five, children are spread out between the mental ages of about three and seven or eight, a total of four to five years. By the age of ten this range has doubled and it probably continues to enlarge till the end of ^{青春期}puberty.' (Board of Education 1937: paragraph 35)

'If the central consideration, by which the curricula and methods of the primary school must be determined, is the sum of needs and possibilities of the pupils attending it, it is obviously from those who have specialised knowledge of physical and mental considerations that, in the first place at least, guidance must be sought.' (Board of Education 1937: xxiv)

Influenced by John Dewey's educational philosophy in the early 20th century, the Hadow report began to define a 'child-centred' approach to education:

'What is important...is that, while the indispensable foundations are thoroughly mastered, the work of the school should be related to the experience and interest of the children.'(Board of Education 1937: xxii).

However, different from the practice in the American, the English approach did not go too far as to indulge children's natural instincts. Instead, the emphasis was placed on bringing out individual potentialities by providing different material appropriate to his or her development. Therefore a smaller size of class was highly recommended in the Hadow Report.

'All the teacher witnesses stressed the point that the primary school would discover even among its normal children a fairly wide range of ability and between the brightest and dullest children in any one class a considerable difference of mental calibre.' 'If the claims of the individual child to suitable treatment and attention are to be met, it is essential that the classes should be reasonably small.'(Board of Education 1937: chapter 5: 60-61).

Since Hadow, different reports have stressed that differences between children are normally shown in physical growth, academic achievement, personality and behaviour.

Difference in Physical Growth

The Plowden Report drew attention to differences in the rates of development of different parts of the body. For examples, the head and brain grow most during the first few years, so that the latter reaches about 90 percent of its adult weight by the time a child 5; children grow taller more rapidly in the first months after birth than they will at any time later, even when they shoot up during puberty. Physical differences between groups and between individuals are also recounted. On average, boys are larger at birth, but girls catch up by six

and go through their pubertal height spurt earlier than boys. Boys, when their turn comes, grow more rapidly than girls and experience a greater increase in muscular strength. Just as the Hadow Report spoke of mental age and skeletal growth, so the Plowden Report referred to skeletal or 'bone' age. On this skeletal ladder, girls are some weeks more mature than boys at birth and up to two years ahead by puberty (Thomas, 1990). However these average features should be treated cautiously:

'Among boys of the same chronological age there is a wide range of bone age which, for eight year olds, stretches from six to ten years' (DES, 1967, Vol. 1: paragraph 14).

Obviously, the range for 8-year-old boys and girls together is wider than four years, and girls are less mature in their bone structure than some boys of the same age. 'It is also important to remember that the rate of maturation is not constant from generation to generation' (Thomas, 1990: 3).

Differences in Academic Achievement

The Bullock Report of 1975 took interest in differences of achievement between children, which followed an enquiry into the teaching of the English language.

'..in a first-year secondary school class containing the full range of ability, the English teacher may encounter an extraordinarily wide spread in reading age (e.g., from seven to fourteen), and an accompanying wide divergence in maturity of reading interest and taste' (DES 1975, quoted in Thomas, 1990:3).

Language achievement

National surveys conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) for the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) in language (DES, 1982, Gorman, 1986 and White, 1986) have indicated that children in the same age group could be very different in reading and writing. Some children misinterpret what they read because they are not

familiar with the concepts discussed and vocabulary used; others may have difficulty in locating the information they need to answer a question. Sometimes the more complex aspects of English grammar and stylistic variations may cause a lack of understanding for many, and the preconceptions children bring can mislead them.

The assessment of writing (White, 1986) also noticed that children were very different in the range and complexity of ideas expressed, the clarity of the description or message, adherence to 'standard' forms of English including syntax and spelling, the ability to catch and hold the reader's attention. Work carried out for the APU shows that about 3 percent of 11-year-olds are in great difficulty with writing. Boys and girls are quite apart in both attitude and performance (White, 1986:8-9). The report also indicates that children's writing is influenced by the ways in which they speak. Girls and boys are about the same in oral ability. Children's performance varies with the purpose of the communication. Individual pupils' spoken language may be either more or less advanced than their performance in reading and writing (Thomas, 1990).

Mathematical achievement

The Cockcroft Report (1982) produced evidence to show a seven year difference in achieving an understanding of place value. When asked to write down the number that is 1 more than 6399, average children of 11 entered the correct number but average children of 10 did not. Additionally, some children of 7 carried out the task correctly and some of 14 did not. That is more evidence of a 'seven year' range of ability towards the end of the primary school stage (DES, 1982). Cockcroft's work made good reference to the differences between children in mathematics.

Surveys by the NFER for the APU reveal still more about mathematical differences between children. Of them, the Primary Survey Report (1981) indicated that children's attitudes to mathematics relied heavily on their own competence rather than on the inherent difficulty of the subject, girls were more likely than boys to suppose that they often got into difficulties, and they were surprised when they succeeded. What aroused huge attention in

the data was that 'on average, children in schools in metropolitan areas score significantly less well than children in non-metropolitan areas, and the mean score is substantially better for children in schools with fewer than 16 percent on free school meals as compared with those in schools with 36 percent or more on free school meals' (DES /APU 1981, No.2:40). The understatement pointed to poor home background and particularly adverse socio-economic circumstances, as a possible contributory cause of low achievement.

Scientific achievement

Likewise the APU's Science Report for Teachers: 1 (DES/APU, 1983) draws attention to other differences between children (Thomas, 1990). Most children classified objects on the basis of observed properties; about a half made predictions based on observations and used given information to make reasonable predictions; but only a few recorded the observation of the fine details, observed the correct sequence of events or gave good explanations of how they arrived at predictions. Girls, on average, were slightly ahead in using graphs, tables and charts, in observing similarities and differences and in writing up descriptions of events. Boys, on average, were ahead in using measuring instruments, applying physical science concepts to problems and in recording quantitative results (DES/APU, 1983).

Differences of Personality and Behaviour

There are other differences of personality and behaviour between children. Most parents who have more than one child will find different temperaments in them though they come from the same genetic bank. They are more or less assertive, more or less imaginative, more or less patient and more or less active. They differ in what they notice and in what they care about. One may be balanced, precise and rhythmic when moving and the other clumsy and rough, and so on and so forth (Thomas, 1990: 6).

The Roots of Differences

However, what have made these differences or what are roots of differences?

Controversy continues, however it has been generally accepted that the differences are the result of two distinguishable but interrelated causes: the genetic make-up of the individual and the circumstances and experiences to which the individual has been subject. But 'one of the dangers of comparative lists of the kind is that someone might suppose that the differences revealed are examples of cause and effect' (Thomas, 1990:7).

Genetic factors

By the time of the Plowden Report, opinion had moved further from the notion that genetic inheritance was so powerful as virtually to fix an individual's capacities.

'...the notion of the constancy of the I.Q. is biologically self-exploding as well as educationally explosive.' (DES, 1967: paragraph 60).

It pointed out that children's Intelligence Quotients (I.Qs) changed between 9 and 19 years of age to such an extent that 20 percent changed either from being in the lower half to being in the upper half of scores or vice versa. We need to remember that an IQ is not intelligence. It is the result of the scores a person achieves in answering questions or carrying out actions in a particular context and under particular conditions. Thomas (1990) states 'the concept of a general factor of intelligence is not a helpful one in primary education, partly because every child and adult ...has been capable of learning more – any inherent limit of learning has not manifested itself – and especially so because acceptance of the concept inclines people to believe that it is possible to judge what a child may be capable of doing, or more usually not doing, in the medium or long term' (Thomas, 1990:8).

Environmental factors

Social class, early education and cultural and religious differences are key environmental factors.

- Social Class — environment

Social class differences play an important part in British society and also severely affect children's academic achievement, personality and behaviour. The Plowden Committee built upon earlier views about the effects of the environment on children's performance in school. The Hadow Report expressed the view that:

'In the past eugenic and biometric investigators have rightly emphasised the effects of heredity; but there is now (1931) an increasing tendency to believe that they have underestimated the effects of the environment.' (Board of Education, 1931: paragraph 48)

The Plowden Report took this view to the point of recommending the identification of deprived areas where children had special educational needs (DES, 1967: paragraph 153). These were to be called Educational Priority Areas (EPA) and be subject to 'positive discrimination' in the distribution of funds and as a consequence, resources, particularly of teachers and nursery education. The criteria that might be used in identification were as follows (Thomas, 1990: 9):

- 1) the proportion of unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers;
- 2) the presence of large families;
- 3) the numbers in receipt of State benefits (including free school meals);
- 4) overcrowding and sharing of houses;
- 5) poor attendance and truancy;
- 6) proportions of retarded, disturbed or handicapped children;
- 7) incomplete families (single parent families)
- 8) the number of children unable to speak English.

The recommendation has certainly had consequences. For a time teachers in identified schools were paid an additional allowance.

- Early Education (nursery provision or family education)

The Central Government's Urban Programme, which began in 1969, approved the establishment of some 20,000 new places in nursery schools and classes as well as day nurseries, community centres and classes in English as a second language. The 1972 White paper, *A Framework for Expansion*, included substantial proposals for an expansion of nursery education with the aim of meeting the Plowden Council's recommendation of providing for 90 percent of 4-year-olds and 50 percent of 3-year-olds within ten years (DES, 1972: paragraph 28). However the oil crisis in 1973-1974 severely truncated the aim (Thomas, 1990).

There is often quoted evidence that summer-born children, on average, do less well than autumn-born children, and throughout school life, but it is very difficult to know the extent of this, i.e. to what extent it is because the former are the youngest in their year group or because they have had less schooling. 'It has to be said that it is hard to get conclusive evidence from the UK that what is provided before age 5 has a long term educational benefit for a child - which is not at all to deny the importance of nursery education'(Thomas, 1990). It is certain that there has been insufficient large scale, systematic research in the UK on the effects of early childhood education. This makes it hard to know how a teacher's expectation should change with the knowledge that a child has not had nursery education. However, research evidence in US and Europe which demonstrates that pre-school education (in the period 3-6) can provide a firm foundation for later school learning is accumulating. It suggests that early childhood education, if it is of high quality, can prevent school failure and problems of adjustment, which are associated with social disadvantage (Sylva, 2000).

- Cultural and Religious Differences

The Plowden Report and the ILEA Alternative Use of Resources Scheme (Thomas, 1990) both took notice of the fact that society in England had become diverse since 1940s, with

many ethnic groups, cultures and religions being represented. By the 1985 ILEA report, *Improving Primary Schools*, it was possible to report that children attending ILEA schools spoke, between them, more than 147 different languages (ILEA, 1985). Data supplied by the LEAs in 2000 mentioned more than 350 language names, some of which were alternative names for the same language though. The data also showed the percentage for those 40 leading home languages spoken between London school children (Baker & Eversley, 2000). The 50 schools studied in the ILEA Junior School Project (1985) were reported as being a reflection of the ethnic composition of Inner London as a whole. Nearly 16 percent of the children did not use English as their first language; 34 other languages were identified as being used. Of course, there are some schools in England with no experience of children from families with overseas backgrounds. 'No children, anywhere, should be denied the advantage of learning about the culturally and religiously diverse community of the country in which they live' (Thomas, 1990:12).

Looking through above - mentioned Reports, what we can not deny is the fact that a class is made up of individual children who differ from one another in variety of ways, and that the differences are such, no matter what would be the cause, it is dangerous to suppose that two children who are similar in one respect will be similar in another.

3.3 The Official Response to Linguistic and Cultural Differences

As one of the oldest imperialist countries, Britain has always been a multilingual society. However, the need to respond to a new kind of 'difference' as a result of immigration was not addressed as a specific issue during the last half of 19th century and, indeed, before the mid 20th century. There appears to have been no discussion of the special linguistic needs of these children speaking other languages within English schools in the educational literature of the first half of this century. It has only been since the 1960s that the language needs of pupils speaking languages other than English have become an issue in England. Developments in educational provision for these children signify the current trend of official interest and response to the issue.

3.3.1 Plowden Report and Assimilation

In colonial times, there had been immigration for hundreds of years to Britain; during the nineteenth century, the majority of the immigrants had been of Jewish or European origin and from British India. The arrival of large numbers of immigrants from the Caribbean and South Asia took place mainly in the post war period. Post-war migration worldwide has meant that many countries, particularly industrialised countries in need of labour in the 1950s and 1960s, have been faced with the task of incorporating workers from different groups into the host society. In Britain, as elsewhere, after the Second World War the prevailing assumption tended to be that the faster these ethnic minority children were assimilated into British society, the better they would do later on in life. In 1963 the Department of Education and Science (DES) produced a report *English for Immigrants*, also known as the Plowden report that was based on this policy of assimilation. It was recommended that a carefully planned intensive course making full use of modern methods of language teaching should be developed. In response to the recommendations, a three-year project funded by the Schools Councils for the Curriculum and Examinations was set up in September 1966 at the University of Leeds (the Leeds Project) to develop course materials for teachers to teach English to non-English speaking children (DES, 1971a). Over the period fast and efficient English teaching was required as a prerequisite for all school learning.

The belief that the learning of more English will help non-English speaking children to cope with their educational problems was revealed in Circular 7/65 (DES, 1965) as follows:

‘From the beginning the major educational task is the teaching of English. Where a school contains a number of children with little or no knowledge of English, it is desirable to arrange one or more special reception classes in which they may learn English as quickly and as effectively as possible’ (DES, 1965:2).

Schools with large proportions of immigrant children were offered extra financial support

to arrange one or more special classes in which immigrant children should learn English as quickly and as effectively as possible. The Section 11 of the 1966 Local Government Act had granted this support, and within the following ten years, most authorities in and around big urban areas had established *Special English* services funded by the Home Office for this 'Section 11' support. For more than thirty years the Section 11 projects remained in place and continued to support schools, though the kind of support, the quantity and quality offered, changed throughout the years. The Home Office provided funding up to 1999, but also imposed its own restrictions and limitations on the Section 11 projects.

The first major post-war research project was undertaken by the Central Advisory Council for Education. Its extremely influential report - *the Children and their Primary Schools*, or the Plowden Report contains a chapter devoted to 'the children of immigrants' which emphasized the 'disadvantage' of many immigrant children 'because of the poor educational background from which they have come' (DES, 1967). It clearly acknowledged emergent bilingual children's different learning experiences:

'Children unable to speak English need much extra attention if they are to find their feet in England' (DES 1967:59).

These needs were at first defined as essentially the need for special tuition in English for 'immigrant' children. However, the linguistic and cultural experiences of the 'immigrant' children were seen not so much as part of each child's individuality to be built on, but rather as a 'barrier'. The report argued, in terms of beginning reading, that a vocabulary of about 3000 words was the minimum requirement not only to native English speakers but also to immigrant children. The teaching of English was viewed as crucial in overcoming the 'language barrier'.

'It is absolutely essential to overcome the language barrier. This is less serious for the child entering the infant school. He rapidly acquires, both in the classroom and outside, a good command of the relatively limited number of words, phrases and sentences in common use

among the children. He can then learn to read with the rest, by normal methods' (DES, 1967: 71).

A 'specialism' (Bourne,1989) was developed during this period, which required a concentration on teaching the 'non-English speaking children' mainly through separate provision outside the mainstream and called for more training and understanding on how to teach English to immigrant children and how to develop more suitable materials. This extensive task was undertaken by the LEAs and by Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) in particular and by the Centre for Urban and Educational Studies (CUES). As an achievement of the Leeds Project (1966), the Schools Council Project in Teaching English to Immigrant Children (School Council, 1969) produced innovative materials (SCOPE). Meanwhile, the immigrant children were withdrawn regularly from their ordinary classes for Special English Lessons, in which specialised teachers taught them. These lessons were grounded in structural analysis of the English language and behavioural psychology. They were also a very practical attempt to respond to children's needs.

However, owing to the policy of assimilation, children's first languages were totally ignored, if not considered a 'drawback' (Bourne, 1989). Thus how this special tuition would be carried out efficiently was left unacknowledged. Certainly, the notion of the special English class being a haven for those children was not misplaced, however, the establishment of the special class itself conspired to construct newcomers as both 'different' and 'unable' and also serve to intensify the negative perceptions of children's ability (Levine,1990). Paradoxically, the view of 'difference' taken in the reality was not consistent with the central philosophy of the Plowden report which claims to value individual differences; the notion of all 'non-English speaking children' as being 'the same' and needing the same provision, also contrasted with the aim of 'individualism' and 'child-centred' education promoted in the report.

3.3.2 The Bullock Report and Specialism

During the period of assimilation and particularly during the late 1970s and early 1980s the question of how to respond to the first languages of bilingual children became a matter of increasing interest. Based on union reports, government enquiries and professional surveys, the schools were blamed for ineffectiveness in responding to their linguistically and culturally diverse children.

Following the Leeds Project (1966), three surveys on the language needs of immigrants children namely the *Potential and Progress in a Second Culture: Education survey 10* (DES, 1971a), the *Education of Immigrants: Education Survey 13* (DES, 1971b) and the *Continuing Needs of Immigrants: Education Survey 14* (DES, 1972) were conducted by the DES in the early 1970s. Based on findings of the three surveys, the report *A Language for life*, also known as the Bullock Report, was completed in 1975. The Bullock report just like its smaller predecessor *Educational Disadvantage and Educational Needs of Immigrants* (DES, 1974) drew a clear distinction between 'advantaged' and 'disadvantaged' children.

'It has been said that the best way to prepare the very young child for reading is to hold him on your lap and read aloud him stories he likes, over and over again. The printed page, the physical comfort and the security, the reassuring voice, the fascination of the story: all these combine in the child's mind to identify books as something which holds great pleasure. This is the most valuable piece of advice that a parent can be given, and we want to outline some of its implications before considering in greater detail the question of reading readiness. Before the child arrives at school he should have learned to look upon books as a source of absorbing pleasure. There are some households in which this is a virtual certainty from the beginning; there are very many more where there are few books of any kind and certainly none the child grows up with as his own. We believe that a priority need is to introduce children to books in their pre-school years and help parents recognise the values of sharing the experience of them with their children' (DES 1975: 97).

This stance attempted to consider homes, families and children's starting points in more

detail, and made a clear argument that, on entry to school, a child who is facing the need to learn a new culture, language and ways of learning is disadvantaged when compared to a child who feels at home in his/her school environment, culture and the teacher's use of English. Homes where this kind of story reading practice may not have taken place are duly identified as lacking something essentially important. Similarly children's home languages complicated this issue further as a child who did not speak English was perceived as automatically disadvantaged. Therefore, the Report pointed out the need to extend the initial English language training for non-English speaking children and suggested that such a task should be done by specialist language teachers. The proposal was as follows:

'although after a year (the immigrant child) may seem able to follow the normal school curriculum, especially where oral work is concerned, the limitations to his English may be disguised; they become immediately apparent when he reads and writes. He reads slowly and often without a full understanding of vocabulary and syntax, let alone the nuances of expression. His writing betrays his lack of grasp of the subject and a very unsteady control of syntax and style ... (The Education Committee) regard it as a grave disservice to such children to deprive them of sustained language teaching after they have been learning English for only a comparatively short time. In (the Committee's) view they need far more intensive help with language in English lessons. This should be the task of a specialist language teacher, whose aim should be to help them achieve fluency in all the language skills'. (DES, 1975:290)

In practice, the Special English Lessons, mainly taught through separate provision outside the mainstream still remained but children had now began to be referred to English As a Second Language (ESL) pupils; this recognition led to the use of methods and materials that more closely reflected emergent bilingual children's experiences and needs.

The Bullock Report has been considered to be the turning point in recognising the individual needs of linguistic minority children as it departed from the strongly assimilationist policies of the previous two decades and made an impressioned plea for

schools to respect the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students (Edwards, 2003). This is best illustrated through the following paragraphs:

‘Immigrant children’s attainment in tests and school in general is related not only to language but to several other issues, particularly those of cultural identity and cultural knowledge. No child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of home as he crosses the school threshold, nor to live and act though school and home represent two totally separate and different cultures, which have to be kept firmly apart. The curriculum should reflect many elements of that part of life which a child lives outside the school’ (DES, 1975: 286).

‘It is a process that consists primarily of learning to live in or between two cultures and of learning to handle two languages or dialects’ (DES, 1975:285).

‘In a linguistically conscious nation in the modern world we should see (bilingualism) as an asset, as something to be nurtured, and one of the agencies which should nurture it is the school. Certainly the school should adopt a positive attitude to its pupils’ bilingualism and wherever possible would help to maintain and deepen their knowledge of their mother tongue’ (DES, 1975:293-294)

Clearly in the Report, the central importance of bilingualism in children’s lives - cultural identity was emphasised. As a result, an increasing number of schools and LEAs began to bring in and reflect the surrounding multicultural society by attempting to reform teacher training as well as developing multicultural curricula. This often emphasised the inclusion of multicultural materials and resources. What is more, the Report also hinted at incorporating children’s mother tongues into the general school curriculum, though it had not stated precisely what policies and strategies schools would adopt to achieve this aim, and there was no support, yet, for the children in their ordinary mainstream classes. One joint effort worth noticing is that the European Community produced in 1977 a Directive *The Children of Migrant Workers* on mother tongue teaching, acknowledging that mother tongue teaching was indispensable for children’s learning, especially until fluency in

English was achieved. It was recommended that member states were required to promote the teaching of the mother tongue of the children of migrant workers 'in accordance with national circumstances and legal systems' (European Community, 1977:2). Several small-scale research projects arose from the national interest in mother tongue teaching.

However, there were various objections, one of which was financial arguments against it. An important research project, the Bedfordshire project (1976-1980), a study of an Italian community in Bedfordshire, had been funded by the EEC and came to a halt in 1980 as the grant ran out. This supports the government's argument against mother tongue teaching on the grounds that it was too expensive. It turned out to be that Bullock's support of mother tongue / culture education at school was only a statement of intent. Since then this whole question and possibilities of mother tongue teaching and learning, soon became a much debated issue, and this is where the question of how to respond to the first languages of bilingual children became a matter of increasing interest.

3.3.3 Swann Report and Integration

In spite of a somewhat negative response to the linguistic diversity in British schools, it became clear from the 1980s that the use of children's home language was valued and seen as an acceptable approach to facilitating their English learning. The Department of Education and Science (DES), under the pressure of accumulating theoretical arguments for integrating children's home languages within mainstream teaching, set up two projects: the Mother Tongue and English Teaching Project (1981-85) in Bradford and the Linguistic Minorities Project (1979-83) to investigate the general patterns of bilingualism in Britain. The former focused on investigating how the children's cultural identity would influence their way of learning English and what teaching medium and materials would meet the educational needs of young children (of Asian origin), many of whom entered school with little or no knowledge of English; the latter set out to 'discover the extent of bilingualism among the school population and scale of mother tongue teaching provision available'

(1985:8). These projects although having no impact on educational policies were influential in shifting general perception. Since then, growing emphasis was placed on developing children's full linguistic 'repertoire' (Edwards, 2003), and language teaching was expanded to include the teaching of community languages.

In reality it should be noted at the same time that many immigrants do not expect their children to be educated into their own minority culture. Having made the decision to migrate they accept the fact that English is the key to academic success, equality of opportunity, and full participation in British life; the ability to read and write Standard English is regarded as a crucial measure of educational performance, and as such it also serves as a means of discrimination in the labour market. Therefore they want to ensure that their children get on in the society of settlement. Arguably too much stress on their cultural difference might act as an obstacle to this process of 'getting on' (Rex, 1989). What is argued for here is the promotion of effective bilingualism with emphasis being placed on a command of the language, which is necessary for educational achievement.

However, the concern expressed since the 1960s by ethnic minority communities in Britain (effectively Afro- Caribbean and Asian) about the poor performance of their children within the educational system was shared by teachers and educationalists. This increasing concern then led to an urgent call by the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration for the setting up of an independent inquiry into the underachievement of West Indian children in particular. The Government responded positively by setting up in 1977 a Committee of Inquiry into the Education of 'Ethnic Minority Children'. Its interim report, the Rampton Report, published in 1981, was the outcome of such concerns and pressures; the final research report titled *Education for All*, also known as the Swann Report, however, had shifted its initial focus to include other minority ethnic groups. It marked a milestone in making explicit policy for bilingual pupils in schools.

The major issue addressed was, the report stated, a larger one than simply a question of what was the best for 'second language learners'. It was that of 'what organisations and strategies have the best potential for creating for all learners' equal access to the starting

points of their learning and understanding' (DES, 1985: 395). Furthermore, rather than seeing language education for ethnic minority group children in terms of supporting English and of meeting community demands for 'mother tongue' teaching, each isolated from the other and from whole school language policies, the report continued: 'ethnic minority children's language needs serve to highlight the need for positive action to be taken to enhance the quality of education for all children' (DES, 1985: 385-6). Clearly, the Swann policy was framed in a broader approach to multicultural education, and within the aims of broadening and reorganizing the mainstream to accommodate more of ethnic minority cultures, meeting minority demands, while at the same time working towards educating the whole society in order to alleviate racism and hostility (Bourne, 1989).

The exact factors, which may be responsible for underachievement, are not easily ascertained. All the different committees rejected the idea that any differences in achievement reflected a difference in I.Q. and argued that differential performance was associated with difference in socio-economic status. Minority children were seen as sharing in the general disadvantages of working class children, but they were doubly disadvantaged because they had to face radical discrimination and prejudice (Rex, 1989). As far as racism is concerned, the Rampton Report spoke of 'unintentional' racism as a contributory factor since it led to white teachers having unduly low expectations of the children and to low expectations of career prospects by the children (Thomas, 1990). The Swann Report confirmed these worries but distinguished between malign prejudice and harmless likes and dislikes, and stressed that it was the task of education to overcome malign prejudice. As far as the failure of individual ethnic groups, the Swann Report hinted that there was also thought to be too little support for schools with West Indian and Asian families.

One of the Rampton Report's findings, which had a strong effect on the Swann Report, was that teachers' stereotypes were disadvantageous. The discussion at this point appears to point to the need for a specifically anti-racist strategy as the centre of a policy for minority children in schools (Rax, 1989). The Swann Report called for many changes under an anti-racist strategy. However, stress was laid on provision for bilingual pupils within a mainstream system responsive to linguistic diversity, but within a curriculum framework

common to all pupils (Bourne, 1989). In response to the concern for the rights of disadvantaged minority groups, Swann made a number of recommendations for provision for bilingual pupils as far as English language support was concerned, but specialism is rejected. Swann came out firmly against separate provision ('withdrawal') of all kinds. It stressed that the English needs of bilinguals should be organised within the mainstream 'as part of a comprehensive language policy for all children' (DES, 1985: paragraph 5.2); all teachers have a responsibility to cater for the linguistic needs of their pupils, of whatever language background, and the DES and LEAs should give them 'appropriate support and training' to be effective (DES, 1985: paragraph 5.5).

Subsequently, the previous provision and separate 'ESL' course were criticised as they tended to exclude bilingual children from mainstream classes until they were 'proficient enough' in English to join their peers in subject learning. This was viewed as having the effect of magnifying differences rather than recognising diversity. But mainstreaming was claimed to be inclusive and to challenge the monolingual status quo while remaining solidly anti-assimilationist (Bourne, 1989). Terms like 'immigrant children' or 'non-English speakers' were replaced by 'bilingual children'; the EAL provision subsumed within a conceptualization of mainstream English was claimed to give positive recognition to children learning English as an additional language. As a result, ESL lessons were removed, ethnic minority children were no longer withdrawn from their ordinary classes for language support lessons, and the support teachers moved into mainstream classes to support the general school teaching and learning, rather than providing extra English lessons. This seemed like a major breakthrough, whereby the class teacher and the specialist teachers, if any, now shared the responsibility of teaching minority ethnic children English, and all other areas of the curriculum. In theory, even if not always in practice, fluency in English was not regarded as a prerequisite for school learning, and some financial and specialised support was available for teaching the broader curriculum.

Rampton's vision was elaborated by Swann through the production of *Education for All* (DES, 1985). 'When the Swann Report considered a multilingual society as different from a multiracial society, there was an evidence of possible inconsistency in the high value

given to minority languages and the lower value given to the place of such languages in the educational system' (Baker,1988: 62). The Report called for the equal acceptance of all minority languages in the mainstream education. In essence *bilingual education* was rejected, as it was perceived as using the mother tongue as medium of instruction. Children's home language was seen as a positive asset of multicultural education and resource for schools, it should be fostered, but not incorporated in any general way into the mainstream teaching (DES, 1985). In other words, mother tongue teaching within the mainstream was seen as worth developing, only when ethnic languages may become a subject within the curriculum but not a medium in teaching the curriculum. Crucially, it maintained that mother tongue maintenance was not a school aim, the minority communities were themselves directly responsible for their own linguistic, religious and cultural needs, and that both mother tongue use and its maintenance were best achieved within community provision.

Consequently, during this period many new community language schools were established by the communities themselves; schools and classes generally took place on Saturdays and Sundays.

Apparently, the Committee's concerns here focused on what it saw as the 'dangers' of any separate provision. However, the question is whether this anti-racist strategy is sufficiently included in the proposed policy of education for all (Verma, 1989); whether incorporation of provision for bilingual children into the mainstream, then, is not without its dangers (Bourne, 1989). Unfortunately, reports during the 1980s neither addressed the fact that many minority ethnic children had very different starting points, nor considered the need for all-round support and possibly different routes to mainstream curriculum. It is paradoxical to find that individuality for minority ethnic children was again totally lost, the notion of 'sameness' only meant they were all labeled disadvantaged but they should be treated in the same way as monolinguals, it had nothing to do with equality. Also, what was excluded in both the Rampton and Swann Reports was the fact that some minority ethnic children did particularly well, or that there might have been other important factors, which might have had an impact on teaching and learning. There is a considerable difficulty in the

discussion of any of the differences between groups of children, whether chosen according to social class, sex, race or any other criterion. Thomas (1990) argues for a greater awareness of 'difference' by teachers who should take action to minimize disadvantages and to spread advantages more widely. He further argues that no individual child should be thought to carry a disadvantage simply because he or she is a member of a particular class, sex or race. Bourne (1989) reminded us that 'with a short history of 'special' provision, it might be easier for schools to return to a tradition of ignoring diversity in language needs, rather than to begin exploring new teaching strategies'(Bourne, 1989: 5).

3.3.4 National Curriculum and Centralization since the 1990s

Centralisation is the key feature of this period in the West as well as in England. However, prior to the Education Reform Act in 1988, Britain was the only country in Europe where curriculum planning was the concern of individual schools. Teachers were able to devise a school curriculum and conduct teaching activities freely in classrooms. The tradition was challenged when the National Curriculum, the central part of the Act, was introduced in 1989 and implemented in the early 1990s. Apart from the unified National Curriculum, the Act is concerned with the creation of grant-maintained schools (enabling schools to 'opt out' of LEA control and have a direct relationship with DES); parental choice, especially in the form of open enrolment for schools; local financial management of schools; the abolition (1989) of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA); changes in the funding and control of higher education; and a number of miscellaneous items. The introduction of the National Curriculum underlined the official view of assuring high standards of national education, leveling up educational achievement for everyone and ensuring an equal access to future life chances. But as expected, as soon as the National Curriculum came into effect, it almost immediately met with criticism from teachers all over the country as being both unmanageable and too narrow in its focus. There was also a lot of controversy amongst the educational community over the structure of the curriculum, the way it had been set up, and the approaches adopted in particular subject areas and some issues like equal opportunities. Ethnicity was mentioned but unexplored. In response to this widespread hostility, the

National Curriculum was revised in 1992 and in 1995, and the newly revised National Curriculum, published in November 1999, has been implemented since 2000.

However, the debates have continued, at least among educationists, who wish to see further improvement. Issues, such as 'ethnic minority achievement', 'individual needs of linguistically disadvantaged children', 'English as a second language support' are strongly pursued and highly controversial. So far the term 'equality of opportunity' used by Kenneth Baker (1987) when he was Secretary of State for Education, and later reflected in the National Curriculum Council's initial promise, has been found hard to fulfill within the present curriculum framework. The claims that the Act would 'open the doors of opportunity' for all children, that it 'will be taking account of ethnic and cultural diversity and ensuring that the curriculum provides equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of ethnic origin or gender' (NCC, 1988), and that the assessment development agencies would be making every effort to ensure that the SATs (standard assessment tasks) avoid race, culture or gender bias, that they should be amenable to translation into another language other than English or Welsh and that they would not contain material to put children from the ethnic minorities at a disadvantage (SEAC, 1989), however, are not consistent with the reality in the mainstream class. In terms of many linguistic minorities and emergent bilingual pupils, none of these documents emerging from the Act have identified their experiences, starting points and approaches to be any different from the monolingual norm.

'Our initial reaction to pure belief in respect of bilingual pupils was that all pupils must have access to the same attainment target and programmes of study.' (DES, 1989: 10.6)

It seems that individual differences have been totally ignored in the name that all children are entitled to the same curriculum. The transitional role of mother tongue support was emphasised as:

'...where bilingual pupils need extra help, this should be given in the classroom as part of normal lessons and that there may be a need for bilingual teaching support...until such time as they are competent in English.' (DES, 1989:10.10)

In addition, the curriculum documents recognize very few currently accepted research findings in the field of bilingual education in terms of principles (Gregory, 1994). It is suggested that even use of the term 'bilingual' is confusing, as it gives the idea that 'bilingualism' is regarded as an asset, but then provides no conditions for 'additive bilingualism' to take place and thus diverts attention from the children's need for extra help in English. In fact, the advantages of full bilingualism are only used as an excuse for the neglect of linguistic and cultural differences. At most, the educational provision that the National Curriculum offered for emergent bilingual children has been tagged on to an already existing practice introduced by the Swann Report. The notion of *Education for All* has been echoed as 'the same curriculum for all' through a more and more centralist tune. What has been left out is that the curriculum has excluded reference to the multicultural initiatives which had developed during the 1970s and 1980s.

What is worse, this centralisation has developed a new framework for funding, administering and monitoring all aspects of education. 'Funding has been devolved to school level, school budgets are determined by student numbers, a diversity of schools has been encouraged and selection of pupils by schools has re-emerged' (Tomlinson, 2000: 22). At the same time an educational market has been created, based on parental 'choice' of school. Competition between schools is fuelled by the annual publication of the raw scores of public examinations, e.g. GCSE and SATs, and schools are rewarded by a funding formula for the numbers of pupils they attract. 'In this educational climate, values of competition, individualism and separation have become important, social and racial justice and equity less so' (Tomlinson, 2000: 22). However, interestingly enough, even when individualism is returned to parental wishes as they respond to educational market forces, individuality is still not found in any policy devised for minority ethnic children. They are all treated in the same way as monolinguals but their linguistic need is severely ignored in the mainstream class. Although the term of 'equality of opportunity' has been frequently used, ethnic minority children have never done well in situations of selection as they are linguistically vulnerable children in the competitive market situation, which, via the mainstreaming of the provision, reject them both socially and educationally. Prior to 1988,

initial disadvantages experienced by ethnic minority children, emergent bilingual children in particular, were associated with issues of English language teaching, underachievement, an inappropriate curriculum and selective systems that worked against minorities, and they are continuing to be experienced by minority children. Now, in the 1990s lack of funding, teachers' low expectations and no knowledge of minority educational issues are 'new forms of inequalities and new disadvantages' emerging at the same time as the education systems respond to market forces (Tomlinson, 2000: 17-20). On the analogy of above-mentioned inequalities, the centralised curriculum practice in the mainstream classroom has actually intensified the disadvantaging situation for emergent bilingual children. It is worrying in particular that both research and government reports have so far failed to produce national policies that would bring about real inclusion and successful education of ethnic minority children.

There are certainly continual attempts by central government during the early years of the twenty-first century. For instance, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) replaced the education element of the Home Office Section 11 grant in 1999, which has represented 'a conscious shift in policy focus. It was intended to widen the scope of the programme from one aimed mainly at addressing EAL needs to one aimed at raising standards for all minority ethnic groups at risk of underachievement' (DfES, 20003). Likewise the DfES has begun to address the issue of the achievement of ethnic minority children. In its recently launched consultation document *Aiming High: raising the Achievement of minority Ethnic pupils*, the DfES sets out its thinking and outlines a proposed strategy. The approach, e.g. establishing an Ethnic Minority Achievement Team, has been encouraging so far, however, there is of course the question of what the strategy looks like, its implications and whether it will achieve its objectives particularly, for NALDIC (National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum), in relation to bilingual pupils and their individuality. Jones (2003) points out that there are two important issues that will impact on this. Firstly, the fact ministers tend to take little notice of ideas that, in their perception, challenge or fall outside their broad policy parameters. Secondly, there appears to be no new money to fund the strategy...' (NALDIC News 2003: Vol.29). Besides, the implementation of a new funding formula for the distribution of

EMAG, while long overdue, will adversely affect some authorities. With the OFSTED report *Managing Support for the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Group* published in 2001, central government should have noticed that the demands on the funding were increasing.

To conclude, we have every reason to worry if EAL support in the mainstream context is to be further marginalized as a result of this new form of funding; if the disadvantaging situation for emergent bilingual children is to be intensified due to this new form of educational exclusion.

3.4. Summary

A brief historical literature review convinces us that what is called the 'British heritage' is understood as individualised school curriculum and practice, whereby individual differences are highly valued and strongly pursued at every single level, as is teacher autonomy (professional insight). Both the Hadow and Plowden Reports placed great emphasis on individual differences and thought the child at the heart of the educational process. However it has only been since the 1960s that the language needs of school children speaking languages other than English have become an issue in England. In the period of assimilation, attitudes towards 'immigrant' children were essentially negative. A special English provision was established for the children of immigrants but their first languages were largely ignored or considered a 'drawback'. Paradoxically, the view of 'difference' taken in the reality was not consistent with the central philosophy of the Plowden report which claims to value individual differences; the notion of all 'non-English speaking children' as being 'the same' and needing the same provision, also contrasted with the aim of 'individualism' and 'child-centred' education promoted in the report. In the time of specialism, educational disadvantage and educational needs of those children were being identified, and the influence of a child's cultural identity and mother tongue were counted not only as a possible deficit concept but also an additive enrichment in certain ways. This period featured by the Bullock Report has been generally accepted as the 'golden age' in recognition of the individual needs of linguistic minority children.

However, under the pressure of integration in languages, there emerged a sudden move from separate English teaching programmes into providing language support within the 'mainstream' classroom. The Swann Report rejected traditional assimilation and also rejected the policy of separatism. In the role given to minority languages within mainstream education existed evidence of possible inconsistency in the high value given to minority languages and the lower value given to the place of such languages in the educational system. The Report called for the equal acceptance of all minority languages in mainstream education. In essence, bilingual education was rejected. It included the view that minority languages should be fostered, but not incorporated in any way into the normal school curriculum as a medium in teaching the curriculum. This policy indicated a negative return to a tradition of monolingualism which ignored diversity in language needs, but this was done in the name of 'education for all'. Finally, this incorporation of provision into the mainstream has been justified and further developed through a much-centralised National Curriculum since the 1990s. The term 'equality of opportunity' is said to be the central theme of this centralisation, but then in terms of many linguistic minorities and emergent bilingual pupils, provides no conditions for individualism and individuality to take place. Emergent bilingual children in particular, who are all 'lumped' together as being 'disadvantaged', no documents emergent from the theme have identified their experiences, starting points and approaches to be any different from the monolingual norm. Thus 'equality' only means putting them all together in spite of differences. Interestingly enough, even when individualism is returned to parental wishes as they respond to the educational market force, individuality is still not found in any policy devised for minority ethnic children. They are treated in the same way as monolinguals, but their linguistic need is severely ignored in the mainstream class. What are worse, new forms of inequalities born out of problematic inclusion and new forms of funding have emerged, which will intensify the disadvantaging situation for emergent bilingual children through marginalizing EAL support in the mainstream context.

As the present research on emergent bilingual children as well as the educational provision for them involves many areas across second language learning, bilingual teaching, peer

interaction and parental involvement, a more detailed literature review will be undertaken in each of the following chapters.

Chapter 4 Methodology and Design of the Study

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss and justify the distinct forms of this study in terms of the methodology. The discussion begins with an examination of general features of the research approach within which this study has its origin, then proceeds to justify details about the particular methods employed for data collection, and the specific approach taken for analysing and interpreting the findings.

By methodology, I refer to the fundamental or regulative principles, which underpin any discipline. Traditionally speaking, there are two general approaches of inquiry: **quantitative / qualitative**. The former usually relies on systematic and structured use of numerical data while the latter aims to investigate through ‘...detailed narrative accounts, which emphasise social meanings and cultural contexts’ of the phenomenon studied (Foster, 1996: 4). The fundamental differences between them are ‘assumptions about how humans know, about what can be known and about what are suitable approaches to inquiry’ (Ely et al., 1997: 4). However, I agree that quantitative-qualitative arguments are ‘essentially unproductive’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 41), ‘all methodologies have their limitations and the only **rule** that survives is **anything goes**’ (Feyerabend, 1975: 296). In other words, any methodology only makes sense if we understand what the research process is all about (Silverman, 1993:1). My investigation starts with the exploratory research question of how beneficial it is for older primary age children speaking no or very little English to be plunged into mainstream classrooms, what is considered as good practice in developing support for emergent bilingual children; and what might have contributed to the linguistic and cultural success of bilingual children. The questions arising in the pilot study are issues from a portrayal of the school provision for ethnic minority children who enter this country at KS2 mid-phase, just beginning to learn English, that they do not speak at home. These questions should be addressed and explored reflexively through narrative accounts with emphasis on generating rather than testing hypotheses.

Ethnography particularly, with its emphasis on generating rather than testing hypotheses, has been chosen as the most appropriate framework for this research.

4.2 Ethnography - the most basic form of social research

Ethnography, in many respects, is the most basic form of social research. Since it aims to interpret culture and investigate society, ethnography critically incorporates a variety of philosophical positions, theoretical orientations and research practices. These practices draw upon inductivist empiricism, descriptive naturalism, interpretive paradigms and cultural relativism. They may also incorporate ideas from action theory and symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and constructionism. In my view, those different influences have come to shape the nature of ethnography and given rise to new developments from within.

4.2.1 Research Principles in Practice

Participant Observation

Ethnography agrees with inductivist empiricism that knowledge must be derived from observations by a process (induction), and also shares the view with descriptive naturalists that the research must be carried out in ways that are sensitive to the natural setting and remain true to the nature of the study. Therefore it claims that it is necessary to eradicate the influence of values and preconceptions, and observe what is there rather than substitute our prior notions for the thing we should be observing. In this sense, ethnography brings a variety of techniques of inquiry into a prolonged and repetitive observation involving attempts to observe things that happen, listens to what people say and question people in the setting under investigation over an extended period. Hence the 'natural' state, undisturbed by the researcher and not an 'artificial' setting, like experiments or formal interviews, should be the primary source of data. Theory comes to be developed out of data

analysis and all subsequent data collection is guided strategically by a well-defined set of assumptions or **hunches**. It is often generated rather than solely tested. Theories and explanations must emerge from the work as it goes on (McNeill, 2000: 70).

However, as regards the observer position, ethnography is distinctive in a particular way. As founders of ethnography, anthropologists took the view that society and culture could only be studied from the inside by the immersion of the researcher in the society under study. Later, sociologists came to use the method. They argued that the people living outside the culture of their group could become a member of the group through participation. At the same time, '**being there**' (Schutz, 1964) creates an attitude of objectivity because the outsider must carefully examine what seems self-explanatory to the members of the group and they know that the other ways of life were possible. The essay on *The Stranger* by Schutz (1964) provides a model for the ethnographer using **participant observation**. In this model, the ethnographer tries to treat the familiar world of 'members' as anthropologically strangers, so as to gain an objective interpretation. This is particularly demanding when a researcher is studying a group with which he or she is familiar. Generally, a series of potential observer roles are open to the ethnographer. He or she can be the complete participant, the complete observer, the participant as observer or the observer as participant. It depends much on the researcher's choice of whether to take an overt or covert role in the setting. The best observational position for doing ethnographic studies is to go '**marginal native**' (Walsh, 1999) which combines participation in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data.

Relativism in Epistemology and Methodology

As far as epistemology is concerned, ethnography shares the view with the relativist position which believes that there are only truths and no universal truth, versions of reality but no one reality. The point of departure is the well-known fact that cultures are diverse (Lazar, 1999). The famous relativist, Peter Winch (1970) exemplified a particularly radical version of conceptional relativism by rejecting the notion that science tells us what exists and claiming that the check of the independently real is not peculiar to science. Nearly all

relativists do not accept that reality exists outside cultures and languages and agree with Goodman (1982), another radical relativist, that social science can produce no single 'right' view of the world, but only one of many possible 'versions'. Relativism has had a profound influence not only on social science research but also on natural scientists. Kuhn (1970)'s relativist paradigm is said to reject the rationalist view of science because he argues that 'paradigm' is a shared view of the discipline and the world it seeks to investigate, as well as a set of methods for such an investigation and claims that the term 'truth' and 'falsity' have meaning only within a paradigm and there is no reality outside the paradigm (Lazar, 1999). When anthropologists applied this idea to the ethnographic analysis of cultural difference, there emerged Cultural Relativism. Faced with non-Western societies, which may largely possess an oral culture, researchers are encouraged by a perception of their diversity to take an attitude of cultural relativism, whereby the values and institutions of any given society are seen to have an internal logic of their own. Any attempt to judge other societies as inferior or superior, in this view, is condemned as ethnocentric. This attitude eventually leads to the view that rationality itself is simply a value position promoted by Western societies (Walsh, 1999).

Besides, as regards methodology, ethnographers appreciate Paul Feyerabend's (1975) critical view that 'All methodologies have their limitations and the only rule that survives is anything goes'. This supports a powerful epistemological argument for using a diversity of methods to gain knowledge (a claim about how we might gain true knowledge of the world). Ethnography, in this sense, opposes the notion that there is one supreme method for doing ethnography, and argues that ethnography is a research approach, a methodology, but not only a method. It may use various methods including participant observation, life-stories, interviews, case studies, and even surveys and other statistical methods as it is held that doing an ethnography does not mean that quantitative methods cannot be used. In addition, Feyerabend's argument that no theory ever 'agrees with all the known facts in its domain' also has an effect on ethnographic research. This leads to the view that social research is characterized by scepticism and openness. The essential core of ethnography is to make use of all useful theories and methods in order to gain insights about another way of life from the native point of view. In ethnographic research the process is one of a

constant interaction between problem formulations and data collection. Very often questions prove to be different from those the research initially intends to study. One of strengths of ethnography is its open-ended nature.

Subjectivity for Achievement of Objectivity

The issue of how social science produces objective knowledge is often referred to as the problem of objectivity. Because it is about the status of social scientific 'knowledge', it is one, which no social scientist can avoid. Generally, there are four basic positions on the implication of initial value commitments and subjectivity for the achievement of objectivity, namely naturalist 'value freedom', reconciles 'value relevance', feminist 'emotion involvement' and relativist 'truths not truth' (Lazar, 1999: 17-21).

Ethnography tends to favour relativism and feminism in this respect. One solution for ethnographic studies to eliminate the effects of the researcher on the data is the direct experience of the social world, which requires researchers to '**surrender**' themselves to the cultures they wish to study (Wolf, 1964). There is no doubt that **reflexivity** is a significant feature of social research and it is true that social researchers, whatever their theoretical perspectives, are individuals with personal characteristics, are situated in a certain class, ethnic group, gender, religious group and live in a particular historical period. The orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer on them. What this represents is a rejection of the idea that social research can be carried out in some autonomous realm. And recognition of reflexivity implies that there are elements of positivism and naturalism, which must be abandoned, but it does not require a rejection of all of the ideas associated with those two lines of thinking. Ethnography, therefore, does not see reflexivity as undermining researchers' commitment to realism; it only undermines naive forms of realism, which assume that knowledge must be based on some absolutely secure foundation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). The '**observer's paradox**' (the problem that the researcher has an unknown effect upon the behaviour of the participants) is not a problem in ethnographic studies because ethnographers are required to be simultaneously both

passive observer and active participant in the social world they study. This is achieved by becoming a member of the group or observed community. This view involves seeing social research as one possible interpretation amongst many. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) refers to the task of ethnography as developing '**thick description**' (broad cultural interpretations and generalizations), through which ethnographers produce their own distinctive forms of knowledge. Recently it is an increasingly accepted view that objective knowledge can be gained by adopting methods of study appropriate to its subject matter. Ethnography is thus scientific to the extent that it uses appropriate methods and is rigorous, critical and objective in its handling of data. In order to achieve 'reliability' and 'validity', qualitative researchers are encouraged to follow certain ground rules (Silverman, 1999:197-210)

- 1) Don't mistake a critique for a reasoned alternative.
- 2) Avoid treating the actor's point of view as an explanation.
- 3) Recognise that the phenomenon always escapes.
- 4) Avoid choosing between all polar oppositions.
- 5) Never appeal to a single element as explanation.
- 6) Understand the cultural form through which truths are accomplished

Interpretation of Subjective Meaning

The interpretive tradition has informed several approaches to social research. Interpretation is essential and of central importance to give interpretive understanding of subjective meaning. What is being questioned in recent decades is referred to as realism. The criticism of realism partly stems from a tension within ethnography between the naturalism characteristic of ethnographers' methodological thinking (conventional view) and the constructivism and cultural relativism (critical view). Constructivists believe that society is to be seen as socially constructed on the basis of how its members make sense of it and not as an object-like reality. They urge a radical break with all ideas of objective scientific inquiry. This position involves not simply seeing ethnography as a revelation of social construction but seeing ethnographic research as itself participating in the construction of

the social world, or in other words, ethnographers see themselves constructing the social world through their interpretations of it, because those interpretations sometimes reflect different cultures, so that there is a sense in which through their actions people create different social worlds.

4.2.2 Distinctive Research Procedure

Ethnography, as a methodology, follows the general principles of qualitative research, but it has unique characteristic features in both subject matter and approach (Walsh, 1999).

Firstly, ethnographers study people in their natural settings, seeking to document the world in terms of the meanings and behaviour of the people in it. Ethnography places in doubt the variables which quantitative research analyses, examining instead their socio-cultural construction.

Secondly, it does not follow the sequence of deductive theory testing because it is in the process of research itself that research problems come to be formulated and studied. It does not start with a hypothesis.

The generally accepted procedure in ethnographic research is as follows:

- a) the initial question is followed by substantial fieldwork in a naturalistic setting; initial fieldwork is guided by assumptions and hunches;
- b) during fieldwork, multiple questions and hypotheses are arising from the data collected until patterns are discerned to provide an analytic framework; constant feed-back from data informs analysis;
- c) there is a narrowing down of hypotheses to form an argument, which is substantiated further through **triangulation of methods**;
- d) on writing-up, the aim is to produce '**trustworthy**' ((Mishler, 1986) evidence through a full and explicit description of the social world in which events take place whilst

realising that the reader and researcher share a joint responsibility in interpreting events.

Thirdly, ethnography brings a variety of techniques of inquiry into play involving attempts to observe things that happen, listen to what people say and question people in the setting under investigation.

Fourthly, the observer is the primary research instrument, accessing the field, establishing field relations, conducting and structuring observation and interviews, recording and transcribing and finally writing up the research. It is essentially the observer who stands at the heart of ethnography and of its open-ended nature.

