# UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

# IT'S NOT JUST BLACK AND WHITE:

## AN EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, ATTITUDES AND INFLUENCES.

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## Chapter 7: Analysis of Children's Perceptions in England.

**'My Dad's errm a racist because he don't like no brown skinned people but he does like half castes' Max (white, B school predominantly white).**

The sections of this chapter are described below:

1.  Data Analysis: commentary on Bean Sheet findings.

2.  Children's knowledge and understanding- commentary on interview findings

3.  Children's attitudes: commentary on interview findings

4.  Behaviour towards those of a different culture

5.  Possible influences on the children's attitudes: school, friends, parents, media

6.  Matrix showing synergy between research aims and questions, methodology and findings

Data analysis of interviews, conducted with the children in England, form the basis of this discussion. I begin by explaining how I coded and analysed the 26 transcribed group interviews with 73 children using NUDIST 5 (N5) a computer data analysis package (Richards, L. 2000; Richards, T. 2000). I refer to the methodological use of the Bean Sheet data which highlights children's perceptions of their knowledge (the raw data with comments can be found in the appendix). I quote extensively from the taped interviews because, as I explained earlier in the methodology and literature review chapters, I worked collaboratively *with* the children and I am keen for their voices to be heard (Mayall 2000, Mandell 1991, Erriker 2001).

## 1 Data Analysis

In this chapter, I present 'thick' descriptions (Ryle 1949; Geertz 1973) of children's perceptions (knowledge) of different cultures which were identified on the Bean Sheet interview schedule (Chinese, Asian, African/ Caribbean, White, Other). I also discuss their attitudes towards different cultures. This relates to my research question and aim 1, as set out in the matrix, table 7.2, namely, an appraisal of children's multicultural knowledge. In the following sections I try to capture the richness of the children's individual comments, therefore I quote at length from the interviews. I consider how the children's knowledge can be categorised and how my categories differ from Kincheloe and Steinberg's model 'types of multiculturalists' (1997) and Figueroa's

'approaches to multiculturalism' (1995), as discussed earlier in the literature review chapter.

## 1.1 Coding the Interview Data using N5

Before presenting the results I discuss my use of a qualitative software package N5 NUDIST and the process of coding which I developed in the course of my analysis.

As stated in chapter 5, I spent six weeks in each school getting to know the children and the teachers during the entire school day (lessons, assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes). During the taped interviews, the second phase of the fieldwork, children devised and then wrote comments on the "Bean Sheet" (table 7.1). A few days later they were interviewed in small groups (pairs or threes) where they referred to their sheets and also looked at pictures of people from a variety of cultures (appendix). I was able to gather rich data. From this methodological approach the children provided me with a wealth of material reflecting their different opinions, experiences and knowledge of their own and others' cultures.

In reviewing the possibilities for data analysis of research I selected a qualitative data analysis package, N5, to analyse the children's tape recorded interviews. There are obvious advantages of using a computer analysis package - speedy retrieval of relevant data, easy organisation of data, and more importantly N5 helped ensure rigour in the data analysis. However, whether using a computer analysis package or coding manually, there is a splitting up of the whole dialogue because of the very process of presentation of particular ideas which emerge from the data. My interviews have been split and coded and re coded into segments and in this process there is a danger that the context can get lost. I found a similar problem in an earlier research project (Elton-Chalcraft 2002). Thus when presenting quotations here, I often provide lengthy quotations in order to preserve some aspect of contextual meaning, and also to capture the richness of the children's voices.

As I explained earlier in the methodology chapter, the interviews were child-led rather than researcher-led, and so after transcription and before importing into N5 I had to format each interview by giving each section of the interview a title according to the content. These titles related to the prompt Bean Sheet questions, for example "*KBC" denoted comments children made in answer to the question

How much do you think you know about British Chinese people who live in this country- (food, clothes, what they do, look like believe etc)?

I had to format each interview at the transcription stage, because during the interview the children took ownership of the interview and questions were not always addressed in the same order. Similarly, sometimes the children were prompted to digress from a particular question e.g. "*KBA" (how much do you think you know about British Asians who live in this country?) to tell me a story which, I felt, was more about their attitude and behaviour and so I formatted this as another code "*ABehave" thus relating to the question,

How do you and others behave towards those of a different culture to you? Can you describe any incidents about this?

Having formatted the interviews I imported them into N5 and was then able to run a command file in N5 which collected together answers from all the interviews for each question. For example, all answers for

How much do you think you know about British African /Caribbean people who live in this country?

were collected together in a node "*KBAF". Therefore I created nodes for each of the 10 questions and all the answers from each of the 73 children were coded in that node. Through the *browse* facility in N5 I examined the data collected at each node and I was able to see similarities, connections and create other nodes to help organise my thinking about the data. As Richards, (2000:34) co-creator of the QSR NUDIST packages, states:

nodes are the containers for ideas....They represent categories for thinking, which may be concepts, topics, tentative interpretations...Nodes are also containers for coding... Nodes are also the way you ask questions, about the intertwining of themes, or the occurrence of patterns. (2000:34)

I was able to code further using text searches and relate these to existing nodes. For example within "*I"

How did you come to know about other cultures - from school, home, friends or television?

Also I could text search for "friend" and then see if children in the high proportion minority ethnic schools were more or less likely to refer to their friends as a possible

influence on their knowledge and attitudes than children in the predominantly white schools.