Ellis (1994), from his practical research, suggests three advantages of an ethnographic approach:

- (1) it can account for learners who do not participate actively in class;
- (2) it can provide insights into the conscious thought processes of participants;
- (3) it helps to identify variables, which have not previously been acknowledged.

However, at the same time he also points out the 'difficulty of generalizing results, and the danger of ignoring superordinate variables relating to the learners' social context' (Ellis, 1994: 569).

4.2.3 Conclusion

Ethnography, as a distinctive methodology, presents opportunities for social and cultural research. Participant observations, open-ended natural settings, reflexivity and the strong interpretative character are the basic features of ethnographic research. Reflexivity as a significant feature does not undermine researchers' commitment to realism but only undermines naive forms of realism, which assume that knowledge must be based on some absolutely secure foundation. It is wrong to think that doing ethnography is all about

textuality, all about inventing realities or all about telling stories. If ethnographers are simply in the business of introducing new text into a society and culture that is little more than an interplay of 'text', we must have given up any notions of science or truthfulness (Walsh, 1999). Actually ethnography is to produce its own distinctive form of knowledge through 'thick description'. Here the 'observer's paradox' is not a problem in ethnographic studies since ethnographers recognise that the researcher must be part of the world studied. The concern with eliminating the effects of the researcher on the data, for ethnographers, can be solved by being a 'stranger' within the group as well as being part of it.

However, there are some difficulties in ethnographic research, which are not only analytical but also more ethical. Beginning ethnographic studies, the researcher should be well aware of the observer's position (overt or covert), the access to the field, field relations and field observation. The fact that ethnographic research depends on building up relations of rapport and trust with people in the field, whilst using this to generate and collect data from them, raises issues of manipulation, exploitation and secrecy. Yet ethnography, through participant observation of the social and cultural world, opens out the possibility of an understanding of reality, which no other method can realize (Walsh, 1999: 232). In recent decades ethnography has become a popular approach to social research, along with other kinds of qualitative work. It stems in part from disillusionment with the quantitative methods that for long held the dominant position in most of the sciences, and in most areas of applied social research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995:1).

4.3 Design of the Study

Ethnography involves the researcher in describing the culture and people's daily lives in a way which is as faithful as possible. It begins with participant observations then integrates field observations into a '**cultural whole**' (Baszanager & Dodier, 1997:8). Various researchers have adopted this approach in relation to many different aspects of culture and society, including the study of language and literacy learning. A group of people being studied may be large, as in the case of community studies of a whole area like City

Literacies (Gregory & Williams, 2000) or quite small, as in the various researches on mainstream deaf children, a school in its community, or bilingual children in nursery. My study concentrates on studies of relatively small groups - Chinese emergent bilingual children in the mainstream classroom. Their educational experiences in the mainstream classroom lead me to the questions of *equality and inequality of opportunity in Education*. In other words, the questions posed in the study are issues from a portrayal of the school provision for ethnic minority children who enter this country at key stage two, just starting to learn English that they do not speak at home. These questions should be addressed and explored reflexively through narrative accounts with emphasis on generating rather than testing hypotheses. They cannot be explored through a structured interview or a questionnaire. Ethnographic case studies from children's home and classroom ethnography are the main data to be collected in the study. What I want to illustrate from the following are details about the particular methods I employ, what are the problems and difficulties in the process and how ethnographic strategies work out for me.

4.3.1 Organisation of the Investigation

As mentioned earlier, it is the researcher's task to 'get inside their (the participants) head' until it is possible to see their world as they do (McNeill, 1990). And this cannot be achieved through a structured and logically sequential research design that compartmentalizes it into distinct stages, but certain phases can be identified.

Sampling

Selecting cases for investigation is the most crucial aspect during the early stages of the research design. The first decision to be made was the choice of topic and group to be studied, then came the choice of where to observe and when, who to talk to and what to ask, as well as about what to record and how (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 45). In this process I am not only deciding what is and is not relevant to the case under study but also sampling from the data available in the case.

First of all, I identified my research questions relevant to the Chinese community particularly so as to have an easy access owing to my Chinese background. My attention was deliberately focused on children aged 8-10, who had recently entered English schools and were learning in a language they could not yet speak. However, at the beginning of the process, I was unable to find my sample, as it was hard to find that particular group. One of the head teachers of a community school told me that the best time for finding those immigrant children was during the 1970-1980s when lots of Chinese refugees from Vietnam came over to the UK, and around 1997 when Hong Kong was taken over by China, many children came with their parents to the UK. He was right at this point as most children I met in Chinese community schools were either born or brought up in this country. Then I tried some English schools for clues but only to find it disappointing. Being so frustrated that I was unable to find the children I wanted, I wondered if my research proposal was realistic enough to be continued. It was then when a friend of mine in South Bank University came to my aid after he learnt my intention. He gave me Shan's mum's telephone number. I was overwhelmed with this discovery as the English saying goes 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'. Then again through my husband's friend I met the two sisters from the Hong Kong family. So far I was eventually able to sample three girls of recent arrivals, in which the children's family backgrounds were to be taken into account carefully.

However, what was being neglected at the beginning was the sampling of the older children aged 13-14, who came to the UK with their parents from Mainland China four or five years ago. Their past experience and early memories were also relevant to my research interest. In order to get hold of the data available in this context, I embarked on teaching in the GCSE Chinese class in the London Mandarin School.

Once children of recent arrivals in English schools and older children in the London Mandarin School were selected, community schools, London primary schools and secondary schools and children's homes became my chosen contexts where the study was thus to take place. In these contexts, data was to be collected through interviews, diaries,

and participant observation. I also used my own experience as a learner of English in China to inform my study (see chapter one) as well as my experience as the mother of a child who had recently been in the same situation as my emergent bilingual participants.

Access

Access to the different settings sampled is particularly essential in ethnography and it is also an issue to be resolved throughout the whole of the data collecting process. Ethnographers believe access is not simply a matter of physical presence as it is far more than the granting or withholding of permission for research to be conducted. Therefore on the first level I used the ordinary interpersonal resources and strategies that we develop in dealing with everyday life to gain the initial access to the field, then I needed theoretical understanding in ethnography so as to achieve an academic access because ‘the discovery of obstacles, and perhaps of effective means of overcoming them, itself provides insights into the social organization of the setting’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 54).

Involvement in community schools

The initial access to London Chinese community schools was not a problem as the school was similar to a ‘public’ setting like clubs, bars. Any parents who have children involved in Chinese learning can, in principle, enter the schools. As a mother, I was easily granted the right to make inquiries of some information relevant to my interest. One of the advantages for this initial entry was that I could speak both Cantonese and Mandarin Chinese. Therefore I made frequent visits to those community schools and made best use of the opportunity to talk with parents and get to know some of those emergent bilingual children. However, this initial presence and inquiry could not satisfy my curiosity of knowing how other children of recent arrivals cope with their school if my son was not the only case. Then I started to let people know my professional background (as an university professor of education in China and a researcher in bilingualism at Goldsmiths College). That worked perfectly well right away as I expected. Soon I was asked to be an advisor, often delivering speeches, lectures and articles. Owing to my performance, many parents and friends came to me for educational advice, and I began to get involved in teaching a GCSE Chinese

class, where I began to get familiar with those older bilingual children and their parents.

Meeting with children's parents

Meeting with parents and children was a relatively easy matter. It was especially so when they knew I was an educational researcher as well as a mother of a ten-year-old boy, who shared the same risky situation as their children. But I was very careful at the beginning of the inquiry, as I was afraid of scaring people away if I asked too many questions straightway. For instance, when first contacting the couple from Mainland China over the phone, I began by mentioning their friend in South Bank University then introduced myself as a worried mother rather than an academic researcher in education. We talked about 20 minutes on the phone initially, sharing a motherly worry and anxiety, and then we planned to meet each other the next day. However I did not reveal my academic intent to them until our second meeting at their home. As expected, the couple and the daughter showed even more interest in me as a teacher or a voluntary helper. This initial access told me that I, being a teacher as well as a mother, was very welcome to the family. Since then I have been able to be someone 'being there', undertaking the research. Upon this first experience, my approach to the second family was more direct. I told the couple from Hong Kong right away who I was and what I would do with my research the very first time we met, which proved to have saved me a lot of time. The Hong Kong parents were desperately eager to have me involved in their daughters' education, as they were totally illiterate in English. Their initial impressions of me and our gradually established relationship played an important role in my later access to the school. I trust it is my good intent to offer a kind of concern and assistance that has won their hearts because both parents and children at this stage were desperately seeking support from elsewhere.

Visits to English schools

The access to schools was far more difficult than my previous access to families and community schools. First of all, I needed to be formally granted permission for visits and the research to be conducted. To achieve this, I prepared two letters for each school, with one letter of self-introduction and one supporting letter from the Head of the department at

Goldsmiths. In the letter, I told them the general aim of the research and observations and I also offered my willingness to be a voluntary helper to the children I observed. The procedure was: I contacted the school reception and left the letters with the secretary, then waited for the reply. However it was always the secretary who had power to grant or block access to and who controlled the process. While I was waiting, normally I asked parents for a helping hand, and it worked wonderfully as I expected. For instance, when I paid my first visit to Soho school, I did not manage to see Mr David, the head teacher because the secretary said Mr David was at a meeting and she would contact me to arrange another day when he agreed to see me. One week passed, nothing was heard. I just could no longer wait, so I telephoned Mrs Li, the mother, asking if she could come to school with me so that we could go and see the Head together. She agreed. The next day we got to school around 3:30, we then managed to speak to both the head teacher and the deputy head. When I explained my intention, as expected, they all expressed their hospitality and asked me how often I could come to the school. I had a feeling that they were eager to have me in school in the hope that I could help the two sisters with their lessons in their home language.

Access to primary schools was relatively easier because at this level schools as well as parents all expected some additional help of me. However this was not the case with secondary schools, where even parents rarely have opportunities to speak to class tutors, subject teachers or the head teacher. I had to go through a lot in order to gain permission for my physical presence. As a last resort, I always turned to parents again for help. Parents agreed to take me to the Parents' Evening where I would get an opportunity to meet and talk with teachers. This accelerated the process of getting permission for participant observation and interviews.

My experience of obtaining access corresponded with issues that access is not simply a matter of physical presence or absence. It is far more than the granting or withholding of permission for research to be conducted, as whether to take an overt or covert role in the setting affects the accuracy of ethnographic study because it determines how and where fieldwork can be organized (Seale, 1999). So how important was being Chinese in this?

Field Relations

Observation, inquiry and data collection depend upon the observer gaining access to the field and establishing good working relations with the people in it. Essentially ethnography entails a learning role in which the observer is attempting to understand a world by encountering it first-hand (Walsh, 1999). Once access to a setting has been achieved, issues of the field relation are to be considered. Central to this issue is how to gain trust from people involved and how to avoid at the same time the danger of 'going native' (McNeill, 1990) and over-rapport. It is an issue of the identity that the observer assumes, which very much determines the success of data collection.

*In my study I adopted a completely overt role in the family setting, letting parents know about the purpose of my research, but in the school setting I only partially informed teachers of the research. The combination of two roles has produced desirable effects, in which unnecessary problems in both the covert and overt role have been avoided. Normally I acted passively as a member of the group being investigated so as not to disturb the data but actively as the observer, recording all possible details of context, the participants and ongoing events. This has been achieved by establishing a relationship of rapport and trust, which would minimize the problems of pretence. The trust and rapport from people involved in my study included teachers, parents and children, but different parties would place me within their own experience. Relatively, it was not difficult for me to gain the **trust** of parents and children because they desperately demanded support. However, it was not that easy to achieve the trust from schools, though I was very welcomed to the school. Most teachers were familiar with research and so they viewed the research in a favourable way, but there might have been a mismatch between their expectations of what a researcher should do and the eventual research product. To avoid producing obstacles, I worked hard as a pure language helper for the first two weeks before I conducted any interviews so as to convince them that I had contributed my knowledge to the school and produced several aspects I could share with those children that parents and teachers could not; and that my research in school was to reflect positively the attendance of EAL children in the mainstream classroom, but not to find faults with schools (although I might be critical of*

the present policy). As a result, I earned my credits and trust from schools and teachers, which enabled me to take field notes, to talk with children and teachers and even able to do filming and recording afterwards.

However, what I always bear in mind is to avoid being either a complete observer or complete participant, because being a complete observer would put me in danger of seriously misunderstanding the behaviour and perspectives of participants observed; and being completely immersed would risk going native. 'Going native' sometimes would lead to abandoning some important data and the task of analysis in favour of the joys of participation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 112). Bias may also arise from this 'over-rapport'. And over-rapport with one group leads to problems of rapport with others (Miller, 1952: 98). Therefore the best observational position for doing ethnographic studies is to go 'marginal native', which combines participation in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data. For me, the usual aim throughout is to avoid the observer's paradox or the ethnographer's dilemma. I feel strongly that I have benefited a lot from maintaining a more or less marginal position, which enabled me to have access to participant perspectives but at the same time minimizing the dangers of over-rapport. For instance, in the school being studied I was apparently a voluntary language helper and a researcher in bilingualism. When I was with worried parents, I was a mother myself sharing their anxiety. I was also a bilingual teacher and an academic researcher, being able to help them. These three roles were interwoven throughout the period (see Appendix III & IV).

4.3.2 Data Collection

Data collection in my study is mainly about description of the people's accounts from within a framework as faithful as possible as the way they see it. The accounts given may sound very subjective in the eyes of scientism, however it is a distinctive feature of social research that the 'objects' studied are in fact 'subjects', and themselves produce accounts of their world (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995:124). Many ethnographic studies therefore

have an interest in insider accounts. They are important in two ways in which ethnographers can use data. Firstly, participant knowledge on the part of people in a setting is an important resource for the ethnographer. Secondly, accounts are also important for what they may be able to tell us about those who produced them. Researchers can use what people say as evidence about their perspectives. However not all insider accounts are produced by informants responding to an ethnographer's questions, they may be unsolicited as all human behaviour has an expressive dimension. Some ethnographers, following naturalism, even argue that people's accounts should always be unsolicited so as to avoid the reactivity; nevertheless, the expressive power of language provides the most important resource for accounts. The three broad methods of data collection used in my investigation are observation, interviews and documentation, of which participant observation is a prerequisite; interviews with the people involved and a review of children's writings are my central method to 'get inside their head' (McNeill, 1990: 70).

Observation

Participant observation has always been the central method of ethnographers. It characterizes all ethnographic research and is crucial to effective fieldwork. 'It is the researcher's task to 'get inside their heads' until it is possible to see their world as they do' (McNeill, 1985:70). Generally observation, like any other research method, has its advantages and limitations. One of the main strengths is that '... observation can provide detailed information about aspects of school life, which cannot be produced by other methods' (Foster, 1996:12). Observation allows the observer to study events from perspectives, which may not be available to the participants. Most importantly, observation is the key to studying topics and issues, which cannot be easily quantified. However, limitations of observation as a research method could include that '... sometimes it may be impossible to observe the behaviour or phenomenon of interest because it is inaccessible. And ... observations are inevitably filtered through the interpretative lens of the observer' (Foster, *ibid*: 13-14).

The observation made for this investigation was planned and systematic. I considered all

implications, and gave considerable thought and time in deciding what to observe, who to observe, and how to record the observations. The lessons observed were representative of the general language support provided in the mainstream class and those emergent children's encounter in their journey to learn English as a second language. Teachers knew in advance of the observations but did not know of my critical intention. I also observed meetings between teachers and parents at parent evenings. The guiding principle was compatibility with other data, and issues related to systematic analysis of the data to be collected. During my classroom observations, I took written notes as well as making audio and video recordings.

Interviews

Interviewing has a particular character in ethnography. Ethnographers use interviews to help classify and organize an individual's perception of reality. The general types include structured, semi structured, informal, and retrospective interviews. Each interviewing approach has a role to play in soliciting information. Informal interviews are the most common in ethnographic work. In formal interviews, the differences between participant observation and interviewing are more obvious, while in the case of informal conversations, especially when interviewing people with whom one has already established a relationship through participant observation, the differences are not as great as are sometimes suggested (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995:139-141).

Participant interviews

Participant interviews are very useful approaches throughout my investigation in discovering what parents, children and teachers think and how each agenda's perceptions compare with another's. Owing much to the rapport I have already built with the people in the field and the constant participant observations as 'only extra pair of hands' (McNeill, 1985) both in the mainstream class and at the child's home, interviews are not difficult to obtain, though sometimes it took a considerable time for schools to arrange them.

My interviews with children and teachers have mostly taken place in school settings

including playgrounds, dining halls and classrooms, while interviews with parents have mainly taken place at home or any places other than schools.

The interviews with parents and children are mostly conversations, in which the questions emerge automatically with an open-ended character, whereas the interviews with teachers are more than simple conversations. However, in order to maintain a natural situation while attempting to learn about the teachers' perception of reality, I adopted a more flexible approach, allowing the discussion to flow in a way that seems natural. Here tape recorders were essential for me to engage in lengthy informal and semi structured interviews without interrupting a natural conversational flow. I used a tape recorder in my research simply because I could not write fast enough to catch every word that people say. But I also stopped the recorder whenever I touched on a topic that the interviewee thought was too sensitive to have on tape. In order to avoid unnecessary tension, I usually began with pen and paper, and when the conversation picked up speed I asked if I could switch to the tape recorder. As I immersed myself in the field long enough, I used a video recorder in my interviews more and more often. Most of the time I used it simply as a tape recorder, and to my great discovery, people liked to be in the film, and it was especially so with the children in my project.

My interviews were mostly directive in one way or another in terms of what was and was not relevant. However, I always avoided asking leading questions in fear that certain questions would impose artificiality, e.g. some teachers or deputy heads are in some sense 'speaking for posterity'. The aim for doing this is to minimise the influence of the researcher on what the interviewee says. Thanks to my constant participant observation, I believe my interviews have less 'artificiality'.

Retrospective interviews

Retrospective interviews (Fetterman, 1998), also known as life stories, provide useful information about the individual's experience in the past. They can be structured, semi structured, or informal. I used them in my fieldwork to gather information about some older children (14-15 years) past experience as an emergent bilingual child. This kind of

interview would be the only way to provide me with important data about their first days in English schools, and about what it was that contributed to the success of bilingual learning experiences. In some instances, however, although the data may not be verifiable or even factually accurate, they are still invaluable because the record captures individuals' perceptions of the past, providing a unique look at what kind of disadvantage they encountered in the mainstream class when they first entered an English school unfamiliar with English, and how those difficulties in the language were friendly overcome. For example, one boy during the interview told me he felt very bad when he first moved to an English school. His fellow classmates and even teachers often wronged him. He was very left out in the class activities, as he could not cope with them in English. Since he could not get a proper support from school, his mother later found him a private tutor, who gave him tuition twice a week. Once his English improved, he became confident in class, and he started making friends. Now he was one of the best students in his secondary school. What he told me about his early experience corresponds with my investigation into the situation of present emergent bilingual children in the mainstream school.

Documentation

It has been repeatedly emphasized by researchers that ethnography is a method ideally suited to the study of non-literate cultures and that people's accounts should always be unsolicited so as to avoid reactivity. But it must not be forgotten at the same time that valuable written evidence (e.g. diaries, official documents etc) are an important source of evidence, and the expressive power of written language provides the most important resource for accounts. In a literate culture, then, it is possible to draw on all sorts of 'inside' written accounts - documents produced especially for the purposes of the research and those generated routinely for other purposes (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 158-159). Therefore, ethnographers need to take account of documents as part of the social setting under investigation. There are quite a variety of documentary materials that might be of some relevance to the researcher. These include fictional literature, diaries, autobiographies, letters, and mass media products. In my study, for ensuring a broad perspective as well ensuring reliability and validity, I gathered all available documented

information about those emergent bilingual children being investigated. Evidence collected in the form of documentation includes government papers, school records, younger children's diaries and older children's autobiographical memories. Especially the children's writings have provided me with first-hand insider descriptions, which enable me to elicit information about the personal and private. For instance, reading diaries by three younger children of recent arrivals allowed me to assemble a massive amount of perceptual data with which to generate and answer my research questions about general disadvantaging situations for emergent bilingual children in the mainstream class. And older children's detailed autobiographical descriptions not only told me much about their past feelings in the mainstream class as a new arrival but also some unseen factors that might have contributed to their success on the way to bilingualism. Their inside accounts may not be verifiable or even factually accurate, but they are still invaluable with additional work (together with observation and interviewing). Even those solicited accounts, though they sometimes may be intended for posterity, when carefully managed, and with suitable cooperation from informants, can be used to record data that might not be forthcoming in face-to-face interviews or other data collection encounters (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 164), and they proved valuable resources for me.

Data Recording

Field notes are the traditional means in ethnography for recording observation data, which consist of relatively concrete descriptions of the discoveries and their contexts. The most common tools ethnographers use are pen and paper. Pen and paper have several advantages: ease of use, minimal expense, and unobtrusiveness (Fetterman, 1998: 63). However, the writing of field notes is not an entirely straightforward matter and it should be carried out with as much care and self-conscious awareness as possible. In my study, I wanted to be sure what to write down, how to write it down, and when to write it down. I chose not to make notes during actual participant observation, as I was afraid if I took notes during conversations or participant observation, such activity would be disruptive to any 'natural' participation. However, I needed to jot down some brief notes (hasty notes could be scribbled later) when I left the scene, as even the briefest notes could be valuable aids in

the construction of a more detailed account. Then the notes needed to be worked up, expanded on, and developed as soon as possible before the observations would fade from memory and effort would be wasted. In other words, there would be no advantage in observing social action over extended periods if inadequate time is allowed for the preparation of notes. To avoid this I normally wrote up the events of a day before going to bed at night, or, at the very latest, the following morning.

There is always the temptation to try to observe everything, and the constant fear that some vital incident will be missed in withdrawing from the field, but it is impossible to observe and record everything, and field notes no matter how concrete and descriptive can not possibly provide a comprehensive record of the research setting. In other words, the 'pen-and-notebook' approach to fieldwork inevitably means the loss of much detailed information. The fine grain of speech and non-verbal communication is not easily reconstructed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 186). Besides there always existed scepticism over speakers' original words and summaries in the research's words. Given these problems, any tools that free the ethnographer from manual recording are welcome. The advantages of audio & video recording of observations are considerable. The uses of video or film, still photography, and audio-recording offer various options for data collection and storage. Among them camera recordings are extremely useful in my observation as I, like most ethnographers, 'usually have a fraction of a second to reflect on a person's gesture, posture, or gait' (Fetterman, 1998: 68). On many occasions I used a video recorder to tape teaching activities in the mainstream class, and watched them over and over again, each time finding new layers of meaning, nonverbal signals among participants. Recording data helped me make sense of what was happening to those emergent bilingual children in the class, identify as well what common attitude the teachers had towards those children and how language support from peers took place. Video recordings also helped me observe children's family so as to better understand behaviours and perspectives of both children and parents.

But the limitations in using audio & video recordings is that people either do not want their voice and face to be identifiable, or they are in some sense 'speaking for posterity',

therefore the first task is to obtain permission from interviewees for filming. Normally agreement is forthcoming once it is explained that the purpose is simply to aid note taking and the confidentiality will be maintained (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 186). This was true with most of my encounters. One time I encountered an embarrassing situation when I was working in the classroom in Soho school. I was stopped by the class teacher from filming the lesson. I told her that I got this permission from her the other day, if she remembered? She said she misunderstood me believing I would only be taking pictures, she then said she was not sure what the film would be used for. After I explained my aim and how the data was to be used, she immediately let me film her class activities and even gave me her frank opinion about the situation that the younger sister faced before my camera. Some ethnographers think using audio & video-recordings may actually reduce reactivity rather than increase it. But, of course, the availability of any kind of tape-recording facilities in the field does not remove the necessity for observation and the construction of field notes because overemphasis on audio & video-recordings can distort one's sense of 'the field', by focusing data collection on what can be recorded and concentrating attention on the analysis of visible and spoken action.

4.3.3 Data Analysis

In ethnographic research, data analysis and data collection run concurrently. Their inter-dependent nature is highlighted as 'to encourage researchers to clarify their research foci and questions, and subsequently to collect new data, or sometimes to re-analyse existing data, to shed further light on their revised research problems' (Foster, 1996: 63). Much the same is true of my investigation. In many ways, my data analysis began during my pilot study, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continued through to the process of the writing up. Very often one piece of collected data and its analysis influenced the next piece of data to be collected. For instance, for my pilot observations I interviewed the parents, and the analysis of their responses shaped the types of questions that I asked the children. Likewise, my analysis of responses given by the children and their parents influenced the questions posed to the teachers. Analysis of the data collected during

pilot period triggered my next data gathering.

Reliability and Validity

The initial task in analysing qualitative data is to find some concepts that help us to make sense of what is going on in the scenes documented by the data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 209). Mason (1996) argues that the researcher actively constructs knowledge about that world and is therefore involved in generating rather than collecting data. This process of data generation is intellectual, analytical and interpretive. Therefore the researcher is necessarily active and reflexive in the process of data generation. But this realisation gives rise to some important questions concerning the reliability of data: How can you be sure that you are not simply inventing data, or getting it 'wrong'? Frequently cited discussions of the generalizability of qualitative research can be found in Stake (1978), Guba & Lincoln (1982), Goetz & Le Compte (1984) and Schofield (1993). Stake (1978) agrees that one cannot confidently generalize from a single case to the target population, since single members often poorly represent whole populations. However, he points out one can take the findings from one study and apply them to understanding another similar situation.

In a similar vein, Guba & Lincoln (1982) argue that 'generalizations are impossible since phenomena are neither time- nor context-free'. They suggest replacing the concept of generalization with that of 'fittingness' by which they mean that the researcher should supply full information about the entity studied and the setting in which that entity was found. Goetz & LeCompte (1984) also emphasize the importance of clear and detailed description in deciding the extent to which findings from one study are applicable to other situations. They emphasize 'comparability' and 'translatability'. That is, the findings should be sufficiently well described and defined that other researchers can use the results of the study as a basis for comparison.

Schofield (1993) also states that data collection and analysis are influenced by the researcher's individual attributes and perspectives. He thinks the goal of qualitative research is not to produce a standardized set of results that other researchers can reproduce,

but rather ‘a coherent and illuminating description’ of a situation that is based on detailed study. He also points out that qualitative researchers need to consider seriously the internal validity of their work.

In ethnographic research, this internal **reliability and validity** is usually achieved in four main ways - through triangulation, respondent validation, reflexive subjectivity and catalytic validity.

Triangulation is one of the best-known ethnographic techniques for ensuring the accuracy of data collection and analysis. The term originates from land surveying where it is used to locate one’s position on a map using two landmarks (Webb et al, 1966). The two main techniques are data triangulation and methodological triangulation. In data triangulation, the information may be collected from different sources; whereas methodological triangulation refers to different methods to data collection. In my study, I used both data and methodological triangulation techniques. Data-source triangulation involves the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork, different points in the temporal cycles occurring in the setting, or, as in respondent validation, the accounts of different participants (including the ethnographer) differentially located in the setting. For example, the data for my research come from parents, mainstream teachers, community schoolteachers and students; Data-method triangulation involves the comparison of different methods applied to the same data source. I collected these data through participant observation, interviews and children’s writings. This is very time -consuming but, besides providing a validity check, it also gives added depth to the description of the social meanings involved in a setting (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 231).

Respondent validation is a process in which researchers may have the opportunity to comment on and, if necessary, correct the analysis. It consists of the ethnographer showing findings to the people studied and seeking verification in which the participants recognize a correspondence between the findings and what they say and do. Thus it is mainly a matter of authenticity and can be achieved in a number of ways. Woods (1991) suggests revisiting

informants on a number of occasions and in a variety of settings. 'The value of it lies in the fact' that as researchers may impose their own interpretations on the data, it is important as a safeguard that 'the participants involved in the events documented in the data may have access to additional knowledge of the context - of other relevant events, of temporal framework, of others' ulterior motives, for example - that is not available to the ethnographer' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 228). Respondent validation is a principle, which I used through my fieldwork. My view is that one should use whatever resources available, which help to make sense of the data. The interview data reported in chapters two, five and six, for instance, were collected in two separate rounds; the second round was used to check the validity of the preliminary findings and to explore a number of issues which had emerged in the first round in greater depth. Similarly individuals involved in the parent-teacher interviews were presented with written summaries of the preliminary analysis and given the opportunity to comment and amend. Respondent validation represents one kind of triangulation, which allows me to compare different kinds of data from different sources to see whether they correspond with one another so as to reassess my analysis in various ways.

Reflexive subjectivity is important for those interpretive ethnographers, who, different from descriptive ethnographers, ask what could be rather than describing what is. In order to avoid the criticism that the obvious involvement of the researcher is an obstacle to objectivity, to safeguard against concerns that critical ethnography is too subjective, researchers 'need to recognise our own implication in the production of data and thus must begin to include ourselves (our own practice and their social and historical basis) in our analyses of the situations we study' (Simon & Dippo, 1986: 200). In my study, I have intended to acknowledge the importance of reflexive subjectivity by including a personal statement of my reasons for undertaking research on Chinese emergent bilingual children in the mainstream class.

Catalytic validity is another technique, which attempts to ensure the reliability of research findings in an interpretive ethnography. Its aim is to ensure that the research process results in increased awareness and participation of informants or in other words, ethnographic

research can be used as a resource and reference. In my study, the findings are to be shared with the parents, children and teachers who have taken part in the study; the findings are also of particular importance to those concerned with the education of emergent bilingual children, including local education authority (LEA) officers, inspectors, advisers, teachers, community associations, parents, teacher trainers and policy makers.

The Process of Data Analysis

‘The strengths of qualitative data rest very centrally on the competence with their analysis that is carried out’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10). Researchers usually gather large amounts of data on the phenomenon that they study. Often the collected data is worthless in their original form. Thus the basic function of data analysis ‘...is to summarize this data and identify the significant features and patterns it reveals about the phenomena of concern. Analysis enables researchers to produce the generalized descriptions, evaluations and explanations which are their main aim’ (Foster, 1996: 83).

Stages of data analysis

As data analysis and data collection begin simultaneously in ethnographic research, the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research. Formally, it starts to take shape in analytic notes and memoranda; informally, it is embodied in the ethnographer’s ideas and hunches. And in these ways, to one degree or another, the analysis of data feeds into research design and data collection (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 205). However this commitment to a dialectical interaction between data collection and data analysis is not easy to sustain in practice as fieldwork is a very demanding activity, and the processing of data is equally time-consuming. According to the model suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), there are different stages to the data analysis itself: (1) early stage - data reduction, (2) stage two - data display and (3) final stage - conclusion drawing and verification. However the first stage continued throughout the whole process of data analysis.

In the first stage, I reviewed my field notes, went through audio or video recorded data so

as to become thoroughly familiar with it, and then prepared the transcripts. When transcripts were prepared, I made a decision about how detailed the transcript should be. A careful reading of the transcripts helped me to identify the main theme that ran through the collected data. The aim of it was to use the data to think. Then came the second stage of the analysis, in which I worked out approach to the data display. I was involved in focusing, selecting, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the information from the transcripts and the notes in light of the main focus of the investigation before I was able to interpret and add meaning to the coded transcripts and observation notes. At the final stage of analysis, I will present the findings from the observations in the classrooms and at homes, and also some findings from the interviews with children, parents and teachers.

Transcription & translation

Where transcription is to be carried out, a decision must be made about how detailed this should be. There are well-established conventions for the preparation of transcripts. These have been developed for the purpose of conversation analysis. However, the question of transcription of audiotaped or videotaped data, particularly of conversation, needs to be related to methodology. According to Ochs (1979: 44), 'transcription is a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions'. Analysis begins as decisions are made about how the oral text on the tape is to be turned into a written text on the page. Graddol et al. (1994) see this essentially as an intuitive, impressionistic exercise (Graddol et al: 181), and warn against the appearance of scientific objectivity (ibid182-187) through the over-rigid use of coding conventions as non-verbal and contextual information can also be included as relevant. Fairclough (1992b) also has much to tell us about how decisions about layout can also reflect the viewpoints of the analyst (ibid: 229). As regards my study, transcripts were produced around different themes that I identified in the early stage, and it was carefully displayed in its original forms. For example, whenever videotaped data involved in 2-3 languages, was to be turned into a written text, I deliberately transcribed those alien sounds into Latin script followed by English translation so that people could understand the oral text, and at the same time, could hear the actual foreign sounds as if they were personally on the scene. Besides a specific format was designed for certain purpose of data display, for

instance, I displayed my transcription in a way that different languages the people used in my interview were catalogued into different columns, so that data could present a broader picture of certain theme that I attempted to address in the main study. The following is typical of this format I displayed in transcription (see Appendix VI).

Wington: <i>Nigo M tao de ji hai mieye?</i> / What is the word starting with 'M' ?	Yuan: Muscle, <i>Cantonese hai 'jiyo'</i>
Wington: <i>Niduo, niduo</i> / what about here?	Yuan: Stomach, lung, liver, brain ...
Wington: Stimach...lung...liver...brain...	

(Wington kept reading after Yuan. Wington seemed very happy, every now and then she would stop Yuan for the meanings in Cantonese).

Wington: <i>Come on, du nido la</i> / Come on, read here.	Yuan: constraint and relax.
Wington: <i>Mieye yici?</i> / what is the meaning?	Yuan: <i>xiushu tongmai fansong</i>
Wington: <i>Xu nido yaomo gon guo luolai zuo mie yong?</i> /Does the text tell us what are these bones used for	Yuan: <i>yiding yao la, wo taitai.</i> /it should, let me have a look.
Wington: <i>Hai ng hai nido?!</i> are they here?	Yuan: <i>Hai</i> / yes

Translation is a unique technique I employed in presenting data. Although the professional translation literature distinguishes between translation and interpretation, 'where translation refers to the written modality and interpretation generally refers to the oral modality', I use the term translation 'to refer to all modes of reformulating a message from one language (the source language) into another language (the target language)' (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1996). During processing the text for translation, I paid special attention to the comprehension of the meaning. I agreed, as much literatures on translation suggests, that the processes involved in the comprehension of text can be better understood through translation and interpretation (Mininni, 1981; Nida, 1976; Seleskovitch, 1976) or in other words, a deeper comprehension of the text as whole should improve the quality of the translation (Mininni, 1981; Pergnier, 1978; Seleskovitch, 1976). Within this literature, I do not follow a word-for- word translation pattern on the ground that 'two languages are rarely so similar that a translation equivalent is a word-for-word or phrase-for- phrase

transposition from one language to the other' (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1996: 145). For instance, a word in Chinese may require a phrase in English, a clause in English may require only a phrase in Chinese. Grammatically speaking, Chinese may be more concise than English and other European languages. It is always the case that one page of the Chinese text requires two pages long in English when translated. Therefore, there is generally a certain amount of syntactic and lexical restructuring that must be done in translation, and this was very true when I reformulated the original Chinese script from the children's diaries into the English text. A translated passage from the younger children's diaries is displayed with its printed Chinese script as follows (see Appendix II).

今天下午是历史课，白老师讲英国历史人物亨立八世。全班同学都象平常一样，围坐地毯上。老师说话生动活泼，面部表情丰富。只见她时而写板书，时而提问。班上同学个个积极举手发言，就是我例外。当白老师讲到精彩处，大家都开怀大笑，我也跟着笑，因为我不想让他们看出来我听不懂。我知道，这样做是自我保护，其实我心里很难过。我不知道什么时候才能成为他们中的一员。好在每次课后，我都可以向白老师要些材料，让我爸晚上在家帮助我补习(宋珊(十一岁)日记 2001年3月22日星期四)。

This afternoon in history lesson, Mrs White was talking about Henry VIII. We children were sitting around her on the carpet as usual. She was talking with a rich expression on her face. Sometimes she wrote down a few words on the board, sometimes she raised some questions for us to answer. Many of my classmates, except me, put up their hands, eagerly to put forward their opinions. When Mrs White said something very interesting, the whole class burst out laughing, I just followed suit without knowing what they are laughing about and why I want to do the same. Maybe this was to cover up my ignorance by instinct. Actually I felt sad at heart. I wonder when I can be real part of the class. After each lesson I would usually ask Mrs White for materials so that my father can help me out at home. (Thursday, 22nd March, 2001 - a passage in the diary of Shan, aged 11).

4.4 Summary

Ethnography, as a distinctive methodology, presents opportunities for social and cultural research or in other words, ethnography involves the researcher in describing the culture

and people's daily lives in a way as faithful as possible. Participant observations, open-ended natural settings, reflexivity and the strong interpretative character are the basic features of ethnographic research. It is wrong to think that doing ethnography is all about textuality, all about inventing realities or all about telling stories. Actually ethnography is to produce its own distinctive form of knowledge through 'thick description'. The 'observer's paradox' is not a problem in ethnographic studies since ethnographers recognise that the researcher must be part of the world studied. The concern with eliminating the effects of the researcher on the data, for ethnographers, can be solved by being a 'stranger' within the group as well as being part of it. Various researchers have adopted this approach in relation to many different aspects of culture and society, including the study of language and literacy learning. My study concentrates on studies of Chinese emergent bilingual children in the mainstream class. Their educational experiences in the mainstream classroom lead me to the questions of *equality and inequality of opportunity in education*. These questions should be addressed and explored reflexively through narrative accounts with emphasis on generating rather than testing hypotheses.

Following the generally accepted procedure in ethnography, I began my investigation with sampling. Access to the different settings sampled is particularly essential in ethnography. Central to this issue is how to gain trust from people involved and how to avoid at the same time the danger of over-rapport. In my study I adopted a completely overt role in the family setting, letting parents know about the purpose of my research, but in the school setting I only partially informed teachers of the research. In these contexts, data was to be collected through interviews, diaries, and participant observation. I also used my own experience as a learner of English in China to inform my study (see chapter one) as well as my experience as the mother of a child who had recently been in the same situation as my emergent bilingual participants.

Data collection in my study is mainly about description of the people's accounts from within a framework as faithfully as possible to the way they see it. The three broad methods of data collection used in my investigation are observation, interviews and documentation, of which participant observation is a prerequisite; interviews with the people involved and a

review of children's writings are my central method to 'get inside their head' (McNeill, 1990: 70). Data analysis and data collection run concurrently in my study. In many ways, my data analysis began during my pilot study, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continued through to the process of the writing up. The initial task in analysing qualitative data is to find 'reliability' and 'validity, and this internal reliability and validity is usually achieved in four main ways - through triangulation, respondent validation, reflexive subjectivity and catalytic validity.

What has been unique in my data analysis is that the data display as transcription which is a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions (Ochs 1979: 44). Transcripts in my study were produced around different themes that I identified in the early stage, and they were carefully displayed in their original forms. For example, whenever videotaped data involved in 2-3 languages, was to be turned into a written text, I deliberately transcribed those alien sounds into Latin script followed by English translation so that people could understand the oral text, and at the same time, could hear the actual foreign sounds as if they were personally on the scene. Besides, a specific format was designed for certain purpose of data display, for instance, I displayed my transcription in a way that the different languages the people used in my interview were catalogued into different columns, so that data could present a broader picture of certain themes that I attempted to address in the main study. Again translation is another technique I employed in presenting data. I did not follow a word-for-word pattern in reformulating the children's diaries into English. Instead when processing the text for translation, I paid special attention to the comprehension of the meaning. I also displayed them in both the original Chinese script and English script.

All in all, the whole procedure of my data collection, analysis and presentation all has further testified to the assumption put forward in the beginning of the study that ethnography is an appropriate methodological approach for my present study, which suggests a distinctive way of presenting a portrayal of emergent bilingual children in the mainstream classroom.

PART THREE INTO HOME AND CLASSROOMS - MAIN S STUDY

Chapter 5 EAL Programmes in the Mainstream School

Wilson: *Would you please give the opposite of the word 'small'?*

Student A: *large*

Wilson: *Give me the opposite of word 'quiet'*

Student C: *loud*

Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'soft'*

Kapo: *hard*

Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'good', for instance, you are such a good girl.*

Student E: *bad.*

Wilson: *Spell it for me*

Student E: *b-a-d*

5.1 Introduction

Having investigated the problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class, chapter five sets out to investigate, by observing classroom interaction between teacher and child in EAL programmes, what are the key features of a supportive classroom, what might be considered as good practice in developing support for emergent bilingual pupils within the mainstream class, or in what ways can this effective learning environment take place? A review of some influential theories of second language learning helps us to understand this issue. Some examples of group teaching are highlighted to illustrate the special learning process that takes place and to convey the message that withdrawal inside the mainstream school might be a positive rather than a negative step for children's learning.

5.2 A Theoretical Review

The late 1960s have seen the birth of second language learning as a field of study within applied linguistics. This is reflected in a dramatic increase in the published journals that inform the field. Although this is mainly due to general historic-political changes (the arrival of large numbers of immigrants since the World War II), there are several factors together, particularly contributing to the development of an L2 research. These factors are (1) the previous work in first language acquisition, (2) theoretical conflict as a result of competing views of how language is acquired, and (3) a growing disillusionment with contemporary approaches to the teaching of an L2 (Ellis, 1993). Since then, research in this field has increased rapidly and produced insights from many perspectives into many aspects which are crucial to our understanding of second language learning and language teaching.

5.2.1 Second Language Learning - A Different Process

As early as the 1930s, when Western European research was pointing unambiguously to the negative effects of bilingualism, Vygotsky's (1935) thesis took a very different direction, arguing that first and second language learning involve very different processes. Afterwards in the 1970s more and more linguistic research confirms that the child learns a first language only by being immersed in the language, but second language learning at a later stage, although sharing some aspects of L1 learning, in some area, is different. Theories of L2 learning differ in what they consider to be the crucial aspects, each providing some useful insights into a specific area, most, however, relating to how children learn their first language, and what importance is attached to input and interaction rather than a direct investigation of L2 learning (Cook, 1996). However, it has been pointed out that: 'Evidence about how the child learns a first language has to be interpreted with caution in L2 learning and seldom in itself provides a basis for language teaching.' (Cook, 1996: 7)

The processes are similar only because they all emphasise the interactive and social nature

of learning. However the significant differences between the two processes lie in the conditions under which they are normally learned.

Firstly, 'the child assimilates his / her native language unconsciously and unintentionally but acquires a foreign language with conscious realization and intention' (Vygotsky, 1935, trans. 1962: 2-3). Krashen (1983) defines the two forms of language learning as *acquired knowledge* and *learnt knowledge*, and claims that all L1 knowledge and potentially some L2 knowledge are *acquired knowledge* which is acquired by a natural means in informal situations. It consists of rules, principles, etc. that are not available to conscious attention. Much L2 knowledge is *learnt knowledge*, which is learnt by conscious understanding of rules in formal classroom situations. It consists of explicit linguistic information that is consciously available to the speakers (Krashen & Terrell 1983: 67). Gibbons (1993) defines the differences between the two processes as follows: When a child is learning his or her first language, the home is in general support of language learning, and there are normally many opportunities to engage in one-to-one interaction with an adult. 'Almost all adults from either families or communities intuitively respond to the child by adjusting their own speech appropriately. These responses are tailored to the child's needs, and the child's approximations are accepted and interpreted' (Gibbons, 1993: 10). We may notice, however, some difference between a foreign language and a second language (The term 'foreign language' refers to a target language which is not the environmental language e.g. English is a foreign language in China, while the term 'second language' refers to a situation in which the whole environment, not only the school environment, uses the language a learner acquires). For the purpose of this study, English is a second language for those who do not speak English at home, who are newly arrived in this country and learning English they cannot yet speak fluently in the English mainstream classroom. Although the whole environment, including school uses the language, it takes time for children to get along in the new environment and to catch up with the target language, and yet it is still nearly impossible for them to gain from the classroom setting the same quality, quantity and density from these interactions as they did in their first language environment.

Secondly, learning a first language is, in this sense, 'learning how to mean' (Halliday, 1975). People learning a second language already know how to mean. In other words, second language learners already have one language present in their minds. There is no way that the L2 learner can become a monolingual native speaker by definition (Cook, 1996: 7). At school, children learning a second language are at a very different cognitive and conceptual level from their knowledge of the new language. By the time they start, they will have had wide experience of using their first language, not as an end in itself, but as means of finding out more about the world around them. They begin to learn their second language on the basis of this language experience, and so their learning in the early stages involves working out how to express familiar concepts and meanings in the new language. Problems arise when no transfer is possible because a child has not acquired a certain cognitive functioning in the first language before school (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981).

Thirdly, English-speaking children begin their schooling in a familiar language which they have been hearing and using for at least five years. They have had time and opportunity to use English constantly with a wide range of people and for a wide range of purposes. But for non-English speaking children, especially those of new arrivals, English is not the language through which they have been growing cognitively or a tool by which they have developed their way of thinking for so many years before they arrive in an English speaking country. In an English school they must make up this gap as quickly as possible if they are not to be disadvantaged. By comparison the classroom, especially the second language classroom, may be stressful or threatening, and this may inhibit language learning as well as affecting self-esteem. Classroom anxiety for whatever reason is a very strong factor working against language learning (Gibbons, 1993: 11).

5.2.2 Second Language Learning - more than the transfer of L1

In the 1950s, the prevailing view of how an L2 was learnt was derived from behaviourist theories of learning. According to Skinner (1957), the main representative of behaviourist views, language learning was a process of habit formation in which the main components

were: a) the child imitates the sounds and patterns that he or she hears; b) the well imitated sounds and patterns are reinforced by adult approval or reward; c) in order to obtain more of these rewards, the child repeats the sounds and patterns so that they become habits; d) in this way the child's verbal behaviour is conditioned (or shaped) until the habits become identical to those of the adults (Littlewood, 1984: 5). 'The principal mechanisms involved are imitation, repetition and reinforcement' (Ellis, 1993: 3). Thus the nature of L2 learning would be the forming of a new set of habits. Learners learn the L2 as a result of responding to stimuli and receiving feedback on the correctness of their productions. In other words, the child builds up the complex use of language by interacting with people in a situation for a purpose. The approach emphasises the role of environmental factors, and accounts for what is seen and what can be observed. Successful learning occurs when the learner succeeds in forming new habits, unsuccessful learning is the result of negative transfer (interference) from the learner's L1 (Ellis, 1993) as the old habits of L1 can do nothing but interfere with the new process. The general wisdom held at that time was that 'bilingualism was a disorder that could be corrected through ruthless instruction in a standard majority language, pushing out of the inflicted child all traces of the invading language' - the child's home language (Bialystok, 1996: 1).

The behaviourist view of L2 learning was seriously challenged in the late 1960s by Chomsky's mentalist theories of language learning, which deemphasise the role of the environment and give greater recognition to learner-internal factors (Ellis, 1993). They strongly challenge the habit-formation view by pointing to the creativity that children demonstrate in the process of L1 acquisition, especially in the comprehension and production of numerous sentences that they have never heard before. According to the universal grammar (UG) model, all human beings inherit universal principles and parameters, which control the shape a language can take, and make languages similar to one another. The term 'principles' refers to a highly abstract knowledge of grammar, which applies to language in general, and underlies the grammatical rules of all language. The term 'parameter' refers to principles that vary in certain limited ways from one language to another. Thus language is learnt by setting parameters in the device, and second language learning involves transfer through internal factors. Lydia White's (1986) research has found

that first language setting for the parameter was indeed carried over to the second. Research on other areas of syntax has often produced similar conclusions. Indeed most L2 learners seem to start from their L1 setting rather than from scratch (Cook, 1996:155-156). Its implications for classroom teaching are: L2 learners need to spend comparatively little effort on grammatical structure, since it results from the setting of a handful of parameters. They do, however, need to acquire an immense amount of detail about how individual words are used. The learner needs to acquire large numbers of words, not only in the conventional way of knowing their dictionary meaning or pronunciation, but also in knowing how they behave in sentences. The comparative simplicity of syntax learning in the UG model is achieved by increasing the burden of vocabulary learning (Cook, 1996: 156).

In the late 1970s at a time when the concern for description and theory building gave way to a concern for explanation and theory-testing, researchers set out to use the techniques of error analysis to evaluate to what extent learner errors could be explained with reference to L1 transfer or to the process of creative construction. Data has been collected from within the L2 classroom. The results indicated that 'L1 transfer was far less prevalent than had previously been assumed, lending support to the mentalist position' (Ellis, 1993: 4). A linguistic explanation of L2 learning which has achieved currency since the 1980s is again based on the Chomskian view of government and binding (Chomsky, 1982). According to this view, languages are learnt by setting parameters in the 'Language Acquisition Device', and second language learning involves the resetting of some parameters. This mechanism accounts for the creative process by which learners construct a mental grammar of the L2 (Ellis, 1993). The child's language is not simply being shaped by external forces. Rather, it is being creatively constructed by the child as he or she **interacts** with those around him. The question is whether resetting parameters is the same as setting them in the first place. If L2 learning is the same as L1, Chinese learners of English will learn word order in the same way as French learners of English. On the other hand, if the L1 settings influence L2 learning, Chinese learners will differ from other learners wherever their L1 parameter settings are different. 'Transfer is explained as the influence of the parameter settings established for the first language on the values necessary for the second' (Bialystok, 1996:

3).

Cook (1996) concludes: 'the first language helps learners when it has elements in common with the second language and hinders them when they differ.... But the importance of such transfer has to be looked at with an open mind. Various aspects of L2 learning need to be investigated before it can be decided how and when the first language is involved in the learning of the second. Though transfer from the L1 indeed turns out to be important, often in unexpected ways, its role needs to be established through properly balanced research rather than being taken for granted'(Cook, 1996: 7-8).

Different from applied linguistic perspectives, a social-cultural approach is based on sociolinguistic analysis of language learning and use, which distinguishes consciousness as unique to human development. According to the sociocultural paradigm, bilingualism always contains an element of cultural understanding. A current definition of bilingualism is thus within the realm of culture, which may or may not be directly linked with language. One of the important views in Vygotsky (1935, translated in 1962)'s work *Thought and Language* is that the native language is acquired unconsciously and unintentionally but second language can only be learnt with conscious realization and intention. And the key to gaining access to this consciousness is the effective mastery of two or more languages whereby learning a second language is more than the transfer of the L1, it is 'added' to the development of the first (Cummins, 1979; 1992). This view is supported by a number of research studies (Cummins, 1981; Hamers and Blanc, 1989) which state that children are capable of transferring cognitive functioning in their first language at home to their second language in school, and cognitive skills in their second language in school to their first language at home (Gregory,1994). No cognitive or linguistic advantages are likely to accrue if the children are learning in a 'subtractive' context, where their first language is 'submerged and seen merely as an obstacle to be overcome' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981).

5.2.3 Features of a Supportive Classroom

For non-English speaking children, especially those of new arrivals, what characterises a classroom which is supportive of the second language learner? A number of principles can be discussed as follows:

- A positive attitude towards children's first language and their contribution to the classroom.

All successful teaching depends upon learning, and learners' attitudes to learning and their confidence in themselves as learners are key factors in successful learning. One crucial component in L2 learning is what the students bring with them into the classroom. Positive responses by teachers to children's linguistic needs and children's first language and culture are important in developing their confidence. Everything that is achieved in the classroom depends eventually upon what goes on in the students' minds. Without an understanding of why children need to learn other languages and of how knowledge of other languages are learnt, teachers will always be less effective than they might be. 'Speech accommodation theory' (Giles, 1973; Tajfel, 1974) in social psychology claims that the extent to which a child's success might run parallels with recognition of the home language and culture, and with being treated as an 'important learner' (Gregory, 1994:153-154). Many bilingual children suffer low self-esteem because of early frustrations and language related difficulties in school (Gibbons, 1993). Thus to stop the cycle of failure and low self-esteem, the classroom should provide a comfortable learning environment characterised by teachers' positive attitude towards the children's first language and their culture. There is little point in teaching if those emergent bilingual children are located in a disadvantaged situation as the total situation in which the students are located plays a crucial part in their learning.

- Frequent opportunities for classroom interaction between the teacher and the individual child.

The interactive and social nature of learning has long been recognized across academic disciplines. However, theories of L2 learning differ in the importance they attach to input and interaction. On the one hand nativist theories emphasise the insufficiency of input, arguing that 'the input underdetermines linguistic competence' (White, 1990: 121) in the sense that it can be shown that competent speakers of a language possess knowledge of their language that goes far beyond the actual sentences they could possibly have been exposed to. On the other hand, interaction has been viewed as a kind of crucible that forges knowledge of an L2 through the 'pouring back and forth' and 'gathering together and taking apart' (Brown, 1968: 287) which grammatical patterns are subjected to during the course of face-to-face communication. No matter what view is taken, most L2 theories currently endorse some form of 'input' hypothesis, which states that second language learning depends upon access to input, which is modified in various ways to make it comprehensible. Underlying this principle is the fact that a central function of language is meaningful communication. Factors influencing the comprehensibility of the input have to do with the child's level of cognitive functioning, linguistic proficiency in the target language, and chance to communicate with teachers (Gregory, 1994). There is now considerable research to suggest that a major factor in the academic success of linguistic minority groups is the degree to which learning takes place in an interactive rather than a passive environment (Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988). A supportive classroom should be a classroom where there are many opportunities for frequent dialogues and communications between teachers and students, there are rooms for special attention and extra help, but in classrooms where there are nearly 30 students, teachers' attention and children's personal interaction with teachers become a difficult task for comprehensibility of the input, and teachers under the present National Curriculum framework can make little special recognition of the children's need for different comprehensible input by providing special materials and interaction. Many bilingual children might find themselves very much left out in class activities because of both their language related difficulties, and their particular linguistic needs.

- Planned opportunities for meaningful interaction between peers.

Work and play between peers has been another resource for the interactive classroom, which has revealed a much more equal relationship in teaching and learning. The value of cooperative classroom learning, in which peers work together on academic tasks and provide one another with motivation, guidance, and feedback (Damon, 1984; Slavin, 1987), also suggests that in circumstances in which children have practice in interaction, they may be very helpful to one another. Peers can serve as guides in academic activities in the classroom, especially if such interaction is encouraged in the classroom social structure, giving children experience as onlookers and in coordinated parallel activity, guidance and collaboration (Aronson, Blaney, Stephan, Sikes & Snapp, 1978; Cooper, Marquis & Edward, 1986). 'When teachers encourage and support peer interaction, children may develop skill in academically useful forms of interaction' (Rogoff, 1990: 170). In addition, some shared problem solving between bilingual children underlies the cognitive benefits of peer interaction, as the process provides both children with motivation, feedback and a sense of their own contribution (Chen & Gregory, 2004). A further discussion about bilingual peers' interaction will be detailed in the next chapter.

- A bilingual and bicultural support - an unique contribution

Official education policy documents over the past thirty years have shown some awareness of generally accepted principles for successful second language learning. The term 'additional' indicates the official recognition that 'bilingualism' is referred to as an 'asset' (NCC, 1991c). 1996 SCAA (at the time the curriculum authority) published a second official curriculum document focusing on EAL, which reflected that EAL had been positioned within the remit of the subject English. However, first language support was not fully recognised in this document. In some transitional programmes, 'the first language support is given to pupils in order to help them gain access to the majority language programme as quickly as possible, after which bilingual support is stopped' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981:127). At best, bilinguality is still viewed only in terms of linguistic competence. Children's first languages are to be used only where there is an inadequate mastery of English and there is no indication as to how a child's bilinguality can be developed (Gregory, 1994: 155). In reality, frequently because of funding-related issues,

many bilingual programmes are 'transitional', meaning that mother tongue support is gradually withdrawn as the child learns to cope in English. Although such programmes do not aim for maintenance of the mother tongue, they nevertheless remain a very important option for schools that have a number of second language speakers who share the same mother tongue.

Many research studies support the argument that successful interaction is seen broadly to depend upon similarity attraction in terms of personal and cultural attributes. (Giles, 1973; Tajfel, 1974) Successful communication might also relate to a shared interpretation by participants on what constitutes 'work' and 'play' (Gregory, 1994). Gibbons (1993) gives many reasons for use of the mother tongue in school: 1) it allows children to draw on their total language experience and so continue their conceptual development; 2) the mother tongue helps to provide a social-emotional environment in which the basic conditions for learning can occur; 3) it is sound educational practice to build on a learner's competencies and abilities. To her, ignoring children's first languages is wasteful because it ignores one of the greatest resources they bring to school (Gibbons, 1993:61-62). In this sense, a classroom where there are only a small numbers of bilingual children, and where first language support is provided for emergent bilingual pupils seems to be an ideal classroom. Only in this bilingual interaction, where the use of L1 language for learning is generally accepted by both teachers and peers, and where learning a second language is 'added' to the development of the first (Cummins, 1979; 1992), culture is no longer viewed separately from language. Not only this; a widely accepted opinion finds that second language learning runs parallel with first language competence and that acquisition of a second language is, indeed, dependent upon the level of development of the native language (John-Steiner, 1995). Bilingual teachers use language - code switching, code mixing etc. in order to focus on bilingual children's learning; peers speaking a common language give each other a confidence, trust and reciprocity which is impossible in 'subtractive' contexts where their first language 'submerged' and seen merely as an obstacle to be overcome (Gregory, 1994).

Not surprisingly, a classroom which is characterised by these features would support any

child's language learning, but for emergent bilingual children, the type of classroom with these features is of special relevance. However, to conclude, we must ask whether these features are embedded in the present mainstream classroom.

5.3 Snapshots of Three Emergent Bilingual Children in Different Learning Environments

Following the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1989 and the mainstreaming of provision for children learning English as an additional language since 1990s, the linguistic support for emergent bilingual children has been positioned firmly and without question within the mainstream classroom; EAL has thus been subsumed within a conceptualization of mainstream English which is implicitly and necessarily based on a mother-tongue model (Naldic News, 2002, Vol.28: 6). Mainstreaming was claimed from the start to be a progressive educational policy and was intended to be inclusive, while the previous provision and the separate ESL (English as second language) courses were criticised as they tended to exclude bilingual children from mainstream classes until they were 'proficient enough' in English to join their peers in subject learning. This was viewed as having the effect of magnifying differences rather than recognising diversity. But the mainstreaming as it was claimed was intended to challenge the monolingual status quo while remaining solidly anti-assimilationist (Bourne, 1989). The rationale behind this mainstreaming approach is found in various government policy documents which present the mainstream as providing the best opportunities for second language learning (DES, 1985: 426), cognitive development (DES, 1989:10.10), meeting student's affective needs (DES, 1985: 420) and developing societal equality (DES, 1985: 319). However, what is the reality? After decades of research, we are still seeking the answer of how the needs of emergent bilingual children can best be met in today's mainstreaming framework; what might provide children with equal access to the National Curriculum. I argue that the observations below have much to tell us.

5.3.1 Children in 'in-class' Lessons

Shan and her Mainstream Class Lesson

Shan, a ten-year-old newcomer from Mainland China, was placed in the year six mainstream classroom as soon as she entered Gillespie primary school. Because of funding-related issues, the school, according to Mr. Jake, could not afford to provide EAL support for children like Shan. Finally it was an agreement between Shan's parents and the school that Shan joined the year three class for her English, stayed with the year 5 class for her Maths, and spent the rest of the time in her own class. In the following field notes and diaries, we see evidence of how Shan copes with her mainstream lesson.

Extract one: Setting - Thursday, 22 / 05 /2001, the History Lesson in the Year 5 Classroom (field notes, see Appendix VI).

Today Shan was having a history lesson with her fellow classmates. Mrs. White, the class teacher, put on the board 'Henry VIII and A New Church', then she began to talk following her bullet points:

- *Henry VIII's attack on Martin Luther (picture 1) won him the papal title of Defender of the Faith;*
- *Henry's marriage and divorce to Catherine;*
- *1535 - A Treasons Act; Closing down all monasteries;*
- *Henry VIII's contradictory personality*

Shan, as usual, was sitting in the last row alone and withdrawn, and although she attentively tried very hard to figure out what Mrs. White was talking about, she seemed puzzled. She wrote down every word and any recognisable mark in her notebook, but she was always quiet and timid when Mrs. White raised questions. At present, she did not have the English skills to understand or engage in question answering activities. 'Henry first won the title of Defender of the Faith because of his attack on Martin Luther, why then did he lead the Church of England away from allegiance to the Pope?' asked Mrs. White. Many children were striving to have the floor before others, but Shan kept sitting silently, observing and listening, or she lowered her head, looking up new words in the English-Chinese dictionary to find out their meaning in Chinese. She was very left out and unable to participate in the lesson. Then came the time for class work. Children were asked to test themselves by writing answers to a few questions e.g. what were the effects of Henry's religious policies on (a) the church; (b) his wealth; (c) rich English families? Children were also asked to understand that 'the

break with Rome' had many causes by making a list of the long - term causes of hostility towards the Church, and also to explain if there would have been a break with Rome if Henry VIII had not wanted a divorce. Obviously, Shan was not able to cope with the work. Mrs. White finally came towards Shan and gave out a list of vocabulary for her to learn and copy. Soon the lesson finished.

A passage from Shan's diary below well reflected her true feeling about her lesson and the class (see Appendix II).

今天下午是历史课，白老师讲英国历史人物亨利八世。全班同学都象平常一样，围坐地毯上。老师说活生动活泼，面部表情丰富。只见她时而写板书，时而提问。班上同学个个积极举手发言，就是我例外。当白老师讲到精彩处，大家都开怀大笑，我也跟着笑，因为我不想让他们看出来我听不懂。我知道，这样做是自我保护，其实我心里很难过。我不知道什么时候才能成为他们中的一员。好在每次课后，我都可以向白老师要些材料，让我爸晚上在家帮助我补习(2001年3月22日星期四)。

This afternoon in the history lesson, Mrs White was talking about Henry VIII. We children were sitting around her on the carpet as usual. She was talking with a rich expression on her face. Sometimes she wrote down a few words on the board, sometimes she raised some questions for us to answer. Many of my classmates, except me, put up their hands, eagerly to put forward their opinions. When Mrs White said something very interesting, the whole class burst out laughing, I just followed suit without knowing what they were laughing about and because I wanted to do the same. Maybe this was to cover up my ignorance by instinct. Actually I felt sad at heart. I wonder when I can be real part of the class. After each lesson I would usually ask Mrs White for materials so that my father can help me out at home (Afternoon, Thursday, 22nd March, 2001 - a passage from the diary by Shan, aged 11).

Kapo and Her Mainstream Class Lesson

Kapo, a newly arrived girl from Hong Kong, was learning in the year six classroom in Soho Parish School after she entered this country. The school fortunately had a language support teacher, who, though she worked part-time, was responsible for EAL support for classes (3-6). Because of the limited English support available, it is impossible for a school to offer substantial in-class support, so support can only be given to each class on a rota basis and it was confined to the Literacy Hour. The following are my fieldnotes and Kapo's diary reflecting her situation in the mainstream class lesson.

Extract two: Setting – Friday, 27 /04 /2001, the Literacy Hour in the Year Six Classroom (field notes, see Appendix II & VI).

Kapo now was at her Literacy Hour. The class was reading the book titled 'The illustrated Mum' by Jacqueline. The aims drawn by Miss Frances, the class teacher from the Literacy Framework were:

Reading comprehension

- *to identify the point of view from which a story is told and how this affects a reader's response*
- *to change the point of view, e.g. to tell an incident or describe a situation from a different perspective*

Writing

- *to write from another character's point of view*

The class was to discuss the above points over the week in the whole class section of the Literacy Hour and the writing was to take place as a part of teamwork. Kapo was literate in her Chinese, highly motivated and anxious to do the same work as her classmates but her limited English betrayed her, she just could not engage in the class activity. Today it was Kapo's privilege to have Ms Crista sitting beside her as she was the only one who need a strong EAL support in the class. Together, and with the use of a dual language dictionary, Ms Crista and Kapo read the book and tried to talk about book. For Ms Crista, the EAL support today was designed to teach Kapo the language form that she needed for the classwork, and complex sentences that included subordinate clauses to express a point of view. But all this was so difficult for Kapo, so that the support had to be reduced to the level of vocabulary learning. Both teacher and the child felt that an understanding of each other was the key to the content of support, but it turned out to be so hard for Kapo to understand Ms Crista's English and there was no way that Ms Crista could understand Kapo's Chinese. Ms Crista and Kapo were completely at a loss as to what to do in the class.

Apparently, although Kapo was physically in the class, she was withdrawn, unable to participate in the lesson even with the EAL teacher sitting beside her. Kapo's frustrated feeling has been well reflected in her diary below (see Appendix II).

.....我比较喜欢数学，只是因为我不一定要懂英文就能看懂数字和公式，有时我还能猜。老实说，我根本听不懂英语课和科学课。有时上语言课时，英语辅导老师Crista到我班上来，坐在我旁边，可是她

也帮不上什么，至少她比不上英汉词典。刚开始我总是要画很多画来表白自己，来提问题，但发现太花时间长了，我因此变得很烦。后来我学会了查词典，用它和老师同学交流。我发现这样学习更好……(2001年4月27日星期五)。

... I like Maths best, relatively speaking, just because I can read numbers and formulae without necessarily understanding English and sometimes I can guess between the lines. To be honest, I find it very difficult to follow the teacher in any other lessons. Mrs Crista, the language teacher, sometimes sits beside me in the Literacy Hour, but she can't be very helpful, at least no better than my English-Chinese dictionary. At the beginning I did a lot of drawing to express myself or to ask questions but it took too much time, I was impatient. By and by I've learnt to use a dictionary to communicate with my teachers and classmates. In this way I am learning English better... (Friday 27th April 20001- a passage from the diary of Kapo-Li aged 11).

Wington and Her Class Lesson

Nine-year-old Wington, Kapo's younger sister is sitting in the year 4-5 classroom. Mrs Judith, the deputy head told me that Wington was sent to the Year One classroom for literacy lessons as she seemed neither to understand nor be able to say very much at all. But she stayed in her own class for the rest of the lessons. Ms Crista never visited her in the class, but quite regularly Ms Crista saw her twice a week in a small group. In the next excerpt we can see how Wington behaves in the class lesson.

Extract three: Setting: Friday, 12 / 07 / 2002, the PHSE lesson in year 4-5 (field notes, see Appendix VI)

Miss Andrew, the new class teacher, called everybody's attention as the class presentation was to begin soon. The class presentation was centred around two topics: 1) Why I think the school should start at nine in the morning and end at one in the afternoon; 2) Why I think children should wear the school uniform. The topics were given out yesterday for children to prepare. Each of them was supposed to choose one and write a piece of work to give a reason for a point of view. Now, according to the different topics they chose, the class was divided into two teams, with one team giving a presentation and the other one acting as audience and vice versa. Then I saw Wington sitting by herself in the corner, reading a book. I came towards her and asked why she didn't join the class. She lowered her head murmuring in Chinese: 'Because I am not able to do what they are doing, Ms Crista gave me this easy one to learn.' Then she showed me the book given by Miss Andrew and exercises inside the book that she was supposed to do. The exercises were all very simple but Wington

still had no idea what to do about the exercises because she could not understand the instruction. She felt ashamed when she told me this. However, she was easily distracted and off task for much of the time. Every now and then she could not help peeping to know what was going on among her classmates over there. I trusted it was her curiosity that took away her concentration. Obviously she was miserable, withdrawn and considerably disadvantaged in her Year 4 class. What she was doing over in the corner had nothing to do with the whole class. 'What a poor child!' I thought to myself.

In order to find out about any support for Wington, I first interviewed Mrs Judith, the former class teacher, I then interviewed Miss Andrew, the new class teacher. I was surprised to find they held very different opinions on Wington (see Appendix V & VI).

Judith: She is doing really well. At first she was a little bit withdrawn but now she is really joining in and her English has really improved. She can communicate well with mature children now and her work is getting much better and she would ask me for a favour or other children for a favour if she doesn't understand the work. She recognises a lot of words in English. However we let Wington join in the Year One class as they are doing a lot of rhyming work and lots of basic things about how the English language works. So it is good for her to be able to repeat things and the level of the work here is still a bit high for her to understand.... Apart from that, we've got quite a good amount of support most days, we've got a language support teacher. Wington sometimes works in a small group of Year Three children with a language support teacher, but not all the time because it is hard to organise when Mrs Crista, the language support teacher works only part time here in the school but not all the time. That is why we organise the resources in the younger classes (Friday 25 May 2001, a passage from the interview with Mrs Judith).

Miss Andrew: I am new here. I just came here last November. My first impression was that Wington was very new to English. It really surprises me that after such a long time her English is still very poor. It is unfair for me to expect her to join in the activity because she doesn't have a clear mind on what is going on. She still stays with Ms Crista outside the classroom but not enough. I hope Wington can have more EAL support, either going to the younger class or to have somebody else come to the class and give in-class support because at the minute she does not understand most of what we do in literacy, she does not understand the text we are reading, but there is no other way I can do that because I have got 20 more students in class to take care of, and also it is unfair for me to divert my attention away from the rest of the class for this extra support. Fortunately we have Yuan in the class as Yuan can speak Wington's language. So sometimes they sit together but still it is unfair for Yuan to spend too much time with Wington as Yuan has to keep pace with her classmates otherwise by the end of the day Yuan will lag behind (Friday 12 July, 2002, a passage from the interview with Miss Andrew)

Clearly we can see Mrs Judith's view is carefree and maybe indifferent, while Miss

Andrew is anxious but a bit impatient about Wington's progress. Neither of them is positive or helpful, I am afraid.

What we have learnt from the above three examples of an 'in-class lesson' is that EAL support in the mainstream practice, because of funding-related issues, is very limited, which makes it impossible to offer substantial in-class support; class teachers, most of the time, work alone in a 'one person for everything' manner, they actually cannot afford to pay extra attention to new arrivals; EAL teachers, if there are any, work only part-time. Observations have also revealed they struggle to give support because they do not have the skills or knowledge to support new arrivals in a manner that would maximise potential and minimise language as a barrier to learning, and they do not have enough resources, such as bilingual texts or cassettes in each class; EAL children like Shan, Wington and Kapo are also struggling with the demands of the curriculum, but we find that they are only very withdrawn and disadvantaged in the class, unable to participate in lessons and activities. From what I observed and interviewed, and from children's diaries (See also chapter 2), I came to the conclusion that features of a supportive classroom are not embedded in the present mainstream classroom, or in other words, the mainstream classroom provides a problematic inclusion which can hardly fulfil the government's promise for equal opportunities but creates new inequalities (Tomlinson, 2000) and further intensifies the disadvantaged situation for new arrivals who are beginning their English language learning process.

5.3.2 Children in Withdrawal Sessions

Due to the limited in-class EAL support, many EAL teachers choose to work in a small group. A session whereby the EAL teacher withdraws the children from different classes offers an opportunity for initial access to the National Curriculum, or for further practice and consolidation. Schools have no objection to this special provision as they argue that the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involve new arrivals receiving focused support out of their mainstream classroom. The following are a few extracts from

my video footage, reflecting what might be expected of EAL teaching in withdrawal situations.

Ms Crista and Her Small Group in Soho Parish School

Extract four: Setting – 14 /06 /2001, Soho School (see Appendix VI).

As arranged last Tuesday after I had a talk with Ms Crista, the language support teacher, I come to film her group today. The three children in this small group today come from year 4 and 5. They are all EAL children (learning English as Additional Language). Here is their game-learning lesson.

A number of cards are spread out on the table each with a picture of a different animal on them. Under each card is a different colour fish. The aim of the game is to practice nouns, adjectives, prepositions and sentence structure e.g. by saying, 'Is my fish under / behind the dog?', If the answer is correct, the fish is removed. The winner is the child with the most fish.

Ms Crista today was working with a group of three EAL children in the school library. Wington was a new arrival in this group but she seemed very familiar and comfortable with other children in the group. She was lively and active as if she were totally a different child from what we saw in her mainstream class. The lesson started with Crista's introduction: 'Now in this game, everybody is to collect the fish. You collect the green, you collect the red and you collect yellow. To find a fish, you have to say 'Is it my fish behind... then you choose an animal like 'Is it my fish behind the turtle', 'Is it my fish behind the cat', but you mustn't touch it, I have to pull out the fish and show you. If it is your fish, you can fill out the space, if it is somebody's fish. The first person to fill out her fish, she wins, the last person... of course ... Ok, who is going to start?' 'me, me' said Arna, she looked very eager to be the first.

1 Arna: *Is it my red fish behind the dog?*

2 Crista: *Yes, you are right.*

4 Liliar: *Is is my yellow fish behind the elephant*

5 Crista: *Um it is not. Now Wington's turn*

6 Wington: *Is my fish beh...* (she was not sure of how to pronounce 'behind', she looked up at Crista)

7 Crista: *behind...*

8 Wington: *behind...this one* (she was not sure the name in English though she knew it far better in Chinese)

9 Crista: *what is it?* (Crista didn't want to tell her right away but encouraged her to have it try)

10 Wington: *rubbat?* (she nearly got it except for a vowel)

- 11 Crista: *rabbit?*
- 12 Wington: *yes, rabbit* (she repeated the word and try to get the correct sound)
- 13 Crista: *No, it isn't rabbit.*
- 14 Arna: *Is it my fish behind the rabbit?*
- 15 Crista: *Yes, well done, Liliar*
- 16 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish behind the zebra?*
- 17 Crista: *yes, well done*
- 18 Wington: *Is my fish behind bird?* (now this time she was perfect, she got both pattern and words right, but she still got a wrong guess)
- 19 Crista: *the bird, ok, let's see... oh no, look your green fish is behind this one* (Wington sighed).
All right, Arna (Crista continued)
- 20 Arna: *Is my fish behind the turtle?*
- 21 Crista: *This one?* (check) *yes, great.*
- 22 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the bird?*
- 23 Crista: *Ok, you know the name of the bird, I have a lot of birds. She* (Wington) *doesn't know the name because it is hard for her, but I think you can tell me the name of that bird, what is he called? It begins with 'E'.*
- 24 Liliar: *Eagle*
- 25 Crista: *Yes, I know that you know it, well done!*
- 26 Wington: *Is my fish ...*(Wington seemed very involved though she hadn't collected a single fish yet).
- 27 Crista: *behind*
- 28 Wington: *behind...elephant*
- 29 Crista: *yes, elephant, good!*
(Wington almost cried out with joy)
- 30 Arna: *Is it my fish **hiding** under the owl?* (Arna changed the 'behind' to 'hiding')
- 31 Crista: *Oh, you knew the name of the bird, didn't you?* (check)
No, it is blue one, isn't it? Nobody can have that out because we have only three players.
- 32 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the orange cat?* (she is very careful about the colour)
- 33Crista: *Yes!*
- 34 Wington: *Is it my fish behind...*
- 35 Crista: *What is it?*
- 36 Wington: *hor* (she knew very well the meaning of the word, but she just could not have the complete sound)
- 37 Crista: *what is it? Horse?*
- 38 Wington: *horse* (she nodded and also repeated, she always did that as she seized every second to learn)
- 39 Crista: *No it is not, I am sorry.*
- 40 Arna: *Is it my fish hiding under the ship* (sheep)

- 41 Crista: *What is it? Oh sh-ee-p*
- 42 Arna: *sheep*
- 43 Crista: *Oh yes, it is but say it again*
- 44 Arna: *sheep*
- 45 Liliar: *Is it my sheep...(Liliar was confused)*
- 46 Crista: *Ha, ha (laughing) sheep?*
- 47 Liliar: *because you keep saying 'sheep', so I...*
- 48 Crista: *you got missed up (Everybody laughed).*
- 49 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the horse?*
- 50 Crista: *Horse? Let's see...yes!*
- 51 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the elephant?*
- 52 Crista: *No, elephant is gone, this one?*
- 53 Wington: *No, (pointing at another picture)*
- 54 Crista: *What is it?*
- 55 Wington: *I don't know (shaking her head)*
- 56 Arna & Liliar: *She got lion*
- 57 Wington: *Lion (she followed them right away)*
- 58 Crista: *Good, good girl (facing Wington), 'lion' you see (facing to everyone) she just mouths it out.
(checking) I am so touched she got it, she deserves it*
- 59 Arna: *Is my red fish hiding under that bird?*
- 60 Crista: *Ok what is that bird called? We have a lot of birds.*
- 61 Arna: *Pigeon*
- 62 Crista: *Well done! (checking) Oh no, you deserve to get that one but you didn't (disappointed)*
- 63 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the colourful parrot?*
- 64 Crista: *Well done, she even described it (to me particularly), You see when I play the game with older children, I will insist that they don't just tell me the name but put an adjective in like that, so she has described it.*
- 65 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the...*
- 66 Crista: *good girl, 'behind', you see she can say 'behind' beautifully now.*
- 67 Chen: *This kind of game can be played at different levels?*
- 68 Crista: *Yes, it can be played at many levels because of the constant repetition, also they are learning vocabulary.*
- 69 Wington: *um...*
- 70 Crista: *Parrot*
- 71 Wington: *parrot*
- 72 Crista: *Right (check), yes. Ok Arna, try it.*
- 73 Arna: *Is my red fish hiding under that...*

- 74 Crista: *Oh what is that one, I am not telling , this is the hardest, everybody wants it.*
- 75 Liliar: *Giraffe*
- 76 Crista: *tell Arna*
- 77 Arna: *Giraffe*
- 78 Liliar: *Is my fish behind...the pigeon?*
- 79 Crista: *Oh no (to me), yes, you saw I used a different level when I assisted them, then they gave me different names of birds but I didn't with Wington.*
- 80 Chen: *Yes, I can see that.*
- 81 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the horse?*
- 82 Crista: *horse? No, this is not the horse.*
- 83 Liliar: *Cow*
- 84 Wington: *Cow (repeated she).*
- 85 Crista: *Yes, it is the cow.*
- 86 Liliar & Arna: *No, all blue.*
- 87 Crista: *Yes, all blue.*
- 88 Arna: *Is my fish hiding behind 'monkey'?*
- 89 Crista: *Yes, monkey. Oh she knows.*
- 90 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind Giraffe?*
- 91 Crista: *Oh no.*
- 92 Wington: *Is my fish behind the monkey?*
- 93 Chen: *Good, she can say the word 'monkey'.*
- 94 Crista: *And that goes for the idea of opportunity to listen to other children then saying 'monkey' and gives her the motivation to remember the name.*
- 95 Chen: *Very good game.*

(The game went on and on when it came to an end, Crista explained and made comments on the game)

- 96 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the penguin?*
- 97 Crista: *No, it is not pigeon, it is seal, but no fish from the blue.*
- 98 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the grey seal?*
- 99 Crista: *You both try seal, will you? Let's see... Oh, no, it is not. Now Wington has got two to go.*
- 100 Wington: *Is my fish behind the...?*
- 101 Crista: *Would you try this one?*
- 102 Wington: *Um .pile..*
- 103Crista: *Penguin*
- 104 Crista: *Yes, but she didn't remember to say that well. What a pity!*
- 105 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the duck?*

- 106Crista: *Yes!*
- 107 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the goal?*
- 108 Crista: *Is that a goal? No, that is a deer.*
- 109 Wington: *Is my fish behind the ...*
- 110Crista: *S-e-a-... Shall we tell her?*
- 111 Liliar: *s-e-a-l*
- 112 Crista: *That's no good, it is too difficult for her. What do you think Arna? I think we shall tell her.*
- 113 Arna & Liliar: *Seal*
- 114: Crista: *Say it Wington.*
- 115 Wington: *Is my fish behind the Seal (shy she was!)*
- 116 Crista: *Good girl. Oh she is the winner!*
- 117 Chen: *Winner?*
- 118 Crista: *Yes, we usually do with this game, although they are all winners. I let the other children play on, then I decide the second winner and the third one.*
- 119 Liliar: *Arna is the second winner.*
- 120 Crista: *Do you mind this because she's only got one left? Come on!*
- 121 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the monkey?*
- 122 Crista: *Monkey? Ok, this monkey looks so nice.*
- 123 Wington: *It is not monkey!*
- 124 Crista: *No, it is not monkey.*
- 125 Liliar: *It is er...*
- 126 Crista: *Go on, tell us.*
- 127 Liliar: *Gorilla.*
- 128 Crista: *Yes, he is a kind of monkey, so yours is already right. (check) Sorry Liliar, do you want to find your the other two fishes?*
- 129 Liliar: (Noded) *Is my fish under the parrot?*
- 130 Crista: *Yes, parrot, let's try and see, yes! Shall I find you another one, which we haven't looked down then.*
- 131 Liliar: *Under the polar bear*
- 132 Crista: *That is very good as it is a hard one. That is!*

The game ended with the bell ringing for lunch. I could see Ms Crista was proud of her game and very pleased with the children's effort. She offered to say something in front of my camera. Below is the conversation between Ms Crista and me.

1 Crista: *Would you want me to say something?*

2 Chen: *Oh, yes, I would like you to explain the game, what's the purpose of the game and what do you*

think of Wington?

- 3 Crista: *Well, as I said just now the game goes for the idea of opportunity for children to learn vocabulary, to reinforce vocabulary. So things they are not sure about, they get another chance to practice. Especially it gives children like Wington who haven't got this vocabulary a chance to listen to what the other children have got to say and the motivation to remember the vocabulary, which is important to them because that is the way they find their fish. And you can play this game up to year six. I think they probably get bored after that but by adding in things like adjectives you actually raise the level. There, with this game, you don't have to play with simple pictures as we have many different sets, so that children could learn shapes, words and anything at many different levels.'*
- 4 Chen: *Yes we talked before about 'extra help' for those children like Wington and Kapo, then what kind of extra help in your sense is most helpful?*
- 5 Crista: *No, none of one kind of help, a lot of different kind. They need to stay in the classroom sometimes and just to experience what goes on in the classroom, then the words they could have from it make sense to them. Personally I think they need to come out of the classroom or they need an opportunity in class if not, out of the classroom, to play games like this as fun because then they have motivation to learn some of the basic vocabulary and then they also need teachers like me to go into the classroom with the games and actually help them with what's really going on in the classroom. Sometimes that means the vocabulary that we learnt in the small group goes into the classroom with them, that I can see it being used in the context. So they need me to support them when they are doing extra tasks in the class.*
- 6 Chen: *Do you think the extra class in a small group is a good idea, then you can give them extra time, extra attention?*
- 7 Crista: *Yes, you are right, these games do not exist in their classroom except sometimes there is a maths game as sometimes it makes the other children watch you, distract them, doesn't it?*
- 8 Chen: *Of course, so do you think some short period of withdrawal is needed? I don't think that is something related to discrimination, but on the contrary, it respects children and provides an equal opportunity for different children.*
- 9 Crista: *I think so too. I know, 'withdrawal' is not fashionable these days, but I think it has its place. Every school makes their own decision. This year the school have made their decision to give me some groups which are withdrawn from their classroom for some special work. Now there are many different ways of working with EAL children. Personally I think they need different things from what the other children who can stay in the classroom need, and that sometimes should require a withdrawal group where they can play games, doing work that other children in the class have already done. So I think it has its place though not everybody agrees with me.*
- 10 Chen: *What do you think of those 'language centres' or 'units' in history?*
- 11 Crista: *I don't think that I particularly approve of those centres, I think we have all decided that is not*

a good idea now. It is a kind of extreme in the withdrawal. But it is fine if it is within the school, a little bit of withdrawal so those children stay most of their time in the class.

12 Chen: *Yes, a little bit of withdrawal in the same school setting.*

13 Crista: *Then they can take what they learnt in the group back into the classroom.*

14 Chen: *From the school I visited I found little support given to those children. It really so surprised me to see the teacher like you working here for those children, but I can't find the similar support in the other schools. So the situation now goes to another extreme: No withdrawal at all.*

15 Crista: *But also no helping in the classroom. Maybe one of the reasons is that the government don't fund the schools.*

16 Chen: *So it is not only school's policy.*

17 Crista: *It isn't. Some schools have got a lot of EAL children who can't get the support.*

18 Chen: *That is why we are worried. But you have done the great job, you should work full time here.*

19 Crista: *Thanks, I hope so.*

This transcript is very different from the previous field notes taken in Wington's in-class lesson. From the extract, a number of observations can be made. First, the opportunity for children to work in a small group with the EAL teacher's support provides an appropriate access for Wington, a newcomer to initial English learning. She learns step by step in a supportive atmosphere which is not often found in her mainstream class, e.g. every word and sound that Wington is not sure about she gets help right away from either the EAL teacher or peers, she thus learns and gets reinforced by listening to others and getting another chance to practice. Second, working in a small group provides a tremendous opportunity for dialogue between teachers and children, from which children benefit from teachers' immediate attention, in doing so creates meaningful interaction in language learning. Third, EAL peers working together towards same goal reinforce the need for communication, which offers the children a real motivation to use language, e.g. the way that Wington learnt every new word in the group gives her the idea of opportunity to listen to other children saying 'monkey' and gives her the motivation to remember the name, and this is important to her because that is the way she plays in the educating game. All these points have corresponded to the key features of a supportive classroom that we discussed at the start of the chapter. They are perfectly tuned to our knowledge of the interactive and social nature of learning supported by different theories, e.g. Vygotsky (1935)'s conscious

awareness of L2 learning and Chomsky (1982)'s mentalist theories of L1 transfer.

Mrs Wilson and Her 'Moving Forward' Class

Approximately six EAL children are arranged in the 'moving forward' class for EAL support. The aim for this class, as explained to me, is to reinforce the mainstream classroom work, and sometimes that also means vocabulary that they learn in this class goes into the mainstream classroom with them and they see it being used in context. The class is held once a week for 45 minutes. Mrs Wilson, the deputy head, is the class teacher. The following transcript was a snapshot of the EAL lesson in this small group.

Extract five: Setting – Friday, 24 / 05 / 2002, Anderson Girl School (see Appendix VI).

Kapo seemed to have a lot of things to tell me about her secondary school and her teachers. She loved Mrs Wilson's lesson and the classmates in this EAL group. At my request, Mrs Wilson invited me to her class. I remember it was a warm day, just immediately after the morning break, Kapo showed me the way to her EAL classroom. Mrs Wilson was in her fifties; she looked lovely and very experienced. She then just finished calling the register, and was about to write the date...

1 Wilson: *the date?*

2 Students: *24th May 2002*

3 Wilson: *Who can write the short form?*

4 Student A: *I know*

5 Wilson: *Come* (the girl came to write 24 / 05 / 2002 on the right corner of the board)

6 Wilson: *Well, thank you.*

7 Wilson: *Anybody learnt or came across any new words this week in any subjects,*

like English, science, maths, or any words that they hadn't come across before or they didn't behave the way you expected to them to perform?

We always get words like that, don't we?

(There was a minute of silence)

8 Wilson: *No? What about the word 'should' sound*

9 Student B: *Sh-ou-ld*

10 Wilson: *If I would write the word as it sounds, what is the initial?*

11 Student E: *sh*

12 Wilson: *What is the vowel sound?*

13 Kapo: *ou*

14 Wilson: *If I got one 'o', what sound we would get?*

15 Kapo: *'o'*

16 Wilson: *If I add a friend 'u', it sounds?*

17 Student C: *'u:'*

18 Wilson: *Yes, so we would think that word 'school' should look like 'schoul', but of course, English speaking English is playing the trick on the game and it doesn't look like that at all.*

(Students were all taking a note, they were very attentive).

19 Wilson: *You know the word 'rhyming', what do I mean by rhyming? Everybody has to tell and think.*

20 Student A: *They are sounding the same.*

21 Wilson: *Right, but is it all the sounds sounding the same or part of the sound?*

22 Student C: *part of the sound*

23 Wilson: *Right, we mean words whose middles or the endings sounds the same. So give me the word of this.*

24 Student C: *Would*

25 Wilson: *Yes, would. Please give me the sentence with the word 'would' in it.*

26 Kapo: *I would tell my sister to do the homework*

27 Student E: *I would buy a toy*

28 Wilson: *Yes, that is usually how word is used. I would like to do something, is something I would like to ask.*

29 Student F: *Would you...*

30 Wilson: *Would you please, give me the sentence like 'would you please...?'*

31 Student G: *Would you please give me the pen?*

32 Wilson: *Right, ok. I've got 'should' and I've got 'would', I would like to do something, I should do something. If I say to you I...*

33 Student A: *I could*

34 Wilson: *How to spell?*

35 Student A: *c-o-u-l-d*

36 Wilson: *And there again you've got it rhyming, you've got the same bits in them, which are sounding the same. (She then shows the class several words to read aloud, and asks what are the vowels in each word.)*

37 Wilson: *Yes, they all have vowels. Give me the vowels, Kapo?*

38 Kapo: *a e i o u*

39 Wilson: *and how did they sound, Kapo*

40 Kapo: *a-e-i-o-u*

41 Wilson: *Can we say together, please?* (The class read after her)

42 Wilson: *Ok, why do we need vowels? Can we make words without them?*

43 Students: *No.*

44 Wilson: *Do you remember how we make sandwiches. This is a piece of bread and filling.
And sandwiches we make with all the pieces of bread, with all the consonants and with all
the other letters called?*

45 Student C: *Vowels*

46 Wilson: *Yes, if you take out the vowels, you've got nothing, you've got language that just isn't language,
For instance, look at my name, my name is Wilson (she wrote down on the board) How about
the name without vowels. How it look like when it is written without vowels.
(She asked student E to have it try on the board)*

47 Student E: *It could not be pronounced*

48 Wilson: *You will be coming to Mrs Wilson (laughing). You see, the word 'Wlsn' doesn't make sense at
all. So we need those. Remember whatever we do with them we need them desperately. Right,
let's go on, ok?*

(Again, Mrs Wilson showed more words to the class, but she stopped at the word 'restaurant' and asked who knew the spelling).

49 Student A C E: *r-e-s-t-u-r-e-n-t*

50 Wilson: (Shaking head) *Can any of you write it for me on the board?*
(Many hands put up, Student B was asked to the board)

51 Student B: *restraurant*

52 Wilson: *Oh, you are so close. Kapo, come and fix for her.*

53 Kapo: *restaurant* (Kapo raised her hand and came to spell it on the board)

54 Wilson: *Well done! This is a funny little word, of course this is not an English word at all, and it is a
French word. So many words you can build, there are words you can't and those of the words
you have to learn until you recognise and reproduce and to make it up ourselves, like the word
'restaurant'. You probably have to learn to spell it and you have seen it over and over again as it
plants into your head.*

(Then the students were given a piece of worksheet to fill out some missing letters. In about 10 minutes, Mrs Wilson called to stop as she was to say something else).

56 Wilson: *Would you please give the opposite of the word 'small'?*

57 Student A: *large*

58 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of word 'quiet'*

59 Student C: *loud*

60 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'soft'*

61 Kapo: *hard*

62 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'good', for instance, you are such a good girl.*

63 Student E: *bad.*

64 Wilson: *Spell it for me*

65 Student E: *b-a-d*

66 Wilson: *Here there is a fair-play trick again (She turned to board and wrote 'bed' and 'bad'), and I know there is a difficulty in pronunciation, a lot of people come to live here, there is a tendency to say 'bed'. The word 'bed' has 'e' but 'bad' has a straight forward 'ar', it is a hard 'ar', like 'apple', 'cat', 'dad', 'had'. Give me another one?*

67 Student D *'sad'*

68 Wilson: *Give me another one?*

69 Student F: *'that'*

70 Wilson: *Good, give me another one (pointing to Kapo)*

71 Kapo: (not very sure) *'egg'*

72 Wilson: *Yes! right, lovely*

...

The lesson carried on with more words and rules introduced, and the teacher singled out some words which do not behave in the way expected. All the children in the class looked very engaged as the teacher drew their attention closely and gave everybody the opportunity answer to questions or come towards the board to perform before others.

73 Wilson: *Look, what is this word (she showed the word in a card)*

74 Student D, C and A: *Spring*

75 Wilson: *What is the word 'season', how to spell it, Kapo?*

76 Kapo: *s-e-a-s-o-n*

77 Wilson: *What are more season words?*

78 Class: *Summer, Autumn, Winter*

79 Wilson: *What is funny thing with autumn? A-u-t-u-m, is it how we spell it?*

80 Student A: *No. it is a-u-t-u-m-n*

81 Wilson: *Mind the letter'n' in the end. Yes, the word 'spring' also has another meaning, what is that?*

(silence)

82 Students: *jump* (murmuring)

83 Wilson: *If you spring into action, that means you leap forward or it means something on the bed or sofa that make it up and down. But what is the difference of that, how would I know the meaning if I was writing 'Spring' and 'spring', what is the difference?*

(Mrs Wilson then wrote two sentences on the board for children to tell the difference, 'When Spring arrives, the flowers bloom.' And 'I will spring into the bed')

84 Student C: *In the first sentence, the word means 'season', and the second means 'jump'.*

85 Wilson: *Yes, from the sense of the sentence, we know the difference, how about the word itself? How would I write the word differently, there is slightly different, how it that?*
(she pointed the letter and asked Kapo)

86 Kapo: *The first one is a capital letter.*

87 Wilson: *Yes, good girl! The first one has got a capital letter because it is the name of the season. I wouldn't write your name without a capital letter.*

Then again the children were given a piece of worksheet to do the relevant exercises thus to reinforce their understandings In between Mrs Wilson also explained some words they didn't understand, for instance, the word 'hunch', meaning 'to have a feeling'. She then gave several examples such as 'I have got a hunch that by the sea this afternoon we would have a lot more rain.' 'I have a hunch that if I went out of this room, you would enjoy your nice time.' Then she emphasised the importance of learning those tiny words, 'It is funny, girls, because as you come to year nine, which is the first time when you will have national tests, you will have quite a large comprehension passage to read and to answer questions on, and sometimes it has little tiny words like 'hunch' that worry you because you are not sure of the meaning and it doesn't seem to fit in, you can't see it fitting in the right sense, then you may miss up the chunk of the paragraph, you lost the meaning because it is the word that doesn't come into your experience.' ...

At our request, Mrs Wilson agreed to talk before our camera:

1 Wilson: *Our programme is an individualised learning programme, which each individual student uses, the beauty of it is that they have their own focus; they work on their own level, and above all sometimes they can fail quite, because you make mistakes in the lesson that can be very embarrassing, but for us you can have the opportunity to rehearsal with all you have learnt, especially with those certain words, using those contexts and using those sentences without anybody marking 'right' or 'wrong' except yourself. The girls are put on the programme at the foundation level, the foundation level takes them through three or four tests and right to their programme levels up to their correct levels, so the programme actually*

process itself assessments.

2 Chen: *Wonderful! Those children are lucky to have this support. Is the name of this called 'Moving forward'?*

3 Wilson: *Yes.*

4 Chen: *Is it a kind of learning support?*

5 Wilson: *It is learning support system for girls whose literacy is perhaps not quite the right level because they came from other countries, or girls who perhaps have difficulties in learning English or difficulties in learning to read.*

6 Chen: *Those from other countries are what we call 'emergent bilingual' children; they are on the way...*

7 Wilson: *Exactly they are on the way, and we just give them some opportunities to explore words they have learnt during the week.*

8 Chen: *They need this kind of support badly*

9 Wilson: *I think so.*

10 Chen: *Thank you so much for your lesson, it has impressed me a lot. How often you provide this lesson?*

11 Wilson: *Once a week*

12 Chen: *Once a week, but at different time?*

13 Wilson: *Yes, and the idea is to try to catch up with literacy as quickly as we can over year 7 and 8*

14 Chen: *Up to year 8?*

15 Wilson: *Yes, because by the time they get to year 9 and then they do the SATs, it is fine to know the language, it is fine to have it at your finger tips when you are calm and not too much pressures on you.*

16 Chen: *This kind of help tends to be done in a small group?*

17 Wilson: *Yes, exactly.*

18 Chen: *Do you think it is not possible to do it in the mainstream class?*

19 Wilson: *No, no, so hard. But I mean they can pick up certain amount in the class but it is quite an extra pressure comes in when suddenly they have got SATs and they have got two and the half pages closed time to read and comprehend and answer questions. It is not that easy.*

20 Chen: *Thank you so much!*

21 Wilson: *Not at all, my pleasure.*

The extract shows us that how well emergent children, like Kapo, can cope with given structured tuition and high expectation. The 'Moving forward' class as is characterised by Mrs Wilson's talk - 'an individualised learning programme', is just tailored to their needs. The teaching methods used in the lesson appear very traditional, but they reflect the very nature of a language learning process - conscious, attentive and interactive supported by

Vygotsky's conscious realization and intention of L2 language learning. First, the class provides many opportunities to engage in personal interactions with teachers. Mrs Wilson, though she does a lot of talking, enables the children to get really involved, they are always kept busy with their mind, hands and voice, there is hardly a single moment of idleness in the whole lesson. Second, the lesson is designed specially to work at the children's own level, and at the same time it is well linked to the National Curriculum and SATs tests. What they do not understand in the mainstream class will be taught again here in this withdrawal group. We can see individualism which is lost in policy is then taking place in the lesson where Kapo and her classmates picked up quickly from this kind of support. Third, the children are on an equal footing, they are respected and highly motivated as they want to make up the gap as quickly as possible. Obviously, these features are hardly found in the previous extract of practice in the mainstream classroom.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the main arguments about L2 learning processes based on different models. I feel there is an urgent need for discussion on what are considered to be key features of a supportive classroom, where those new emergent bilingual children, especially those KS mid-phase admissions are not to be disadvantaged and their needs can best be met. The aim of this is to identify EAL programmes in the mainstream school, that the children feel have supported their language and cognitive development, as well as emotional-social development. We are gradually accumulating evidence from both contexts: 'in-class support' and 'withdrawal support', which suggests that some strategies involving new arrivals who receive focused support out of their mainstream classroom do not run counter to the principle of inclusion. In contrast, the problematic inclusion due to lack of proper language support in class actually causes severe exclusion in the sense that the children are very withdrawn in the lesson, their confidence is dampened, which is evident in the case with Shan, Kapo and Wington. Bourne (1989) has reminded us that 'the mainstream school has been repeatedly suggested to be a place of inexplicit, covert evaluation and stratification of pupils, a process within which certain groups underachieve

disproportionately' (Bourne, 1989). 'Incorporation of provision for bilingual pupils into the mainstream, then is not without its danger' (Bourne, 1989: 6). It would be wrong to pretend that problems such as inequalities, exclusion or racism do not exist in the mainstream classroom, and that new arrivals will certainly benefit from a language policy based on mainstream inclusion. On the contrary, inclusivity will achieve little if it does not consider how substantial EAL support can be provided inside or outside the classroom. I want to argue that an exaggeration of the advantages of bilingual learners diverts attention from the children's need for extra help in English. However, it is disappointing to notice that all the language specialists referred to in this chapter are non-bilingual EAL teachers. South (2002) comments: 'Considering the number of bilingual assistants working in schools over the past 15 years, it seems to me to be a national disgrace that it has been so under-researched and so little attention has been paid to this area by government educational agencies'(Naldic News, 2002, Vol.28 :9). The next chapter investigates ways in which bilingual 'teachers' (or support) might be found within traditional mainstream classrooms.

Chapter 6 Bilingual Peers Support in the Mainstream Class

Wington: *Ni di ji ding du?* (How do I read these words?)

Yuan: (reads) *body...ribs...skeleton...*

Wington: *body...ribs...skeleton... Cantonese ding gai?* (What are they in Cantonese?)

Yuan: *samti, paigua and guga*

Wington: *Nigo M tao de ji hai mieye?* (What is the word starting with M?)

Yuan: *Muscle. Cantonese hai 'jiyou'*

Wington: *Niduo, niduo!* (Here, here!)

Yuan: *Stomach, lung, liver, brain...*

Wington: *Stomach... lung... liver... brain...* (Chen & Gregory, 2004)

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has illustrated some EAL programmes in the mainstream school, which have proved to be realistic and effective ways of providing language support for emergent bilingual children within the framework of the National Curriculum. However, this kind of support within the school is limited. Evidence presented in Chapters 2 and 5 has indicated that older emergent bilinguals in mainstream classes are often withdrawn and isolated, unable to participate in classrooms. But 'how can they survive and make progress?' With this question in mind I propose a new focus for informal learning rather than formal teaching inside school, to see what else might actually work for those children since children may also learn informally outside school: from their classmates, from television and from life generally (Gregory, 1996). The excerpt above has aroused my interest in bilingual peers' support as tutors and mentors, which, I think, may play a crucial role in present situation, but has hitherto been neglected in recent research. This chapter thus investigates such teaching and learning and goes on to contribute new theoretical insights into the nature of 'scaffolding' between bilingual peers.

6.2 Theoretical Reviews

It became clear after the Bullock report (1975) and the EEC's directive (1977), that the use of children's home languages was valued and seen as an acceptable approach to facilitating their English learning. However, the school response to this departure of traditional monolingualism was sluggish. Over the past 15 years, there has been a singular lack of attention given to issues relating to the work of bilingual support and the bilingual child's learning. Specialist support for EAL children is available, though very limited in today's classroom context, but bilingual support in terms of the work of bilingual assistants has been much neglected in school practice, and has now hardly existed, if there is any. Then we notice from the excerpt that this gap seems to be partly filled out by bilingual peer support taking place in the classroom. But what is important for our mainstream teachers to notice bilingual children's learning and how teachers can understand those ways of using language –code switching, code mixing etc. in order to incorporate bilingual support into the system are much new ground to be explored as existing studies in bilingual education does not offer us a model.

Theoretically speaking, the issue of bilingual peer support in the mainstream classroom spans interest across three main areas of research: bilingual teaching, literacy and peer interaction. Some existing studies partly account for what we see taking place between bilingual peers, but crucial questions remain unanswered. Besides, very few studies unpick episodes of this kind of collaboration between peers, perhaps recognising the difficulty in eavesdropping on children's privacy, but it is these episodes that may provide answers to crucial questions concerning the nature of peer support.

6.2.1 Bilingualism and Bilingual Teaching

Much of the early research in bilingualism was motivated by educational needs and policy but biased by particular prejudices against bilingualism. However by the 1970s, this bias began to disappear. In contrast, a number of studies linked certain cognitive and linguistic

advantages to bilingualism. Many of these studies, however, seemed to be 'overenthusiastic' in their effort to identify positive effects for bilingualism, in spite of the fact that results were 'sometimes equivocal and sometimes even negative' (Bialystok, 1996:6). But the optimism since then has been a necessary political tool: first to dismiss the predominant views of bilingualism as a liability, and second to justify a tradition of ignoring diversity in language needs. However, we need a balanced examination of the influence of bilingualism on children's development otherwise any exaggeration of the advantages of bilingual learners may divert attention from the children's need for language support. This is clearly reflected in the chapter 2. What we see from those examples is: the children are intelligent but they are very much withdrawn from class activities just because of their poor English. The dilemma for classroom practice, is, therefore the forthcoming: children are given no condition for 'additive bilingualism' (Cummins, 1979; 1992) to take place, and 'bilingualism' as an asset is being used to find an excuse of neglecting the children's need for extra help in English.

From the mid 20th century, most attempts aimed to identify precise conditions for second language acquisition, the psychological factors that accompany bilingualism. 'One factor that has made the problem so difficult to study is the enormous diversity that accompanies children's bilingualism' (Bialystok, 1996:1). For example, regarding some of the conditions under which children can become bilingual, we know that children can learn both languages simultaneously in the home; they can learn second language through submersion in a foreign culture, or they can learn it through immersion with the majority language environment. The majority of the research relevant to investigations of bilingualism in the late 1960s focused on the linguistic, or applied linguistic perspective. The prevailing view was based on Vygotsky's thesis that first and second language learning involve very different processes whereby 'the child assimilates his/her native language unconsciously and unintentionally but acquires a foreign language with conscious realisation and intention' (1935, translated into English in 1962: 2-3). This stance was further developed as a linguistic approach named 'contrastive analysis' (Lado, 1975, quoted in Bialystok, 1996), which claimed that language learners learned a second language by substituting target language forms and structures into what they already knew about their first language.

'Transfer' was hence a complete explanation for second language learning. But this view was soon replaced in the 1970s by a claim called 'creative construction' (Dulay and Burt, 1975, quoted Bialystok, 1996). According to this view, one learned a second language by starting all over again using the same processes that had guided first language acquisition, in which there was no place for transfer. This method, sharing traditionally predominant views of bilingualism as a liability, still find a place among today's special language schools or language training agents. Nevertheless, this approach does not match with the learning reality of those emergent bilingual learners in my study, as they do not start learning English by any of the means they used in learning Chinese. It was only until the 1980s that a more balanced view emerged, in which the obvious role of transfer is acknowledged but not offered as a complete explanation of second language learning. This stance was based on the Chomskian view (Chomsky, 1982) that languages are learned by setting parameters, and second language learning involves the resetting of some parameters. 'Transfer was explained as the influence of the parameter settings established for the first language on the values necessary for the second' (Bialystok, 1996:3). More recently, a number of research studies in both Britain and the USA have also shown how bilinguals possess an enhanced metalinguistic, metacognitive and analytical awareness (John-Steiner 1985, Cummins 1992). Such awareness is particularly fostered when a child is able to transfer first language knowledge to the new learning task, a thesis termed the 'linguistic interdependence hypothesis' (Cummins 1992). These studies begin to explain Wington and the other two bilingual learners' acute awareness of individual letters and words in both languages. Their fluent literacy in their mother tongue means that they are very conscious of what they do not yet know in English; Yuan and the other two Chinese peers likewise, are similarly aware of their responsibility as translator from one language to the other.

Studies on bilingualism during the latter half of the twentieth century have also moved towards a wider interpretation of 'bilinguality' (the psychological state of an individual) based on sociolinguistic analyses of language learning and use. Its principle thesis claims that bilingualism is a multidimensional phenomenon involving not just a linguistic ability but social, psychological and cultural issues which can only be understood through a study of communication in intercultural contexts (Grosjean 1982, Hamers and Blanc 1989,

Romaine 1989, and Scollon 1996). Successful communication, therefore, might depend upon similarity attraction in terms of personal and cultural attributes (Yang and Bond 1980), sometimes referred to as 'speech accommodation theory' (Tajfel 1974) or on the child being treated as an 'important learner' (Schieffelin and Cochran-Smith 1984). Successful communication might also relate to a shared interpretation by participants on what constitutes 'work' and 'play' (Gregory 1994b). An important contribution of this approach was that it documented and analysed the critical contextual facts that distinguished one bilingual situation from another (Bialystok, 1996). Studies examining the social context of bilingualism led to such crucial distinctions as high-versus low-status languages, additive versus subtractive bilingualism, full versus partial control of language, and frequent versus infrequent use of the language. All of these factors were shown to be instrumental in bilingual learning process. These perspectives might explain why Wington works enthusiastically with her friend in her first language, as well as her eye for detail and accuracy, essential aspects to literacy learning in Chinese (Kenner 2003). However, aspects of Wington's learning still remain unexplained. Why does she 'run before she can walk', trying to learn specialised English from a biology text rather than simple colloquial expressions from her friend? Why might individual words seem so important rather than learning one or two 'chunks' of language she could use appropriately in class (Chen & Gregory, 2004).

6.2.2 Literacy

Although a large number of studies detail various aspects of bilingualism and bilinguality, very few focus specifically on literacy learning in a new language. However, research into strategies used by young preliterate children learning to read in more than one language indicates that a lexical (word recognition) awareness is likely to be the most highly developed 'cue' or clue called upon by these pupils who usually have superior memories to monolingual children (Verhoeven 1992, Gregory 1996). The learning of important 'one-sight' words is seen as a key to children seeing themselves as 'readers' and gaining access to other clues (graphophonemic, syntactic, semantic and bibliographic). The method of

translating words and texts in order sufficiently to understand their meaning is promoted by others interested in children already literate in their mother-tongue (Williams and Snipper 1990). However, the interaction between these girls engaged in a literacy task is quite different from any lesson they know from their English classrooms. There is, of course, no bilingual literacy teaching in their school. Additionally, the method of repeating words and phrases is not one used by the teacher in her lessons.

During the last two decades of the twentieth century literacy has been included within a sociocultural paradigm, whereby literacy is seen in terms of existing of a number of different cultural practices or 'literacies' which are shaped by the context i.e. the participants, the materials, methods and purpose for which they occur (Heath 1983, Street 1984, Barton and Hamilton 1998, Gregory and Williams 2000). Each of these authors details literacy practices taking place that contrast sharply with those of the mainstream school. Marsh (2003) extends the notion of 'literacy practices' to that of 'communicative practices' including visual, oral or corporeal practices within which literacy might be embedded. Crucially, home and community communicative practices are inherently purposeful, are group oriented and are learned through an apprenticeship with more experienced members of the group who mediate appropriate behaviour (Baynham 1995). By comparison, mainstream school literacy practices tend to be without specific purpose beyond completing the task itself, individual oriented and transmitted by direct teaching. What we see taking place between the two girls in this study is a complex syncretism of community and school practices. Paradoxically, what might appear to be a purposeless task of repetition gives Wington access to the subject-specific vocabulary needed for the lesson; the repetition would be a familiar method to her from early literacy learning in Hong Kong; the meaning of words are certainly being mediated through translation. Yet who is actually mediating what and to whom? Although Yuan 'teaches' Wington the words, it is Wington who tells Yuan *how* to teach her and Yuan, it seems, who obediently obeys.

6.2.3 Peer Interaction

The interactive and social nature of learning has long been recognised across academic disciplines. Some fifty years ago (translated into English only in 1978), Vygotsky argued that social interaction with a more competent member of society is the means by which cultural knowledge is acquired and that all learning takes place first on an *interpersonal* level between participants before it is internalised on an *intrapersonal* level within the individual self. Different researchers illustrate the nature of interpersonal learning through a range of metaphors. During the 1970s researchers detailed ways in which caregivers provide finely-tuned tuition to young children as they complete cognitive and linguistic tasks, referring to this as ‘scaffolding’ (Wood et al. 1976) whereby adults provide a ‘loan of consciousness’ (Bruner 1986) to the child. Like a scaffold, pieces are gradually removed as the child gains confidence and competence. This metaphor, although still widely used as a generic term, has been criticised for implying a passivity on the part of the child (Addison-Stone 1998). Since the 1990s, the metaphor of ‘guided participation’ coined by Rogoff in 1990 has focused more upon the child as co-constructing meaning with an adult.

Work and play between peers and siblings, however, have revealed a much more equal relationship in teaching and learning. The metaphor of ‘synergy’ (Gregory 2001) has been used to show that both younger and older sibling learn from each other, particularly when children are bilingual. The older child learns as much through explaining words in a new language as well as acting as a cognitive facilitator as the younger child who is being ‘taught’ through the medium of play. Peers who speak the same language also act as skilled facilitators of classroom learning as they participate together in ‘collaborative learning’ (Tharp and Gallimore 1988, Chang-Wells and Wells 1993). Mother-tongue speakers can also play a crucial role in initiating children into a new language. Long (1997) shows how a group of Icelandic girls carefully structure the learning of an English speaking novice, revealing skills well beyond those of adults and the classroom teacher. The value of cooperative classroom learning, in which peers work together on academic tasks and provide one another with motivation, guidance, and feedback (Damon, 1984; Slavin, 1987), also suggests that in circumstances in which children have practice in interaction, they may be very helpful to one another. Peers can serve as guides in academic activities in the

classroom, especially if such interaction is encouraged in the classroom social structure, giving children experience as onlookers and in coordinated parallel activity, guidance, and collaboration (Aronson, Blaney, Stephan, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978; Cooper, Marquis, & Edward, 1986). When teachers encourage and support peer interaction, children may develop skill in academically useful forms of interaction (Rogoff, 1990). These studies partly explain what I see taking place between Kapo and Xiumei and between Shan and Mimi. However, Wington and Yuan's interaction does not fit well into any of the above metaphors. A synergy is, indeed, taking place whereby both children teach and learn from each other. But, paradoxically, it is the child whose knowledge of the new language is very limited (Wington) who appears to control events. What, then, might be going on and what might be learned from this on both a practical and theoretical level (Chen & Gregory, 2004)?

6.3 Settings and Backgrounds

This part of my study is taking place in different contexts between two pairs of Cantonese speaking peers, Mandarin speaking girls and English classmates (Cantonese and Mandarin are both spoken dialects, both sharing the same written form as literacy Chinese). Three English mainstream schools are involved in the study and two families participate in the contribution to our main data. The excerpts presented below are drawn from a much larger bank of data collected over an extended period of participant observation and interviews, and also from the children's diaries.

6.3.1 Wington and Yuan

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Wington is often seen sitting on her own in the classroom, withdrawn from class lessons. Yet she has a Cantonese classmate named Yuan, who, one year younger, was born in Britain but also speaks fluent Cantonese. They are often seen together at break time; occasionally they sit together in the class helping each

other. The excerpt (Chen & Gregory 2004: 117) below demonstrates how eight-year-old Yuan is helping nine-year-old Wington to read and understand a text on human biology.

Extract one: Setting - Tuesday, 22 / 05 / 2002, in the class of Wington and Yuan (Field notes, see Appendix VI).

In the science lesson today children were grouped together, cutting paragraphs from the materials given by Ms Andrew, the class teacher, and then reorganising them onto a big sheet of paper. The aim for this teamwork was to see how much they understood the text on human biology they had just learnt. Wington and Yuan worked intensely together on this text. When they finished cutting and sticking, they started reading aloud in turn to check how their work made sense. In between Wington stopped Yuan every now and then and pointed at some sentences for Yuan to show her how to read using correct pronunciation and explain in Cantonese what these words meant.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Wington: <i>Ni di ji ding du?</i> / How are these words read? | 2 Yuan: body...ribs...skeleton |
| 3 Wington: body...ribs...skelton, <i>Cantonese ding gai?</i>
/ what are they in Cantonese? | 4 Yuan: <i>samti, paigua and guga.</i> |
| 5 Wington: <i>Nigo M tao de ji hai mieye?</i>
/ What is the word starting with 'M'? | 6 Yuan: Muscle, <i>Cantonese hai 'jiyou'</i> |
| 7 Wington: <i>Niduo, niduo</i> / what about here? | 8 Yuan: Stomach, lung, liver, brain... |
| 9 Wington: Stomach...lung...liver...brain... | |
| 10 Wington: <i>Come on, du nido la</i> / Come on, read here. | 11 Yuan: constraint and relax |
| 12 Wington: <i>Mieye yici?</i> / what is the meaning? | 13 Yuan: <i>xiushu tongmai fansong</i> |
| 14 Wington: <i>Xu nido yaomo gon guo luolai zuo mie yong?</i>
/Does the text tell us what are these bones
used for | 15 Yuan: <i>yiding yao la, wo taitai.</i>
/it should, let me have a look. |
| 16 Wington: <i>Hai ng hai nido ?/</i> are they here? | 17 Yuan: <i>Hai</i> / yes |

From the excerpt above we begin to see that this is not an ordinary collaboration between classmates. What starts as a human biology lesson becomes a complex exercise in language, literacy and translation. But who is teaching whom? Interestingly, although Yuan provides answers, it is Wington who takes a teacher's role, quizzing her and urgently pushing her into thinking about translations, pronunciations, and explanations.

6.3.2 Kapo and Xiumei

Twelve year old Kapo, the elder sister of Wington, has recently transferred to a secondary school for girls. She feels much different than a year ago when she was with her sister in Soho School. She wrote in her diary that she was quite left out in the class at that time. But now she feels much more at home. The direct reason for this change is because she has met many bilingual learners in this school and, particularly she has established a close relationship with her Cantonese classmate named Xiumei. They work and play together, learning from each other on equal status. This is what Kapo tells us in her diary below (see Appendix II).

我很高興我終於轉道 Anderson 女子學校上學了。老師說，這是唯一一所不要求入學考試的中學。據說，這所學校較注重英語教學和少數民族文化。我們班有28個同學，其中三分之一是在三、四年前，從別的國家移民來的。只有Sorina兩年前剛從Kosovo來。Lyna從Bangladesh來。秀梅和我是我們年級，唯一兩個香港來的女孩，所不同的是，秀梅三歲時就來了，而且爸爸是英國人。她說著一口漂亮的英文和香港話。她善良、熱心、學習優秀，我們成了好朋友。最重要的是，她能用香港話，給我解釋我所不懂的東西，用別的同學無法了解的方式，給我學習上許多幫助。當然，別的移民同學，如Sorina和Lyna也很友好，她們一樣對我有幫助，因為我們都是EAL學生。我喜歡這所學校，更喜歡她們。沒有她們，我簡直沒法在英文學校生存(2001年11月4日星期天)。

I am very happy that at last I have been transferred to Anderson Girls School. Ms Carol said this was the only school that didn't require the entrance exam and the school was strong for its multicultural richness and languages. 28 girls are friendly classmates. About one third of them are immigrants from other countries. Most of them came here four or five years ago, Lyna came at three from Bangladesh, only Sorina from Kosovo two years ago. Xiumei and I are the only Hong Kong Chinese in our form. However Xiumei is different, she came over here when she was three and her father is English. She speaks beautifully in both English and Cantonese. We are best friends as she is kind, warm hearted, and she is good at many subjects. But most important to me is that she can explain anything I don't understand in my home language and helps me with my study in a very different way that others just could not understand. Of course Sorina and Lyna are also very friendly and helpful as we are all learning English as a second language. I like this school as much as I like them. Without them I could not have survived in this English school (Sunday, 4th November 2001 - a passage in the diary of Kapo, aged 12).

We learn from the diary that Kapo is getting more and more confident after she was transferred to Anderson Girls School where she met Xiumei and other bilingual classmates. She feels comfortable with her bilingual peers. For instance, Xiumei could help Kapo in her mother tongue, and other bilingual children, though speaking different mother tongues, are also helpful as they are all on the way to becoming bilingual, having many interests in common. We notice that an equal relationship between peers actually creates bilingual culture in the mainstream classroom, where bilingual children are able to share their experience in second language learning, thus gaining from each other both technical and emotional support. This phenomenon needs detailed examination.

6.3.3 Shan and Mimi

Shan, after a year of experience in the year 6 mainstream class in Gillespie School, is now studying in the year 7 mainstream class in High Fields School. Although she has told me a lot of her unhappy encounters and embarrassment in the school, luckily she still has something cheerful to share with me; that is her friendship with Cindy, a British born Chinese girl in year five, and Yuezhou, a boy who came from Mainland China one year earlier and studies now in another English school. This cheerful moment was well described in her early diary (see Appendix I). Shan, now in her new school, has made several new friends: Maria, Harra and Mimi. Maria came from Russia at five, Harra came from Afghanistan at three, only Mimi who came from Taiwan at four speaks Shan's mother tongue at home. Of course, due to her fluency in both languages, Mimi later becomes Shan's best friend. The conversation below shows how Shan and Mimi plan their joint work and what other classmates think of Shan (see Appendix III & VI).

Extract two: Setting - Friday, 19 / 07 / 2002, High Fields Girl School (field notes)

Shan and her classmates were having a Geography lesson. When doing class teamwork, Shan moved to the next table where Mimi and other three girls were discussing the assignment. The assignment was about 'Places in the world', students were supposed to work out a planning note for a short geographical essay on

whatever places were familiar to them. I saw Shan showing Mimi a Chinese Geography book and pointing at the chapter 'Three Gorges'. At this point, they began to whisper in Mandarin.

1 Shan: *Ni kan women xuan Zhongguo hao bu hao?* / What do you think if we write about China?

2 Mimi: *Hao zhuyi, weishenme bu?* / What a good idea, why not?

3 Shan: *Xie shenme hao?* / Whereabouts in China?

4 Mimi: *'San Xia' zenme yang? yinwei wo men zhenzai xue 'the narrow precipitous' /* What about 'Three Gorges' as we are learning the narrow precipitous.

5 Shan: *Dui, dui, jiu xie 'San Xia' hao le, erqie women keyi cong shu li zhao yixie Zhongwen ziliao /* You are right, then we are writing something about it, and here in the book we can find some information in Chinese.

6 Mimi: *Hao ba, women kan kan zhe ben Chinese Geography. Dan shi ni yao gaosu shu wo limian zenme shuo de, ni zhidao wo kan bu hao./* All right, Let's have a look, but you have to tell me what is written about because you know I can't read much Chinese.

7 Shan: *Mei wenti, women yiqi xie, ni dei ban wo Yingwen /* No problem, we work together and you always help me with English.

...

When the class had a break, Shan introduced me to her other friends. From the following short conversation, I could see that Shan was getting on very well with them and becoming more confident with her English.

8 Shan: *This is Maria, coming from Russia when she was three years old. She is at the top of the class.*

9 Chen: *Hello Maria, Shan tells me you are very nice to her.*

10 Maria: *Shan is very friendly too and we have a lot of fun together.*

11 Chen: *Do you often help her in lessons?*

12 Maria: *Yes, we often work together in a group and we are the best group in the class.*

13 Chen: *What do you think of Shan's progress in English?*

14 Maria: *She is clever, her handwriting I am very jealous of.*

15 Chen: *How do you help her English?*

16 Maria: *I correct her English in many ways.*

17 Shan: *Hanna is also my best friend, she is talkative, you can talk to her.*

18 Chen: *Hello, Harra, where are you from and when?*

19 Harra: *I came from Afghanistan when I was very small.*

20 Chen: *What is your impression of Shan?*

21 Harra: *Shan is a good friend of mine. She is good at written work but her weak point is pronunciation. I often help her with her pronunciation and with some technical terms, but her strong point is clear and precise. She works very hard.*

22 Chen: *Are you often together after class?*

23 Harra: *Yes, we go to library, play games and have fun together. In class we often sit next to each other so we can help each other.*

24 Chen: *English is Shan's second language and you do not know her language, how do you make her understand you?*

25 Harra: *Well, that is not very difficult. Sometimes we use gesture, we draw and we simplify the meaning so that Shan can understand more clearly. Of course sometimes we ask Mimi to do the translation.*

Apparently Shan's friendly peers know her very well, giving Shan a constant support in many ways. Mimi, of course, is the key person, who acts as tutor and mentor more directly as she speaks Shan's language. Other classmates still find ways to support Shan. What is more from the excerpt above, is that friendly peers are keen to appreciate each other's strength and learn from each other's strong points to offset one's own weaknesses, helping as much as encouraging each other on an equal status. This atmosphere is very beneficial to those newly arrived emergent bilingual learners like Shan, Wington and Kapo.

The examples presented above demonstrate that peers and, especially bilingual peers play an important role in a newcomer's English support by engaging in reading and pronouncing words, paraphrasing expressions, translating meanings in the mother tongue, sharing enthusiasm and solving problems. However, such kind of collaboration has been underestimated in practice by researchers and school teachers. We notice that probably two main factors might be responsible for this neglect. Firstly, since the Swann report (1985) and the Educational Reform Act (1988), researchers and teachers have tended to emphasise the similarities rather than differences between children. This trend has been practically reinforced by the implementation of the National Curriculum in the 1990s. 'Equality of Opportunity' a promise made in the various official documents, has been currently interpreted as 'the same' provision, thus children's linguistic and cultural differences have been ironed out. Also schools have failed to acknowledge the learning practices of different minority groups (Gregory, 1996). Secondly, this neglect may stem from traditional teacher training programmes and curricula. Many teachers have little awareness of linguistic differences between pupils and no training for coping with these differences. Some

generally accepted principles of bilingualism, findings about the interactive nature of learning and the peer's role in learning support, are not included in training programmes. The interviews I conducted revealed that most of the mainstream teachers felt that they had no pedagogic knowledge or skills for supporting new arrivals. As a consequence, teachers are unable to recognise a newcomer's urgent need for English support and how this can best be met. In theory, all teachers have the responsibility to cater for the linguistic needs of their children, to encourage any form of extra support within the mainstream, but in practice, teachers in this study tended to assume an unproblematic inclusion in the mainstream, and overlooked the importance of the role of peer support in second language learning.

6.4 Bilingual Exchange Teaching between Peers

1 Chen: *What language does she always use to communicate with you?*

2 Yuan: *Cantonese*

3 Chen: *Because...*

4 Yuan: *Because she doesn't notice my English.*

5 Chen: *How do you help her with her English?*

6 Yuan: *Well, I help her just by telling her what to do and help her...er... that is.*

...

1 Chen: *You look a bit white, you are not one hundred percent Chinese, am I right?*

2 Xiumei: *You are right, I am a half Chinese because my mum is Cantonese and my father is English.*

3 Chen: *You speak Cantonese at home?*

4 Xiumei: *Yes, I speak Cantonese with my mum.*

5 Chen: *Kapo told me you help her a lot in her lessons.*

6 Xiumei: *Oh, yes, sometimes.*

7 Chen: *How you help?*

8 Xiumei: *Normally I tell her in Chinese when she couldn't understand well.*

9 Chen: *But do you speak English to her because she is learning English?*

10 Xiumei: *Sometimes when it is simply but not often because we could not talk more in English.*

...

1 Shan: *Ni kan women xie Zhongguo hao bu hao?* / What do you think if we write about China?

2 Mimi: *Hao zhuyi, weishenme bu?* / What a good idea, why not?

3 Shan: *Xie shenme hao?* / Where about in China?

4 Mimi: *'San Xia' zenme yang? yinwei wo men zhenzai xue 'the narrow precipitous'* / What about 'Three Gorges' as we are learning the narrow precipitous.

5 Shan: *Dui, dui, jiu xie 'San Xia' hao le, erqie women keyi cong shu li zhao yixie Zhongwen ziliao* / You are right, then we are writing something about it, and here in the book we can find some information in Chinese.

6 Mimi: *Hao ba, women kan kan zhe ben Chinese Geography. Dan shi ni yao gaosu shu wo limian zenme shuo de, ni zhidao wo kan bu hao.* / All right, Let's have look, but you have to tell me what is wriiten about because you know I cannot read much Chinese.

7 Shan: *Mei wenti, women yiqi xie, ni dei ban wo Yingwen* / No problem, we work together and you always help me with English.

...

In fact, behind each of the above three scenes, the whole process is much more complex than it appears. Although Yuan indeed 'helps' her friend, we shall see below that she does not, in any teacherly sense, actually tell her what to do. Maybe this is because Wington is one year older and Yuan is very aware of her friend's superior knowledge of spoken Chinese as well as the written form. A synergy is occurring, which is similar to that described between siblings but with one crucial difference: the roles of the more experienced English speaker and the novice are reversed. Since the teaching and learning takes place bilingually, the younger child, Yuan, whose English is more proficient, has to translate and interpret for the older child. Wington, in turn, retains her status of age by her carefully focused questions and her overall control of the whole lesson. When Xiumei was asked how she helped Kapo, she told us she did it by telling her in Chinese, as they could not talk more in English. What we see here is the teaching and learning takes place bilingually. Both Yuan and Xiemei, whoes English is more proficient, play the role of interpreter, translating for their Chinese peers into the mother tongue. This cannot be simply referred to as 'scaffolding' or 'guided participation' as outlined above, since the 'helping' is cognitively equally taxing on both sides (Chen & Gregory, 2004). For instance, when Shan and Mimi worked together on a piece of writing about Chinese geography, Shan could be the teacher and Mimi, though more proficient in English, has to ask Shan to tell

her in spoken Chinese as she cannot read much Chinese. What we see, therefore, is a complex interaction which we term ‘bilingual exchange teaching’ between the peers. I unpick below three crucial features of this approach (Chen & Gregory, 2004:117- 126).

6.4.1 Translating and Using the Mother-Tongue

‘Do you know the meaning?’ ‘No’ said Wington. Then Yuan explained to her in Cantonese sentence by sentence, *Niguo xu hai gong yao yi guo dongmu, kyu hue hyudei cesuo genxi, kyu wun duo hao duo ye buo, kyu ng zongyi buo...* / This book is about an animal, when he went to his toilet, he found a lot of things he dislike.... Wington nodded.

...

On another occasion:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Wington: <i>Come on, du nido la</i> / Come on, read here. | 2 Yuan: constraint and relax. |
| 3 Wington: <i>Mieye yici?</i> / what is the meaning? | 4 Yuan: <i>xiushu tongmai fansong</i> |
| 5 Wington: <i>Xu nido yaomo gon guo luolai zuo mie yong?</i>
/Does the text tell us what are these bones used for | 6 Yuan: <i>yiding yao la, wo taitai.</i>
/it should, let me have a look. |
| 7 Wington: <i>Hai ng hai nido?</i> / are they here? | 8 Yuan: <i>Hai</i> / yes |

Translating is a complex skill, especially when vocabulary is specialised and difficult. Yuan gives literal Cantonese translations of ‘constraint’ and ‘relax’, which tax her own knowledge of Cantonese, because the process involved in the comprehension of text can be better understood through translation and interpretation (Minini, 1981; Nida, 1976; Seleskovitch, 1976). Even more taxing is the task of explaining the function of such difficult words. As a competent Cantonese speaker, Wington almost takes over the role of teacher herself by directing Yuan to the text to find out answers. Yuan, herself, becomes more aware of her bilinguality through the process of translation. She realises the double understanding of ‘meaning’ (literal translation and explanation) and has to think about all this. This same bilingual teaching experience happens to Kapo and Xiumei, Shan and Mimi, whereby the competent English speakers benefit from their less competent peers in written Chinese.

6.4.2 Repeating and Phonetic Imitation

(...) = actual text

2 Yuan: *'Meg was poor'.*

4 Yuan: *Um... (Yuan then could not turn the page
quick enough, Wington helped her)*

6 Yuan: *'Soon I'll have a chicken' said Meg.*

8 Yuan: *Then I'll have more chickens.*

1 Wington: *You first.*

3 Wington: *'But a (family) farmer get (gave)
her an egg'.*

5 Wington: *'Niduo, ah' / here, here!*

7 Wington: *'It will gran (grow) big and (lag
some) en (eggs).*

9 Wington: *Then I'll have more chickens.*

(When Yuan noticed Wington was not following her all the time, she paused and asked Wington to read on.)

10 Wington: *They will grow big and...*

(but Wington could not manage to read by herself, then the follow-up pattern continued)

11 Yuan: *They will grow big and lay some eggs.*

13 Yuan: *I'll sell the eggs and...*

12 Wington: *They will grow big and lay some
more eggs*

(Wington this time got lost as to where to follow, Yuan pointed to the right line for her. After confirming in Cantonese, Wington went on).

14 Yuan: *buy a cow*

16 Chen: *OK*

18 Yuan: *Then I'll sell the cow's milk and ...*

20 Yuan: *buy a sheep*

22 Yuan: *Then I'll sell the sheep's wool and...*

24 Yuan: *buy some clothes and ...*

26 Yuan: *clothes (Yuan repeated the word)*

28 Yuan: *a house, and ...*

30 Yuan: *But Meg didn't look where she
was going*

32 Yuan: *She fell down*

34 Yuan: *The egg broke.*

13 Wington: *I'll soo (sell) the eggs and...*

15 Wington: *buy a cow .*

17 Wington: *It's your turn.*

19 Wington: *Then I'll sell the cow's milk and...*

21 Wington: *buy a sheep (repeated).*

23 Wington: *Then I'll sell the sheep's wool.*

25 Wington: *buy some clothd (clothes) and*

27 Wington: *clothes*

29 Wington: *a house, and .. (followed)*

31 Wington: *But Meg didn't look where she is
(was) going*

33 Wington: *She fell down*

35 Wington: *The egg broke*

36 Yuan: *Meg was still poor*

37 Wington: *Meg was still pull (poor)*

Through the act of repetition, children take their first steps in learning to do things themselves. In the excerpt above, we see how Yuan provides a firm structure of support, whereby Wington takes over as much or as little as she is capable of. She encourages Wington to continue the reading but allows her only to repeat when it is clear that independent reading is too difficult. In this way, Wington is able to pronounce and remember whole phrases of the new language - a task she could never manage on her own. The same interaction is repeated by Shan and her classmates - Maria and Harra, who often tell Shan how to read the words and sentences with correct pronunciation and intonation. Interestingly Wington and Yuan's interaction has much in common with the support given by older, more competent Bangladeshi British siblings in East London (Gregory 1998) as well as the approach taken by adult Zinacantecan weavers initiating girls into the skill in Mexico (Childs and Greenfield 1982).

6.4.3 Shared Problem Solving in Two languages

Extract three: Setting - Afternoon, Friday, 19 / 07 / 2002, High Fields Girl School (fieldnotes).

Shan and her classmates were having a Geography lesson. When doing class teamwork, Shan moved to the next table where Mimi and other three girls were discussing over the assignment. The assignment was about 'Places in the world', students were supposed to work out a planning note for a short geographical essay on whatever places familiar to them. I saw Shan showing Mimi a Chinese Geography book and pointing at the Chapter 'Three Gorges'. They began to whisper in Mandarin.

1 Shan: *Ni kan women xuan Zhongguo hao bu hao?* / What do you think if we write about China?

2 Mimi: *Hao zhuyi, weishenme bu?* / What a good idea, why not?

3 Shan: *Xie shenme hao?* / Whereabouts in China?

4 Mimi: *'San Xia' zenme yang? yinwei wo men zhenzai xue 'the narrow precipitous' / What about 'Three Gorges' as we are learning the narrow precipitous.*

5 Shan: *Dui, dui, jiu xie 'San Xia' hao le, erqie women keyi cong shu li zhao yixie Zhongwen ziliao / You are right, then we are writing something about it, and here in the book we can find some information in Chinese.*

6 Mimi: *Hao ba, women kan kan zhe ben Chinese Geography. Dan shi ni yao gaosu shu wo limian zenme shuo de, ni zhidao wo kan bu hao.* / All right, Let's have a look, but you have to tell me what is written about because you know I can't read much Chinese.

7 Shan: *Mei wenti, women yiqi xie, ni dei ban wo Yingwen* / No problem, we work together and you always help me with English.

...

Extract four: Setting - Wednesday, 11 / 12 / 2002, in Wington's literacy class (field notes)

We came as usual to join Wington's class. The teaching target today was to get children to understand and practise conjunctions like 'before', 'after', 'since', 'as', 'when', 'in case', 'although', 'whenever' etc. The task was practised at two levels: At the first level, dozens of short sentences were given in a list and the children were supposed to make complex sentences (consisting of a main clause and subordinate clause) by matching up conjunction words and short sentences from the list. At the second level children were asked to make sentences of their own by using the given conjunction words. The first level task was easy and with little help from Yuan, Wington grasped the rule and finished matching up all of the words in the list even though she might not know exactly the sentence meaning. After that Wington went on to do the second level task. After struggling for a few minutes, she decided to organise the idea in Chinese and asked Yuan if she could work on these ideas with English equivalents. Yuan seemed very happy with this suggestion as she was struggling with what to write about. Wington then showed Yuan what she wrote in Chinese and read aloud to her because Yuan, like most of the British born Chinese, had only a very limited vocabulary, though fluent in speaking. With the help of Wington, Yuan quickly found the English equivalents for the Chinese expressions and also suggested some changes of different wordings and sentence patterns. The second level task ended with perfect sentences. (The field notes from participant observation in Wington's literacy class).

A number of studies from both Piagetian and Vygotskian traditions focus on the sharing of decision-making or perspective as an important factor in effective peer interaction. Many of them confirm that the most productive interaction appears to result from arrangements in which peers' decision making occurs jointly, with a balanced exploration of differences of perspective (Rogoff 1990). In bilingual peer interaction such as that between Wington and Yuan, shared problem solving results from an exchange of ideas in the two languages as different codes reflect different perspectives through different labels of the concept. What the fieldnotes of the observation above demonstrate is that the bilingual interaction between Wington and Yuan has led to a level of understanding unavailable in solitary endeavour or even monolingual collaborative interaction. The data also support the notion that shared

problem solving underlies the cognitive benefits of peer interaction as the process would provide both children with motivation, feedback and a sense of their own contribution.

All in all, what is unique about bilingual exchange teaching between peers? The data shows ways in which peers speaking a common language give each other a confidence which is impossible in the monolingual English classroom. Three aspects typify their interaction; trust, respect and reciprocity. Wington has the confidence to 'have a go' and trusts Yuan who allows her to do as much or as little as she is able to. Kapo and Shan as well, all develop a friendship with their Chinese peers and get confidence from their company and encouragement. Second, is the aspect of respect. During bilingual exchange teaching a special type of equality exists between the learners that is absent even between siblings. The competent Chinese readers are respected for their overall knowledge of literacy Chinese generally while the competent English speaking peers act as mediators of the English language. They learn from each other's strong points to offset weaknesses. Third, is the notion of reciprocity. As a competent speaker and reader of English, we might expect Yuan to take on the traditional role of the teacher, quizzing and testing her 'pupil' on her learning. Older Bangladeshi British siblings playing school in East London certainly went about teaching in this way - reflecting the approach of both their mainstream and community class teachers (Gregory 2001). However, what we see here is the exact opposite. It is Wington who is asking for individual words and meanings. In doing so, she almost takes over the role of the teacher herself, particularly when she quizzes Yuan on her knowledge of phonics: 'What is the word starting with 'M'?'

What we see above provides a new dimension to the debate on the nature of 'scaffolding'. The learning taking place between Wington and Yuan cannot be referred to as 'scaffolding' or 'guided participation' as outlined above, since the 'helping' is cognitively equally taxing on both sides. A synergy is occurring, which is similar to that described between siblings but with one crucial difference: the roles of the more experienced English speaker and the novice are reversed. Since the teaching and learning takes place bilingually, the younger child, Yuan, whose English is more proficient, has to translate and interpret for the older

child. Wington, in turn, retains her status of age by her carefully focused questions and her overall control of the whole lesson.

6.5 Summary

Theoretically speaking, the issue of bilingual peer support in the mainstream classroom spans interest across three main areas of research: bilingual teaching, literacy and peer interaction. Some existing studies partly account for what we see taking place between bilingual peers, but crucial questions remain unanswered. Besides, very few studies unpick episodes of this kind of collaboration between peers, perhaps recognising the difficulty in eavesdropping on children's privacy, but it is these episodes that may provide answers to crucial questions concerning the nature of peer support.

The examples presented in the study demonstrate that peers and, especially bilingual peers play an important role in a newcomer's English support by engaging in reading and pronouncing words, paraphrasing expressions, translating meanings in the mother tongue, sharing enthusiasm and solving problems. However such kind of collaboration has been underestimated in practice by researchers and school teachers. Besides what we see detailed in the data provides a new dimension to the debate on the general language support for emergent bilingual children in the present educational provision in the UK. Emergent bilingual children like Wington, Kapo and Shan are newcomers to London. My argument has been that emergent bilingual children need to be taught step by step in order to survive and move on in the English school but this is often not the case in the mainstream class. Luckily, children are also learning from their classmates and, particularly from peers speaking a common language. These bilingual children have many skills that contribute to children's language support (linguistic and academic progress) that our class teachers could not share; they give each other a confidence which is impossible in the monolingual English classroom. This special peer culture cannot be referred to as simple 'scaffolding' or 'guided participation' as outlined above, since the 'helping' is cognitively equally taxing on both sides. Instead, I refer to it as 'exchange learning' that provides a new insight to the

debate on the nature of 'scaffolding'. In addition, benefits also occur for teachers as in the mainstream class bilingual peers are actually sharing with schools and teachers the responsibility of catering for linguistic differences and providing language support within the 'mainstream' classroom. They also help to diminish the current tension of 'inclusion' in the mainstream school.

Chapter 7 The Role of Family Support

The ultimate responsibility for the child rests with the parent- and that the child will develop his full potential only if the education of the child has the full support of the parent (Plowden, 1973).

7.1 Introduction

Based on previous investigations into the EAL support provided in children's mainstream school, this chapter goes on to identify the role of family support at home through an ethnographic approach to studying the parents' attitude to education, their high expectations of English schools and teachers, and their active involvement in the children's learning process. The parents' educational background is taken into account, as an active involvement often depends on parents' knowledge of the education system.

7.2 A Review from Existing Literature

'Parental involvement' can mean different things to different people - from parents repairing library books or helping on trips, to parent aids working in the classroom, or giving home-based help with reading (Long, 1987) - but to those minority parents, the involvement means concern, encouragement and high expectations. However, existing studies about parental involvement in school are mainly about native parents' help with reading. Relatively few studies focus on minority parents' role in the school-home partnership, and there is very little positive literature documenting minority parents' active involvement, which might contribute to the success of emergent bilingual children.

7.2.1 Home Background and Minority Expectations

One of the important factors for children's success in education is their home background and parental attitude to education, manifest in active interest, encouragement and high expectations (Plowden, 1967). A good deal of post-war research has been devoted to identifying which features in the home environment have been most significant in explaining school achievement, and numerous studies have testified to differences in achievement between social classes or educational levels (Tomlinson, 1983). However, the early literature concerning minority cultural backgrounds was set within an assimilationist framework. It has only been since the 1970s that assimilationist models have given way to recognition of cultural diversity, and some acceptance of the notion that Britain is now a multiracial, multicultural society.

There are records showing that Hong Kong Chinese were brought into Britain as seamen as early as the nineteenth century, but the Chinese community only began to grow after the Second World War in response both to large-scale labour shortages in Britain and to Hong Kong's economic recession and political instability particularly in the 1960s. Following changes in the law in Britain, the immigration of Chinese from Hong Kong became easier and, with the introduction of the employment voucher system by the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the number of Hong Kong workers in Britain increased rapidly and the rate was further accelerated by the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, demanding additional labour in prosperous Chinese catering businesses. By the early 1980s, there were in total about 100,000 Chinese in Britain, making them the third largest ethnic minority group. Since then due to the confirmation of the return of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China and the open-door policy promoted in Mainland China, the number of Chinese population in the Britain has further increased. By Spring 2002 to Winter 2002/03, there were about 199,000 Chinese in Britain; occupying 0.34% of the total population (59 330,000). However, for a variety of reasons, they have received a disproportionately small amount of attention from researchers and educationists alike (Wong, 1992). The Chinese parents' perception of British schools and their expectations of children's education are not only less documented but missinterpreted in some of the work, and there is even little

research on the progress of Chinese children in British schools.

The Changing Attitudes towards British Education and Schools

One explanation for this neglect in research lies partly in an assumption derived from some studies (Broady, 1955, Ny, 1968, Jones, 1979, Watson 1977 and Wang, 1982) that 'Chinese settlers in Britain, primarily from Hong Kong, have not attracted the same degree of antagonism as Caribbean and Asian settlers'... 'The economic niche in which the majority of Chinese work - the restaurant trade - has allowed them to work and prosper in Britain without changing their way of life to suit British expectations' (Tomlinson, 1984: 30). 'Many do not even bother to learn English, they retain their ability to pass unnoticed in the wider community' (Jones, 1979: 409). According to Fitchett (1976) and Jones (1980), some British-born Chinese children were, in the early days of immigration, sent back to Hong Kong to be brought up by their grandmothers. This is partly because Chinese parents wanted to free themselves for work and partly because they presumed that western concepts of democracy and individualism in the British society would not be compatible with the traditional Chinese cultural values and were thus afraid of 'losing' their children to British culture if they went to school in this country. In this respect, it is true to say that the Chinese are the least 'assimilated' of all minority groups (Watson, 1977).

父母对英国教育的看法

However, the majority of Chinese parent's attitudes have changed following the strict immigration control due to the 1971 Immigration Act, and the fear of communism when Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997. Consequently their children are no longer sent back to Hong Kong and now attend British schools. They realise that they come to Britain not only to make a living but also expecting to improve the education and life chances of their children. They believe that English-medium education will lead to social and economic advancement and they expect that their children will take advantage of the British education system to gain more academic credentials to prepare them for work, but of course, at the same time still hope that their children should have a strong link with the Chinese culture which will help them to maintain certain traditional cultural values. In so thinking Chinese parents are on the one hand willing to send their children to English

schools, but on the other they want to send their children to Chinese community schools.

Alongside new Hong Kong Chinese immigrants in the 1980s, the Mainland Chinese first came to Britain as students and scholars in the late 1970s when China implemented the open-door policy. From the late 1980s, children and spouses began arriving as dependents. Many of them who came as students in the 1980s found themselves parents in the 1990s. Although this group is still very small in number compared with the Hong Kong Chinese in Britain, their number has increased greatly in recent years. Different from the majority of Cantonese parents who have received only primary-level education and do not have a working knowledge of English, most Mainland Chinese have received a higher education, especially men; many of them have completed doctoral studies. They are able to read and write in English, though may not be fluent in speaking. These academic parents, owing much to their own academic experience, place a high value on the merits of the British education system and very much fantasise over the high aspirations of English teachers for their pupils. Having some knowledge of British schools, they are thus more critical of schools and more demanding on behalf of their children.

No-change Aspirations for the Children's Success in Education

Chinese parents' aspirations for their children's success in education have never changed (Wong, 1992). The Hong Kong Chinese and the Mainland Chinese, though speaking different dialects, read and write the same language; they may differ in terms of educational background, but they all share the Confucius Heritage Culture and Confucius' perception of knowledge. Confucius ideology in fact has an impact on the development of perfect men and the administration of society. Among the hierarchy of professions in traditional society, scholars were on top of the social ladder, as they were preferred for government officials by the civil service examinations (Keju). Therefore in old China, literacy training was seen by common people, no matter whether rich or poor, as the high road to public service, and subsequently to wealth and prestige. Even today Hong Kong as well as Mainland China is very much under the influence of Confucius's concept of man, knowledge and society. Many Chinese parents still believe that success in education will lead to occupational and

status mobility, or in other words, 'status mobility' can be achieved by education, and university education is the key to this achievement. Therefore Chinese parents, regardless of different educational backgrounds and different occupations, mostly share high expectations about education, and also high aspirations for their children. For those less educated parents from the rural parts of Hong Kong, children's success in education will bring honour to the family or the clan. They realise, after having experienced hardships and frustration in looking for jobs, the importance of education for personal development, they insist that their sons and daughters, brothers and sisters should go to school and encourage them to stay on for further education and training, children are not required to help in the fields; but for those intellectual parents from Mainland China, children's growth in two languages and cultures, and the acceptance of children's talent by international societies, are their pride and dream. They expect, through their opportunities abroad, to improve the life chances of their children. What may be an important difference between the Mainland Chinese parents and the Hong Kong Chinese parents is that the Mainland Chinese parents are considered to be more knowledgeable of schools and actually rather more likely to have visited their children's schools, while Hong Kong Chinese parents, mostly due to the language barrier, working longer hours and doing shift work, do not have much contact with schools though they are intensely anxious for their children to do well in schools. But all in all, owing much to their parents' overall positive attitude to education, Chinese children are on the whole highly motivated, they aim for higher educational qualifications and better life chances than their older generations.

7.2.2 Parents' Involvement and Children's School Performance

Lady Plowden (1973) who chaired the Advisory Council which produced the influential report on Primary schools, has emphasised in her book *Parents and Schools Guidebook* that 'the ultimate responsibility for the child rests with the parent- and that the child will develop his full potential only if the education of the child has the full support of the parent' (quoted in Wood & Simpkins, 1973). This famous quotation demonstrates that researches into general home and school relations have centred on more specific questions

of how we positively judge the role of minority parents in the educational process, and if there is with certainty an association between minority parental encouragement in particular and children's educational performance. These questions have been matters of considerable controversy within the educational community over the last thirty decades.

Official Recognition of Parental Involvement

The roots of parental involvement in schools can be traced back to the early nineteenth century in the USA. One of the earliest pieces of substantial tangible research in the UK was the survey conducted by Wall (1947), who analysed the views of 262 head teachers on the subject of parent-teacher co-operation. About 85 per cent of respondents reacted favourably (Topping, 1986). However, the publication of the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967) may be seen as a starting point in the process of involving parents in the UK. Plowden offered a perspective which was effectively 'school-supporting' - persuading parents of the value of the school's work and involving them in their children's school and education (Long, 1987). Data gathering included interviewing 3,000 parents in their own homes about their attitudes towards their children's education, and their relationship with the teachers involved. The report concluded from its own research that there was certainly an association between parental encouragement and children's educational performance (Topping, 1986), or in other words, variation in parental attitudes was one of the main factors underlying variations in children's school achievement. In order to promote partnership between home and school, Plowden outlined a five-point programme consisting of a welcome to the school, regular meetings between parents and teachers, open days for parents to see their children's work, information for parents about their child's progress and general school activities, and annual written reports (Hughes, Widely and Nash, 1994). At the time, these recommendations constituted a major step forward in home/school relationships. It gave official recognition to the problem of 'good relations' between teachers and parents, which called for positive action and thought from schools on parental involvement, and advocated home-visiting and increased community involvement as strategies to be considered by schools (Long, 1987).

After the Plowden Report, coupled with a wider acceptance of the principle of parental involvement, was the growth of organisations committed to parental involvement in school: the Home and School Council, the Advisory Centre for Education, the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations, and the Confederation for Advancement of State Education. In 1977 the Taylor Report again strongly recommended the involvement of parents in the governance of schools, proposing that half of the governing body be composed of parents of children in the school and other representatives of the local community. But 'how much of this was implemented is another story altogether' (Topping, 1986: 16). Nonetheless the process of parental involvement was underway, though the pace might be slow. Twenty-four years later most schools would accept the Plowden suggestions for parental involvement, and legislation in the 1980s, via the 1980, 1986 and 1988 Education Acts, has given parents more legal rights - to choice of school, increased representation on governing bodies and more information from schools (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991).

Importance of Parental Involvement

The 1967 research (Plowden Report) confirmed that the main benefits for parental involvement were seen as: (a) leading the parents to take a greater interest in the school, (b) helping the teacher to understand the child, and (c) encourage the child in his/her lessons (Topping, 1986). But what could be the reasons? A summary of some ideas is as follows:

Firstly parents know best of the needs of their children. They are the primary educators or teachers of their children before school or nursery, and it makes sense to continue and utilise this involvement in their latter formal schooling (Long, 1987). Now it is a legal duty for parents to ensure that their children receive full-time education since the 1944 Education Act, therefore parents must be offered all necessary information to carry out this duty (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991). Practically, parents and teachers have a common interest in enhancing children's achievements. However, the perception of parents as problems has a long history in the British education system. It is good to see that since the Plowden Report, the positive perception of parents as partners in the educational process,

has won its legal place. Some key ideas in the report have formed a basis from which current trends have developed.

Secondly, it has been proved that parental involvement improves children's school performance, that where parents have become involved in their own children's learning, the children's school performance has invariably improved quite significantly. Numerous studies indicate that whatever the form of involvement, the effect on children's school performance is positive, provided the involvement is well-planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting, and serves to integrate the child's experiences at home and school (Gillum et al., 1977; Herman and Yeh, 1980; Fantini, 1980; and Henderson, 1981). That is why lack of parental interest is often cited as a reason for low educational achievement. However, evidence shows that a good majority of parents from all backgrounds are interested in their children's education, supportive of schools and most anxious to help out their children, so long as they are given a specific tasks and sufficient encouragement and assurance (Tomlinson, 1983 & Long, 1987).

Thirdly, as such involvement has positive advantages for children, teachers and parents, it actually extends the learning contexts beyond the confines of the classroom and the school, in which teachers develop their professional role as facilitators of learning wherever it takes place, and parents gain skills and confidence to extend their child's learning (Long, 1987). Parents can prove a valuable educational resource in many ways. There is evidence that where schools apply themselves to develop parental involvement, good results are possible even in disadvantaged areas. 'Nevertheless, many schools still have no programme of parental involvement, or one which confines parents to low-level mental tasks' (Topping, 1986:32).

Numerous facts have proved that 'failure to acknowledge the importance of parental involvement would lead in some cases, to teachers blaming parents for undesirable influences, an ability to assist their children educationally, and also to some parents, blaming schools for failing to equip their children with appropriate skills and qualification' (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991: 3). 'The finest school will be even finer when it

acknowledges the powerful contribution of every parent, however much we, as amateur sociologists, might have categorised them as disadvantaged' (John Coe, Chairperson of the National Association for Primary Education. September 1984).

Prejudice against the Role of Minority Parents

Since the Plowden Report, the idea of developing parental involvement has become more accepted, however there still exists a traditional view within the British education system that parents - or at least, particular groups of parents - are to be seen primarily as problems as they hold certain attitudes, or bring up their children in certain ways, which make it difficult, if not impossible, for schools to do their job properly (Hughes, Wikeley and Nash, 1994).

M. In the 19th century, early church schools saw themselves as rescuing children from parental moral decadence, while the later Board schools saw themselves as removing children from parental exploitation. In the early years of the 20th century teachers were frequently urged to impress school values on the home, particularly in the areas of moral and physical welfare. The Hadow Report on Nursery and Infant schools (Board of Education, 1931) just resulted from teachers talking about the beneficial effects on health and hygiene to groups of parents. In the 1960s the main criticism pointed at parents was that many of them were not sufficiently interested in their children's education. This concern was fuelled by a number of studies, and one of the most influential of these was Douglas (1964)'s *the Home and the School*, which found that children's academic achievement was strongly affected by factors in their home backgrounds. The Plowden Report was also supportive of this concern. The 1970s saw the emergence of a different type of parental 'problem', for example, their culture and language. Ethnic and cultural differences added an extra dimension to issues of parental involvement. Focus was then given to the idea that the underachievement of working class children in school was due to linguistic problems, and that these in turn were due to inadequacies in the way the children were talked to by their parents at home. This idea, which was known as the theory of 'a language deficit' or 'verbal deprivation' was often supported by reference to the work of Bernstein (1971),

Tough (1976) and the Bullock Report (Department of Education and Science, 1975). According to these ideas, non-English speaking minority parents of low social class background were of course regarded as a major problem. Minority parents, particularly those of West Indian origin, were to blame for their children's under-performance in schools in terms of 'dialect interference' (Tomlinson, 1983); Asian and Chinese parents were also blame for their children's lower scores in language and literature. The English proficiency of Chinese children in the school system assessed by some studies (Rosen and Burgess, 1980) found that only 46% of the Cantonese speaking Chinese pupils in London were rated as fluent speakers of English, and the reason given for this poor rate was that before Chinese children entered British schools, the majority of them were brought up in Chinese families where they first learnt to speak Chinese for at least four or five years; when they began schooling in Britain, many of them had problems with the English language (Wong, 1996: 56). At the time the language problems of immigrant parents were an early target for official policy and practice; testing the IQ of non-English -speaking children was also given public attention.

Although perspectives and ideologies have changed a great deal in the last thirty years, many researchers today still hold the view that the partnership of home and school, parent and teacher, can be very difficult to establish with ethnic minority parents where a language barrier intervenes. A study of 230 multiracial schools in 1972 concluded that 'in general home and school relations appear to be one of the most unsatisfactory areas of life in multiracial schools - more than half the schools reported difficulties in establishing personal contact with immigrant parents' (Townsend & Brittan, 1972). The 1977 Taylor Committee on school governors as well did not recommend any specific provision for the representation of minority parents on school governing bodies. Teachers, lacking knowledge of minorities and their backgrounds, tended to hold and have low expectations of the children's educational capabilities. However, Tomlinson (1980) notes that many of the stereotyped views held by the teaching profession of attitudes to education by various ethnic groups are not supported by the facts. Tomlinson and Rex, in their study of Afro-Caribbean and Asian parents in Birmingham (1979) found that 'minority parents lacked knowledge of school curricula, examinations and general policies though they expected

teachers to make sure that their children learned English, and were placed at appropriate examination levels and obtained qualification' (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991: 3). Those parents were mostly quite eager to help in their children's education; however, their own educational experiences have tended to leave them with confused expectations of the educational system in their adoptive country and even more dependent on the schools taking the initiative in encouraging involvement, quite irrespective of language problems (Tomlinson, 1980). Tomlinson's study has made a major contribution to this under-researched area.

Research in the 1980s (Ghuman, 1980; Bhachu, 1985; MacCleod, 1985; Smith & Tomlinson, 1989;), which has focussed more on specific groups of ethnic minority parents, has continued to support the conclusions that minority parents expect schools to provide qualifications, a work-oriented education and respect for cultural, religious and linguistic differences - and that schools sometimes find difficulty in meeting these expectations. These studies all have testified to the high expectations the parents held of education, and also to the fact that 'coming from an ethnic minority does not necessarily lead to educational disadvantage or low achievement' (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991:4). However some studies did find some problems with minority parents' involvement in schools, for instance, parental first language was not English and communication was difficult; there was a shortage of ethnic minority teachers who could have taken the initiative in developing relationships, and parents from different cultural backgrounds did regard schools differently in some respects to native parents.

Difference in Parental Involvement

Parental involvement for minority parents can take place in many ways. Research literature over the past twenty years has suggested that ethnic and cultural differences do add an extra dimension to issues of parental involvement. Indeed, minority parents may not be able to help their children with school curriculum, every day reading programme or homework as some British parents do, but their endeavour has been seen everywhere – such as participating in fun raising activities, hearing their children reading at home, supervising

children's work, helping out in the swimming pool, buying facilities for children, and so on so forth. Without any doubt, the involvement, manifest in constant encouragement and a supportive attitude to school, has been most valuable and significant in explaining children's school performance, and parental encouragement is a causative factor in children's learning which is more significant than I.Q., socio-economic status or school variables (Topping, 1986).

However, there has been considerable stereotyping on the part of educationalists concerning supposed differences between Caribbean and Asian parents' views of education. This stemmed from some comparative studies of the educational performance between West Indian, Asian and White minority groups. The conclusion is that in general, West Indian boys do under perform and under-achieve in comparison with white and Asian minority groups. The explanation for this difference centres on ethnic and cultural differences. The common view is held that Asian parents are probably more interested in their children's education and more supportive of schools. This is only partially true as in fact there is little direct evidence to support this claim. Tomlinson (1980) found in her Birmingham research that West Indian parents displayed an interest in education equal to that of Asian parents. What is noticeable, she warned, is that 'more educational researchers, particularly those of Asian origin themselves (Dosanjh 1969, Bhatti 1978, Ghuman 1980) have stressed the positive interest and characteristics of Asian families; while white researchers attempting to explain poor West Indian school performance, have often stressed supposedly negative family characteristics' (Tomlinson, 1984: 52).

In general, a growing body of evidence suggests that whatever the class position, educational levels and colonial backgrounds of migrant parents, they mostly share high expectations about education, and they view schools as places where their children's life chances should be enhanced. 'Many migrant parents working in low-paid jobs have felt that their efforts might be justified if their children could acquire a more favourable position in society than they were able to achieve' (Tomlinson, 1984: 52). What may be an important difference between Caribbean and Asian parents is that from the early 1960s, Caribbean parents have been highly critical of English culture and the English education system, their

expectations have centred around the view that schools would be able to offer their children 'equality of opportunity' and that this would be reflected in examination passes. Asian parents, also expecting 'equal' opportunities to be offered to their children, have been more satisfied with schools, which from the early 1960s did take their children's learning problems seriously (particularly those connected with language) and have been able to help a number of Asian children to achieve examination passes and qualifications (Tomlinson, 1984).

It is shameful that, for many decades, the Chinese community seems out of the British academic focus. There is limited specific research on Chinese parents' involvement in school and their children's school performance, although it is commonly accepted that Chinese children are on the whole quite successful in British schools and score highly in all levels of the National test. What we can see most from very limited data presented by either white researchers or those of Chinese origin themselves is negative documenting about supposed family characteristics, for instance, 'At present, the Chinese are still not interested in assimilation, - many do not even bother to learn English, - they retain their ability to pass unnoticed in the wider community' (Jones, 1979: 401). 'Chinese children do not, on the whole, aim for higher educational qualifications, often because parents prefer their children to join family businesses' (Wang, 1982, quoted in Tomlinson, 1984: 31). There is no convincing evidence to support this judgment. In fact what Wang proclaimed has completely contradicted the general findings about minority parent's expectations of schools and education. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that 'lack of actual knowledge about the progress of relatively small number of Chinese children in British schools and the desire of Chinese parents to preserve a cultural separateness, do pose problems for home/school relations which have a different base to those between schools and other minority groups' (Tomlinson, 1984:31). The following investigation is thus intended to make a contribution to this under-researched area.

7.3 Investigation into two Families of Recent Arrivals

As mentioned in chapter two, the two families in my study come from very different backgrounds. The Mandarin speaking family is from Mainland China while the Cantonese-speaking family is from Hong Kong. Both families have arrived in the UK only a short time ago. What is noticeable is that they represent two different groups of Chinese new immigrants. An investigation into their educational backgrounds, attitudes towards schools and education, and their response to their children's educational needs will make some contribution to the study of minority parents' involvement in general, and also will particularly increase our knowledge about the progress of the relatively small number of Chinese children in British schools.

7.3.1 Parental Knowledge of the Education System

Existing literature suggests that there is a strong correlation between parents' educational background and their knowledge of the education system in the adopted country, and parents' active interest and the degree of involvement very much depend on this particular knowledge. However there is little literature documenting the extent of knowledge minority parents have about the British school system. The following data particularly documents Chinese parents' knowledge about the British education system shaped by their different social and educational backgrounds.

Shan and Her Parents

Shan's parents are university graduates from Mainland China. They both work as researchers in the field of archaeological studies. Ms Wei, the mother, came to study as a research student at the City University of London in 1999, Mr Song, the father came with their 10-year-old daughter, Shan in 2000, to join her mother here in UCL. They are housed in one of the flats on the top floor of an old building in the Islington area. Though coming as a dependent, Mr Song soon found a place in the history department, doing some research

in his field. The parents know some English though speak little, which enables them to read in English and get informed on the English education system and merits of English schools. Shan's parents, like thousands of Chinese parents in China today, are keen on their children's education and believe in what they have learnt about western values and school education. It is their knowledge about the English school system, together with their perception of their daughter's education that accelerates their determination to prolong, at all cost, their stay abroad.

Extract one: Conversation taking place at Shan's home (see Appendix IV Part one).

- 1 Chen: *Shi shenme yuanyin rang nimen jue ding dai Shan lai Yingguo?* / What has made you bring Shan here to Britain?
- 2 Mum: *Women cong shu ben li he dian shi shang dezhi, Yingguo jiao yu shi hen yixiu de, tebie zhu zhong gebie ha jiao xue bing yici jian chang de!* We have learnt from books and TV that the British education system is excellent, especially famous for its individualised teaching.
- 3 Chen: *Shixian nimen zhi bu zhidao Yingguo jiao shi shi zenme yang de?* / Did you have any idea about school teachers before you came over here?
- 4 Dad: *Women tingshuo Yingguo de laoshi shuiping hen gao. Jiulian xiaoxue lao shi ye shi daxue biye de!* We heard that English teachers are of high quality, even primary teachers have a university degree.
- 5 Chen: *Name, Ni jue de zhongguo xiao xue laoshi zenyang?* / What do you think of primary teachers in China?
- 6 Mum: *Tamen hen fu ze keshi tamen de xueli zhishi Zhong zhuan, xiang dan yu zheli de di liu xueji.* They are very responsible but most of them have only graduated from 2-year teachers college, equivalent to graduates from six form colleges in Britain.
- 7 Dad: *Danshi ta bu tong yu Yingguo de zhidu, dui ma?* / But it is a system different from the British one, isn't it?
- 8 Chen: *Dui, Zhongguo de jiaoshi peixun shi yi zhong fengui jigou, 1949 nian xuexi sulian de moshi.* / Yes, the teacher training system in China can be understood as a multiple-tier structure, which has been modified on the lines of the former Soviet model since 1949.
- 9 Mum: *Shi, zenme yang de?* / what does it look like?
- 10 Chen: *Zai zhe zhong zhidu li, you si zhong jiben de jigou fuze peixun shizi.* / Within this structure, there are four main establishments responsible for all levels of teacher training, for instance...
- 11 Dad: *Wo zhidao you san nian zhi de shifan xueyuan, bi ye sheng fen pai qu na, haiyou liang nian zhi de shi fan xue xiao you shenme jubie?* / I know there is a school called 3-year teachers college, where will these graduates be assigned? And there is another one called 2- year normal school, what is different?

- 12 Chen: *Biru, liang nian zhi de youshi shi peiyang you er yuan laoshi de, liang nian zhi de shifan xuexiao shi peiyang xiao xue laoshi de, san nian zhi de shifan xuexiao ze peiyang chuzhong laoshide, er si nian zhi de daxue shi pei yang gaozhong laoshi.* / For instance, 2-year special schools for the training of Kindergarten teachers; 2-year educational colleges for training primary school teachers; 3-year teachers colleges for the training of teachers in lower secondary schools; and 4-year teachers universities responsible for training teachers working in upper secondary schools.
- 13 Dad: *Name, zheli de shizi shuiping hai shi yao gao dian.* / In comparison, the English teachers's level is really higher.
- 14 Mum: *Wo tingshuo, tamen dou you hen sheng de ertong xinlixue he jiaoyuxue zhishi.* / I hear they all have profound knowledge of child psychology and pedagogy.
- 15 Dad: *Ling yi ge yiyue tiaojian shi, zheli de banji ren shu shao.* / Another advantage here is the size of each class, there are much less children in a class.
- 16 Mum: *Zhongguo banji ren shu tai duo le, yi ge ban you 50 ren, yige ban zhu ren, jige ke ren lao shi.* / China has got a wrong size of a class, as big as over 50 pupils in a class, with one tutor and several subject teachers.
- 17 Dad: *Zhe yang da de banji genben bu keneng zhuyi xuesheng de ge bie chayi.* / This makes it impossible for teachers to take care of every individual differences
- 18 Mum: *Women xiwan Shan neng deli yu zheli de xuexiao.* / We hope Shan will benefit from her English school here.
- 19 Dad: *Wo zuichu de xiang fa shi, jiran yingyu shi shijie yu, women yi zhi sheng shou ji hai, name, wei shenme bu rang Shan you yi ge zai bentu xuexi yingyu de jihui?* / My primary thought is that since English is a global language, and we suffer a lot from being poor in the language, why not let Shan have an opportunity to learn English in the native country?
- 20 Mum *Zhishao ta keyi xuexi dao hao de yingyu, jianglai hui qu neng shuo yi kou hao ying wen, bi shenme dou qiang.* / At least, she will learn good English here, and return someday with a good command of fluent English, nothing could be better.
- 21 Chen: *You daoli, xian zai hen duo nian qing ren lai guo wai xue yingyu yingwei zhongguo yao yu shijie jiegui.* / You are right, nowadays lots of youngsters are sent abroad learning English as China is becoming a part of the world.

...

In this extract, we can see both father and mother have had some knowledge of traditional English schools and teachers. What they appreciated about English schools was exactly something rare or not available in China. They wanted to ensure their daughter a better education and better opportunity than her friends in China, and they presumed that English and English-medium education would bring Shan a lot of advantages in many ways

especially when she returned to China someday. Therefore, they placed a high value in sending Shan to a local English school.

The Two Sisters and Their Parents

The two sisters - Kapo and Wington's parents are Cantonese speaking Hong Kong Chinese. Mr Li, the father, came to Britain about two years ago as an immigrant worker. Mrs Li and the two daughters have just joined him recently. They rent a small room in 'Nine Dragon Building' at China Town in the West End, living a very modest life. Both, parents, like the majority of the immigrants from Hong Kong after arriving in the UK, are working in the kitchen of a restaurant in China town. They work long hours, with the father working from 11:30am to 12:30 after midnight, the mother working from 6:00pm to 3:00 am in the morning. Obviously the two sisters have to learn how to take care of themselves while their parents, particularly the mother, are at work. Both parents are not well educated, they have only received primary-level education; they can barely read and write in Chinese, and are totally illiterate in English of course. However, as they grew up in Hong Kong where they experienced a colonial culture and education system, they have had their own beliefs and expectations of English education shaped by their experiences in the society where white collar-jobs or executive positions are normally filled by English-literate people, or university graduates. They moved to Britain partly because, after 1997, Hong Kong has been seriously attacked by the 'Asian Economic Crisis', unemployment has become serious, people in Hong Kong, especially the less educated like Mr Li try to look for jobs overseas, and partly because they worry for their children's education in Hong Kong as it is too competitive for their daughters to survive, let alone the idea of going to a university some day. The following is an extract from the conversation taking place at their home.

Extract Two: Meeting with the family from Hong Kong at their home (see Appendix IV Part two)

- 1 Chen: *Dingai nidei guozhuo Yingguo, Hong Kong ng mai haohao mie?* / Why does the family want to move to the UK since Hong Kong is quite a good place.
- 2 Mum: *Hong Kong mo mieye hao quzuo ren duo, yiga hao nan wen dao gong.* / Well, Hong Kong

is overcrowded; there are too many people and limited job opportunities for adult.

- 3 Chen: *Hong Kong gaoyu du ng cuo.* / But the education in Hong Kong is also quite advanced.
- 4 Mum: *Danhai, tai ginjiong, yali tai da, gongfo tai duo, sailao zai ting ng xun.* / But schools put too much pressure on children, too much homework, too much for kids.
- 5 Chen: *Kudei dude hao ng hao?* / How about your daughters' performance?
- 6 Mum: *OK du hai ok, buguo qidi du yao mafan.* / Generally speaking, they are ok, but I think they would have problems sooner or later.
- 7 Chen: *Dingkai?* / Why ?
- 8 Mum: *Yingwei hao duo wuki du hai qiang ciga laoci, fanhou jihao dabien gao kudei zaimu.* / Because many households have to employ a private tutor for extra tuition after school
- 9 Chen: *Hai ng hai bu za?* / Is it for making up a missed lesson?
- 10 Mum: *Ng hai, nidi hai tabie gao chu lai de, du hai bang ju kudei zainu shang daihou.* / Not really, it is kind of extra teaching and learning, lessons are tailored to the child's needs of going to university.
- 11 Chen: *Nidei ng bei kudei liang fen shang daihou?* / don't you want your daughters to go to university?
- 12 Mum: *Xiong hai Xiong la, danhai mo banfa, wedei jigi mo mieye menfa, yao mo qian, din yao banfa?/* Of course we wish they could go to university, but we are exactly those parents who are illiterate and who cannot afford this extra tuition.
- 13 Chen: *Nidei hai ng hai himan kudei zai liduo du daihou?* / Do you expect them to go to university here in Britain?
- 14 Mum: *Danhai la. Wodei sai genxi mo tiugian du duo di xu, yiga du wen ng dao hao gongzuo.* / Yes, of course. When we were a child, we did not study much. Now we cannot find a good job.
- 15 Chen: *Mieye hai hao gong?* / What do you mean by a good job?
- 16 Mum: *Danhai xiezi lao gogo gongzuo, cigan duan, chuliang gao gou zhong luo.* / Well, some jobs in the office, work less hours but get more paid... In Hong Kong those office jobs either in the company or in the civil service are normally taken by university graduates. (she sighed in despair and continues) *Yingwei wodei duxu xiu, sanghuo huangng du hao nan gaoging luo, dang hai wo dei du himan kudei hao duo guo wodei luo.* / Life is hard on us because we do not have a good education, but we want our children to be better off than us.
- 17 Chen: *Nidei dui Yingguo yiu mieye liugai?/* How much do you know about Britain?
- 18 Mum: *Ren bi Hong Kong xiu, gihui duo di, Yingguo jian hao di luo.* / Yes, Britain has less population, more opportunities, and money is better valued if you change British pounds to Hong Kong dollars.
- 19 Chen: *Yingguo houhaoding yang ?* / What about English schools?
- 20 Mum: *Yinggai hao guo Hong Kong ying wei Hong Kong du hai hou Yingguo, hai ma?/* I think English schools should be better than Hong Kong's as Hong Kong was following Britain during those years, wasn't it?
- 21 Chen: *Hao duo Hong Kong ren bei jigi zainu lai Yingguo duxu hai ma?* / Lots of Hong Kong people

have sent their children over here to study in English schools, why?

22 Mum: *Mozuo, yuguo nidei zainu xiong du daihou, ku yiding yao duxu hao hao, yingwei hao duo ren tong ni zan ma, zongyao hao duo ren hua: Yingguo gaoyu mo bei sailouzai gandai di yali, xiu ren tong ni zan, yao ng sai bei jian, mie gei hao luo!* // Yes, in Hong Kong, a child has to demonstrate an outstanding performance in all the examinations at various stages of schooling in order to enter a university. Besides people in Hong Kong all say: British education is better valued, less competitive, and parents pay almost nothing for schooling.

23 Chen: *Ni lao gong hai ng hai tong ni yi yong lan fa?* / Does your husband have the same idea as you?

24 Mum: *Hai, Kyu hua, gan duo yao jian lao du hai bei jigi zainu guo zuo lituo duxu, sai ji duo jian du da, wo dei yiga yao tiugian lai lituo dagong, danhai bei kudei lai luo.* // Yes, my husband said that many rich people were mad about sending their children to British A level colleges or universities even at very high expense. Now that he was employed here, of course we should make best use of the opportunity.

...

From the interview above, we notice that Mrs Li has her own beliefs and expectations about English education shaped by her own experiences in colonial education systems. The intention for her husband and the whole family's migration is very practical: the couple want to find a job and make more money; the children want a less competitive but better valued education. Both husband and wife, from their own bitter past, particularly aspire for their daughters to be socially mobile into white-collar or professional jobs by getting educational qualifications, and English schools, less competitive in their eyes, are regarded as easier places where their children's life chances will be enhanced. This is the view shared by many migrants from colonial countries.

In comparison, we can see that the two families, whatever the social and educational backgrounds, all share high expectations about their children and English education. The English school system obviously represents more than 'just education' for them as 'it provides an extension and consolidation of all the hopes and ambitions the parents may have had in coming to this country' (Derrick, 1968: 118) What may be an important difference between the Mainland couple and the Hong Kong couple is that their perception of the English education and schools are shaped by very different access to knowledge. While mainland couple gets to know Britain and the British education system through

literature, media, and through their English experience abroad, the Hong Kong couple comes to realise the advantage of English schools directly from their former colonial reality. Again, what is noticeable is that the Mainland parents are keen on their daughter's good command of English and other broader knowledge, while the Hong Kong parents are more concerned about their daughters' opportunity to earn qualifications for a better job in the future. The former is holding a more idealistic point of view while the latter is much more realistic. Also, we can see the different myths held by both the two families, with the Mainland couple showing more interest in individualised teaching and the Hong Kong couple being keen on competition. All these differences result in their different attitudes to schools and teachers.

7.3.2 Attitudes towards Schools and Teachers

It has been accepted that parental attitudes to schools and teachers play a crucial part in children's school performance. There is a considerable amount of literature documenting the different attitudes of Asian parents, Caribbean parents and parents from other backgrounds. However, for whatever reason, the attitudes of Chinese parents are not well documented. According to some early studies, 'Chinese parents have never made their expectations particularly clear to schools' (Tomlinson, 1984: 55). Let us see what the Mainland couple and Hong Kong couple are thinking, which might reveal in general what lies behind the mysterious veil of Chinese parents from different social and educational backgrounds.

The Attitude of Shan's Parents

Shan's parents show enthusiasm for schools and for English education, thus are anxious about their daughter's progress, in her new school. This attitude is linked to their knowledge and expectation as discussed earlier in this chapter. However, they are also keen to know what is going on in Shan's school and what should be done on the parents' part, or in other words, they expect teachers to explain to them what are the school procedures or

philosophy when dealing with children like Shan, who has recently arrived in this country, not speaking English before. The following conversation reveals the couples' complex feeling about their daughter's school and teachers

Extract three - Conversation continued at Shan's home (see Appendix IV Part one)

- 1 Chen: *Nimen da sun zai Yingguo dai duo jiu?* / How long are you going to stay in this country?
- 2 Mum: *Kan kan Shan xuexi Yingwen de Qingkuan zai ding.* / It depends on how well Shan learns English.
- 3 Chen: *Nimen ziji de Gongzuo jian jing ruhe?* / How about your job possibility?
- 4 Dad: *Dagai mei wenti ru guo women xiang lu xia lai.* / We don't think there is a problem if we would like to stay on.
- 5 Mum: *Ke tou teng de shi women wufa zuo chu jue ding.* / But the problem is we just cannot make a decision.
- 6 Dad: *Kanlai Shan yao xiang xue hao Yingwen kongpa bu name rongyi.* / It is really not easy for Shan. She has lots of difficulties in the class.
- 7 Chen: *Na laoshi shuo shenme?* / what did her teacher say?
- 8 Mum: *Laoshi ye mei shuo shenme, zhishi shuo mei guanxi, xiaohai xue yuyan hen kuai.* / She didn't say anything really, but always asks me not to worry as kids would pick up language quickly.
- 9 Chen: *Shan shuo shenme?* / Did Shan say anything about it
- 10 Dad: *Shan shuo laoshi dui ta hen hao, buguo mei shuo shenme hua.* / Shan said the teacher was very nice to her but did not talk much to her.
- 11 Mum: *Shan genben jiu meibanfa he laoshi tongxue jiao liu.* / There is no way for teachers and classmates to understand Shan as she can not communicate with them.
- 12 Chen: *Shan you mei you Yingwen fudao lao shi?* / Does Shan have any language support in the class?
- 13 Mum: *Meiyou, genben tan bu shang.* / No, hardly any.
- 14 Chen: *Nimen you mei you he xiaochang tan?* / Did you talk with the head teacher or other teachers?
- 15 Dad: *Shuo shi shuo le, dan ta shuo, xuexiao mei you duoyu de laoshi fuze zhe jian shi. Suiran you yige xuexi fudao laoshi, dan tamen tai mang le. Ta yao women bu jiaoji.* / We did talk, but the headteacher said there was no extra teacher taking care of the support, as the school has only one learning support teacher, she is too busy to take the job. He told us to be patient as Shan will be all right soon.
- 16 Mum: *Women bu zhidao xuexiao you shenme zhendui xiang Shan zheyang haizi de zhengce, tamen xuyao tebie guan zhu.* / We have no idea what is the school policy in dealing with children like Shan, they need a special attention.

- 17 Dad: *Mujian zuo zhongyao de shi xuexi Yingwen, fouze meifa xuexi qita zhishi. Ruguo Shan zai duan shijian nei gan bu shang qu, name ta yi ding shibai. / At the moment, learning English is Shan's priority as it is the key to other subject learning. If Shan can not catch up in a short period, she is going to fail many ways.*
- 18 Mum: *Women bin bu huaiyi Yingguo jiaoyu, danshi cong Shan de jingyan li kan bu chu Yingguo jiaoyu zhuzhong gebie hua jiaoxue. / We don't doubt that the British education is famous for its individualised teaching, but I just cannot see this from Shan's experience.*
- 19 Chen: *Shan ziji zenme jue de? / How does Shan feel about it?*
- 20 Mum: *Ta buai shuo hua, zhi shi fei chang lei, fei chang jusang. / She is very tired and distressed when she's back home, she doesn't want to talk much.*
- 21 Dad: *Shan de qingkuang yu women xiang dao de bu tong. / Shan's experience is quite out of our expectation.*
- 22 Mum: *Wo you ge ganjue zheli de laoshi mei xin mei fei, haizi xue bu xue dou wu suo wei. Dong bu dong jiu shi 'hao yang de'. / I have a feeling teachers here seem quite care-free, they don't really bother if children learn, 'well done' is a common expression.*
- 23 Dad: *Zhe ge shuo fa bu cuo, danshi xuexiao yinggai bao zheng xuesheng xue dao dongxi, kaoshi jige. / The expression is good but it is essential that children in school should learn and pass exams.*
- 24 Mum: *Ni xianzai zhidao women wei shenme touteng le ba. / You know now why we all get a headache about it.*

Again we see the reference to 'individualised education' and how the myth that Britain is famous for this dies hard (see chapter two & three). What is noticeable also in this extract, that the couple are preoccupied with Shan's English learning as they believe that language is the key to the English education system where, they hope, their daughter's potential can be brought into full play. However, due to their ignorance of the present educational provision in Britain, and lack of knowledge about specific school policies for Shan, they are disappointed. They are expressing dissatisfaction with teachers' comments like 'well done' or 'doing well', as they mean nothing tangible but are rather perfunctory. Teachers' low expectations or carefree attitudes, and the school's philosophy make the couple even more anxious and uneasy.

The Attitude of the Cantonese Parents

Without exception, the Hong Kong couple are equally interested in their children's

education, even if they have not had much contact with schools and teachers, and they are ignorant of the procedures of English schools. This can easily be seen from the attitude they have each time I visit them. They are very happy to have me as their contact, they would like to share every bit of their happiness or otherwise with me. What impresses me most is that they, particularly the mum, always ask me about the comments of their teachers. Their attitude to the school and teachers is well reflected below:

Extract four - Talk continued with Kapo's Mum (see Appendix IV Part two)

- 1 Chen: *Kydei sailouzi yao meiye gango?* / How do the kids feel about this change?
- 2 Mum: *Kydei haokaixin, biyao yao xinxi gan* / They are happy as everything is new and interesting to them
- 3 Chen: *Zhong ng zhong yi niduo houhao?!* Do they like their school?
- 4 Mum: *Yinggai dou zhongyi luo. Kydei hua laoci dui kydei hao hao, momeiye pihi, ng qi Hong Kong laoci.* / I think they are quite happy about the school. Kapo (elder daughter) told me teachers were nice and patient, not like teachers in Hong Kong, they were shouting all the time.
- 5 Chen: *Kydei houhao gonghuo ding yang? Kydei ming ng ming ?!* How about their school lesson?
- 6 Mum: *Wo ng hai gi mingba kydei houhao de ci, danhai wo ji kydei yeye fan lai mo meiye gong fu zuo.* / I don't know much what is going on in school but I can see they normally don't have homework after school.
- 7 Chen: *Ni ng danxiang kydei mo xu du?* / Don't you worry anything because the kids are too relaxed?
- 8 Mum: *Wo du mo landao lidi, wo guede houhao du hui fuza kydei, wo du ng ci.* / Well... I haven't thought about this yet. I guess the school has its method, I know nothing myself.
- 9 Chen: *Houhao laoci yaomo gaodai meiye?* / What did the teacher say about Kapo and Wington?
- 10 Mum: *Laoci duhai hua ky liang jiemui hao hao. Buguo yijia yao duo gong Yingwen* / Teachers always say **they are doing very well**, but I am afraid they have to catch up quickly.
- 11 Chen: *Ni ji ng ji kydei liangguo ding yang buza, xian yao banfa du dao Yingwen.* / Do you know in what way they can catch up quickly?
- 12 Mum: *Wo du ng ji. Wo jiuhai tiantian cong kydei fan hou, jie kydei fan lai. Yao mieye ci, laoci xie ji liduo, wo huajia Kapo luo bei renga tai. Yuguo yao meiye gaoduai, wodei jiu zuo luo.* / I don't know how I can help them really. What I can do is sending them to school and collecting them back home. If there is anything important, there will be a note for parents, then Kapo or I will ask some friends in China town to do the translation. We parents always do what the school asks without any delay.
- 13 Chen: *Nidei xiangxi ng xiangxi liduo houhao tongmai laoci?* / Do you understand schools and teachers here as you did in Hong Kong?

14 Mum: *Wo du ng ji, yao ng ci Yingwen. Buguo wo lang houhao huajia laoci duhui fuza, yuguo ng hai, du ng sai kydei la?* / I am not sure as I don't understand the language, but I believe that once kids are sent to schools, they will be educated anyway, otherwise what is point to have schools and teachers?

15 Chen: *Ni gong de ansai, bu guo zuihao du hai bei yi guo laoci banha kydei.* / You are quite right, but will it be better if the school can provide the kids with extra support?

16 Mum: *Hai hai, ni yao mo banfa ban wo tong houhao gonggong?!* / I know ... but can you help me to talk with the school?

17 Chen: *Mo mentai. Tianya wo cici tai, bu yu wo tong ni yicai qu gian haochang, hao ng hao?!* / No problem, I will try it tomorrow, but why not go and see the head teacher together when you collect them in the afternoon?

18 Mum: *Hao! Wodei tianya gian.* / Good idea, let's meet in the school tomorrow afternoon.

In this extract, we notice that the Hong Kong couple, especially the mother, expressed overall satisfaction with teachers and the school, and placed faith in the comments of the teachers. This is partly because she has just been released from the high pressure in Hong Kong, and partly because she is ignorant of school procedures but respects the school's expertise and the professionalism of the teachers. However she is not sure whether her daughters are able to understand the lesson with limited English, and she has no idea at all of how to help them catch up with English. She hopes the school will do more.

Clearly both couples have in common an anxiety for their children's progress in English schools. However, as they differ considerably in their knowledge of the English education system, the attitudes they take to schools and teachers are different, with one more active and one more passive. As comparing the two families, the Mainland couple is more critical of what they see in school, and ready to make suggestions; the Hong Kong couple tends to accept the reality of the school, and demonstrates a greater reliance on teachers' opinions, and on what they are told about school arrangements for their daughters. Both families are supportive though different, which has later developed into different strategies of helping their children at home.

7.3.3 Different Home Strategies Responding to their Children's Linguistic Needs

Driven by anxiety for their children's progress in the English schools, both the Mainland couple and the Hong Kong couple are eager to help their children's education, however, due to their different attitudes based on their knowledge of English schools and teachers, what they expect on behalf of their children in terms of extra support (additional education provision) are not the same. The next section centres on different strategies developed in the two families as a response to the disadvantages of their children in the English mainstream school.

Parents of the Mainland Family

Shan's family is anxious about their daughter's inability to cope in the classroom and they suggest that she might joint a younger class to try to catch up on basic knowledge. They are also very involved in Shan' language study, for instance, the father looks for books, exercises and videos in W.H.Smiths, and learns with her every night those new words and expressions; the mother checks anything brought back from the school, helps her out with her school assignments, if any, and signs the daybook when asked. They prepare in particular for Shan a pocket English dictionary and check them every weekend; they also ask Shan to recite lessons or dialogues from memory, and even try to speak English with Shan, though with a strong Chinese accent. The couple also helps Shan to collect some useful information for Shan' history lessons, geography lessons and science lessons. The parents, in order to minimize Shan' feeling of loneliness in her new school, send Shan to the London Mandarin school, one of the Chinese Sunday schools, where she is able to meet her Mandarin speaking friends and also share learning experiences with some older bilingual classmates. Obviously Shan's parents play an important role in her first days in the UK, and her immediate need for EAL support. The diary below reflects how this self-help approach is being applied at home (see Appendix II).

明天又是星期六，但对我而言，谈不上什么周末。不是爸爸就是妈妈总要给我辅导英文。他们用的是‘新概念英语’课本，他们在大学上学时读过。课本编得不错，有中英文对照。每一课后面都列有‘生

词与词组’、‘课文注释’和‘笔头练习’。我妈总是要我记下每一课的生词和词组，然后检查拼写和字义，而我爸爸则要我背诵课文并做英汉/汉英翻译练习。尽管很难，但我觉得值。爸爸、妈妈虽然口音不准，但他们可以教我语法和用法。语音方面，我一般向同学们请教。我发现这样学，进步很大(2001年6月22日星期五)。

Tomorrow is Saturday again, but I have not much weekend to talk about as either my father or mother would have an English lesson with me. They use ‘New Concept English’, the textbook they used at university to help me learn English. The textbook is well written in English/Chinese, every lesson is followed by ‘new words and expressions’, ‘notes on the text’ and ‘written exercises’. My mum asks me to memorise all the new words and expressions in each lesson, and checks if I know the spelling and the meaning well enough. My father even asks me to recite from memory the whole text and do some translations from English to Chinese and Chinese to English. Hard as it is, but I think it is worth doing. My parents, though, are not good at pronunciation and intonation; they are able to tell me most of the grammar rules and the usages. In order to get the sound right, I normally have them checked with my classmates. I find my English has improved in this way (Friday, 22nd June 2001 - a translated passage from Shan’s diary).

Parents of the Hong Kong Family

The Hong Kong couple, at first, is quite at ease about their daughters’ new school. This stems from their limited knowledge about how English schools work, about the curriculum and the whole process. However, when they realise the importance of English language support for newcomers, they seek support elsewhere from outside the English schools, e.g. the community schools. Although community schools are mostly set up for Chinese and cultural maintenance, the one where Kapo and Wington are going has a class teaching English to adults. Kapo and Wington joined in the class with permission from the class tutor. However, unlike the Mainland couple, the Hong Kong couple does not have much contact with the English school simply due to the language barrier, and at the same time, they feel, even with the best intentions, they can not provide much support for their children themselves as they know nothing about what actually goes on in school, let alone in English schools. The father feels ashamed that he does not have enough time to spend with his children, let alone try to help his daughters. The adult English class works very well for the two sisters as the class uses Cantonese as a medium language, thus enabling

children of recent arrivals to get ‘language shelter’ on their first days of school. No doubt, the Hong Kong couple, though ignorant in almost everything educational, has actually managed to supply their children with the best additional provision, which contributes to their daughters’ survival in an English school. What Kapo tells us in her diary below is something we expect from bilingual teachers in EAL support (see Appendix II).

今天上中文學校，因路上堵車，我遲到了許多。真糟糕，因為我不想在上中文課之前，錯過英文課。目前，我更重視學英文，我要儘快趕上班上的同學。這個英文班本來是只教成人學英文的，後來經老師特許，我和妹妹才得以旁聽。老實說，雖然在這個班裡沒什麼意思，不過至少能學一點英文基本知識。馮老師會說英文也會說中文，這對我學習幫助很大。我妹妹卻不同，她年紀小，覺得受不了那種‘悶’，但我覺得還行，因為我知道在目前情況下，沒有別的辦法。我聽說，我爸爸朋友的孩子請家教，每小時20鎊，可是我父母花不起這份錢。不管怎麼說，能在這個班上學習我已經很滿足了(2001年7月8日星期天)。

Today I was late for my Chinese school as we were held up by the traffic. It is too bad as I don’t want to miss my English class before we have my Chinese one. At the moment I am more concerned about learning English and catching up with my English classmates. This English class is for adults but my sister and I have just joined in with the head teacher’s special permission. To be honest, there is not much fun in this class though, we learn at least some basic knowledge of English, and the teacher, Mr Feng can speak both English and Cantonese, which helps us a lot more in learning. I know my sister feels bored in the lesson as she is too young to stay in this class, but it is ok for me as I can’t expect anything better in the present situation. I know some of my father’s friends even pay 20 pounds per hour for their children’s one to one extra tuition, but my parents cannot afford that for us. However I feel lucky enough to be in this class (Sunday 8th July 2001- a translated passage from Kapo’s diary).

Apparently both Shan and Kapo have very positive comments on their home support; each takes what she needs from the different approaches employed by their parents. They all feel it highly necessary to have extra tuition for English in whatever form.

7.4 Summary

It has been accepted that parental involvement improves children's school performance, that the involvement manifest in constant encouragement and a supportive attitude to school has been the most valuable driving factor. However, relatively few studies focus on minority parents' role in the school-home partnership, and there is very little positive literature documenting minority parents' attitudes and their parental involvement that in fact contributes greatly to the success of emergent bilingual children. The present study, through an ethnographic approach to studying the two Chinese families of different backgrounds, reveals in general the mysterious veil of Chinese parents' attitudes towards education - they, whatever their social and educational backgrounds, all share high expectations about their children's education and English schools. They have a great interest in knowing about their children's school performance; they are always eager and ready to provide their children with all kinds of support in the hope that their children would benefit from the English schools and be able to have better life chances in the future. However, existing research informs us that parents' active interest and the degree of involvement very much depends on parents' educational backgrounds and their knowledge of the English education system. The two couples all respect the professionalism of the English teachers and want the schools to do more however in different ways, but while the Mainland couple demonstrates enthusiasm for their daughter's school philosophy, the Hong Kong couple shows an eagerness for their daughters to take advantage of educational opportunities, which they have never had; the mainland couple appears to be disappointed at their daughter's progress in school, and expresses dissatisfaction with teachers' comments like 'well done' or 'doing well' as they find them not tangible but perfunctory; the Hong Kong couple demonstrates a greater reliance on the teachers' opinions, and on what they are told about the school arrangements for their daughters, and seem to have more faith in the comments of teachers.

The study also testifies to the view that 'coming from an ethnic minority does not necessarily lead to educational disadvantage or low achievement' (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991: 4). Despite the gap between these two couples in what they have of the English

education and schools, despite disappointments they experience more or less about their daughters' disadvantaged situation in the English mainstream school, and despite the different approaches or strategies they adopt due to their difference in educational qualifications though, all of them manage work effectively to rescue their children from educational failure. Their efforts, whatever the approach they use, continue to support the findings in chapter five that EAL support is of vital importance to children of recent arrivals. All in all the role of family support means providing many things that school cannot accomplish alone. Home-school relations should be enhanced through promoting a mutual understanding on both sides, with parents' gaining more knowledge of school procedures and teachers' having more awareness of children's home backgrounds, and those of minorities in particular.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

In Britain, as elsewhere in the West since the 1980s, the term 'equality of opportunity' has been a major theme at the heart of the government's agenda. With the promulgation of the Education Reform Act in 1988, it is a policy that 'equality of opportunity' must become a cross-curricular dimension underpinning every area of curriculum planning and evaluation. The implementation of the National Curriculum in the mainstream school, the mainstreaming of provision for children learning English as an additional language, and the linguistic support for emergent bilingual children positioned within the mainstream classroom, have thus been claimed to be the best way to ensure equal opportunities and the future life chances of all children, regardless of ethnic origin or gender, of different linguistic or cultural backgrounds and different learning competence. However, what is the reality?

Essentially two issues have been raised in the study.

The first is my concern about problematic nature of inclusion in the mainstream class. The study shows that new arrivals (aged 8-11) with a limited knowledge of English encounter many difficulties and disadvantages in English schools. They are physically included in the mainstream class but alone and withdrawn, unable to participate in lessons; they are confronted with the same English curriculum but they find no way to have equal access to 'attainment targets' and 'programmes of study'; linguistic support is said to be positioned within the mainstream framework but it is often mingled with learning support and is far from enough; teachers are nice but mostly hold low expectations of those children and appear to have no awareness of linguistic differences and training for these differences. Due to this educational exclusion, they experience severe feelings of isolation, misunderstanding and frustration. Apparently these new arrivals are those vulnerable children who suffer many disadvantages in negotiating a position that will guarantee equality of opportunity for them. Then the obvious questions are: Why was a promise of equal opportunities made if it is of so little benefit for new arrivals to be plunged into

mainstream classrooms? How have these notions of 'sameness' = 'equality' arisen in Britain?

Generally speaking, what accounts for 'British Heritage' in education are three working principles embedded in the British decentralised education system, of which individualism is at the core. The idea of individuality, which was first expressed by John Locke in the 18th century, was later further developed in the child-centred philosophy of education in the 19th and early 20th century, and is well matched with English localism. Until 1988, individualism was customarily exhibited in multiple autonomies, e.g. of the local authority from the central government, of the school from the LEA, of the teacher from the school, and of the student from the teacher in the choice of curriculum. The Hadow, Plowden and Bullock reports represent British official recognition of individual differences in different periods, of which the Bullock report signifies such a crucial response to linguistic and cultural differences. Positively, from the 1960s to the 1980s educational policy and practice changed slowly to accommodate minority children, and despite a good deal of xenophobia and lack of understanding, educational equity for minorities began to be regarded as important (Tomlinson, 2000). However, individualism for ethnic minority children was always lost in policy that ran through periods of assimilation, specialism and integration. Children were first 'lumped' together as being 'unable', and then were labelled as being 'disadvantaged' but treated in the same way as monolinguals in spite of differences. Since the 1970s, bilingualism has been seen as an asset, but children's linguistic needs have been severely ignored. As a result, children continue to experience disadvantages in many ways.

Historically British education has always promoted individualism but not diversity. Diversity, as with the case of ethnic minorities, was seen as a threat. Not speaking English was perceived as having no starting point for learning, as well as being no prerequisite to ensure benefit from the British strength of individualism. Therefore, I argue that it was the loss of individualism in educational policy that led to problems in the education of ethnic minority children. It is noteworthy that until 1999, either separate ESL lessons or mainstreaming EAL support was funded by the Home Office Section 11 grant but not the DES or DfES. Thus we can see how English education for immigrant children was

marginalised in terms of individuality, but this was done in the name that 'all children should be treated alike, there should be no discrimination'. Then the question must be: Does overlooking individual differences and treating everyone as if they were the same, involve less discrimination?

In America, we see that the opposite scenario prevails 'placing pupils at an early stage in their learning of English in mainstream classrooms without a special programme of additional support is found to be discriminatory' (NALDIC News, 2003, Vol 29). However in Britain, based on this arguable mistaken perception of 'discrimination', the 1980s witnessed the sudden official move from separate English teaching programmes into providing language support within the mainstream classroom. In the 1990s centralisation via the National Curriculum documents strengthened the idea of 'education for all' and 'equality of opportunity', but again in terms of linguistic minorities and emergent bilingual children, none of these documents identified children's experiences, starting points and teaching strategies to be different from the monolingual norm. 'Equality' still means only physical inclusion. Positively DfES's EMAG replacing the education element of the Home Office Section 11 grant represents 'a conscious shift in policy focus', but new forms of funding in which 'it was intended to widen the scope of the programme from one aimed mainly at addressing EAL needs to one aimed at raising standard for all minority ethnic groups at risk of underachievement' (NALDIC News 2003, Vol. 29), means that EAL support in the mainstream context is further marginalised, where funding seems to become an excuse for schools to ignore the fact that those children need extra help in English before they can actually be included. This is evident from the fact that Ms Crista, a part-time EAL teacher left her job, and then worked as a supply (recovery) teacher. However, on the other hand, competition between schools and individual families is becoming heated as educational markets based on parental choice are created. Interestingly enough, even when individualism is returned to accommodate many parental wishes, it is still not found in any of the policies devised for emergent bilingual children, they continue to be excluded. The automatic question must, therefore, be: Is the mainstreaming of provision for those children without substantial EAL support without its danger? Or is the mainstreaming of provision suitable for all?

In reality 'new forms of inequalities and new disadvantages emerge as the education systems respond to market forces and the government seeks to lever up educational achievements for everyone'(Tomlinson, 2000:17). Evidently the case for individualism still has to be fought for emergent bilingual children.

The second issue concerns the survival of those new arrivals and how their linguistic need can best be met or in other words: 'What is it that might have contributed to the success of bilingual learners? To address this question data were presented from a group of older bilingual children. The ethnographic study to answer this question spanned interest across three main areas of research: second language learning, bilingual peer interaction, and parental involvement. Findings and some theoretical insights emerging during the analysis of data contribute to our knowledge of the school experience of emergent bilingual children as well as to possible curriculum and policy developments that might take place in future to serve better bilingual students. They are summarised below:

- EAL programmes within the framework of the mainstream provision

Without question, emergent bilingual children like Wington, Kapo and Shan are newcomers to English schools. Their diaries and interviews reveal that they would have appreciated being taught step by step in order to survive and move on in the English school but this was not the case in the mainstream class. Nevertheless, evidence was presented from both contexts: 'in-class support' and 'withdrawal support', which suggested that some strategies involving new arrivals who receive focused support out of their mainstream classroom do not run counter to the principle of inclusion or in other words, the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involve some withdrawal EAL support out of the mainstream classroom. In contrast, the problematic 'inclusion' due to lack of proper language support in class actually causes severe exclusion in the sense that the children were very withdrawn in the lesson, their confidence was dampened, as was evident in the case of Shan, Kapo and Wington. Jill Bourne (1989) reminds us that the 'incorporation of provision for bilingual pupils into the mainstream, is not without its danger' (Bourne, 1989:

6). It would be wrong to pretend that problems such as inequalities, exclusion or racism do not exist in the mainstream classroom, and that new arrivals will certainly benefit from a language policy based on mainstream inclusion. On the contrary, inclusivity will achieve little if it does not consider how substantial EAL support can be provided inside or outside the classroom. My evidence suggests that an exaggeration of the advantages of bilingual learners might divert attention from the children's need for extra help in English; that the potential cognitive and linguistic advantages of bilingual learners can only be developed through an effective learning environment. Whether or not bilinguality is a positive asset depends on how those emergent bilinguals are treated in the mainstream class or in other words, I argue that recognition of the children's 'disadvantage' could lead to a more positive recognition of their 'advantage' in school.

- The role of bilingual peer (support) in second language learning

What we see from the picture of bilingual peer support in school provides us a new dimension to the debate on the nature of 'scaffolding'. The learning taking place between Wington and Yuan cannot be referred to as 'scaffolding' or 'guided participation' as outlined above, since the 'helping' is cognitively equally taxing on both sides. A synergy is occurring, which is similar to that described between siblings (Gregory, 1998, 2001) but with one crucial difference: the roles of the more experienced English speaker and the novice are reversed. Since the teaching and learning takes place bilingually, the younger child, Yuan, whose English is more proficient, has to translate and interpret for the older child. Wington, in turn, retains her status of age by her carefully focused questions and her overall control of the whole lesson. From participant observation, I have also found a new approach to the debate on the general language support for emergent bilingual children in the present educational provision in the UK. It is almost vital for KS2 mid-phase newcomers like Shan and Wington, to have bilingual teachers during first days in school as bilingual teachers have many advantages over non-bilingual teachers in the roles, relationships and talk they use in EAL support. However, it is disappointing to notice that all the language specialists referred to in chapter five are non-bilingual EAL teachers. South (2002) comments: 'Considering the number of bilingual assistants working in schools over

the past 15 years, it seems to me to be a national disgrace that it has been so under-researched and so little attention has been paid to this area by government educational agencies' (NALDIC News, 2002, Vol.28:9). We are pretty sure that the learning environment for emergent EAL children will be further improved if the children are able to receive home language support either through bilingual EAL teachers or bilingual peers.

- The role of parental involvement

It has been accepted that parental involvement improves children's school performance, that the involvement manifest in constant encouragement and supportive attitude to school has been a most valuable drive. However, relatively few studies focus on minority parents' role in the school-home partnership, and there is very little positive literature documenting minority parents' attitudes and their parental involvement that in fact contributes greatly to the success of emergent bilingual children. The present study, through an ethnographic approach to studying the two Chinese families of different backgrounds, reveals the mysterious veil hiding Chinese parents' attitude towards education - they, whatever their social and educational backgrounds, all share high expectations about their children's education and English schools, thus all have great interest in knowing their children's school performance; they are always eager and ready to provide their children with all kinds of support in the hope that their children will benefit from the English school and qualifications so as to have better life chances than the parents themselves in the future. However, findings also show that parents' active interest and their degree of involvement very much depends on parents' educational backgrounds and their knowledge of the English education system. The two couples all respect the professionalism of the English teachers and wish schools could do more. However, this is expressed in different ways by both families: while the Mainland couple demonstrates enthusiasm for their daughter's school's philosophy, the Hong Kong couple shows an eagerness for their daughters to take advantage of educational opportunities which they have never had; while the mainland couple appears to be disappointed at their daughter's progress in school, and expresses dissatisfaction with teachers' comments like 'well done' or 'doing well' as they find them not tangible but perfunctory, the Hong Kong couple demonstrates a greater reliance on the

teachers' opinions, and on what they are told about the school arrangement for their daughters, and seem to have more faith in the comments of teachers.

The study has also testified to the view that 'coming from an ethnic minority does not necessarily lead to educational disadvantage or low achievement' (Tomlinson & Hutchison, 1991: 4). Despite the gap between these two couples in the knowledge they have of the English education and schools, despite the disappointments they experience concerning their daughters' disadvantaged situation in the English mainstream school, they are both eager to give help. In spite of adopting different approaches or strategies due to their difference in educational qualifications, both couples seem to work effectively to rescue their children from educational failure. Their efforts, whatever the approach, continue to support the findings in chapter five that EAL support is of vital importance to children of recent arrivals and the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involve new arrivals receiving focussed support out of their mainstream classroom. In short, the role of family support means many things that schools cannot accomplish alone; home-school relations should be enhanced through promoting mutual understanding from both sides, with parents gaining a greater knowledge of school processes and teachers gaining a greater awareness of children's home backgrounds, and those of minorities in particular.

Implications for Practice

This study is of prime importance to those concerned with the education of emergent bilingual children, including local education authority (LEA) officers, inspectors, advisers, teachers, community associations, parents, teacher trainers and policy makers.

Firstly, the term 'bilingual' used to label children of recent arrivals does not correspond with the reality where those children in my study suffer considerable disadvantages in mainstream English schools. The term gives the idea that 'bilingualism' is regarded as an asset, but then provides no conditions through mainstreaming for 'additive bilingualism' to take place and thus diverts attention from the children's need for extra help in English.

What is worse, the term and its idea could be used as an excuse for schools to return to a tradition of ignoring diversity in language needs. For this reason, the term 'emergent bilingual' is chosen as more appropriate in the English situation.

However behind this confusing terminology surrounding 'bilingual' is the notion of 'sameness' within the framework of national curriculum requirements, which suggest that 'equal opportunity' equates 'equal access' to the 'same' curriculum for children of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The data in my study reflect that although the children are being physically included in their mainstream school they are mentally excluded from their lessons; though they are given the same curriculum tasks, they are unable to engage in any of the class activities, simply due to their poor English. The obvious conclusion would be: children who enter school with a limited knowledge of English are unable to have an equal access to the curriculum designed for all children; even an equal access to the same curriculum does not necessarily mean an equal opportunity being provided for them. In Britain today, though the idea of withdrawal is no longer fashionable, withdrawal sessions of a short period in schools such as 'language shelter', 'language club', 'welcome group', 'new arrivals workshop' or in whatever name, still find their place in reality as they are *temporary strategies only serving to welcome those newcomers and minimise their early disadvantage in the class*. Much research data testify to the argument that the principle of inclusion does not exclude strategies that involve new arrivals receiving focused support out of their mainstream classroom.

Secondly, children who enter the school system with limited English proficiency should have an entitlement to additional and appropriate support for their learning. However, providing language support for emergent bilingual children within the framework of the National Curriculum within the school is limited both in time and space. Classroom observations find that mainstream teachers are, on the whole, unaware of new arrivals' cultural backgrounds and their linguistic needs, they have little pedagogic knowledge and skills to support those children in a manner that would maximise potential and minimise language as a barrier to learning. Some EAL programmes struggle to give support, but teachers have a lack of resources, e.g. no bilingual dictionaries that older literate children

could use to help with a piece of writing in English; no sufficient funding that pays for EAL specialists or bilingual helpers. To improve this limitation, a substantial and long-term national training programme is required which should be appropriately funded by additional resources as was the case with the Literacy, Numeracy and KS3 strategies. This would involve sustained training for bilingual teaching staff so as to incorporate bilingual support into EAL programmes. The findings about bilingual peers' interaction reveal that bilingual peers have many skills that contribute to children's language support (linguistic and academic progress) that our class teachers could not share. In that case could the role of peers not be recognised and developed? In addition, bilingual support is more about achieving learning by supporting language learning, it is about providing a role model. Therefore, we are pretty sure that the learning environment for emergent EAL children will be further improved if the children are able to receive home language support either through bilingual EAL teachers or bilingual peers.

Thirdly, since home factors are such an important influence on educational success, home-school links must be improved, and it is especially so if emergent bilingual children are to be offered a fair and equal opportunity in schools. Language might be a barrier, but it is not in itself a causal factor if schools are willing to make best use of the resources in communities or community schools. Tensions between teachers and minority parents can be minimised through the work of bilingual assistants, who help explain to parents the school policies and philosophy, and also help parents to put forward suggestions to schools and participate effectively in their children's school process. Otherwise a lack of knowledge on each side leads to conflicts, manifest in mismatches of expectations and aspirations with teachers blaming parents for undesirable influences and an inability to assist their children educationally, and parents blaming schools for their carefree attitudes or failing to equip their children with appropriate skills and qualifications. All in all, given positive school attitudes to minority parents and children, and an understanding of their educational needs, the site of emergent bilingual children can be much improved; at the same time, the possibility for parents to have better knowledge of school processes and an opportunity to work cooperatively with schools, means that parental involvement will be more relevant and efficient. It goes without saying that children's transition period can be

shortened, and their academic attainments can increase if parents and teachers have a common goal and expectations. The traditional home-school links are parent-teacher meetings, school reports, parents' commentaries, etc. However, new links, such as some minority parental participation in educational decision-making via governing bodies and selected committees, and consultation between minority communities and LEAs can be added for successful work together.

Directions for Future Study

Proposal one: mother tongue, cultural identity and school performance

Regarding the issue of equal opportunities for emergent bilingual children, my present study focuses only on the first goal of bilingual education - the acquisition of the language of the adoptive country as it is the key to academic success and to full participation in the mainstream society. However, the second goal - the retention and continuing development of the heritage language, which is equally important, is not yet being addressed in my study, simply due to limited time and space, and I cannot manage to build up a detailed study of two goals at the same time. Therefore, for my next step I will move on to address the second goal of bilingual education, proposing a new focus on why and how developing literacy in the heritage language, knowledge learnt through the home language and the sense of cultural identity help second language development and promote school success; which factors have been most important in bringing about full bilingualism and what life chances and equal opportunities mean to those young bilinguals. In reality there are always two sides to a coin, on the one side the acquisition of the second language has obvious advantages to the individual, in terms of practical advantages and cognitive development; on the other side continuing heritage language development also encompass practical and intellectual advantages, and accelerates second language acquisitions. This, however, remains a topic for further study.

Proposal two: ethnic minority achievement

The issue of the performance and achievement of ethnic minority children in British schools is still unsolved after forty years. Since the 1960s numerous studies have been devoted to identifying the various causes responsible for poor performance of minority group children within the educational system. The explanations for the poor performance have varied from, on the one hand cultural and family differences or strangeness, migration shock, prejudice, disadvantage and poor home background; on the other hand to school and teacher expectations, parents' educational attitudes, and language and dialect problems. More recently solutions have been sought through attempts to provide equality of opportunity calling for mainstreaming educational provision for ethnic minority children, combating educational disadvantage within inclusive education, and meeting the needs of vulnerable children via the National Curriculum.

It is never easy to know what a deciding cause of low achievement is. However, what has been long neglected in our literature is a real attempt by researchers to focus on those factors, which might contribute to the successful education of minority children, and there are few positive examples documenting successful minority children.

Relatively speaking, the performance of West Indian and Asian children has been well documented though most of them are negative records of their underachievement, but there is little, if any, research on the progress of Chinese children in British schools; statistical information hitherto available appears to show that Chinese children are, on the whole, doing well in schools and achieve very well in public national tests, e.g. SATs, GCSE. Their achievement is particularly significant, since families have suffered considerable socioeconomic hardship and the older generations have often had little formal education either in Mainland China, HK or the UK. It is, therefore, crucially important for educators to find out what might enable these students to achieve such results in order to inform work with other minority groups in schools.

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Note on Chinese Children in the UK

The number of Chinese children in British schools has become more significant as a result of immigration and natural growth.

After the rapid increase of immigrants in the 1960s and 1970s, by the 1980s there were about 100,000 Chinese in Britain; forming the third largest ethnic group after the Afro-Caribbean and Asians (GB.P.H. of C.HAC, 1985; GB.OPCS, 1983a, quoted in Wong, 1992: 30). Since then, due to the confirmation of the return of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China and the open-door policy promoted in Mainland China, the Chinese population in Britain has further increased. Based on 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics in 2004 has issued new figures of *Population by Age and Ethnic Group*, which states that there were 199,000 Chinese in Britain from Spring 2002 to Winter 2002/ 03, amounting to 0.4% of the total population (59 330,000). Chinese children aged 5-19 represent about 0.7 % of all the children (5- 19) totaling 6,782,400 in Britain (DfES, 2003).

London is one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities, with resident communities of significant numbers from all parts of the world. From of the Census 2001 population of 7,172,036 for Great London, there were 23, 000 people living in London who were born in China, of whom 16,000 were born in Hong Kong SAR (Labour Force Survey 1999). However, if Chinese people born outside of China are included, this number increases to 56,579. Chinese people live all over London. The largest community in terms of numbers live in the London boroughs of Barnet (3895) and Barnet (3086), Islington (3076) and the City of Westminster (2831). The largest concentrations of Chinese people, however, live in two main areas – from London's Chinatown in Soho north to Kings Cross, and in the north of Lewisham around Deptford – where Chinese people represent between 3- 4.5% of the local population. The children of recent arrivals in my study come mainly from Islington and the City of Westminster, where the Chinese population comprise 1.75% of the local population respectively (Islington: 175,797 and Westminster: 181,279).

According to *Islington Census 2001: Key Statistics* there are 253 Chinese children in Islington schools, comprising 0.88 % of the total school age children (28,669); *Westminster School Roll by Ethnicity 2003* (age 5+) shows that there are 251 Chinese children attending English schools, occupying 1.5% of the total school age population (18,795) in the area. These statistics suggest that a specific proportion of the school population in Britain derives from Chinese children.

Approximately 9% (658,600) of all primary and secondary school pupils in England are recorded as having English as an additional language (PLASC figures for 2003). EAL children come from a range of ethnic groups. In some ethnic groups, the majority of pupils are EAL pupils: over 90% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils are registered as EAL, 82% of Indian, 75% of Chinese and 65% of Black African. EAL children are often at a lower starting point than non-EAL children but appear to make greater progress than non-EAL children i.e., they appear to 'catch up' Chinese pupils achieving five or more A*-C GCSEs are 77% (Female) and 70% (Male) of those entered for GCSEs (DfES 2003).

Source:

David Penny (2004) *Office for National Statistics No.140 pp.33*

Office for National Statistics: 01329 813255

Labour Force Survey 2001/ 2002/ 2003

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics.

Pupil Annual School Census (PLASC), 2002, 2003, DfES

Islington Census 2001: Key Statistics. Islington Council.

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Statistics of England: schools in England 2002. DfES

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Many of the above statistics referred to this note can be accessed below:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/>

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/statistics>

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications>

http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/

<http://www.islington.gov.uk/learning>

<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/education>

<http://www.des.gov.uk>

<http://ifc.co.uk/> Chinese Communities in London sponsored by Deloitte & Touche

APPENDIX I

Early Memories of Older Children in the London Mandarin School

In the first 8 weeks after coming to London, I went to the local primary school where together with several other students, I had a learning support teacher. I spent most of my time with her. However, I remember one of the boys among us who had learning disabilities was always winding up the teacher. Once, he stole my jacket, which I only discovered after school. I had a hard time trying to communicate with the teachers and tell them what had happened.. After two months, my family and I moved to where we presently live - Islington. I changed schools and started attending the Ring Cross Primary School, which has since been shut down by OFSTED inspectors due to a poor education system in the infant department. Although there were no any special support teachers in the school, the teacher encouraged me to actively participate in class discussions to try and improve my speaking and listening skills. At home, my father who was an English teacher in China started teaching me from the basic building blocks of the alphabet. With the help of their combined efforts, my English gradually improved over a period of about a year and a half... At first, I was bullied at school by some of the older boys. They pushed me around and saw me as an easy target because I had no way to defend myself. I was physically weaker and my language skills were much poorer. However, as time went on, I came to be cleverer than any of them and by the time I was in year 3 and top of the class in English, Maths and Science, they no longer dared to taunt me (from Joy- Chen's Early Days).

Being Chinese in England has never been, and will never be easy. Although everyone says that discrimination does not exist in this democratic society of equal chances, it does, in the most horrendous yet subtle ways... When I first got to England, it was difficult, but everyone was extremely helpful. The teacher would pay special attention to me during classes, and help me in every way she could. Yet, this meant that less attention was given to the other students around me. It might not have mattered then; as I was in year one, but if this had been the case with an older pupil, it may have caused many problems. If there were more language support teachers, it would ensure that the second language pupil got the necessary treatment, as well as ensuring that the teacher's attention would not be diverted away from other pupils.... My primary school was quite multicultural. This meant that many students there had English as their second language, so most people were in the same boat. The teachers would put individuals in classes with pupils who spoke their own languages as well as English, so as classmates could offer each other help during lessons. My teachers made every effort to help me through a new language, even resorting to trying a bit of Chinese themselves at times! The most important factor in my English development was the involvement of my parents throughout. They used to force me to copy out the alphabet every night and they would translate the storybooks my teacher was reading into Chinese then tape them, so that I could understand. The encouragement of the parents to take an interest in the child's English progress is a very important factor.... Altogether, my first few months in

England were probably a lot better than most people's, as my school and my parents knew how to assist a Chinese pupil in learning English. However, not everyone is as lucky as I was (from Nicola- Xian's My first few months in England).

A little girl of seven stood in the school playground. The other kids were playing and laughing around her but she stood there, lost in thought, in a world of her own... That was I when I first came to England from China. Not knowing English, I had no way of communicating with the rest of my classmates. Breaks from lessons at school would be a time for daydream, a time to reflect and a time to imagine. Coming to join my parents here in England was, and still is the biggest turning point in my life. Even now I cannot forget the experiences that faced me in this new country and culture that is so different from the Chinese traditions I was brought up in... In England, life was hard, as I did not understand a word of English. As being burnt at the beginning of the year, I was in year two. However, to help me, I was put into year one class for a week so I could settle and moved up soon after. Being in a class full of strangers to whom I could not communicate with made me feel like an alien, as if I did not belong. I could not say anything therefore a Chinese girl from the other class would frequently be called over to translate to me what the teacher had just told the class to do. In fact, the school was quite helpless at giving me extra support with the English language as there was no way the teacher could communicate with me. Learning English was all up to me.... At school, during break, I felt lonely; as I did not understand what my classmates were saying or doing leaving me very left out. I could only stand there and think of China, a distant land that I missed very much. When home, my parents were very busy but they tried to help me with my English as much as possible. I was told to memorise a few words each day and was tested on them daily. However, this for me was not as easy as it seemed as I felt I could not handle this new language and grammar just left me at a loss. After learning a word one day, I would just forget it the next day. However, after about half a year, I could verbally communicate with my classmates but my reading and writing skills had a long way to go. For the next few years, I concentrated hard on my English.... When I was in year four, I moved school to one near my mother works because the one I went to was not very good and as I was approaching secondary school, my parents wanted me to take exams for the famous 'grammar schools'. Even though I had to get up at six in the morning and arrived home at seven in the evening to go to this school, I still wanted to go as I knew I had to work hard to get good results, I was prepared to sacrifice my sleeping hours for a better future.... In my new school, I was not given any language support but unlike my previous school, the teacher actually encouraged me to read and write more. For homework, I was given words or phrases, which I would have to include in a sentence. I had great trouble even with that and always asked my dad to help me. I would write the sentences myself and then ask my dad to correct them. It was a long process but I kept going until the day came when I could hand in a piece of work which my dad had not checked and felt confident about it, and when the teachers were praising my style of writing and I managed to pass the exams and could choose to attend the school of my dream - The Henrietta Barnett School, famous for its good quality of education and GCSE / A level examination results.

Finally I had closed up the gap between me and the rest of my classmates. In the last seven years, I have moved from not knowing a word of English to being able to fully understand and analyse works of Shakespeare such as 'Macbeth'....I am no longer the little girl standing in the playground lost in her own fantasy world because she is unable to communicate others around her. I am now the girl who has overcome the difficulty of learning English and is ready to face any new challenge that awaits me (from Xi-Lin Wu's Learning English).

I came to England in 1995 at the age of nine. At that time, England was a completely new concept to me. I arrived in July, which coincided with the school summer holidays. I was therefore unable to attend school. This was to my advantage as I was able to build some foundations for my English before I went to school. The initial aids came from my father who was quite fluent in the language and was a very patient teacher. After holidays I was accepted into Frifedwide Middle School in Oxford. I found the atmosphere there to be rather pleasant and relaxing. Teachers and classmates were also very friendly. That was a great help to me. I soon found myself making many new friends, the best being a boy named Benjamin Rimmer. They helped me through school life, explaining patiently things that I did not understand. The friendliness of the teachers and classmates made me feel at ease with them. This built up my confidence to speak to people, and as a result, I found myself being involved in more and more conversations... Interaction is not the only way I had learnt English. My mother had brought along a series of excellent books to help me with the new language. It was called 'New Concept English'. It was perfect for me as the difficulty of the books varied gradually. The books were full of short stories- mostly amusing- together with full Chinese translations. At the end of each extract, there would be a list of vocabulary, again with their Chinese equivalents. I studied these books carefully everyday, with a lot of help from my parents. This greatly expanded my vocabulary and improved my ability to have conversations in English. However, speaking is only a part of the English language. My parents kept on reminding me that reading, and especially writing were very difficult to master, and continued to teach me. I read a lot, mainly short storybooks and 'New Concept English'. It was mainly my parents' patience and my friends' willingness to help that allowed me to finally grasp the English language. Within two years, I was able to speak, read and write reasonably well, and was able to understand everything. I was able to fully express myself and be able to communicate with my friends. Because of this, I was extremely happy (from Yuqi Huang's My Experiences in Britain).

I came to England at the age of nine. My parents left China when I was 3 years old, and I lived with my grand parents ever since. By the time I came to England, my parents were like strangers to me, as I did not see them for 6 years. So we were unfamiliar with each other. My first year in England was extremely difficult, as there was a language barrier between the other people and me. I was in the mainstream class and I found it very hard to communicate with teachers and other kids. If I wanted to do something, I had to draw a picture or

mimick actions to make myself understood. To be honest, I did not learn very much in school for the first year. Normally I copied the work of others during the day and after school my father explained the work to me in Chinese. My English actually improved much from my second year in England with the constant help of my father. He is the one who had been most influential to me and he played a great part in getting me into a grammar school. Without him I even couldn't have survived in English (from Yueyang Hou's My Bygone Days).

APPENDIX II

Diaries by Younger Children of Recent Arrivals

Part one: Translation Passages from Shan's Diaries 宋珊(十一岁)日记

2001年3月7日 星期三

老师叫我以后每星期三、四、五都到三年级班上上英语课。今天是我的第一堂课。只见小同学们个个看着我，目瞪口呆。他们一定纳闷：这个姐姐为什么来我们班？她这么高，这么大，该不会是我们班新来的同学吧？不知怎么搞的，还没等凯瑟琳老师介绍，我的脸一下就红了。课开始，我只好在他们旁边坐下，尴尬极了！凯瑟琳老师讲课很风趣，小朋友非常开心，也很认真。可我却觉得没意思，也听不懂，唯一可做的就是抄黑板上面的英文单词：fable, myth, moral, traditional, character, introduction, animal, powerful...这些都是生词。凯瑟琳老师的课讲完，帕克老师接着上。帕克老师是1-3年级的学习辅导老师，她给小朋友们讲语法，比如：名词复数的词尾加's'或'es'。这些规则，我已经会了，因为我在家已学过。老实说，我对这些重复练习已经厌烦了。尽管如此，我还是喜欢两位老师，她们总是鼓励我，让我放下思想包袱。

Wednesday, 7th March Morning, 2001

I was told to attend the year 3 class for the literacy hour on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings every week. This is my first lesson in this class. When I first walked in the classroom, the children all stared at me with an open mouth wonder. They must have some strange thought in their mind 'Why is she here in our class? She is big and tall, is she going to do something special for us.' I was very embarrassed that few minutes before Mrs Caroline, the class teacher, introduced me to the class. Then the lesson began, I was sitting among those babies very uncomfortable. When Caroline started talking to the children, they were all very happy and attentive. But I did not feel that interested, as I could not understand what she was talking about. I could only copy down some words and expressions on the board: fable, myth, moral, traditional, introduction, character, animal, powerful ... They were all new to me. When Mrs Caroline finished, Mrs Parker came in. She is a learning support teacher in key stage one. She was teaching some grammar to the whole class. Something like plurals and single form, adding 's', 'es' 'ies' to nouns with specific endings. That is easy to me, for I have learnt some rules at home. To be frank, I was getting bored with this kind of pattern drills. However, I like Mrs Caroline and Mrs Parker, for they always encourage me and make me feel less embarrassed.

2001年3月19日 星期一

我被叫到五年级上数学课，这挺好。首先，数学公式容易懂，靠算，不用靠太多英文。其次，在五年班，我有两个中国好朋友。凡是遇到看不懂的文字题，我可以向他们请教。当然也有他们帮不到的时候，比如：全班同学在练习听力题时，我就束手无策了。题目倒不难，都是心算题。如果是写下来的算式，我可以做得很好，但是念出来的，我就不明白。显然，要不是英文差，我的数学成绩一定会更好。

Monday, 19th March Morning, 2001

I have been asked to have Maths lesson in the year 5 class. I feel much better here. Firstly, I can read formulas without English and calculate through numbers. Secondly, I have two Chinese classmates who are my friends. Whenever I don't understand the questions especially when we are asked to do those verbal questions, I turn to them for help. However, there is an occasion they are not able to help me. This is when the whole class is doing listening practice; I am at a loss what to do. These questions are all about mental maths, not difficult at all if they were on paper but I just can't work it out when they are read aloud. Obviously, if it was not for my poor English, I should have done much better in Maths.

2001年3月22日 星期四

今天下午是历史课，白老师讲英国历史人物亨利八世。全班同学都象平常一样，围坐地毯上。老师说话生动活泼，面部表情丰富。只见她时而写板书，时而提问。班上同学个个积极举手发言，就是我例外。当白老师讲到精彩处，大家都开怀大笑，我也跟着笑，因为我不想让他们看出来我听不懂。我知道，这样做是自我保护，其实我心里很难过。我不知道什么时候才能成为他们中的一员。好在每次课后，我都可以向白老师要些材料，让我爸晚上在家帮助我补习。

Thursday, 22nd March, 2001, Afternoon

This afternoon in the history lesson, Mrs White was talking about historical figure Henry VIII. We children were sitting around her on the carpet as usual. She was talking with a rich expression on her face. Sometimes she wrote down a few words on the board, sometimes she raised some questions for us to answer. Many of my classmates, except me, put up their hands, eagerly to put forward their opinions. When Mrs White said something very interesting, the whole class burst out laughing, I just followed suit without knowing what they were laughing about and because I wanted to do the same. Maybe this was to cover up my ignorance by

instinct. Actually I felt sad at heart. I wonder when I can be real part of the class. After each lesson I would usually ask Mrs White for materials so that my father can help me out at home.

2001年4月14日星期六

我非常想念中国学校和老师，尽管这里的老师和同学都对我不错。印象中，老师总是客客气气，同学们总是礼貌友好，可是我却无法真正接近他们。这里上课的方法不同中国，老师讲的不那么多，同学们经常分小组做课堂作业。学不学是学生的事，老师不负这个责任。你想学，你用功，老师就在一旁鼓励，但也不象中国老师那样上心。你不想学，老师也无所谓。对于我这样一个不会说英语的新生来说，老师并没有把我当回事，更不用说急我所急。老师当然希望我快快进步，可是并没有什么好办法，但她相信一切都是时间问题，我自己很快就可以学会的。校长也是这么同妈妈说的。我不知道是不是这样，但我觉得庆幸，我父母多少还有点英语基础，否则真不知道怎么办才好。

Saturday, 14th April, 2001 evening

I very much miss my primary school and teachers in China, though teachers and classmates here are polite and friendly to me. There seems still no way for me to get closer to them. Different from China, teachers here do not lecture a lot in the lesson but leave a lot of time with us doing class work, mostly teamwork. Learning is a matter of individual interest, but not always teachers' responsibility. If you want to learn and work hard, teachers will encourage you along, but if you do not work hard, teachers are not bothered by you so long as you do not make noise in class and do not play truant. Ms White does not expect much of me as I am a new student with little knowledge of English and the culture, and also because she could not understand me, she will never know what I am worried about being a disadvantaged child in the class. She is happy if I can catch up quickly, but again she finds no better way to help me in the lesson, believing that time is best curer, I will pick up English quickly myself. This is what Mr. Jake, the head teacher said to my mum as well. I do not know if it is true, but luckily my parents know a basic bit of English, they help me after school, otherwise...

2001年6月22日星期五

明天又是星期六，但对我而言，谈不上什么周末。不是爸爸就是妈妈总要给我辅导英文。他们用的是‘新概念英语’课本，他们在大学上学时读过。课本编得不错，有中英文对照。每一课后面都列有‘生词与词组’、‘课文注释’和‘笔头练习’。我妈总是要我记下每一课的生词和词组，然后检查拼写和字义，而我爸爸则要我背诵课文并做英汉/汉英翻译练习。尽管很难，但我觉得值。爸爸妈妈虽然口音不准，但他们可以教我语法和用法。语音方面，我一般向同学们请教。我发现这样学，进步很大。

Friday 22th June 2001, evening

Tomorrow is Saturday again, but I have no much weekend to talk about as either my father or mother would have an English lesson with me. They use 'New Concept English', the textbook they used at university to help me learning English. The textbook is well written in English/Chinese, every lesson is followed by 'new words and expressions, 'notes on the text' and 'written exercises'. My mum asks me to memorise all the new words and expressions in each lesson, and check if I know the spelling and the meaning well enough. My father even asks me to recite from memory the whole text and do some translations from English to Chinese and Chinese to English. Hard as it is, but I think it is worth doing. My parents, though, are not good at pronunciation and intonation, they are able to tell me most of the grammar rules and the usages. In order to get the sound right, I normally have them checked with my classmates. I find my English has improved much in this way

Part two: Translation Passages from Kapo's Diaries 李家寶(年紀十歲) 日記

2001年4月3日星期二

我想有一個英文名字，但我不知道給自己取什麼名字好。我喜歡Francis老師的名字。她的名字跟她的人一樣漂亮。可是我不能叫這個名字，因為我是中國人，有著東方人的臉。如果名叫SOPHIA，怎麼樣？我爸媽一定會覺得怪怪的。那麼叫KEPPEL呢？也許這個名字與我的中文名字‘家寶’潛音，但KEPPEL恐怕不是女孩的名。總之，我希望能想出個好的英文名字來，因為我別人老把我當外國人，也不想讓同學拿名字開玩笑。

Tuesday, 3rd April 2001

I like to have an English name but I have no idea what I shall name myself. I like my class teacher Francis, she is beautiful but I can not be called Francis as I am a Chinese girl with very different appearance. What if I am named as Sophia? It may sound strange to my parents. What about Keppel? It sounds similar to my Chinese name Kapo though, it is not a girl's name, I am afraid. Anyway I wish I could think of a good English name for myself because I don't want people to see me as a foreigner.

2001年4月27日星期五

学校里的一切都是英文。当然，我并不是报怨什么，因为这是英语国家，理所应当。可是我常常觉得

自己在班上活象个傻瓜。班老师，FRANCIS对我一直很好，可是她不了解我。英国老师可能听说香港，但听不懂香港话。我比较喜欢数学，只是因为我不一定要懂英文就能看懂数字和公式，有时我还能猜。老实说，我根本听不懂英语课和科学课。有时上语言课时，英语辅导老师Crista到我班上来，坐在我旁边，可是她也帮不上什么，至少她比不上英汉词典。刚开始我总是画很多画来表白自己，来提问题，但发现太花时间了，我因此变得很烦。后来我学会了查词典，用它和老师同学交流。我发现这样学习更好。尽管如此，我还是担心生中学的事Carol老师负责这件事。她昨天告诉我，她仍然在找，或是在本地区或是在隔壁区找。只有好学校要我。我妈建议让我在六年级多呆一年，可我不愿意，我想学校也不可能同意。

Friday 27th April 2001

Everything in the school is in English, of course, I shouldn't have complained about this as it is an English speaking country. But I just hate myself being a fool in the class! My class teacher Fiona has been very kind to me but she just couldn't understand me well. Teachers here may hear about Hongkong but they couldn't understand the language. I like Maths best, relatively speaking, just because I can read numbers and formulae without necessarily understanding English and sometimes I can guess between the lines. To be honest, I find it very difficult to follow the teacher in the language lesson and science lesson. Sometimes Mrs Crista, the language teacher, comes to my class and sits beside me in the Literacy Hour, but she can't be very helpful, at least no better than my English-Chinese dictionary. At the beginning I did a lot of drawing to express myself or to ask questions but it took too much time. I am getting impatient by and by. Then I learn to use dictionary to communicate with my teachers and classmates. I find that I am learning English better in this way. However I am now worried about my secondary school transfer. Mrs Carol, who is in charge of that, said to me yesterday that she kept trying for me lots of schools either within the borough or neighbour boroughs. I am afraid that there wouldn't be any good secondary school willing to accept me. My mum suggested if I could stay in the primary for another year, but I don't like it, and I don't think it is possible to do it.

2001年5月11日星期一

我覺得自己還不是班上的一分子。老師對我很不錯，因為我是外國人，也是客人。最近全班同學都在忙著準備考試(SATs)而我不參加，我是班上唯一不用考試的學生。因為老師說，有文件規定，象我這樣來英國不到兩年的學生，不要參加這個考試。我為此高興，覺得幸運，但同時又不知道去哪求助，以便盡早趕上班上同學，成為他們中的一個。相比較，香港的老師對教學很負責任，也關心學生的進步，而英國老師則比較民主、開放，鼓勵我們自由思考。香港的學生必須勤力、刻苦，而英國的學生則享受自由放鬆的氣氛。我覺得各有各的好處，應該互相學習。

Monday 11th May, 2001

I don't think I am part of the class. Teachers are nice to me just because I am a foreigner, a guest. Recently the whole class is very busy with preparation for SATs but I am not. I am the only one who doesn't have to sit for the test because I haven't been in Britain long enough to take this test. I am glad to be lucky and special, but at the same time I wonder where I may get some extra help in my English so that I can catch up with my classmates. I want to be one of them. As compared, I've got a strong feeling that teachers in Hong Kong are more responsible for what they are teaching, more concerned with students' progress, while teachers here are more tolerant and liberal, encouraging children's own thinking. Children in Hong Kong have to be hardworking while children here enjoy much more relaxation. I think they are both good and they should learn from each other.

2001年7月8日星期天

今天上中文學校，因路上堵車，我遲到了許多。真糟糕，因為我不想在上中文課之前，錯過英文課。目前，我更重視學英文，我要儘快趕上班上的同學。這個英文班本來是只教成人學英文的，後來經老師特許，我和妹妹才得以旁聽。老實說，雖然在這個班裡沒什麼意思，不過至少能學一點英文基本知識。馮老師會說英文也會說中文，這對我學習幫助很大。我妹妹卻不同，她年紀小，覺得受不了那種‘悶’，但我覺得還行，因為我知道在目前情況下，沒有別的辦法。我聽說，我爸爸朋友的孩子請家教，每小時20鎊，可是我父母花不起這份錢。不管怎麼說，能在這個班上學習，我已經很滿足了。

Sunday 8th July 2001, evening

Today I was late for my Chinese school as we were held up by the traffic. It is too bad as I don't want to miss my English class before we have my Chinese one. At moment I am more concerned about learning English and catching up with my English classmates. This English class is for adult but my sister and I have just joined in with the head teacher's special permission. To be honest, there is no much fun in this class though, we learn at least some basic knowledge of English, and the teacher, Mr Feng can speak both English and Cantonese, which helps us a lot more in learning. I know my sister feels bored in the lesson as she is too young to stay in this class, but it is ok for me as I cannot expect anything better at the present situation. I know some of my father's friends even pay 20 pounds per hour for their children's one to one extra tuition, but my parents cannot afford that for us. However I feel lucky enough to be in this class

2001年11月4日星期天

我很高興我終於轉道Anderson女子學校上學了。老師說，這是唯一一所不要求入學考試的中學。據說，這所學校較注重英語教學和少數民族文化。我們班有28個同學，其中三分之一是在三、四年前，從別的國家移民來的。只有Sorina兩年前剛從Kosovo來。Lyna從Bangladesh來。秀梅和我是我們年級，唯一兩個香港來的女孩，所不同的是，秀梅三歲時就來了，而且爸爸是英國人。她說著一口漂亮的英文和香港話。她善良、熱心、學習優秀，我們成了好朋友。最重要的是，她能用香港話，給我解釋我所不懂的東西，用別的同學無法了解的方式，給我學習上許多幫助。當然，別的移民同學，如Sorina, Lyna很友好，她一樣對我有幫助，因為我們都是EAL學生。我喜歡這所學校，更喜歡她們。沒有她們，我簡直沒法在英文學校生存！

Sunday, 4th November 2001

I am very happy that at last I have been transferred to Anderson Girl School. Ms Carols said this was the only school that didn't require the entrance exam and the school was strong for its multicultural richness and languages. 28 girls are friendly classmates. About one third of them are immigrants from other countries. Most of them came here four or five years ago, Lyna came at three from Bangladesh, only Sorina from Kosovo two year ago. Xiumei and me are the only Hongkong Chinese in our form. However Xiumei is different, she came over here when she was three and her father is English. She speaks beautifully in both English and Cantonese. We are best friends as she is kind, warm hearted, and she is good at many subjects. But most important to me is that she can explain anything I don't understand in my home language and helps me with my study in a very different way that others just could not understand. Mostly we have lunch together, talk together and do homework together in the school library or in the computer room. Classmates thought that we were twins since we all looked the same in their eyes. Of course Sorina and Lyna are also very friendly and helpful as we are all learning English as a second language. I like this school as much as I like them. Without them I could not have survived in this English school

APPENDIX III

Interviews with Children

Part one: Interviews with Shan and Her Friends

Video Transcripts (1)

Setting – 11 / 04 / 2001, the Year 3 Classroom in Gillespie Primary School

1 Chen: *Zenme yang, zhege xingqi?* / How are things with you this week?

2 Shan: *Hai xing.* / Not too bad.

3 Chen: *Ting de tong ma?* / Are you following the lesson all right?

4 Shan: *Yixie, dan ruguo laoshi shuo de tai kuai, wo jiu yige zi duo ting bu tong le.* / Some, but when she is speaking fast, I could not catch up the word.

5 Chen: *Juxing zuo de lai ma?* / What about those pattern drills?

6 Shan: *Juxing dao shi hen rongyi. Dan lao shi zhongfu, ting fan de* / They are easy for me because they are always repeated over and over again. I feel they are boring sometimes.

7 Chen: *Ni tiantian dou dai zai san nian ji ma?* / You stay in the year 3 class everyday?

8 Shan: *Bu shi tiantian, shi mei xingqi san, si he wu.* / Not everyday but regularly on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning

9 Chen: *Shi sheide zhuyi?* / Whose idea?

10 Shan: *Wo baba mama yao qiu de, dan lao shi ye tongyi* / My parents' suggestion and the teacher's decision.

11 Chen: *Ni ziji xihuan zheyang ma?* / Are you happy with this arrangement?

12 Shan: *Haixing, yingwei wo zai ziji de ban shang ting bu tong.* / It is quite all right because I felt very lost in my own class.

13 Chen: *Xianzai zai zhege ban li, ni you wenti ma?* / Any problem since you joined here?

14 Shan: *Hai shi yingwen de wenti, dan youxie neirong dui wo lai shuo tai jian dan le* / Something here in this class is too easy for me but my understanding of English is still a problem.

15 Chen: *Name, ni zenme yu laoshi he tongxue goutong ne?* / Then how can you manage to communicate with teachers and Classmates?

16 Shan: *Wo jingchang huahua, zheyang hui hao dian.* / I often draw some signs or pictures. I feel I can express myself better in this way.

...

(The class is over, it is about lunchtime)

Video Transcripts (2)

Setting: 09/05 /2001, before lunchtime in Gillespie Primary School

- 1 Chen: *Ni shenme shihou zhuan dao wu nian ban de?*/ When did you move to year 5 class?
- 2 Shan: *Fuhuo jie hou. Wo yuanlai jiu zai zhege ban shang shuxue ke de.*/ After Easter, I was asked to join the year 5 class. I used to be in year 5 only when having Math lesson. But since then, I have been in the year 5 class.
- 3 Chen: *Wei shenme? Shi bu shi you shi ni fumu de jianyi?*/ Why? Is your parents' suggestion again?
- 4 Shan: *Zhehui bushi, shi xiaozhang de zhuyi. Ta juede quan ban tongxue yingai jizhong zhunbei SATs, er wo bu yong canjia yinwei wo gang lai bu jiu.*/ Not this time. It is the head teacher's idea. Because he thought the whole class should be concentrated on SATs and I am the exception, as I haven't stayed in this country long enough.
- 5 Chen: *Yingyu ke zenme shang xianzai?*/ What about language learning?
- 6 Shan: *Hai zai san nian ban shang.*/ Still in the year 3 class.
- 7 Chen: *Name zai wu nian ji ganjue ruhe?*/ How are things going in year 5?
- 8 Shan: *Wo ting gaoxin de yinwei wo you liangge zhongguo hao pengyou. Tamen dou sheng zai zheli, shuo zhe yi kou piaoliang de yingyu.* / I am very pleased with the class because I have two Chinese classmates with me. They were born here, so they speak beautiful English.
- 9 Chen: *Tamen shuo zhongwen ma?*/ Do they speak Chinese?
- 10 Shan: *Shuode, nande nage shuo putong hua, nude shuo guanggong hua.*/ Yes, the boy speaks Mandarin and the girl speaks Cantonese.
- 11 Chen: *Ta ban de liao ni ma?*/ Does she help you?
- 12 Shan: *Ta ke hao le suiran ta bu hui shuo putonghua. Ta zongshi he wo shuo yingwen, wo bu tong, ta jiu xie zi gei wo.*/ She helps me a lot though we cannot talk in either Mandarin or Cantonese. She always speaks English to me but she can translate for me the words that I don't understand into Chinese witting as we share the same written language.
- 13 Chen: *Na tai hao le! Ni you le yige hao banshou.*/ That' wonderful! Then you've got a helper and friend.
- 14 Shan: *Mei cuo, women shi hao pengyou. Women chang zai yi qi wan, fuhuo jie li women chang qu duifang jia wan.*/ Exactly, we have become very good friend. We enjoyed playing together and visited each other's home during Easter.
- 15 Chen: *Shide wo kan dao ni jinbu hen da, wo feichang gaoxin.*/ Yes I can see a great progress in your spoken English when I meet you this time. I am very pleased.... It's lunch time, so we say bye-bye.

Video Transcripts (3)

Setting – Morning, 25 / 05 / 2001, before half term holiday in Gillespie Primary School

- 1 Chen: *Ni jintian zaoshang zuo shenme?* /What are you doing this morning?
- 2 Shan: *Women jintian mei shang ke, shangwu ziyou huotong, jiezhe qu gongyuan sai taiyang.* / We have no lesson today, we are having a playtime this morning and then to enjoy sunshine in the park.
- 3 Chen: *Tai hao le, shi ma?* / That's very good, isn't it?
- 4 Shan: *Shi* / Yes.
- 5 Chen: *Ni zai zhe xuexiao kuai yinian le ba. Ni dui yingguo xuexiao yingxiang ruhe?* / You have been in this school for nearly a year by now, what is your impression on English schools?
- 6 Shan: *Er, zheli de xuesheng bi zhongguo xuesheng fangsong de duo. Yiban meiyou jiating zuoye xuesheng, zai jiaoshi li keyi suibian jianghua, zou lai zou qu, yong bu zhao mian dui laoshi yi paipai zuo zhe, laoshi ye wu suo wei xuesheng xue hai shi bu xue, quan kao xuesheng ziji he jiazhang.* /er... Students are more relax here than students in China. Here we don't have regular homework, students can talk and walk here and there in the classroom, they don't have to sit by the desks row by row facing the class teachers. Teachers here don't really care much whether students study hard or not. It is all up to us students and families.
- 7 Chen: *Ni zai ban shang biao xian zenyang?* / How do you behave in the class?
- 8 Shan: *Wo ting anjing de, ye ting dan xiao, hulihudu de.* / I am very quiet in the class, very often I am quite timid and puzzled.
- 9 Chen: *Ni jue de zhe he nide yingwen nengli you guan ma? Ruguo ni hui shuo duo yidian jiu hui zixin de duo.* / Do you think it is due to the language? If you could understand English better, you would be less timid and more confident?
- 10 Shan: *Wo xiang shi de.* / I think so.
- 11 Chen: *Ni jue de zai banshang you dedao teshu de banzhu ma?* / Do you think you get an extra help in the class?
- 12 Shan: *Mei shenme banzhu. Laoshi zong shi gei wo yi xie ruyi de dongxi, huozhe ba wo fangzai di nianji banshang. Meiyou ren gei wo zhijie de banzhu. Wangwang wo dei ziji xiang laoshi yao jiating zuoye, zheyang baba keyi yong zhongwen zidian gei wo jiangjie.* / Not really, I am just given some easier texts or sent to younger class. No one can give me any direct guidance. So I would rather ask for some homework, in that case my father can explain to me with a Chinese and English dictionary.
- 13 Chen: *Ni zui xihuan sheme kemu?* / Which subject do you like best?
- 14 Shan: *Dou be zenyang.* / None of them
- 15 Chen: *Zai zhongguo shi ye yiyang ma?* / What about in China?
- 16 Shan: *Bu, wo xihuan yuwen, ye xihuan kan shu he xie zuo.* / Language, I enjoy reading and writing Chinese.

- 17 Chen: *Bijiao er yan, shuxue shi bu shi qiang dian?* / In comparison, Maths could be your strong subject, am I right?
- 18 Shan: *Ni shuo de dui, danshi hai shi you xuduo ying wen wo kan bu dong, tebie shi yingyong ti.* / You are right, but there are still a lot of English words, which I don't understand, especially when doing problem-solving things.
- 19 Chen: *Kexue ke zenyang?* / What about science?
- 20 Shan: *Kexue hen nan, cihui liang ye da. Laoshi jiang de tai kuai, gen bu shang. Haihao laoshi gei wo ruyi zuo de, biru, naxie dai cha du de zuoye, wo zuo bu wan, keyi dai hui jia.* / Oh, science is quite difficult and has a big vocabulary which I couldn't understand at all. The teacher speaks very fast in class. I couldn't catch a word. So the teacher always gives me some easier one, something like pictures with a little explanation. Sometimes I am allowed take the sheets back home as my parents request.
- 21 Chen: Name, ni zui ai zuo sheme? / Then what do you find the most enjoyable thing to do?
- 22 Shan: *Wo xihuan huahua, shougong. Wo zuo le bu shao, tongxue men dou shuo wo zuo de hao.* / I like drawing and handcraft and I did a lot. They quite appreciate my work.
- 23 Chen: *Ni jue de huahua dui ni you banzhu ma?* / Do you think you are better understood in this way?
- 24 Shan: *Youde.* / Yes.

Video Transcripts (4)

Setting - Afternoon, 19/ 07/ 2002, the class lesson in High Fields Girl School

Shan and her classmates were having Geography lesson. When doing class team work, Shan move to the next table where Mimi and other three girls were discussing over the assignment. The assignment was about 'Places in the world', students were supposed to work out a planning note for a short geographical essay on whatever places familiar to them. I saw Shan showed Mimi a Chinese Geography book and pointed at the Chapter 'Three Gorges'. There began their whisper in Mandarin.

- 1 Shan: *Ni kan women xie Zhongguo hao bu hao?* / What do you think if we write about China?
- 2 Mimi: *Hao zhuyi, weishenme bu?* / What a good idea, why not?
- 3 Shan: *Xie shenme hao?* / Where about in China?
- 4 Mimi: *'San Xia' zenme yang? yinwei wo men zhenzai xue 'the narrow precipitous'* / What about 'Three Gorges' as we are learning the narrow precipitous.
- 5 Shan: *Dui, dui, jiu xie 'San Xia' hao le, erqie women keyi cong shu li zhao yixie Zhongwen ziliao* / You are right, then we are writing something about it, and here in the book we can find some information in Chinese.

6 Mimi: *Hao ba, women kan kan zhe ben Chinese Geography. Dan shi ni yao gaosu shu wo limian zenme shuo de, ni zhidao wo kan bu hao.* / All right, Let's have look, but you have to tell me what is written about because you know I can't read much Chinese.

7 Shan: *Mei wenti, women yiqi xie, ni dei ban wo Yingwen* / No problem, we work together and you always help me with English.

(During work, she also asked me some special terms in English and we talked a bit. Luckily I got permission to film Shan and her friends).

8 Chen: *Nimen jinlai dili xue shenme?* / What are you learning in Geography lesson recently?

9 Shan: *Women xue 'shi jie ge di'.* / We are learning the chapter 'Places in the world'.

10 Chen: *Nimen xue zhongguo bu dili ma?* / Are you learning 'Chinese Geography' as well? (I saw a Chinese textbook on her desk)

11 Shan: *Xuede, women xue 'SanXia', jiushi na ge chang jiang shang de.* / Yes, we are learning the narrow precipitous – 'Three Gorges', over the Changjiang River, which is the longest river in China.

12 Chen: *Laosh ye zhidao 'San Xia' ma?* / Does the teacher know 'Three Gorges' project?

13 Shan: *Zhidao, dan youguan 'San Xia' gongcheng, mei wo dong de duo, yinwei wo baba keyi bang wo zhao ziliao.* / Oh yes, but I can say something more about this huge project because I asked my father to help me collecting data in Chinese-English version.

14 Chen: *Taihao le! Zhehui, ni shi zhuanjia le.* / Good! now this time you are an expert, aren't you?

15 Shan: *Dui, wo baba shi xue zhongguo lishi de, wo gan dao te jiaobao.* / Yes, my father specialises in Chinese History, you know, I feel proud.

16 Chen: *Ni keyi wei wo jieshao yixia nide tongxue ma?* / Could you introduce me your best friend?

17 Shan: *Sure, this is Maria, coming from Russia when she was three years old. She is at the top of the class.*

18 Chen: *Hello Maria, Shan tells me you are very nice to her.*

19 Maria: *Shan is very friendly too and we have a lot of fun together.*

20 Chen: *Do you often help her in lessons?*

21 Maria: *Yes, we often work together in a group and we are the best group in the class.*

22 Chen: *What do you think of Shan's progress in English?*

23 Maria: *She is clever, her handwriting I am very jealous of.*

24 Chen: *How do you help her English?*

25 Maria: *I correct her English in many ways.*

26 Shan: *Hanna is also my best friend, she is talkative, you can talk to her.*

27 Chen: *Hello, Harra, where are you from and when?*

28 Harra: *I came from Afghanistan when I was very small.*

29 Chen: *What is your impression of Shan?*

30 Harra: *Shan is a good friend of mine. She is good at written work but her weak point is pronunciation.*

*I often help her with her pronunciation and with some technical terms,
but her strong point is clear and precise. She works very hard.*

31 Chen: *Do you often stay together after class?*

32 Harra: *Yes, we go to library, play games and have fun together. In class we often sit next to each other so we can help each other.*

33 Chen: *English is Shan's second language and you do not know her language, how do you make her understand you?*

34 Harra: *Well, that is not very difficult. Sometimes we use gesture, we draw and we simplify the meaning so that Shan can understand more clearly. Of course sometimes we ask Mimi to do the translation.*

35 Chen: *That is very good.*

Part two: Interviews with Kapo and Her Friends

Video Transcripts (5)

Setting - Lunchtime, Tuesday 9th July 2002 at Library of Anderson Girl School

Kapo and her classmates were in the school library, doing their homework. As Kapo told me before one of them named Xiumei was her best friend. So I came to them and hoped I could talk with them, especially talk with Xiumei.

1 Chen: *Ni gongon ni ding yi xi Xiumei nigu hao peng you? / Could you tell me how you two become good friends?*

2 Kapo: *Ng gida zuo, hao lui, xiang nian le / I couldn't remember as we have known each for a long time.*

3 Chen: *Ni dai yiqi taidao kyu hai mie ying xiang? / What is your first impression of Kapo (I asked Xiumei)*

4 Xiumei: *Wo ng gida zuo liu / I couldn't remember either (she covered her face, feeling shy)*

5 Chen: *Ng gan you / Don't be shy, it doesn't matter.*

6 Xiumei: *Dai yiqi dai dao kyu, wo zong yiwei kyu hai yi guo nan zai / At first sight, I thought she was a boy.*

Later I realised I was wrong as our school is a girl school.

7 Chen: *Ni you mo men kyu? / Did you ask her?*

8 Xiumei: *Ng gan / I dared not*

9 Chen: *Lemi nidei ding xi? / Then how did you get to know each other?*

10 Xiumei: *I couldn't remember, I don't know.*

11 Chen: *How did you first start to communicate with each other?*

12 Xiumei: *You yigo nu zai giao de ni, wo jidao kyu, kyu jiu jidao Kapo, wodei meijiu xizuo lo /*

One girl knew me and I knew she knew Kapo, then we began to talk.

13 Chen: *Ni hai ng hai jidao kyu hai gon Guangdo hua?* / Did you know she spoke Cantonese?

14 Xiumei: *Xi* / yes.

15 Chen: *Ni cucu gen kyu gon mie hua, Yingmen huajia Guangdong hua?* / What language did you speak to her at first, English or Chinese.

16 Xiumei: *Zongmen* / Chinese

17 Chen: *Ni ding jidao kyu gon Zongmen ng gon Yingmen* / How did you know she spoke Chinese instead of English?

18 Kapo: *Tai ya ji la, haoqi ni tai Bangladesh, wo hai Chinese* / You know when you see, for example, she looks

Bangladesh and we are Chinese.

19 Chen: *So you knew from the first sight that she must speak Cantonese more.*

20 Xiumei: *Yes* (she nodded).

21 Chen: *Nide gici kaici gong hua?* / How did you start to communicate with each other?

22 Kapo: *Yiqi wode zuo team work, yue xian tong wo gong Zhongmen* / She spoke Cantonese to me one day when we were doing team work.

23 Chen: *You look a bit white, you are not one hundred percent Chinese, am I right?*

24 Xiumei: *You are right, I am a half Chinese because my mum is Cantonese and my father is English.*

25 Chen: *You speak Cantonese at home?*

26 Xiumei: *Yes, I speak Cantonese with my mum.*

27 Chen: *Kapo told me you help her a lot in her lessons.*

28 Xiumei: *Oh, yes, sometimes.*

29 Chen: *How you help?*

30 Xiumei: *Normally I tell her in Chinese when she couldn't understand well.*

31 Chen: *But do you speak English to her because she is learning English?*

32 Xiumei: *Sometimes when it is simply but not often because we could not talk more in English.*

One of Kapo's classmates interrupted in and said 'I help you all the time, don't I, Kapo?' 'Yes' Kapo nodded. The girl named Lyna was from Bangladesh but she came to London at three. She could speak fluent English. Kapo then told me Sorina was also her good friend. Two years ago she just came from Kosovo, the former Yugoslavia. When I talked with her I found she could speak English very well. She told me her parents spoke good English and helped her after school. I thought Kapo was lucky in some way as she had so many friends around, who gave Kapo a lot of support which the school could not. Especially Xiumei was most helpful to Kapo because Xiumei played an important role as a bilingual teacher. Without this help, Kapo would be very much left out and lag behind.

(After a few words with those two girls, the conversation between us continued).

- 33 Chen: *Ni zui zongyi hai mie fo?* / *What subject do you like best?* (I turned to Kapo)
- 34 Kapo: *Zui zongyi hai History, PE ...mola, zui zen hai Geography tongmai English, ng hai... Music, German* / I like History and PE best, that is. I hate Geography and English, oh still Music, German, what else?
- 35 Chen: *Xiumei, na me ni?* / What about you?
- 36 Xiumei: *Wo zui zongyi hai Science, PE* / I like Science and PE best
- 37 Kapo: *Hi, wo mei gon wo ng zongyi Science* / Yes, I forgot to say that I didn't like science.
- 38 Xiumei: *Wo zui zongyi Science, PE, English, German tong French* / I like Science, PE, English, German and French.
- 39 Chen: *Miefo kyu (Xiumei) zongoyi ban dao ni?* / In what subject do you need her help most?
- 40 Kapo: *Yingmen* / English
- 41 Chen: *Ding ban?* *Hai ng hai Zong men gaixi bei kyu tiang?* / How do you help? Do you explain things to her in Cantonese?
- 42 Kapo: *Hai, hai, Zongmen gaixi bei wo tiang* / Yes, yes, she explains me the English in Chinese.
- 43 Chen: *Gita fo? Ginxiang zai yi cai kingai, hai ma?* / What about other subjects? Do you often chat together?
- 44 Xiumei: *Hai, senye dou kingai* / Yes, we talk all day long.
- 45 Chen: *Ni zuo mieye fo yika?* / What subject are you working at now?
- 46 Kapo: PHSE
- 47 Chen: *Ni zong yi ng zong yi?* / Do you like it?
- 48 Kapo: *Yi di du ng zong yi.* / Not at all
- 49 Chen: Why?
- 50 Kapo: *Ni fo hao qi dai za hui.* / It is like a mixed stew.
- 51 Chen: *Ni zuomei ng zuo gong fo?* / Why you are not doing homework?
- 52 Xiumei: *Zuosai le* / finished
- 53 Chen: *Zuosai? Bingduo zuosai?* / Really? Where did you finish it?
- 54 Xiumei: *Zai wukei* / at home
- 55 Kapo: *'Homework' danhai home* / Homework means to work at home.
- 56 Chen: *Ni caman mo zuo mei?* / You didn't do your homework last night, did you?
- 57 Kapo: *Ng hai caman, hai hao lui, a week guoya* / Not yesterday, long time ago, almost a week.
- 58 Chen: *Hai ng hai caman dai ball, hai ng hai?* / You watched football last night, didn't you?
- 59 Kapo: *Ng hai ball, hai video.* / No, not foot ball but video
- 60 Chen: *Dinggai?* / why?
- 61 Kapo: *Yingwei hai wo laoxi ng zai niduo, kyu men daili guo covered teacher* / because our teacher has been away, the cover teacher was sent to us.

Most of the time after lunch, these girls stay in the library, either doing homeworks or just reading and chatting.

Part three: Interviews with Wington and Her Friend

Video Transcripts (6)

Setting - Morning, Friday 12 / 07 / 2002, the year 5 class in Soho Parish School.

Wington and her classmates were having the science lesson. They were grouped together, cutting some paragraphs from the materials given by Ms Andrew, the class teacher. They were then sticking them onto a big sheet of paper. The aim for this teamwork was to see how much they understood the text they just learnt. I came towards Wington as I saw her with a Chinese classmate sitting by the desk in the corner. They were busy cutting and sticking, I observed for a while then interrupted them, the following conversation was then taking place.

- 1 Chen: *You two are good friends and classmates, aren't you?*
- 2 Yuan: *Yes, but I am in year 4 and Wington is in year 5.*
- 3 Chen: *You are not in the same year? But you are together having the same lesson, how come?*
- 4 Wington: *Xi nian ban and wu nian ban yiqai / Year 4 and year 5 are together in one big classroom*
(No doubt she understood what I was saying, she replied).
- 5 Chen: *Nigo hai dai ban, hai ng hai? / It is a big class, isn't it?*
- 6 Wington: *Hai / yes*
- 7 Chen: *Where is the year 6 class now (because I knew it before, I asked if there was any change).*
Is it next door?
- 8 Wington: *No that door, it is that door (Clearly she didn't get what I was saying. She pointed to the door and told me so). But they go to...for activity (she turned to Yuan and asked her in Cantonese)*
- 9 Yuan: *Chesington*
- 10 Wington: *Yes, Chesington, today is come back (the grammar was wrong obviously).*
- 11 Chen: *What do you think of Wington (I turned to Yuan)?*
- 12 Yuan: *She is nice.*
- 13 Chen: *What language does she always use to communicate with you?*
- 14 Yuan: *Cantonese*
- 15 Chen: *Because...*
- 16 Yuan: *Because she doesn't notice my English.*
- 17 Chen: *How do you help her with her English?*

- 18 Yuan: *Well, I help her just by telling her what to do and help her...er... that is.*
- 19 Chen: *What are you doing today?*
- 20 Yuan: *We are learning about our body, cutting things out and sticking them onto this title paper*
(Yuan showed me their work).
- 21 Chen: *Did she know what it is talking about here today?*
- 22 Yuan: *Yes.*
- 23 Chen: *Are you sure? Did you tell her?*
- 24 Yuan: *Yes, I did*

APPENDIX IV

Interviews with Parents

Part one: Interviews with Shan's Parents

Video Transcripts (1)

Setting – Saturday, 03 / 03 / 2001, meeting at Shan's home

- 1 Chen: *Shi shenme yuanyin rang nimen jue ding dai Shan lai Yingguo?* / What has made you bring Shan here in Britain?
- 2 Mum: *Women cong shu ben li he dian shi shang dezhi, Yingguo jiao yu shi hen yixiu de, tebie zhuzhong gebie ha jiao xue, bing yi ci jian chang de.* / We have learnt from books and TV that British education system is excellent, especially famous for its individualised teaching.
- 3 Chen: *Shixian nimen zhi bu zhidao Yingguo jiao shi shi zenme yang de?* / Did you have any idea about school teachers before you came over here?
- 4 Dad: *Women tingshuo Yingguo de laoshi shuiping hen gao. Jiulian xiaoxue lao shi ye shi daxue biye de.* / We heard that English teachers are of high quality, even primary teachers have a university degree.
- 5 Chen: *Name, Ni jue de zhongguo xiao xue laoshi zenyang?* / What do you think of primary teachers in China?
- 6 Mum: *Tamen hen fu ze keshi tamen de xueli zhishi Zhong zhuan, xiang dan yu zheli de di liu xueji.* / They are very responsible but most of them have only graduated from 2-year teachers college, equivalent to graduates from six form colleges in Britain.
- 7 Dad: *Danshi ta bu tong yu Yingguo de zhidu, dui ma?* / But it is a system different from the British one, isn't it?
- 8 Chen: *Dui, Zhongguo de jiaoshi peixun shi yi zhong fengui jiegou, 1949 nian xuexi sulian de moshi.* / Yes, the teacher training system in China can be understood as a multiple-tier structure, which has been modified on the lines of the former Soviet model since 1949.
- 9 Mum: *Shi, zenme yang de?* / what does it look like?
- 10 Chen: *Zai zhe zhong zhidu li, you si zhong jiben de jigou fuzhe peixun shizi.* / Within this structure, there are four main establishments responsible for all levels of teacher training, for instance...
- 11 Dad: *Wo zhidao you san nian zhi de shifan xueyuan, bi ye sheng fen pai qu na, haiyou liang nian zhi de shi fan xue xiao you shenme jubie?* / I know there is a school called 3-year teachers college, where will these graduates be assigned? And there is another one called 2- year normal school, what is different?

- 12 Chen: *Biru, liang nian zhi de youshi shi peiyang you er yuan laoshi de, liang nian zhi de shifan xuexiao shi peiyang xiao xue laoshi de, san nian zhi de shifan xueyuan ze peiyang chuzhong laoshide, er si nian zhi de daxue shi pei yang gaozhong laoshi.* / For instance, 2- year special schools for the training of Kindergarten teachers; 2-year educational colleges for training primary school teachers; 3-year teachers colleges for the training of teachers in lower secondary schools; and 4 year teachers universities responsible for training teachers working in upper secondary schools.
- 13 Dad: *Name, zheli de shizi shuiping hai shi yao gao.* / In comparison, the English teachers's level is really higher.
- 14 Mum: *Wo tingshuo, tamen dou you hen sheng de ertong xinlixue he jiaoyuxue zhishi.* / I hear they all have profound knowledge of child psychology and pedagogy.
- 15 Dad: *Ling yi ge yuyue tiaojian shi, zheli de banji ren shu shao.* / Another advantage here is the size of each class, there are much less children in a class.
- 16 Mum: *Zhongguo banji ren shu tai duo le, yi ge ban you 50 ren, yige ban zhu ren, jige ke ren lao shi.* / China has got a wrong size of a class, as big as over 50 pupils in a class, with one tutor and several subject teachers.
- 17 Dad: *Zhe yang da de banji genben bu keneng zhuyi xuesheng de ge bie chayi.* / This makes it impossible for teachers to take care of every individual differences.
- 18 Mum: *Women xiwan Shan neng deli yu zheli de xuexiao.* / We hope Shan will benefit from her English school here.
- 19 Dad: *Wo zuichu de xiang fa shi, jiran yingyu shi shijie yu, women yi zhi sheng shou ji hai, name, wei shenme bu rang Shan you yi ge zai bentu xuexi yingyu de jihui?* / My primary thought is that since English is a global language, and we have suffered a lot from being poor in the language, why not let Shan have an opportunity to learn English in the native country?
- 20 Mum: *Zhishao ta keyi xuexi dao hao de yingyu, jianglai hui qu neng shuo yi kou hao ying wen, bi shenme dou qiang.* / At least, she will learn good English here, and return someday with a good command of fluent English, nothing could be better.
- 21 Chen: *You daoli, xian zai hen duo nian qing ren lai guo wai xue yingyu yingwei zhongguo yao yu shijie jiegui.* / You are right, nowadays lots of youngsters are sent abroad learning English as China is becoming a part of the world.

(The phone rang, we paused a little while)

- 22 Chen: *Nimen da sun zai Yingguo dai duo jiu?* / How long are you going to stay in this country?
- 23 Mum: *Kan kan Shan xuexi Yingwen de Qingkuan zai ding.* / It depends on how well Shan learns English.
- 24 Chen: *Nimen ziji de Gongzuo jian jing ruhe?* / How about your job possibility?
- 25 Dad: *Dagai mei wenti ru guo women xiang lu xia lai.* / We don't think there is a problem if we

would like to stay on.

- 26 Mum: *Ke tou teng de shi women wufa zuo chu jue ding.* / But the problem is we just cannot make a decision.
- 27 Dad: *Kanlai Shan yao xiang xue hao Yingwen kongpa bu name rongyi.* / It is really not easy for Shan. She has lots of difficulties in the class.
- 28 Chen: *Na laoshi shuo shenme?* / How did her teacher say?
- 29 Mum: *Laoshi ye mei shuo shenme, zhishi shuo mei guanxi, xiaohai xue yuyan hen kuai.* / She didn't say anything really, but always asks me not to worry as kids would pick up language quickly.
- 30 Chen: *Shan shuo shenme?* / Did Shan say anything about it
- 31 Dad: *Shan shuo laoshi dui ta hen hao, buguo mei shuo shenme hua.* / Shan said the teacher was very nice to her but did not talk much to her.
- 32 Mum: *Shan genben jiu meibanfa dong laoshi tongxue jiao liu.* / There is no way for teachers and classmates to understand Shan as she can not communicate with them.
- 33 Chen: *Shan you mei you Yingwen fudao lao shi?* / Does Shan have any language support in the class?
- 34 Mum: *Meiyou, genben tan bu shang.* / No, hardly any.
- 35 Chen: *Nimen you mei you he xiaochang tan?* / Did you talk with the head teacher or other teachers?
- 36 Dad: *Shuo shi shuo le, dan ta shuo, xuexiao mei you duoyu de laoshi fuze zhe jian shi. Suiran you yige xuexi fudao laoshi, dan tamen tai mang le. Ta yao women bu jiaoji.* / We did talk, but the head teacher said there was no extra teacher taking care of the support, as the school has only one learning support teacher, she is too busy to take the job. He told us to be patient as Shan will be all right soon.
- 37 Mum: *Women bu zhidao xuexiao you shenme zhendui xiang Shan zheyang haizi de zhengce, tamen xuyao, tebie guan zhu.* / We have no idea what is the school policy in dealing with children like Shan, those children are badly in need of a special attention.
- 38 Dad: *Mujian zuo zhongyao de shi xuexi Yingwen, fouze meifa xuexi qita zhishi. Ruguo Shan zai duan shijian nei gan bu shang qu, name ta yi ding shibai.* / At the moment, learning English is Shan's priority as it is the key to other subject learning. If Shan can not catch up in a short period, she is going to fail many ways.
- 39 Mum: *Women bin bu huaiyi Yingguo jiaoyu, danshi cong Shan de jingyan li kan bu chu Yingguo jiaoyu zhuzhong gebie hua jiaoxue.* / We don't doubt that the British education is famous for its individualised teaching, but I just cannot see this from Shan's experience.
- 40 Chen: *Shan ziji zenme jue de?* / How does Shan feel about it
- 41 Mum: *Ta buai shuo hua, zhi shi fei chang lei, fei chang jusang.* / She is very tired and distressed when she is back home, she doesn't want to talk much.
- 42 Dad: *Shan de qingkuang yu women xiang dao de bu tong.* / Shan's experience is quite out of our expectation.

- 43 Mum: *Wo you ge ganjue zheli de laoshi mei xin mei fei, haizi xue bu xue dou wu suo wei. Dong bu dong jiu shi 'hao yang de'.* / I have a feeling teachers here seem quite care-free, they don't really bother if children learn, **'well done' is a common expression.**
- 44 Dad: *Zhe ge shuo fa bu cuo, danshi xuexiao yinggai bao zheng xuesheng xue dao dongxi, kaoshi jige.* / The expression is good but it is essential that children in school should learn and pass exams.
- 45 Mum: *Ni xianzai zhidao women wei shenme touteng le ba.* / You know now why we are so headached about it.
- 46 Chen: *Nimen you shi guo biede difang?/ Did you know that before or did you try some other schools where probably Shan can have better care in language?*
- 47 Mum: *You, danshi mei chaodao. Zuichu, you ren jieshao women qu Islington de zhongwen xuexiao, keshi yi kan quan shi jiao zhongwende, erqie shuo de shi guangdong hua, women genben ting bu dong./* Yes, but we couldn't find the one. We were first referred to the Chinese community in Islington, but the school is teaching Cantonese not English. And we don't understand Cantonese at all.
- 48 Dad: *Ranhou women zhihao chaodao xianzai zhe suo xuexiao.* / Then we were asked to visit this English school and were accepted.
- 49 Mum: *Keyi shuo danshi shi bie wu xuan ze./* We have no choice.
- 50 Chen: *Shan zai Zhongguo shi zenyang?/* What was the situation with Shan in China?
- 51 Mum: *Ta zai ban shang biao xian hen hao, ren ye huoyue, danshi xianzai jiu bijiao chenmo guayan./* She was doing very well in class and very sociable but now she is quiet in everything.
- 52 Chen: *Bie danxin, Shan hen quai jiu hui zhiying de .* / Don't worry she will be all right soon .
(I worry as well but I have to give them a word of comfort)

Video Transcripts (2)

Setting: Sunday, 20 /05 /2001, talk with Shan's mum in the London Chinese School

- 1 Chen: *You hao xiaoxi ma? /* Any news about the secondary entrance?
- 2 Mum: *Xuexiao shangge xingqi si gaosu women, High Fields Girl School shi zhege diqu weiye jige bu yong kaosh jiu keyi qu de zhongxue./* The school told us last Thursday that High Fields Girl School was the only possibility in the Arsenal area because it didn't require any entrance exam as the rest of the schools in the area.
- 3 Chen: *Nimen qu kanguo ma?/* Have you ever visited this school?
- 4 Mum: *Hai meiyou, buguo women chang jingguo nali, yinxiang zhong zhege xuexiao you xuduo yinba ren he hei ren./* No, we've just passed by several times and found the school quite mixed, for there are quite many Asian and black girls playing on the playground.

- 5 Chen: *Nimen dasuan qu ma?* / Are you going to accept the offer?
- 6 Mum: *Women kanlai meiyou xuanze, buguo hao zai xuexiao li jia bijiao jin.* / We have no choice but fortunately it is very close to where we are living now.
- 7 Shan: *Ni xuede you keneng rang wo zai Gillespie duo dai shang yi nian, di er nian zai canjia gaoshi, keneng jiu you geng duo de xuanze?* / Do you think (towards me) it possible for me to stay in Gillespie for another year, then I am able to take part in all kinds of tests and try some more secondary schools?
- 8 Chen: *Hao zhuyi, rang wo shishi tong xiaozhang shuoshuo kan.* / A good idea, but we have to talk to some authority to see if it can be the case.
- 9 Shan: *Wo hen xiang he wu nian ban na liangge Zhongguo pengyou zai yiqi, yao bu ran you shengxia wo ziji yige ren, guai gu dan de.* / I enjoy very much working with my Chinese friends in year 5, otherwise I would suffer a lot of loneliness.

(There was a long silence before I asked Shan)

- 10 Chen: *Ni xianzai hui dao liu nian ban le ma?* / Have you returned to your year 6 class?
- 11 Shan: *huilai le, yiqie dou hai shi lao yangzi. Tingshuo wu yue 25 ri qian dou meiyou ke, women lai xuexiao zhishi wan.* / Yes, I am asked to return to my year 6 class. I think everything will be as usual, but there will be no any subject teaching before the 25th May (half term). We just go to school for fun.
- 12 Chen: *Wo xiage xingqi er shangwu hui lai kan ni, hao ma?* / I will go and see you next Tuesday morning, is it ok?
- 13 Shan and Mum: *Taihao le.* / Good! (The bell is ringing. We have to stop chatting.)

Part two: Interviews with Kapo's Parents

Video Transcripts (3)

Setting - Sunday, 11/03/2001, meeting with the Hong Kong parents at their home

- 1 Chen: *Dingai nidei guozhuo Yingguo, Hong Kong ng mai haohao nye?* / Why does the family want to move to the UK since Hong Kong is quite a good place?
- 2 Mum: *Hong Kong mo mieye hao quzuo ren duo, yiga hao nan wen dao gong.* / Well, Hong Kong is overcrowded; there are too many people and limited job opportunities for adult.
- 3 Chen: *Hong Kong gaoyu du ng cuo.* / But the education in Hong Kong is also quite advanced.
- 4 Mum: *Danhai, tai ginjiong, yali tai da, gongfo tai duo, sailao zai ting ng xun.* / but schools put too much pressure on children, too much homework and too much for kids.

- 5 Chen: *Kudei dude hao ng hao?/ How about your daughters' performance?*
- 6 Mum: *OK du hai ok, buguo qidi du yao mafan. / Generally speaking, they are ok, but I think they would have problems sooner or later.*
- 7 Chen: *Dingkai? / Why ?*
- 8 Mum: *Yingwei hao duo wuki du hai qiang ciga laoci, fanhou jihao dabien gao kudei zainu. / Because many households have to employ a private tutor for extra tuition after school*
- 9 Chen: *Hai ng hai bu za? / Is it for making up a missed lesson?*
- 10 Mum: *Ng hai, nidi hai tabie gao chu lai di ye, du hai bangju kudei zainu shang daihou. / Not really, it is kind of extra teaching and learning, lessons are tailored to the child's needs of going to university.*
- 11 Chen: *Nidei ng bei kudei liang fen shang daihou? / don't you want your daughters to go to university?*
- 12 Mum: *Xiong hai Xiong la, danhai mo banfa, wedei jigi mo mieye menfa, yao mo qian, din yao banfa? / Of course we wish they could go to university, but we are exactly those parents who are illiterate and who cannot afford this extra tuition.*
- 13 Chen: *Nidei hai ng hai himan kudei zai liduo du daihou? / Do you expect them to go to university here in Britain?*
- 14 Mum: *Danhai la. Wodei sai genxi mo tiugian du duo di xu, yiga du wen ng dao hao gongzuo. / Yes, of course. When we were a child, we did not study much. Now we cannot find a good job.*
- 15 Chen: *Mieye hai hao gong? / What do you mean by a good job?*
- 16 Mum: *Danhai xiezi lao gogo gongzuo, cigan duan, chuliang gao gou zhong luo. / Well, some jobs in the office, work less hours but get more paid. In Hong Kong those office jobs either in the company or in the civil service are normally filled by university graduates. (she sighed in despair and continued) yingwei wodei duxu xiu, sanhuo fanging du hao nan gao ding luo, dang hai wo dei du himan kudei hao duo guo wodei luo. / Life is hard on us because we do not have a good education, but we want our children to be better off than us.*
- 17 Chen: *Nidei dui Yingguo yiu mieye liugai?/ How much do you know about Britain?*
- 18 Mum: *Ren bi Hong Kong xiu, gihui duo di, Yingguo jian hao di luo. / Yes, Britian has less population, more opportunities, and money is better valued if you change it to Hong Kong dollars.*
- 19 Chen: *Yingguo houhao ding yong? / What about English schools?*
- 20 Mum: *Yinggai hao guo Hong Kong ying wei Hong Kong du hai hou Yingguo, hai ma?/ I think English schools should be better than Hong Kong's as Hong Kong was following Britain during those years, wasn't it?*
- 21 Chen: *Hao duo Hong Kong ren bei jigi zainu lai Yingguo duxu hai ma? /Lots of Hong Kong people have sent their children over here to study in English schools, why?*
- 22 Mum: *Mozuo, yuguo nidei zainu xiong du daihou, ku yiding yao duxu hao hao, yingwei hao duo ren tong ni zan ma, zongyao hao duo ren hua: Yingguo gaoyu mo bei sailouzai gandai di yali, xiu ren tong ni zan, yao ng sai bei jian, mie gei hao luo!// Yes, in Hong Kong, a child has to demonstrate an outstanding performance in all the examinations at various stages of schooling in order to enter a*

university. Besides people in Hong Kong all say: British education is better valued and less competitive, and parents pay almost nothing for schooling.

23 Chen: *Ni lao gong hai ng hai tong ni yi yong lan fa?* / Does your husband have the same idea as you?

24 Mum: *Hai, Kyu hua, gan duo yao jian lao du hai bei jigi zaimu guo zuo lituo duxu,*

sai ji duo jian du da, wo dei yiga yao tiugian lai lituo dagong, danhai bei kudei lai luo./

Yes, my husband said that many rich people were mad about sending their children to British A level colleges or universities even at very high expenses. Now that he was employed here, of course we should make best use of the opportunity. ...

25 Chen: *Kydei sailouzi yao meiyegango?* / How do the kids feel about this change?

26 Mum: *Kydei haokaixiang, biyao yao xinxiang gan* / They are happy as everything is new and interesting to them

27 Chen: *Zhong ng zhong yi niduo houhao?* / Do they like their school?

28 Mum: *Yinggai dou zhongyi luo. Kydei hua laoci dui kydei hao hao, momeiyepihi, ng qi Hong Kong laoci.* / I think they are quite happy about the school. Kapo (elder daughter) told me teachers were nice and patient, not like teachers in Hong Kong, they were shouting all the time.

29 Chen: *Kydei houhao gonghuo ding yang? Kydei ming ng ming? Laoci gong mieye?* / How about their school work, do they understand the teacher?

30 Mum: *Wo ng hai gi mingba kydei houhao de ci, danhai wo ji kydeiyeye fan lai mo meiyegong fu zuo.* / I don't know much what is going on in school but I can see they normally don't have homework after school.

31 Chen: *Ni ng danxiang kydei mo xu du?* / Don't you worry anything because the kids are too relaxed?

32 Mum: *Wo du mo landao lidi, wo guede houhao du hui fuza kydei, wo du ng ci.* / Well... I haven't thought about this yet. I guess the school has its method, I know nothing myself.

33 Chen: *Houhao laoci yaomo gaodai meiyeg?* / What did the teacher say about Kapo and Wington?

34 Mum: *Laoci duhai hua ky liang jiemui hao hao. Buguo yijia yao duo gong Yingwen* / Teachers always say **they are doing very well**, but I am afraid they have to catch up quickly.

35 Chen: *Ni ji ng ji kydei liangguo ding yang buza, xian yao banfa du dao Yingwen.* / Do you know in what way they can catch up quickly?

36 Mum: *Wo du ng ji. Wo jiu hai tiantian cong kydei fan hou, jie kydei fan lai. Yao mieye ci, laoci xie ji liduo, wo huajia Kapo luo bei renga tai. Yuguo yao meiyegao duai, wodei jiu zuo luo.* / I don't know how I can help them really. What I can do is sending them to school and collecting them back home. If there is anything important, there will be a note for parents, then Kapo or I will ask some friends in China town to do the translation. We parents always do what the school asks without any delay.

37 Chen: *Nidei xiangxi ng xiangxi liduo houhao tongmai laoci?* / Do you understand schools and teachers here as you did in Hong Kong?

38 Mum: *Wo du ng ji, yao ng ci Yingwen. Buguo wo lang houhao huajia laoci duhui fuza, yuguo ng hai, du ng sai kydei la?* / I am not sure as I don't understand the language, but I believe that once kids are

sent to schools, they will be educated anyway, otherwise what is point to have schools and teachers?

39 Chen: *Ni gong de ansai, bu guo zuihao du hai bei yi guo laoci banha kydei.* / You are quite right, but will it be better if the school can provide the kids with extra support?

40 Mum: *Hai hai, ni yao mo banfa ban wo tong houhao gonggong?/* I know ... but can you help me to talk with the school?

41 Chen: *Mo mentai. Tianya wo cici tai, bu yu wo tong ni yicai qu gian haochang, hao ng hao?/* No problem, I will try it tomorrow, but why not go and see the head teacher together when you collect them in the afternoon?

42 Mum: *Hao! Wodei tianya gian . /* Good idea, let's meet in the school tomorrow afternoon.

APPENDIX V

Interviews with Teachers

Part one: Interviews with Ms White (Shan's teacher)

Video Transcripts (1)

Setting - Morning, 22 / 05 / 2001, talk with Ms White in the year 6 classroom

1 Chen: *Would you mind saying something about Shan before the camera?*

2 White: *No, I am pleased. Since Shan joined us, she has developed a lot of language skills because when she first arrived she was not able to speak and understand English, but now she can understand lots of instructions, can talk to children quite a lot ... a lot more communication.*

3 Chen: *Shan sometimes goes to other class for her lesson, doesn't she?*

4 White: *Yes, she has been going to a younger class for literacy lessons and she is getting along very well. She has been doing lots of writing and she has been able to write a lot in English.*

5 Chen: *She told me she was in the year 5 class for quite a while, why?*

6 White: *Yes, she didn't do the SATs test as the rest of the class did because she hasn't been in England for two years. Children have to do the test when they follow the National Curriculum for two years and English language for two years. So Shan didn't do it because she hasn't fitted that criterion. ... I believe she could do very well in Maths for she is in the higher Maths group and it is a matter of time, as soon as she's got used to English writing and speaking, she will be doing very well. She's learnt a lot quicker than expected.*

7 Chen: *At first she found it very difficult to communicate with you and her classmates didn't she?*

8 White: *yes, she didn't come to ask me questions, she would talk to the children though, but now she's been more confident. Well, she has got some help from a Chinese girl and a Chinese boy who are in Year 5 while we were practising this test. Shan went to their class and did her lessons there, which was quite nice, wasn't it?*

9 Shan: *Yes.*

10 White: *...there were two students she could talk to and they could help her in her own language. She is really making a huge progress in such a short time.*

11 Chen: *Has she got any language support teacher?*

12 White: *No, not as such, no.*

13 Chen: *She told me she did a lot of drawing to communicate with people?*

14 White: *We got her a bilingual dictionary and it has English words as well as Chinese words and she just*

copied down the Chinese one and then the English one. And that helps her a lot.

15 Chen: *Her parents told me they had a girl student who could speak English living with them and was helping Shan at night. So in this way she has got some support at home.*

16 White: *Oh good!*

17 Chen: *What about her secondary school now?*

18 White: *Yes, all girls in my class will go to High Fields Girl School and she will get a lot of support then. What will happen before she goes is I will talk to support teachers in that school and I will fill in the forms for every child to tell the teachers about the school and the child whether she needs extra help and then they will have Shan's record and they will see she has just been in this country for certain amount of time and we might report she has made very good progress but she still needs some support in the language. So they will be informed properly. There is a day for Shan to pay a visit to the school in July and one of the teachers in High Fields, just after the half term, would come to talk to the girls before they go to secondary. So the teacher will know the girls quite a bit before they actually go up and I will have a chance to talk to that teacher about the girls as well then. So it is quite a lot of contact... so it will be well prepared for all the girls.*

19 Chen: *You mean all the girls will go to High Fields. Did they have to take an entrance exam before they go?*

20 White: *No, some schools you need to but this one not. If you live in the locality, Then you can go to that school. If they want to go to a private school, then you should take an entrance exam but High Fields is a state school.*

21 Chen: *But the case with my son is different. I had to apply for schools and he had to sit for different kinds of entrance exams, and that was quite hard on him.*

22 White: *Well, you have to apply for a certain school but if you live in a catchment area, you will get in.*

23 Chen: *So this is the policy in this LEA but in the Lambeth area, even the students living in the catchment area, have to sit for every secondary schools they apply for. So I just wonder if the student fails in the exam, normally they make an appeal but what if they fail in the appeal as well?*

24 White: *Yak (smiling and nodding)*

25 Chen: *Since the National Curriculum was introduced; a lot of tests have come up*

26 White: *You are right. I mean this SATs test started from 1995; children of 7, 11 and 14 do SATs. So when I get the result of this test, I would put them in the children's file and we compare them to the test they had done in 7 to see if they've made any enough progress. It is quite a lot of work for children.*

27 Chen: *What do you think of this kind of test?*

28 White: *err...*

29 Chen: *It is also quite a lot pressure on teachers, isn't it?*

30 White: *It is a pressure on teachers. I think it is a pressure on very young age for the children. But I am not entirely sure how...*

31 Chen: *Is it very different from the traditional values here?*

- 32 White: *That's right. There used to be in Britain, for example, an 11 plus exam.*
- 33 Chen: *Yes I heard about it.*
- 34 White: *And then except for some grammar schools that are left, most schools do not do any more and they stop that. One of the reasons is to think that is too much pressure on children.*
- 35 Chen: *But now there seem to be a lot more tests just in different names.*
- 36 White: *Well, what I am saying is the SATs result does not affect the children where they go. The reason why we do them at 7 and 11, they did them in year 2 and now they did again in year six, so we can see how much progress they made in our school.*
- 37 Chen: *That is the point! Quite difficult though.*
- 38 White: *Yes, there are three English tests - reading and writing, handwriting and spelling, there are a three Maths - mental arithmetic and two written papers and there are still two science papers. So they cover quite a wide curriculum. The reading test in particular is to expect children to be able to read quite a chunk of texts in different types of fiction, non-fiction, and a few multiple choices. It is quite difficult and they only get a certain amount of time to do that.*
- 39 Chen: *Do you think the result of the SATs test will have any effect on the schools?*
- 40 White: *Well, basically the results are published in the newspaper, the league tables but what they don't seem to remember is to take into account the children who have got English as a second language, which is a lot of such children in our school. They might have joined in this school 2 years or 5 years ago, but English is their second language, they speak different mother tongues, they don't take into account the statistic of mobility. Some schools, they've got a lot of children who are travelists, they are here only for two years or so and they go, and they don't take into account of children who take free school dinners. And they still show... and things like what they would do, in my class, there are 23 children although, even Shan didn't do the test, her name is still counted, still in the percentage of the final result. So you see, they are very unfair!*
- 41Chen: *I should say the provision for the bilingual children for every school was not enough because the school is short of staff. It is hard to have a bilingual language support teacher.*
- 42 White: *That's right. I mean in our school we've got two teachers who do ESL, they are going for this support in certain classes but we are only got the two teachers for the whole school and what we do is we look at each class to see which class has most children, so we could never give one teacher to one child. At the moment one of the teachers is in the reception class that is because there are a lot of children there who need help, not just one or two. We've got so many English books but we have to borrow from the teachers' Centre. So it is always the same problem of not enough money to buy in resources, we couldn't afford some people who can communicate in their own language and we've got so many ethnic groups. If it will be fair we have to get a lot of such teachers but we haven't got funding. And Shan is lucky. She is bright, she is picking up at her own pace, very well.*
- 43 Chen: *As far as I know she's got some family support, and if there was no such support, that would take*

her longer time to adjust.

- 44 White: *You are right, and she's made friends, friends help her, the children of her own age, not only her Chinese friends and also friends in the class.*
- 45 Chen: *I learnt from the literature that before 1980s Britain used to have some language units, which maybe affiliated to certain schools. In the units, bilingual teachers were provided and children who were not familiar with English would stay in for a certain period to go over their transition time then they moved into the mainstream. Do you think this kind of provision looks better? The thing is that there is a lot of criticism for the present policy now you see, children who have come to this country recently and been plunged into the mainstream class and they couldn't get what they want.*
- 46 White: *I mean this support costs everything. Is that it is always a good side and a bad side, and I wasn't familiar with that, I have only been a teacher for four years, I don't know much about things like units. I suppose if I start to think quickly about it, if there is somebody in each language there to help the children, I couldn't really think it isn't a good thing so long as the children didn't stay in the community for too long because they need to come in and be socialized.*
- 47 Chen: *Yes, just for a short period.*
- 48 White: *Yes, if just for a short period to keep a start in the English language and then come back to the mainstream that sounds great.*
- 49 Chen: *And it is especially good for children who came here in the middle of their primary schooling.*
- 50 White: *But why will they take that away, do you know?*
- 51 Chen: *They just want to say it is for equal opportunities, educational equality. But actually, it appears to be an equal access, it doesn't really mean an equal outcome.*
- 52 White: *No, I mean in Britain now we did have the statement of special education need if the children have special needs, we could go to the certain process and if they are in the statement, the school will be awarded money for that child, pay for other teachers or helpers to sit with that child for a period of time. But that just recently has been stopped. If the school was given enough money to decide how to buy in support, we don't know this will be a good thing or a bad thing.*
- 53 Chen: *When I was in China I learnt that the English Education was famous for its individualized education. I mean it pays much attention to individual differences. However, it seems this traditional value is changing. Different from what is done in China now, British education is moving towards something centralized. What do you think of this change?*
- 54 White: *A nasty thing with the education system is instability as it hasn't been stable. The National Curriculum has been around now about 12 years and changed for a few times since it was first introduced. Now we've got literacy and numeracy hours, which have just been introduced in the last couple of years. What used to be the British educational system was its stability and we need this stability. So teachers know what they are doing, children know what they are doing. And like you said, we do need to treat children individually because every child is different, we can't offer*

the same.

55 Chen: *Equality doesn't mean the same*

56 White: *No, it only means that they should be treated equally but they ...as some children do need more help and others not. So they can't be treated the same, it has to be different but fair.*

57 Chen: *Yes, you are absolutely right, 'fair' is the word! Our children are different especially for those children who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Obviously they are quite bright but because of the language they lag behind in classes.*

58 White: *Exactly.*

59 Chen: *The support from family plays a part? Take Shan for example, she got some support at home after school, something like what we expect to get from the language unit.*

60 White: *Yes, this is what we need. That has probably helped her a lot. You see children go home and forget everything during the day, not practising it outside school, they just practise during school time, they need to practise in the evening and the students' holidays and then they would have got far more used to it, far more confident.*

61 Chen: *Thank you very much for your wonderful talk*

(I have to stop because one of boys is coming to her).

Part two: Interviews with Ms Judith

Video Transcripts (2)

Setting - Morning, 25 / 05 / 2001, meeting with Wington's class teacher in Soho Parish School

1 Chen: *I heard you are also deputy head here, aren't you?*

2 Judith: *Yes, you are right, but most of the time I am Wington's class teacher. I want to tell you about her. She is doing really well. At first she was a little bit withdrawn but now she is really joining in and her English has really improved. She can communicate well with matured children now and her work is getting much better and she would ask me for a favour or other children for a favour if she doesn't understand the work. She recognises a lot words in English.*

3 Chen: *And for the language Wington joins the Year one class, right?*

4 Judith: *Yes, we let Wington join the year one class as children there are doing a lot of rhyming work and lots of basic things of how the English language works. We think it is good for her to be able to repeat things and the level of the work here is still a bit high for her to understand. That's why.*

5 Chen: *Does the school provide language support teachers?*

6 Judith: *Well it depends. We've got quite a good amount support most of the days, we've got a language*

support teacher. Wingtong sometimes works in a small group of the Year three children with a language support teacher, but not all the time because it is hard when she first came here because it is hard to organise when Mrs Crista, the language support teacher works only part time here in the school but not all the time. That is why we have intended to organise the resources in the younger classes...

7 Chen: *Is she going to Year 5 in her case?*

8 Judith: *Yes, she is going to Year 5 for we've got a big section for Year 4-5, she actually stays in this class but she in Year 5.*

9 Chen: *Oh good, thank you very much indeed.*

Part three: Interviews with Ms Crista

Video Transcripts (3)

Setting: Morning, 25 /05 / 2001, meeting with the language support teacher in Soho Parish School.

1 Chen: *Could you introduce yourself and say something for me?*

2 Crista: *All right, my name is Crista and I come to teach Kapo sometime by herself and sometimes in a group with other children who have English as a second language.*

3 Chen: *How is Kapo making progress?*

4 Crista: *Oh she is making very good progress, she is a fast learner (Crista shows me Kapo's work).*

5 Chen: *So she translated English words?*

6 Crista: *Yes, I suggested that she wrote the Chinese words on the English one.*

7 Chen: *Very good! This is the way she is learning, she can use an English -Chinese dictionary that would help her a lot.*

8 Crista: *Have we got a Chinese dictionary here?*

9 Kapo: *Yes, I got English- Chinese dictionary.*

10 Crista: *And also we have this book today - Oxford Children Visual Dictionary. So this is useful because we didn't understand 'sleeping bed' (She showed me in the book then I translated for Kapo).*

11 Crista: *She wasn't sure the one she got was right.*

12 Chen: *She's got the right equivalent. How did you feel when you first started teaching her?*

13 Crista: *Well (turning to Kapo and asking Kapo 'you remember?'), we used to do pictures for each other. I didn't understand you and you didn't understand the word, so I drew a little picture on it. When we were learning to read, she learnt the letter 'h' 'e' 't' - 'What's that?' so I drew a picture.*

14 Chen: *That's great!*

15 Crista: *We still draw pictures.*

- 16 Chen: *This's called sign language.*
- 17 Crista: *This book draws pictures for us (pointing the book-Oxford Children Visual Dictionary).*
- 18 Chen: *Yes it is very colourful as well. Kapo can find pictures and write both English words and Chinese equivalents on her paper.*
- 19 Crista: *When I first came with some of the children, I have had a dictionary that the children can write in themselves. Obviously it is very small and it has basic things like clothes and they can write in their own script, then I help them to write the English words so that they can actually take the book home to get their own words from other foreign language written in it. But I don't know if I use that with Kapo?*
- 20 Chen: *I think it is quite useful.*
- 21 Crista: *But not now because she has passed that level.*
- 22 Chen: *You come to help every Tuesday and Thursday?*
- 23 Crista: *Yes.*
- 24 Chen: *Morning or afternoon?*
- 25 Crista: *Sometimes, different time, sometimes Kapo comes in the group with other children, and some of the time we play talking games - language games. In the game, children have to use the word they've learnt but today we are not playing language games. It is more fun when you come and watch us playing language games.*
- 26 Chen: *I've come here several times but this is my first time to have met you, I am lucky today.*
- 27 Crista: *Maybe you should come back and video us when we play a language game.*
- 28 Chen: *All right, will that be on Thursday?*
- 29 Crista: *Wait a minute, let me tell you when (she is looking up in her diary book)*
- 30 Kapo: *Thursday?*
- 31 Crista: *Oh no, Thursday is a polling day; we are not here this Thursday.*
- 32 Chen: *So sometime next week?*
- 33 Crista: *Yes, next Thursday, we would do the language games on Thursday.*
- 34 Chen: *Thursday afternoon or morning?*
- 35 Crista: *afternoon*
- 36 Chen: *at what time?*
- 37 Kapo: *11 o'clock?*
- 38 Crista: *No, because that is the time when you do your writing, you see the afternoon we will play the game. It should be anyway (turning to me), so probably not this Thursday but next Thursday at about 2 o'clock.*
- 39 Chen: *I will come then and video your class.*
- 40 Crista: *All right.*
- 41 Chen: *Thank you very much!*
- ...

- 42 Chen: *You know why I am interested in knowing how well the immigrant children get along with their English and new environment because I got my son here about two years ago. When he first came here he didn't understand English, I tried to find if there was any 'centre' or 'unit' for him, where he could stay for a while before he began studying in an English school.*
- 43 Cista: *Not in England now, in 1970s, perhaps before that, was the way they used to deal with immigrant children. They used to put them into a unit instead of a proper school but these days they think it much better if the children go to normal schools straight away. That's why we have English as a second language teachers like myself - Emac teachers (ethnic minority group achievement).*
- 44 Chen: *Yes, that's the term, but what do you think of this change?*
- 45 Crista: *It's difficult to give my opinion on that because I was not an English as a second language teacher when they had the system. I know people who talked about it and they had a misunderstanding about it because some of the children prefer to learn a bit of language (English) before they are going to English schools, but it's difficult to learn English in a vacuum. So personally I think it would be proper for children to go straight to the school as long as they have support teachers like me.*
- 46 Chen: *I think it is easier for younger children to get along with their new language but it would be quite difficult for the older children like Kapo, Wington and my son who are already in the middle of their primary education when they first come here. Do you think if it would be better if they got some English knowledge for a start? Especially so when they are at the time with so many tests around?*
- 47 Crista: *They are not expected to do that but I think it's better if they came into the country when they were very young because education in key stage one is hands on, they can learn the language by 'learning through the play', but that would be difficult when children just came in key stage two, like Kapo and Wington.*
- 48 Chen: *You are right. I've learnt this from my own experience with my son. Things very much depend on language support teachers, whether they could get enough support or not. Do you agree?*
- 49 Crista: *Absolutely!*
- 50 Chen: *You are quite good as compared but still.*
- 51 Crista: *No, unless the government gives us more money for that.*
- 52 Chen: *Yes, with more money, schools could provide more language support teachers and even some minority teachers who could speak the mother tongue of the children.*
- 53 Crista: *Well, providing mother tongue teachers is a problem, not so much in this school because we have two main languages, so if we were given the money we would have one for Chinese, but in some schools where there were just 2-3 pupils from one language, 1-2 from another, and there are so many languages, you can't provide a mother tongue support teachers, no, it is impossible! So in schools where there are only one or two main languages, it would be possible if the money would be available.*

- 54 Chen: *However, one thing is good for the older children because they have already mastered their home language, they can use their first language to support their second language study, for example, they can use a bilingual dictionary and additionally if they could get the teacher like you to encourage them in using their home language. What if they had no way to get any support in the mainstream class?*
- 55 Crista: *That would take a long to learn.*
- 56 Chen: *longer time, you mean?*
- 57 Crista: *Yes, without support, some children would take a longer time but some children who are very independent can find resource for themselves.*
- 58 Chen: *You may be right but I think it depends much on the language support anywhere, some children would get the support from families.*
- 59 Crista: *And if you got a very good class teacher, I think they would do the job I do.*
- 60 Chen: *I don't think they could manage because they face so many children in each class; their attention would be diverted from the rest of the class if they did, and it's possible for a class teacher to take care of every individual in every subject.*
- 62 Crista: *That's true, they can't.*
- 63 Chen: *So that's why you are so important here.*
- 64 Crista: *I am glad you said that. Yes, we did give the time to the children, which the class teachers haven't got. I am sure if the class teachers were aware, that always help.*
- 65 Chen: *If the class teachers were aware, they would at least pay more attention to the child's background and have a more understanding of the child's situation, perhaps would ask the school authority to provide more language support teachers.*
- 66 Crista: *Oh, you can ask but you don't always get.*
- 67 Chen: *This is the best we can get so far. Is there any other teacher of support in the school?*
- 68 Crista: *There are some support teachers but they are not specialized in language. I mean a lot of support teachers now are not specialist language support teachers, they are learning support teachers, and some of them are for special need.*
- 69 Chen: *Are you working here full time or part time?*
- 70 Crista: *Part time.*
- 71 Chen: *Only here on Tuesday and Thursday, working with Kapo and Wington either individually or in a group.*
- 72 Crista: *Yes.*
- 73 Chen: *Is it in a big group?*
- 74 Crista: *No, we keep a very small group.*
- 75 Chen: *Then you have to schedule you time, one hour for this group and another hour for that group?*
- 76 Crista: *Yes, but we don't always work in a group. There are different ways of working. This year I start working in the group, another time I would just spend time in each classroom. This year we*

decide working in a withdrawal group and working on specific problems with reading and writing, but at another time I would go in the classroom and work through the curriculum, and that, I think, is more fashionable.

77 Chen: *All right, I have been very happy to talk with you, thank you so much indeed for your opinion. See you on next Tuesday afternoon, did we say at two o'clock?*

78 Crista: *Yes, at two o'clock, bye-bye*

...

Video Transcripts (4)

Setting: 14 / 06 / 2001, talk with Ms Crista after class in Soho Parish School

(As arranged last Tuesday I come to film her group teaching today, and we have a talk at lunch time)

1 Crista: *Would you want me to say something?*

2 Chen: *Oh, yes, I would like you to explain the game, what's the purpose of the game and what do you think of Wington?*

3 Crista: *Well, as I said just now the game goes for the idea of opportunity for children to learn vocabulary, to reinforce vocabulary. So things they are not sure about, they get another chance to practice. Especially it gives children like Wington who haven't got this vocabulary a chance to listen to what the other children have got to say and the motivation to remember the vocabulary, which is important to them because that is the way they find their fish. And you can play this game up to year six. I think they probably get bored after that but by adding in things like adjectives you actually raise the level. There, with this game, you don't have to play with simple pictures as we have many different sets, so that children could learn shapes, words and anything at many different levels.'*

4 Chen: *Yes we talked before about 'extra help' for those children like Wington and Kapo, then what kind of extra help in your sense is most helpful?*

5 Crista: *No, none of one kind of help, but a lot of different kind. They need to stay in the classroom sometimes and just to experience what goes on in the classroom, then the words they could have from it make sense to them. Personally I think they need to come out of the classroom or they need an opportunity in class if not, out of the classroom, to play games like this as fun because then they have motivation to learn some of the basic vocabulary and then they also need teachers like me to go into the classroom with the games and actually help them with what's really going on in the classroom. Sometimes that means the vocabulary that we learnt in the small group goes into the classroom with them, that I can see it being used in the context. So they need me to support them when they are doing extra tasks in the class.*

- 6 Chen: *I think the extra class in a small group is a good idea, then you can give them extra time , extra attention.*
- 7 Crista: *Yes, you are right, these games do not exist in their classroom except sometimes there is a maths game as sometimes it makes the other children watch you, distract them, doesn't it?*
- 8 Chen: *Of course, so do you think some short period of withdrawal is needed ? I don't think that is something related to discrimination, but on the contrary, it respects children and provides an equal opportunity for different children.*
- 9 Crista: *I think so too. I know, 'withdrawal' is not fashionable these days, but I think it has its place. Every school makes their own decision. This year the school has made its decision to give me some groups which are withdrawn from their classroom for some special work. Now there are many different ways of working with EAL children. Personally I think they need different things from what the other children who can stay in the classroom need, and that sometimes should require a withdrawal group where they can play games, doing work that other children in the class have already done. So I think it has its place though not everybody agrees with me.*
- 10 Chen: *What do you think of those 'language centres' or 'unit' in history?*
- 11 Crista: *I don't think that I particularly approve of those centres, I think we all decided that is not a good idea now. It is a kind of extreme in the withdrawal. But it is fine if it is within the school, a little bit of withdrawal so those children stay most of their time in the class.*
- 12 Chen: *Yes, a little bit of withdrawal in the same school setting.*
- 13 Crista: *Then they can take what they learnt in the group back into the classroom.*
- 14 Chen: *From the school I visited I found little support given to those children. It really so surprised me to see teachers like you working here for those children, but I can't find the support in the other schools. So the situation now goes to another extreme: No withdrawal at all.*
- 15 Crista: *But also no helping in the classroom. Maybe one of the reasons is that the government don't fund the schools.*
- 16 Chen: *So it is not only school's policy.*
- 17 Crista: *It isn't. Some schools have got a lot of EAL children who can't get the support.*
- 18 Chen: *That is why we are worried. But you have done the great job, you should work full time here.*
- 19 Crista: *Thanks, I hope so.*

Part four: Interviews with Mrs Wilson

Video Transcripts (5)

Setting: Friday, 24 / 05 / 2002, meeting at Mrs Wilson's class in Anderson Girl School

(At our request, Mrs Wilson agreed to talk before our camera)

- 1 Wilson: *Our programme is an individualised learning programme, which each individual student uses, the beauty of it is that they have their own focus; they work on their own level, and above all sometimes they can fail quite, because you make mistakes in the lesson that can be very embarrassing, but for us you can have the opportunity to rehearsal with all you have learnt, especially with those certain words, using those contexts and using those sentences without anybody marking 'right' or 'wrong' except yourself. The girls are put on the programme at the foundation level, the foundation level takes them through three or four tests and right to their programme levels up to their correct levels, so the programme actually process itself assessments.*
- 2 Chen: *Wonderful! Those children are lucky to have this support. Is the name of this called 'Moving forward'?*
- 3 Wilson: *Yes.*
- 4 Chen: *Is it a kind of learning support?*
- 5 Wilson: *It is learning support system for girls whose literacy is perhaps not quite the right level because they came from other countries, or girls who perhaps have difficulties in learning English or difficulties in learning to read.*
- 6 Chen: *Those from other countries are what we call 'emergent bilingual' children; they are on the way...*
- 7 Wilson: *Exactly they are on the way, and we just give them some opportunities to explore words they have learnt during the week.*
- 8 Chen: *They need this kind of support badly*
- 9 Wilson: *I think so.*
- 10 Chen: *Thank you so much for your lesson, it has impressed me a lot. How often do you provide this lesson?*
- 11 Wilson: *Once a week*
- 12 Chen: *Once a week, but at different times?*
- 13 Wilson: *Yes, and the idea is to try to catch up with literacy as quickly as we can over year 7 and 8.*
- 14 Chen: *Up to year 8?*
- 15 Wilson: *Yes, because by the time they get to year 9 and then they do the SATs, it is fine to know the language, it is fine to have it at your finger tips when you are calm and not too much pressures on you.*
- 16 Chen: *This kind of help tends to be done in a small group?*
- 17 Wilson: *Yes, exactly.*
- 18 Chen: *Do you think it is not possible to do it in the mainstream class?*
- 19 Wilson: *No, no, so hard. But I mean they can pick up certain amount in the class but it is quite an extra pressure comes in when suddenly they have got SATs and they have got two and the half pages closed time to read and comprehend and answer questions. It is not that easy.*

20 Chen: *Thank you so much!*

21 Wilson: *Not at all, my pleasure.*

Part five: Interviews with Miss Andrew

Video Transcripts (6)

Setting: Afternoon, Friday 12 / 07 / 2002, meeting Wington's new teacher in the year 4-5 class

In order to find out any support for Wington, I interviewed Miss Andrew, the new class teacher. She was first reluctant to talk more about Wington, and then she told me her frank opinion.

Miss Andrew: I am new here. I just came here last November. My first impression was that Wington was very new to English. It really surprises me that for such a long time her English is still very poor. It is unfair for me to expect her to join in the activity because she doesn't have a clear mind on what is going on. She still stays with Ms Crista outside the classroom but not enough. I hope Wington can have more EAL support, either going to the younger class or to have somebody else come to the class and give in-class support because at the minute she does not understand most of what we do in literacy, she does not understand the text we are reading, but there is no other way I can do that because I have got 20 more students in class to take care of, and also it is unfair for me to divert my attention away from the rest of the class for this extra support. Fortunately we have Yuan in the class as Yuan can speak Wington's language. So sometimes they sit together but still it is unfair for Yuan to spend too much time with Wington as Yuan has to keep pace with her classmates otherwise by the end of the day Yuan will lag behind.

APPENDIX VI

Observations and Field Notes

Part one: Participant Observation

Video Transcripts (1)

Setting – 14 / 06 / 2001, Ms Crista and her small group in Soho Parish School

As arranged last Tuesday after meeting Ms Crista, the language support teacher, I came to film her group today. The three children in this small group today come from year 4 and 5. They all learn English as additional language. Here goes their game-learning lesson.

Ms Crista today was working with a group of three EAL children in the school library. Wington was a new arrival in this group but she seemed very familiar and comfortable with other children in the group. She was lively and active as if she were a totally different child from what we saw in her mainstream class. The lesson started with Crista's introduction: *'Now in this game, everybody is to collect the fish. You collect the green, you collect the red and you collect yellow. To find a fish, you have to say 'Is it my fish behind..?. then you choose an animal like 'Is it my fish behind the turtle?', 'Is it my fish behind the cat?', but you mustn't touch it, I have to pull out the fish and show you. If it is your fish, you can fill out the space, if it is somebody's fish. The first person to fill out her fish, she wins, the last person... of course ... Ok, who is going to start?' 'me, me'* said Ama, she looked very eager to be the first.

- 1 Arna: *Is it my red fish behind the dog?*
2 Crista: *Yes, you are right.*
4 Liliar: *Is is my yellow fish behind the elephant*
5 Crista: *Um it is not. Now Wington's turn*
6 Wington: *Is my fish beh...* (she was not sure how to pronounce 'behind', she looked up at Crista)
7 Crista: *behind...*
8 Wington: *behind...this one* (she was not sure of the name in English though she knew it far better in Chinese)
9 Crista: *what is it?* (Crista didn't want to tell her right away but encouraged her to have it try)
10 Wington: *rubbat?* (she nearly got it except for a vowel)
11 Crista: *rabbit?*
12 Wington: *yes, rabbit* (she repeated the word and try to get the correct sound)

- 13 Crista: *No, it isn't rabbit.*
- 14 Arna: *Is it my fish behind the rabbit?*
- 15 Crista: *Yes, well done, Liliar*
- 16 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish behind the zebra?*
- 17 Crista: *yes, well done*
- 18 Wington: *Is my fish behind bird? (now this time she was perfect, she got both pattern and words right, even she still got a wrong guess)*
- 19 Crista: *the bird, ok, let's see... oh no, look your green fish is behind this one (Wington sighed). All right, Arna (Crista continued)*
- 20 Arna: *Is my fish behind the turtle?*
- 21 Crista: *This one? (check) yes, great.*
- 22 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the bird?*
- 23 Crista: *Ok, you know the name of the bird, I have a lot of birds. She (Wington) doesn't know the name because it is hard for her, but I think you can tell me the name of that bird, what is he called? It begins with 'E'.*
- 24 Liliar: *Eagle*
- 25 Crista: *Yes, I know that you know it, well done!*
- 26 Wington: *Is my fish ... (Wington seemed very involved as she hadn't collected a single fish yet).*
- 27 Crista: *behind*
- 28 Wington: *behind...elephant*
- 29 Crista: *yes, elephant, good! (Wington almost cried out with joy)*
- 30 Arna: *Is it my fish **hiding** under the owl? (Arna changed the 'behind' to 'hiding')*
- 31 Crista: *Oh, you knew the name of the bird, didn't you? (check)*
No, it is blue one, isn't it? Nobody can have that out because we have only three players.
- 32 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the orange cat? (she is very careful about the colour)*
- 33 Crista: *Yes!*
- 34 Wington: *Is it my fish behind...*
- 35 Crista: *What is it?*
- 36 Wington: *hor (she knew very well the meaning of the word, but she just could not have the complete sound)*
- 37 Crista: *what is it? Horse?*
- 38 Wington: *horse (she nodded and also repeat, she always did that as she seized every second to learn)*
- 39 Crista: *No it is not, I am sorry.*
- 40 Arna: *Is it my fish hiding under the ship (sheep)*
- 41 Crista: *What is it? Oh sh-ee-p*
- 42 Arna: *Sheep*
- 43 Crista: *Oh yes, it is but say it again*

- 44 Arna: *Sheep*
- 45 Liliar: *Is it my sheep....(Liliar was confused)*
- 46 Crista: *Ha, ha (laughing) sheep?*
- 47 Liliar: *Because you keep saying 'sheep', so I...*
- 48 Crista: *You got missed up (Everybody laughed).*
- 49 Liliar: *Is it my yellow fish behind the horse?*
- 50 Crista: *Horse? let's see...yes!*
- 51 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the elephant?*
- 52 Crista: *No, elephant is gone, this one?*
- 53 Wington: *No, (pointing at another picture)*
- 54 Crista: *What is it?*
- 55 Wington: *I don't know (shaking her head)*
- 56 Arna & Liliar: *She got lion*
- 57 Wington: *Lion (she followed them right away)*
- 58 Crista: *Good, good girl (facing Wington), 'lion' you see (facing to everyone) she just mouths it out.
(checking) I am so touching she got it, she deserves it*
- 59 Arna: *Is my red fish hiding under that bird?*
- 60 Crista: *Ok what is that bird called? We have a lot of birds.*
- 61 Arna: *Pigeon*
- 62 Crista: *Well done! (checking) Oh no, you deserve to get that one but you didn't (disappointed)*
- 63 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the colourful parrot?*
- 64 Crista: *Well done, she even described it (to me particularly), you see when I play the game with older children, I will insist that they don't just tell me the name but put an adjective in like that, so she has described it.*
- 65 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the...*
- 66 Crista: *good girl, 'behind', you see she can say 'behind' beautifully now.*
- 67 Chen: *This kind of game can be played at different levels?*
- 68 Crista: *Yes, it can be played at many levels because of the constant repetition, also they are learning vocabulary.*
- 69 Wington: *um...*
- 70 Crista: *Parrot*
- 71 Wington: *parrot*
- 72 Crista: *Right (check), yes. Ok Arna, try it.*
- 73 Arna: *Is my red fish hiding under that...*
- 74 Crista: *Oh what is that one, I am not telling, this is the hardest, everybody wants it.*
- 75 Liliar: *Giraffe*
- 76 Crista: *tell Arna*

- 77 Arna: *Giraffe*
- 78 Liliar: *Is my fish behind...the pigeon?*
- 79 Crista: *Oh no (to me), yes, you saw I used a different level when I assisted them, then they gave me different names of birds but I didn't with Wington.*
- 80 Chen: *Yes, I can see that.*
- 81 Wington: *Is it my fish behind the horse?*
- 82 Crista: *horse? No, this is not the horse.*
- 83 Liliar: *Cow*
- 84 Wington: *Cow (repeated she).*
- 85 Crista: *Yes, it is the cow.*
- 86 Liliar & Arna: *No, all blue.*
- 87 Crista: *Yes, all blue.*
- 88 Arna: *Is my fish hiding behind 'monkey'?*
- 89 Crista: *Yes, monkey. Oh she knows.*
- 90 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind Giraffe?*
- 91 Crista: *Oh no.*
- 92 Wington: *Is my fish behind the monkey?*
- 93 Chen: *Good, she can say the word 'monkey'.*
- 94 Crista: *And that goes for the idea of opportunity to listen to other children saying 'monkey' and gives her the motivation to remember the name.*
- 95 Chen: *Very good game.*

(The game went on and on when it came to an end, Crista explained and made comments on the game)

- 96 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the penguin?*
- 97 Crista: *No, it is not pigeon, it is seal, but no fish from the blue.*
- 98 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the grey seal?*
- 99 Crista: *You both try seal, will you? Let's see... Oh, no, it is not. Now Wington has got two to go.*
- 100 Wington: *Is my fish behind the...?*
- 101 Crista: *Would you try this one?*
- 102 Wington: *Um..pile..*
- 103 Crista: *Penguin*
- 104 Crista: *Yes, but she didn't remember to say that well. What a pity!*
- 105 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the duck?*
- 106 Crista: *Yes!*
- 107 Liliar: *Is my yellow fish hiding behind the goal?*
- 108 Crista: *Is that a goal? No, that is a deer.*

- 109 Wington: *Is my fish behind the ...*
- 110 Crista: *S-e-a-... Shall we tell her?*
- 111 Liliar: *S-e-a-l*
- 112 Crista: *That's no good, it is too difficult for her. What do you think Arna? I think we shall tell her.*
- 113 Arna & Liliar: *Seal*
- 114: Crista: *Say it wington.*
- 115 Wington: *Is my fish behind the Seal (shy she was!)*
- 116 Crista: *Good girl. Oh she is the winner!*
- 117 Chen: *Winner?*
- 118 Crista: *Yes, we usually do with this game, although they are all winners. I let the other children play on, then I decide the second winner and the third one.*
- 119 Liliar: *Arna is the second winner.*
- 120 Crista: *Do you mind this because she's only got one left? Come on!*
- 121 Arna: *Is my fish hiding under the monkey?*
- 122 Crista: *Monkey? Ok, this monkey looks so nice.*
- 123 Wington: *It is not monkey!*
- 124 Crista: *No, it is not monkey.*
- 125 Liliar: *It is er...*
- 126 Crista: *Go on, tell us.*
- 127 Liliar: *Gorilla.*
- 128 Crista: *Yes, he is a kind of monkey, so yours is already right. (check) Sorry Liliar, do you want to find your the other two fishes?*
- 129 Liliar: (Noded) *Is my fish under the parrot?*
- 130 Crista: *Yes, parrot, let's try and see, yes! Shall I find you another one, which we haven't looked down then.*
- 131 Liliar: *Under the polar bear*
- 132 Crista: *That is very good as it is a hard one. That is!*

The game ended with the bell ringing for lunch. I could see Ms Crista was proud of her game and very pleased with children's effort.

Video Transcripts (2)

Setting - Morning, Friday, 12 / 07 / 2002, Wington's class work in her year 4-5 class

Wington and her classmates were having the science lesson. They were grouped together, cutting some paragraphs from the materials given by Miss Andrew, the class teacher. They were then sticking them onto a big sheet of paper. The aim for this teamwork was to see how much they understood the text they just learnt. I came towards Wington as I saw her with a Chinese classmate sitting by the desk in the corner. They were busy cutting and sticking,

Then they started reading aloud to each other. Wington asked Yuan to read the first sentence, when Yuan read on, Wington stopped Yuan in English 'Stop, it is mine'. Then Wington pointed at another sentence for Yuan to read. However when it came to Wington's turn, she shook her head and told me she didn't know how to read this and showed me the text. I took it over and had a look. I should say it was very difficult for Wington's level. Yuan then read the next sentence and the following one, but Wington only turned to tell me again she could not read. She pointed at the words she did not know and asked Yuan to tell her how to pronounce those words and what they meant in Cantonese.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Wington: <i>Ni di ji ding du?</i> / How are these words read? | 2 Yuan: body...ribs...skeleton |
| 3 Wington: body...ribs...skelton, <i>Cantonese ding gai?</i> | 4 Yuan: <i>santi, paigua and guga</i> / what are they in Cantonese? |
| 5 Wington: <i>Nigo M tao de ji hai mieye?</i>
/ What is the word starting with 'M' ? | 6 Yuan: Muscle, <i>Cantonese hai 'jiyou'</i> |
| 7 Wington: <i>Niduo, niduo</i> / what about here? | 8 Yuan: Stomach, lung, liver, brain ... |
| 9 Wington: Stimach...lung...liver...brain... | |

Wington kept reading after Yuan. Wington seemed very happy, every now and then she would stop Yuan for the meanings in Cantonese.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 10 Wington: <i>Come on, du nido la</i> / Come on, read here. | 11 Yuan: constraint and relax. |
| 12 Wington: <i>Mieye yici?</i> / what is the meaning? | 13 Yuan: <i>xiushu tongmai fansong</i> |
| 14 Wington: <i>Xu nido yaomo gon guo luolai zuo mie yong?</i>
/Does the text tell us what are these bones used for | 15 Yuan: <i>yiding yao la, wo taitai.</i>
/it should, let me have a look. |
| 16 Wington: <i>Hai ng hai nido ?</i> / are they here? | 17 Yuan: <i>Hai</i> / yes |
| 18 Chen: <i>Did she manage to follow you?</i> | |
| 19 Yuan: <i>Um...yes.</i> | |

After only a short pause, they started reading again but this time they were reading sentences one by one, using a kind of mirror plastic paper to enlarge the words as they were too tiny. It was a shame that I was not

able to catch what they were reading actually as the class was very noisy and the class teacher was then shouting to the whole class for everybody's attention. Without exception, Wington and Yuan had to stop reading and discussing. Obviously from what I have observed I trust that the support between peers is wonderful, but because it could only take place once in a while, we could not expect more of it as both time and resources are very limited in the mainstream class hour.

20 Chen: *What does it talk about (turning to Yuan)?*

21 Yuan: *It is talking about an adult has 206 separate bones while a baby has 300 bones.*

22 Chen: *Let us ask Wington if she understands or not.*

23 Yuan: *All right.*

24 Chen: *Wington, ni jidao gon mieye? / do you understand the text?*

25 Wington: *Wu mai hao ji. / a bit but not very clear.*

Then Yuan repeated what she had told me about the text to Wington again in Cantonese. Wington nodded as she understood. Interestingly enough Wington kept saying to herself 'Oh my God' or 'I don't know' during the whole activity.

Then came a break time. After that the whole class gathered together again. It looked like a class discussion was taking place.

26 Chen: *What are you going to do now?*

27 Yuan: *Ok, what we have to do here is to think of the reasons of why I think we should end school at 1 pm and start school at 9am.*

28 Chen: *Yes, did Wington do this?*

29 Yuan: *No, she is doing the school uniform, she is in another group.*

30 Chen: *But could she do it?*

31 Yuan: *The class was doing preparation yesterday but she didn't because she was doing something else?*

32 Chen: *What else?*

33 Yuan: *She was doing the book.*

The class discussion began but Wington was sitting by herself, reading a book in the corner. What she did had nothing to do with the rest of the class. She showed me the book and some exercise inside the book. They were all simple but Wington still had no idea what to do about the exercise, she could not understand the instruction.

34 Chen: *Ni zuo mieye ng zuo gitaren zuo de ye? / Why don't you join them?*

35 Wington: *Yimwei guodei wo ng xi zuo, suoyi lao xi bei nigo wo/* Because I am not able to do what they are doing, the teacher gave this easy one to me.

She felt ashamed when she told me this. However, every now and then she could not help peeping to know what was happening in the big group over there. I can see her curiosity took away her concentration. Obviously she was badly withdrawn in the mainstream class.

Video Transcripts (3)

Setting – Tuesday, 10 / 12 / 2002 , around Lunch time in the school library.

Christmas was approaching, the school was somewhat immersed in a happy and relaxing atmosphere. The day I walked into school though was wet and cold, I came across lots of greetings and smiles. Especially Wington and Yuan almost ran towards me when they saw me in the library. They liked my camcorder and asked if I came to film them again. I knew they were glad when each time they saw themselves on the screen as we had several opportunities before. 'Yes, no problem' said I, then we started our following conversation.

- 1 Chen: *Hi, Yuan, hi, Wington, haven't seen you for ages! How are you doing?*
2 Yuan: *Fine, thank you.*
3 Chen: *What are you doing now?*
4 Yuan: *I'm reading with Wington.*
5 Chen: *But...Is it break time for lunch?*
6 Yuan: *Um..(she nodded)*
7 Chen: *Hi, Wington*
8 Wington *Hello!*
9 Chen: *Hi, do you miss me as I haven't seen you for a long time*
10 Wington: *What?*
11 Chen: *Ni xiang ng xiang wo? Wodei hao lui mo gian mian, hai ma? / Did you miss me as we haven't seen each other for a long time?*
12 Wington: *Yes, I know* (Clearly as she understood me in Cantonese, she replied in English).
13 Chen: *Yiga zuo mieye? /What are you doing now?*
14 Wington: *Reading a book.*
15 Chen: *What are you reading today?*
16 Yuan: *I am reading a book called 'Trees Belong to Everyone'*
17 Wington: *me as well*

18 Chen: *OK, have a look.*

19 Yuan: *And the book was about an old girl, she used to play on the Grandpa's tree, and then one day her grandpa's house was for sale, and someone bought the grandpa's house, and then a woman asked if they were going to cut off the tree, the girl said 'no' because her grandpa once said to her the tree belonged to everyone.*

(Then they picked up another book, showed it to me. Now this time Wington took the lead to tell me the name of the book)

20 Wington: *It is a book called 'Counting Chicken'.*

21 Chen: *Let me have a look, show me!*

22 Yuan: *And this is the book we are going to read.*

23 Chen: *All right.*

24 Wington: *You first.*

25 Yuan: *'Meg was poor'.*

26 Wington: *'But a (family) farmer get (gave) her an egg'.*

(Yuan then could not turn the page quick enough, Wington said 'Niduo, ah' / here, Yuan then carried on)

27 Yuan: *'Soon I'll have a chicken' said Meg.*

28 Wington: *'It will gran (grow) big and (lag some) en (eggs).*

29 Yuan: *Then I'll have more chickens.*

30 Wington: *Then I'll have more chickens*

(When Yuan noticed Wington was following her all the time, she paused and asked Wington to read on.)

31 Wington: *They will grow big and...*

(but Wington could not manage to read by her own, then the follow-up pattern continued)

32 Yuan: *They will grow big and lag some eggs.*

33 Wington: *They will grow big and lay some*

34 Yuan: *I'll sell the eggs and...*

more eggs...

(Wington this time got lost where to follow, Yuan pointed the right line for her. After confirming in Cantonese, Wington went on).

35 Wington: *I'll soo (sell) the eggs and..*

36 Yuan: *buy a cow*

39 Wington: *buy a cow .*

38 Chen: *OK*

40 Wington: *It's your turn.*

41 Yuan: *Then I'll sell the cow's milk and...*

42 Wington: *Then I'll sell the cow's milk and...*

- | | |
|---|--|
| 43 Yuan: <i>buy a sheep</i> | 44 Wington: <i>buy a sheep (repeated).</i> |
| 45 Yuan: <i>Then I'll sell the sheep's wool and...</i> | 46 Wington: <i>Then I'll sell the sheep's wool.</i> |
| 47 Yuan: <i>buy some clothes and ...</i> | 48 Wington: <i>buy some clothd (clothes) and</i> |
| 49 Yuan: <i>clothes (Yuan repeated the word)</i> | 50 Wington: <i>clothes</i> |
| 51 Yuan: <i>a house, and ...</i> | 52 Wington: <i>a house, and .. (followed)</i> |
| 53 Yuan: <i>But Meg didn't look where she was going</i> | 54 Wington: <i>But Meg didn't look where she <u>is</u> (was) going</i> |

(Wington got the tense wrong by pronouncing 'was' as 'is', Yuan corrected her But Wington did not say it again).

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 55 Yuan: <i>She fell down</i> | 56 Wington: <i>She fell down</i> |
| 57 Yuan: <i>The egg broke.</i> | 58 Wington: <i>The egg broke</i> |
| 59 Yuan: <i>Meg was still poor</i> | 60 Wington: <i>Meg was still pull (poor)</i> |

No sooner did they finish reading the 'Counting Chicken' than they showed me another book called 'Beetle in the Bathroom'. They were reading aloud together like 'When I peeped around the bathroom door, I couldn't believe the things I saw ...' But, of course, Wington found it difficult to keep up, Yuan had to stop every now and then, and repeated it or corrected it when Wington got lost. In the end Yuan asked Wington 'Do you know the meaning?' 'No' said Wington. Then Yuan explained to her in Cantonese sentence by sentence, *Niguo xu hai gong yao yi guo dongmu, kyu hue hyudei cesuo genxi, kyu wun duo hao duo ye buo, kyu ng zongyi buo... / This book is about an animal, when he went to his toilet, he found a lot of things he dislike....* Wington nodded.

Video Transcripts (4)

Setting - Morning, Wednesday, 11 / 12 / 2002, at the Wington's the literacy lesson

We came as usual to join Wington's class. The teaching target today was to get children to understand and practise conjunctions like 'before', 'after', 'since', 'as', 'when', 'in case', 'although', 'whenever' etc. The task was practised at two levels: At the first level, dozens of short sentences were given in a list and the children were supposed to make complex sentences (consisting of a main clause and subordinate clause) by matching up conjunction words and short sentences from the list. At the second level children were asked to make sentences of their own by using the given conjunction words. The first level task was easy and with little help from Yuan, Wington grasped the rule and finished matching up all of the words in the list even though she might not know exactly the sentence meaning. After that Wington went on to do the second level task. After

struggling for a few minutes, she decided to organise the idea in Chinese and asked Yuan if she could work on these ideas with English equivalents. Yuan seemed very happy with this suggestion as she was struggling with what to write about. Wington then showed Yuan what she wrote in Chinese and read aloud to her because Yuan, like most of the British born Chinese, had only a very limited vocabulary, though fluent in speaking. With the help of Wington, Yuan quickly found the English equivalents for the Chinese expressions and also suggested some changes of different wordings and sentence patterns. The second level task ended with perfect sentences.

Video Transcripts (5)

Setting - Morning, Wednesday, 11/ 12 / 2002, Wington and Yuan in the library

After the lesson they had a break before lunch. As it was raining outside, the children all stayed indoors. Wington and Yuan went to the library as usual, where they could chat and do some light readings. They wanted me to follow their way and film them there. Yuan then picked up a book and showed me before the camera. *'Dinosaurs Move the Rubbish'*, read out Yuan, Wington tried to follow but she couldn't pronounce *'move the rubbish'* properly. Yuan let her say it again and went on to read the introduction as *'It is about a man...'* *'Wait, wait'*, suddenly Wington burst out as she saw Ms Crista, the former language support teacher coming towards us.

1 Crista: *Hi, Wington, hi Yuan*

2 Wington: *Hi, Crista*

3 Yuan: *Hello, Mrs Crista*

4 Crista: *Hello (she waved and came forward)*

5 Chen: *Hello, how are you?*

6 Crista: *I am fine but you know I am not doing the job anymore.*

7 Chen: *Why?*

8 Crista: *Unfortunately, we have lost the funding, less money, so now I am just a general teacher.*

9 Chen: *Are you coming everyday now? (as I couldn't understand what she meant by 'general teacher')*

10 Crista: *No, still one day or another.*

11 Chen: *You mean you are not a language support teacher but what kind of support you are doing now?*

12 Crista: *Just generally help when the teacher...*

13 Chen: *Is it learning support?*

14 Crista: *No, just support the teachers when they need to do something, for instance, when they need to go to meetings or on courses, I would cover their classes.*

- 15 Chen: *I see. It is all because of the funding, isn't it?*
- 16 Crista: *Do you want me to say more about this?*
- 17 Chen: *Yes, say more about this.*
- 18 Crista: *I used to do the language support but now the school has lost some funding. I am just a recovery teacher. That means I am going to whatever classes are in need because the teachers are going to meetings or on courses.*
- 19 Chen: *Yes, but you are very important to those children who need help in language.*
- 20 Crista: *We still have a language support teacher, but only one not two as before.*
- 21 Chen: *All right.*
- 23 Crista: *Wington, Wington has got a better English and more matured.*
- 24 Chen: *Yes*
- 25 Crista: *Yuan, I always know she is good (turning to yuan and hugging her).*
- 26 Chen: *She is lovely*
- 27 Crista *Yes, she is lovely*
- 28 Chen: *and very helpful*
- 29 Crista *Yes, she is very helpful young lady.*
- 30 Chen: *She works as a little teacher.*
- 31 Crista: *Yes, very much so.*

I also find from Crista that Wington still stays in the Year five class while the rest of her former classmates have already moved to year six. The explanation for this failure of moving up is as such: Wington is not ready to move up to the Year six class and it is good for her to stay behind for another year. On hearing this I am getting really worried and wonder if Wington is able to catch up with her fellow classmates by the end of the year. After Crista left, they tended to go on reading but the time was up. They went to lunch and we said bye-bye.

Video Transcripts (6)

Setting – Friday, 24 / 05 / 2002, Wilson and her ‘Moving forward’ group in Anderson Girl School

Kapo seemed to have a lot of things to tell me about her secondary school and her teachers. She loved Mrs Wilson’s lesson and the classmates in this EAL group. At my request, Mrs Wilson invited me to her class. I remember it was a warm day, just immediately after the morning break, Kapo showed me the way to her EAL classroom. Mrs Wilson was at her fifties; she looked lovely and very experienced. She has now just finished calling the register, and was about to write the date...

1 Wilson: *the date?*

2 Students: *24th May 2002*

3 Wilson: *Who can write the short form?*

4 Student A: *I know*

5 Wilson: *Come (the girl came to write 24 / 05 / 2002 on the right corner of the board)*

6 Wilson: *Well, thank you.*

7 Wilson: *Anybody learnt or came across any new words this week in any subjects, like English, science, maths, or any words that they hadn't come across before or they didn't behave the way you expected to them to perform? We always get words like that, don't we?*

(There was a minute of silence)

8 Wilson: *No? What about the word 'should' sound*

9 Student B: *Sh-ou-ld*

10 Wilson: *If I would write the word as it sounds, what is the initial?*

11 Student E: *sh*

12 Wilson: *What is the vowel sound?*

13 Kapo: *ou*

14 Wilson: *If I got one 'o', what sound we would get?*

15 Kapo: *'o'*

16 Wilson: *If I add a friend 'u', it sounds?*

17 Student C: *'u:'*

18 Wilson: *Yes, so we would think that word 'school' should look like 'schoul', but of course, English speaking English is playing the trick on the game and it doesn't look like that at all.*

(Students were all taking a note, they were very attentive)

19 Wilson: *You know the word 'rhyming', what do I mean by rhyming? Everybody has to tell and think.*

20 Student A: *They are sounding the same.*

21 Wilson: *Right, but is it all the sounds sounding the same or part of the sound?*

22 Student C: *part of the sound*

23 Wilson: *Right, we mean words whose middles or the endings sounds the same. So give me the word of his.*

24 Student C: *Would*

25 Wilson: *Yes, would. Please give me the sentence with the word 'would' in it.*

26 Kapo: *I would tell my sister to do the homework*

27 Student E: *I would buy a toy*

28 Wilson: *Yes, that is usually how word is used. I would like to do something, is something I would like*

to ask.

29 Student F: *Would you...*

30 Wilson: *Would you please, give me the sentence like 'would you please...'?*

31 Student G: *Would you please give me the pen?*

32 Wilson: *Right, ok. I've got 'should' and I've got 'would', I would like to do something, I should do something. If I say to you I...*

33 Student A: *I could*

34 Wilson: *How to spell?*

35 Student A: *c-o-u-l-d*

36 Wilson: *And there again you've got it rhyming, you've got the same bits in them, which are sounding the same. (She then shows the class several words to read aloud, and asks what are the vowels in each word.)*

37 Wilson: *Yes, they all have vowels. Give me the vowels, Kapo?*

38 Kapo: *a e i o u*

39 Wilson: *and how did they sound, Kapo*

40 Kapo: *a-e-i-o-u*

41 Wilson: *Can we say together, please? (The class read after her)*

42 Wilson: *Ok, why do we need vowels? Can we make word without them?*

43 Students: *No.*

44 Wilson: *Do you remember how we make sandwiches. This is a piece of bread and filling. And sandwiches we make with all the pieces of bread, with all the consonants and with all the other letters called?*

45 Student C: *Vowels*

46 Wilson: *Yes, if you take out the vowels, you've got nothing, you've got language that just isn't language. For instance, look at my name, my name is Wilson (she wrote down on the board) How about the name without vowels. How it look like when it is written without vowels. (She asked student E to have it try on the board)*

47 Student E: *It could not be pronounced*

48 Wilson: *You will be coming to Mrs Wilson (laughing). You see, the word 'Wlsln' doesn't make sense at all. So we need those. Remember whatever we do with them we need them desperately. Right, let's go on, ok?*

(Again, Mrs Wilson showed more words to the class, but she stopped at the word 'restaurant' and asked who knew the spelling)

49 Student A C E: *r-e-s-t-u-r-e-n-t*

50 Wilson: (Shaking head) *Can any of you write it for me on the board?* (Many hands put up, Student B

was asked to the board)

51 Student B: *restraurant*

52 Wilson: *Oh, you are so close. Kapo, come and fix for her* (Kapo raised her hand and came to spell it on the board)

53 Kapo: *restaurant*

54 Wilson: *Well done! This is a funny little word, of course this is not an English word at all, and it is a French word. So many words you can build, there are words you can't and those of the words you have to learn until you recognise and reproduce and to make it up ourselves, like the word 'restaurant'. You probably have to learn to spell it and you have seen it over and over again as it plants into your head.*

(Then the students were given a piece of worksheet to fill out some missing letters. In about 10 minutes, Mrs Wilson called to stop as she was to say something else).

56 Wilson: *Would you please give the opposite of the word 'small'?*

57 Student A: *large*

58 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of word 'quiet'*

59 Student C: *loud*

60 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'soft'*

61 Kapo: *hard*

62 Wilson: *Give me the opposite of 'good', for instance, you are such a good girl.*

63 Student E: *bad.*

64 Wilson: *Spell it for me*

65 Student E: *b-a-d*

66 Wilson: *Here there is a fair-play trick again (She turned to board and wrote 'bed' and 'bad'), and I know there is a difficulty in pronunciation, a lot of people come to live here, there is a tendency to say 'bed'. The word 'bed' has 'e' but 'bad' has a straight forward 'ar', it is a hard 'ar', like 'apple', 'cat', 'dad', 'had'. Give me another one?*

67 Student D: *'sad'*

68 Wilson: *Give me another one?*

69 Student F: *'that'*

70 Wilson: *Good, give me another one* (pointing to Kapo)

71 Kapo: (not very sure) *'egg'*

72 Wilson: *Yes! right, lovely*

...

The lesson carried on with more words and rules introduced, and the teacher singled out some words which do not behave the way expected. All the children in the class looked very engaged as the teacher drew their

attention closely and give everybody the opportunity answer to questions or come towards the board to perform before others.

73 Wilson: *Look, what is this word (she showed the word in a card)*

74 Student D, C and A: *Spring*

75 Wilson: *What is the word 'season', how to spell it, Kapo?*

76 Kapo: *s-e-a-s-o-n*

77 Wilson: *What are more season words?*

78 Class: *Summer, Autumn, Winter*

79 Wilson: *What is funny thing with autumn? A-u-t-u-m, is it how we spell it?*

80 Student A: *No. it is a-u-t-u-m-n*

81 Wilson: *Mind the letter'n' in the end. Yes, the word 'spring' also has another meaning, what is that?*
(silence)

82 Students: *jump (murmuring)*

83 Wilson: *If you spring into action, that means you leap forward or it means something on the bed or sofa that make it up and down. But what is the difference of that, how would I know the meaning if I was writing 'Spring' and 'spring', what is the difference?*

(Mrs Wilson then wrote two sentences on the board for children to tell the difference, 'When Spring arrives, the flowers bloom.' And 'I will spring into the bed')

84 Student C: *In the first sentence, the word means 'season', and the second means 'jump'.*

85 Wilson: *Yes, from the sense of the sentence, we know the difference, how about the word itself? How would I write the word differently, there is slightly different, how it that?*
(she pointed the letter and asked Kapo)

86 Kapo: *The first one is a capital letter.*

87 Wilson: *Yes, good girl! The first one has got a capital letter because it is the name of the season. I wouldn't write your name without a capital letter.*

Then again the children were given a piece of worksheet to do the relevant exercises thus to reinforce their understandings In between Mrs Wilson also explained some words they didn't understand, for instance, the word 'hunch', meaning 'to have a feeling'. She then gave several examples such as 'I have got a hunch that by the sea this afternoon we would have a lot more rain.' 'I have a hunch that if I went out of this room, you would enjoy your nice time.' Then she emphasised the importance of learning those tiny words, 'It is funny, girls, because as you come to year nine, which is the first time when you will have national tests, you will have quite a large comprehension passage to read and to answer questions on, and sometimes it has little tiny

words like ‘hunch’ that worry you because you are not sure of the meaning and it doesn’t seem to fit in, you can’t see it fitting in the right sense, then you may miss up the chunk of the paragraph, you lost the meaning because it is the word that doesn’t come into your experience.’ ...Soon the bell rang, the class was over.

Part two: Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes (1) - Shan and her class lesson

Setting - Thursday, 22 /03 /2001, the History lesson in the year 5 Classroom

Today Shan was having a history lesson with her fellow classmates. Mrs White, the class teacher, put on the board ‘Henry VIII and A New Church’, then she began to talk following her bullet points:

- *Henry VIII's attack on Martin Luther (picture 1) won him the papal title of Defender of the Faith;*
- *Henry's marriage and divorce to Catherine;*
- *1535 - A Treasons Act; Closing down all monasteries;*
- *Henry VIII's contradictory personality*

Shan, as usual, was sitting in the last row alone and withdrawn, and although she attentively tried very hard to figure out what Mrs White was talking about, she seemed puzzled. She wrote down every word and any recognisable mark in her notebook, but she was always quiet and timid when Mrs. White raised questions. At present, she did not have the English skills to understand or engage in question answering activities. ‘Henry first won the title of Defender of the Faith because of his attack on Martin Luther, why then did he lead the Church in England away from allegiance to the Pope?’ asked Mrs White. Many children were striving to have the floor before others, but Shan kept sitting silently, observing and listening, or she lowered her head down, looking up new words in the English-Chinese dictionary to find out their meaning in Chinese. She was much left out and unable to participate in the lesson. Then came the time for class work. Children were asked to test themselves by writing answers to a few questions e.g. what were the effects of Henry’s religious policies on (a) the church; (b) his wealth; (c) rich English families? Children were also asked to understand ‘the break with Rome’ had many causes by making a list of the long - term causes of hostility towards the Church, and also to explain if there would have been a break with Rome if Henry VIII had not wanted a divorce. Obviously, Shan was not able to cope with the work. Mrs White finally came towards Shan and gave out a list of vocabulary for her to learn and copy.

Fieldnotes (2) - Kapo and her Mainstream Class Lesson

Setting – Friday, 27/ 04/ 2001, the Literacy Hour in the year Six Classroom

Kapo now was at her Literacy Hour. The class was reading the book titled ‘The illustrated Mum’ by Jacqueline. The aims drawn by Miss Frances, the class teacher from the Literacy Framework were:

Reading comprehension

- *to identify the point of view from which a story is told and how this affects a reader's response*
- *to change the point of view, e.g. to tell an incident or describe a situation from a different perspective*

Writing

- *to write from another character's point of view*

The class was to discuss the above points over the week in the whole class section of the Literacy Hour and the writing was to take place as a part of teamwork. Kapo was literate in her Chinese, highly motivated and anxious to do the same work as her classmates but her limited English betrayed her, she just could not engage in the class activity. Today it was Kapo’s privilege to have Ms Crista sitting beside her as she was the only one who need a strong EAL support in the class. Together, and with the use of a dual language dictionary, Ms Crista and Kapo read the book and tried to talk about book. For Ms Crista, the EAL support today was designed to teach Kapo the language form that she needed for the classwork, and complex sentences that included subordinate clauses to express a point of view. But all this was so difficult for Kapo, so that the support had to be reduced to the level of vocabulary learning. Both teacher and the child felt that an understanding of each other was the key to the content of support, but it turned out to be so hard for Kapo to understand Ms Crista’s English and there was no way that Ms Crista could understand Kapo’s Chinese. Ms Crista and Kapo were completely at a loss as to what to do in the class. Apparently, Kapo was physically in the class but she was withdrawn, unable to participate in the lesson even with the EAL teacher sitting beside her.

Fieldnotes (3) - Wington and her class lesson

Setting - Friday 12 / 07 / 2001, at the PHSE lesson in the year 4-5 classroom

Miss Andrew, the new class teacher, called everybody's attention as the class presentation was to begin soon. The class presentation was centred around two topics: 1) *Why I think the school should start at nine in the morning and end at one in the afternoon*; 2) *Why I think children should wear the school uniform*. The topics were given out yesterday for children to prepare. Each of them was supposed to choose one and write a piece of work to give a reason for a point of view. Now, according to the different topics they chose, the class was divided into two teams, with one team giving a presentation and the other one acting as audience and vice versa. Then I saw Wington sitting on her own in the corner, reading a book. I came towards her and asked why she didn't join the class. She lowered her head murmuring in Chinese: 'Because I am not able to do what they are doing, Ms Crista gave me this easy one to learn.' Then she showed me the book given by Miss Andrew and exercises inside the book that she was supposed to do. The exercises were all very simple but Wington still had no idea what to do about the exercises because she could not understand the instruction. She felt ashamed when she told me this. However, she was easily distracted and off task for much of the time. Every now and then she could not help peeping to know what was going on among her classmates over there. I trusted it was her curiosity that took away her concentration. Obviously she was miserable, withdrawn and considerably disadvantaged in her Year 4 class. What she was doing over the corner had nothing to do with the whole class. 'What a poor child!' I thought to myself.

Fieldnotes (4)

Sunday, 06/05 /2001, Lunchtime in the London Mandarin School

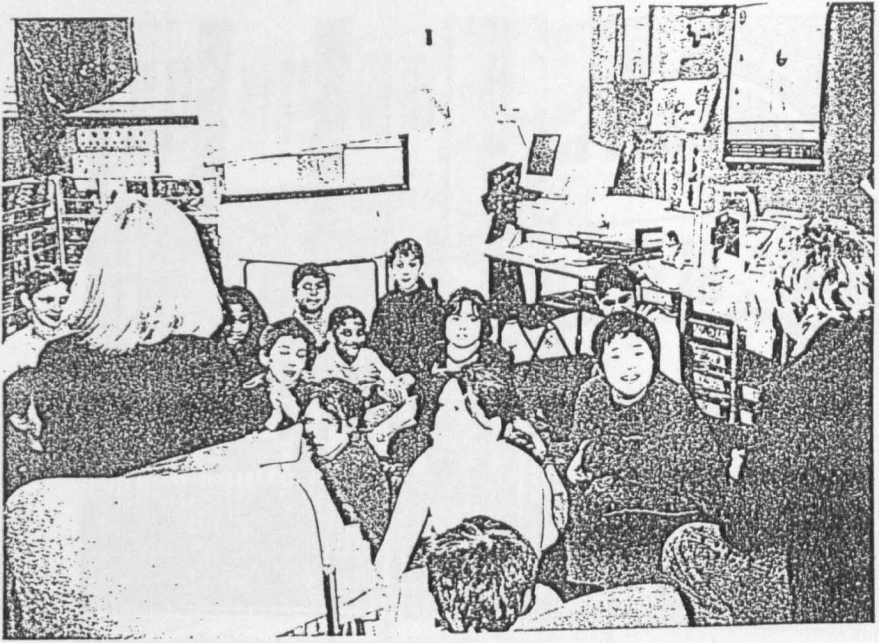
When we were having lunch together, Shan also told me that her parents were thinking of sending Shan back to China in order to continue her primary schooling there. They think Shan's English is not good enough for her to get in Secondary school. While in China, Shan is in year six in September. She can have one more year to go before starting the Secondary. But Shan this time seems reluctant to leave England, to leave her parents and stay with her grandparents in China. She asked me to persuade her parents about this matter. It is a real hard nut for me to crack, as I share the same view with her parents personally but I have been very quiet because I would like Shan to stay for my research purpose.

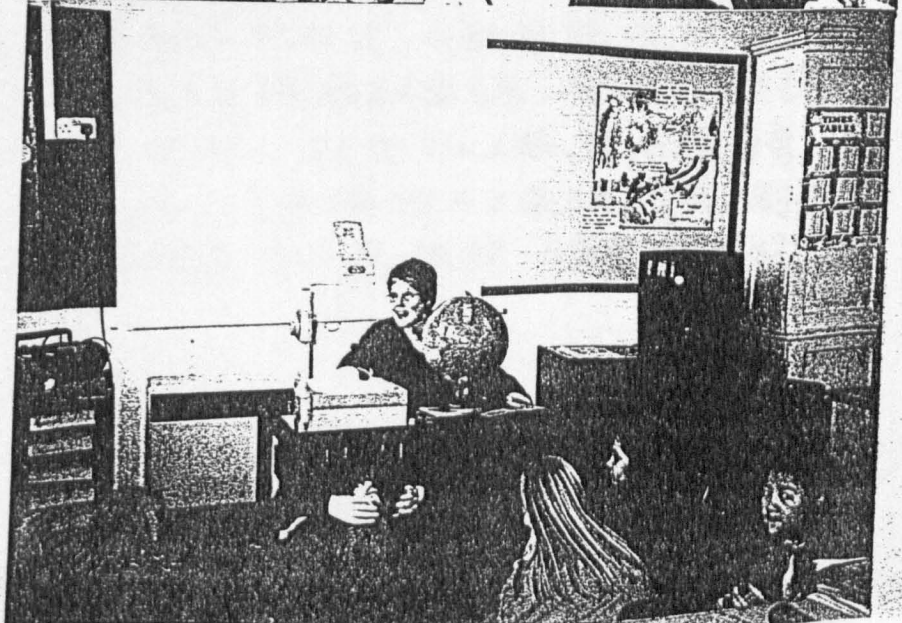
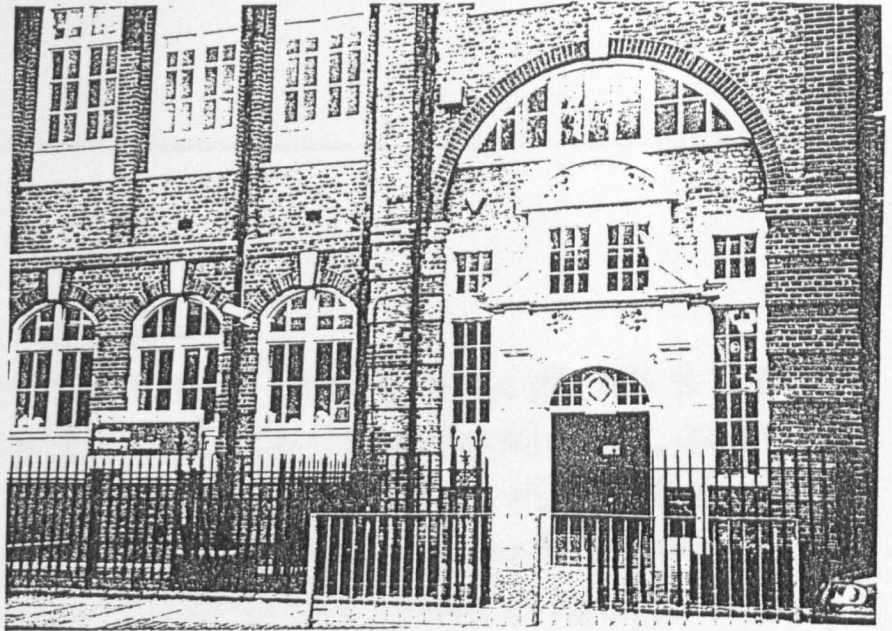
Fieldnotes (5)

Monday, 21/05 /2001, at St. James Park.

During the half term holiday, my son and I invited both Kapo and Wington out for sightseeing. On the way, Kapo told me she would love to return to Hong Kong, but her parents insisted that she finish education here in Britain. But she could not see the point and believed she could still learn English in Hong Kong as Hong

Kong is an international harbour, where she thought she could learn English even better as teachers would talk in both English and Cantonese. But now she said: 'My Chinese is deteriorating day by day and my English is still very poor.' I could see she was really worried. Besides, she also told me she and her younger sister felt very lonely at home because her parents worked days and nights, she and her sister could hardly have time to talk with their parents. The only day for the whole family to get together was on Wednesday when their father and mother both had a day off. She said 'Although we are crowded in a small room, we are a world apart'.





2001年4月3日 星期二

我想有一個英文名字，但我不知道給自己取什麼名字好。我喜歡蔭 FRANCIS 老師的名字。她的名字跟她的人，一樣漂亮。可是我不能叫這個名字，因為我是中國人，有著東方人的月姦。如果名叫 SOPHIA，怎麼樣？我爸媽一定會覺得怪怪的。那麼叫 KEPPEL 呢？也許這個名字與我的中文名字‘家寶’諧音，但 KEPPEL 恐怕不是女孩兒的名。總之，我希望能想出個好的英文名字來，因為我不想別人老把我當外國人，也不想讓同學拿名字開玩笑。

2001年4月27日 星期五

學校里的一切都是英文。當然，我並不是抱怨什麼，因為這是英語國家，理所應當。可是我常常覺得自己在班上活象個傻瓜。班老師，FRANCIS 對我一直很好，可是她不了解我。英國老師可能聽說過香港，但听不懂香港話。我比較喜歡教數學，只是因為我不一定要懂英文就能看懂數字和公式，有時我還能猜。老實說，我根本听不懂英語課和科學課。有時上語言課時，英語輔導老師。CRISTA 到我班上來，坐在我旁邊，可是她也幫不上什麼，至少她比不上英漢詞典。刚开始我總是要畫很多圖來表白自己，來提問題，但發現

太花時間了，我因此變得很煩。而後來我學會了查詞典，用它和老師同學交流。我發現這樣學習更好。儘管如此，我還是擔心生學的事。CAROL 老師負責這件事。她昨天告訴我，說她仍然在找，或是在本地區或是在隔壁區找。只怕沒有好學校要我。我媽建議說我在六年級多呆一年，可我不願意，我想，學校也不可能同意。

2001年5月11日 星期一

我竟覺得自己還不是班的一份子。老師對我很好，因為我是外國人，也是客人，最近全班同學都在忙著準備考該識試 (SAT) 而我參加，我是班上唯一不用考試的學生，因為老師說，有文件規定，像我這樣來英國不到兩年學生，不要參加這個考試。我為此高興，覺得幸運，但同時又不知道去哪求助，以便盡早趕上班上同學，成為他們中的一個。相比較，香港的老師對教學很負責任，也關心學生的進步，而英國老師則比較民主，開放，鼓勵我們自由思考。香港的學生必須勤，刻苦，而英國的學生則享受自由放鬆的氣氛，我覺得各有各的好處，應該互相學習。

2001年7月8日 星期天

今天上中文學校，因路上堵車，我遲到了許多。真糟糕，因為我不想在上中文課之前，錯過英文課。目前，我更重視學英文，我要儘快趕上班上的同學。這個英文班本來是又教成人學英文的，後來經老師特許，我和妹妹才得以旁聽。老實說，雖然在這個班裡沒什麼意思，不過至少能學一點英文基本知識。馮老師會說英文也會說中文，這對我學習幫助很大。我妹妹卻不同，她年紀小，覺得受不了那種‘悶’，但我覺得還行，因為我知道在目前情況下，沒有別的辦法，我聽說，我爸爸朋友的孩子請家教，每小時20鎊，可是我父母花不起這份錢。不管怎麼說，能在這個班上學習，我已經很滿足了。

2001年11月4日 星期天

我很高興我終於轉道 Elizabeth Grange Anderson 女子學校上學了。老師說，這是唯一一所不要求入學考試的中學。據說，這所學校較注重英語教學和小數民族文化。我們班有28個同學，其中三分之一是在三、四年前，從別的国家移民來的。只有 Sorina 兩年前剛從 Kosovo 來。Lyna 從 Bangladesh 來。秀梅和我是我們年級，唯一兩個香港來的女孩，所不同的是，秀梅三歲時就來了，而且爸爸是英國人。她說着一口漂亮的英文和香港話。她善良，熱心，學習優秀，我們成了好朋友。最重要的是，她能用香港話，給我解釋我所不懂的東西，用別的同学無法了解的方式，給我學習上許多幫助。當然，別的其他同學，如 Sorina, Lyna 也很友好，她們一樣對我有幫助，因為我們都是 EAL 學生。我喜歡這所學校，更喜歡這所學校，更喜歡她們，並沒有她們，我簡直沒法在英文學校生存。

2001年3月7日星期三

老师叫我以后每星期三、四、五都到二年级班上英语课。今天是我的第一堂课。只见小朋友们个个看着我，目瞪口呆。他们一边纳闷：这个姐姐为什么来我们班？她这么高，这么大，该不会是我们班新来的同学吧？不知怎么搞的，还设等凯瑟琳老师（Ms Caroline）介绍，我的脸一下就红了。课开始，我只好坐在他们旁边坐下，尴尬极了！凯瑟琳老师讲课很风趣，小朋友非常开心，也很认真。可我却觉得没意思，也听不懂，唯一可做的就是抄黑板上面的

英文单词：fable, myth, moral, traditional, introduction, character, animal, powerful... 这些都是生词。凯瑟琳老师的课讲完，帕克老师（Mrs Parker）接着上。帕克老师是一二年级的学习辅导老师，她给小朋友们讲语法，比如：名词复数的词尾加 's' 或 'es' 等。这些规则，我已经会了，因为我在家已学过。老实说，我对这些重复练习已经厌烦了。尽管如此，我还是喜欢两位老师，她们总是鼓励我，让我放下思想包袱。

2001年3月19日星期一

我被叫到五年级上数学课，这挺好。首先，数学公式容易懂，靠算，不用太多的英文。其次，在五年级班，我有两个中国好朋友。凡是遇到看不懂的文字题，我可以向他们请教。当然，也有他们帮不到的时候，比如：全班同学在练习听力题时，我就束手无策了。题目倒不难，都是心算题。如果是写下来的算式，我可以做得很好，但是念出来的，我就不明白了。显然，要不是英文差，我的数学成绩一定会更好。

2001年3月22日星期四

今天下午是历史课，白老师（Mrs White）讲英国历史人物亨利八世。全班同学都象平常一样，围坐在地毯上。老师说得很生动活泼，面部表情丰富。只见她时而写板书，时而提问。班上同学个个积极举手发言，就是我例外。当白老师讲到精彩处，大家都开怀大笑，我也跟着笑，因为我也不想让他们看出来我所不懂。我知道这样做是自我保护，其实我心里很难过。我不知道什么时候才能成为他们中的一员。但在每次课后，我都可以向白老师要些材料，让我爸晚上在家帮我补习。

2001年4月14日星期六

我非常想念中国学校和老师，尽管空里的老师同学都对我不错。印象中，老师总是客客气气，同学们经常分组做课堂作业。学不学是学生的事，老师不负这平责任。你想学，你用心，老师就在一旁鼓励，但也不象中国老师那样上心。你不想学，老师也无所谓。对于我这样一个不会说英语而新生来说，老师并没有把我当回事，更不用说急我所急。老师当然希望我快快进步，可是并没有什么好办法，但她相信一切都是时间问题，我自己很快就可以学会的。校长也是这么同妈妈说的。我不知道是不是这样，但我觉得庆幸，我父母多少还有点英语基础，否则真不知道怎么办才好。

2001年6月22日星期五

明天又是星期六，但对我而言，谈不上什么周末。不是爸爸就是妈妈总要给我辅导英文。他们用的是'新概念英语'课本，他们在大学上学时读过。课本编的不错，有中英文对照。每一课后面都列有'生词与词组'，'课文注释'和'笔头练习'。我妈妈

是记下面一課的生词和词组，然后检查拼写和含义，而我爸爸则要我背诵课文并做英汉/汉英翻译练习。尽管很难，但我觉得值得。爸爸、妈妈虽然口音不准，但他们可以教我语法和用法。语音方面，我一般是向同学们请教。我发现这样学，进步很大。