As my thinking and analysis of my data progressed I coded the data in other nodes which further refined the first level of coding. For example, I looked at all the answers about knowledge and understanding (under the nodes "KBA", "KBC", "KBAF" etc) and saw patterns emerging which I grouped together at second level nodes ("Own beliefs", "Misconceptions", "alien culture" etc). Similarly in section three of this chapter, "Children's attitudes about other cultures," I have presented data coded at nodes "Abehave?" (how do you and others behave towards those of a different culture), "Athink?" (what do you think about those of a different culture?") and so on. Here too I have second level coding; for example in the section "Athink?" I have further coded data where I saw patterns emerging e.g. "Same but not identical", "white privilege" and so on. I ran a command in N5 to collect together all sections of interviews where children had talked about "same" in the node "AThink?". This then allowed me to examine their attitudes towards the similarities and differences between human beings. I had to think carefully about what questions to ask N5 to process but once I had determined how to collect particular information, I found the speed of retrieval of this process helped ensure systematic data analysis. This also ensured validity and reliability of the data, because despite being time consuming at the outset N5 helped me to quickly and efficiently explore patterns and themes which I would have found virtually impossible to do manually.

Having provided a brief outline of how I used N5 to code some of the data I now comment on the Bean Sheet tables i- iv (see appendix) which show the children's self perception of their knowledge. I considered using another computer package, the statistical data analysis package NVivo (2001), to look at this material however I decided not to because, as I explain below, the data cannot be used quantitatively.

## 1.2 Bean Sheet – Children's Self Perceptions of their Knowledge.

Each child who participated in the taped interview, was asked to complete a prompt Bean Sheet, table 7.1 below, where they wrote in narrative form about their knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures, and they quantified their knowledge in numerical form; they put between 0 and 3 beans in a pot to show

how much they thought they knew about a particular culture.[1] In this section I discuss the statistical data from this sheet (the number of beans put in the pot), while in subsequent sections of this chapter I discuss the qualitative data; what the children wrote on the sheet and what they said in the interviews.

Table 7.1 Semi Structured Interview: 'Bean' Sheet (Last draft Nov 2001)

| Name: | | |
|---|---|---|
| School: | | Class: |
| Date and time of interview: | | |
| **3 beans = a lot** | **2 beans = a reasonable amount** | **1 bean = a little**<br>**0 beans = nothing** |
| **Question** | **Beans** | **Explanation for number of beans given** |
| How much do you think you know about British Chinese people who live in this country? | | What do you know? (Food, Clothes, what they do, look like, believe etc.) |
| How much do you think you know about British Asians who live in this country? | | What do you know? (Food, Clothes, what they do, look like, believe etc.) |
| How much do you think you know about British white people who live in this country? | | What do you know? (Food, Clothes, what they do, look like, believe etc.) |
| How much do you think you know about British African/Caribbean people who live in this country? | | What do you know? (Food, Clothes, what they do, look like, believe etc.) |
| How much do you think you know about any other cultures (not already mentioned) who live in this country? | | What do you know? (Food, Clothes, what they do, look like, believe etc.) . |
| Would you describe the people from all | NA | |

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[1] This method is described at length earlier in the methodology chapter 5.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| these different cultures as British? | | |
| Do you think of 'cultures' as being separate? Does everyone have a culture? | NA | |
| What do you THINK about people who are of a different culture to you? | NA | |
| How do you, and others, BEHAVE towards people who are of a different culture to you? Can you describe any incidents about this? | NA | |
| How did you come to know about other cultures - from school, home, friends, television? | NA | |
| | | S.Elton-Chalcraft   University of Derby        Nov  2001 |

The statistical data from this sheet (see appendix tables 1-4), is interesting not in terms of a comparison between schools but rather as it indicates the self perception of the child. Thus interpretation of the Bean Sheet charts cannot be made in terms of direct comparison, for example one cannot deduce that in white schools the boy's knowledge of British Asian is comparable with knowledge of British white culture. Rather the point of interest is in the correlation between the child's oral and written comments, and the number of beans they placed in the pot. For example an intelligent Asian girl (Harvir) in R school, a high proportion minority ethnic school, only put 2 beans in the pot for British Asian, thus as a more able girl she was aware of what she did not know. Whereas a less able boy, Saz, in X school a predominantly white school, felt he knew as much about British Asian as British white, which I judged to be clearly not the case by his written and oral contribution. The value then of the Bean Sheet statistical data, was that it gave me an indication of individual children's self perception of their knowledge and understanding (see appendix tables 1-4 with commentary).

## 1.3 Patterns Shown in Analysis of the Tables

In this section I explore patterns which emerged from the Bean Sheet data (see tables 1-4 in the appendix).

As I highlighted in my comments about R school's Bean Sheet table, (see appendix), it was the boys who as a general rule had more self confidence about their knowledge; whereas the girls had a tendency to underestimate their knowledge. In the occurrences section of each table a trend can be seen as the male's self assessment of their knowledge, on the whole, is higher in the 2 and 3 bean categories for example in B school, predominantly white, the numbers increase; 0 beans put in by 4 boys, 1 bean by 12 boys, 2 beans by 13 boys and 3 beans by 16 boys. This compares with the girls; 0 beans put in by 5 girls, 1 bean by 21 girls, 2 beans by 8 girls, and 3 beans by 11 girls. It might be argued that the boys self perception of their knowledge is higher than the girls. From the evidence of the interviews, however, I would suggest that the boy's actual knowledge is no greater than the girls.

An interesting result was 21 occurrences of females placing 1 bean in the pot in B school compared with 1 occurrence in X school. I noticed that many girls at B school were not as confident as the girls in X school who were much older and often in higher ability sets.[2]

In the two predominantly white schools in the study, there were more occurrences of placing 2 and 3 beans in the pot for British white for both male and female together. For example in X school, predominantly white, no children put 0 beans or 1 bean in the pot, 5 children put 2 beans in and 11 children put 3 beans in for British white. This contrasts with D school, high proportion minority ethnic, where 1 child put 0 beans in the pot, 4 children put 1 bean in, 10 children put 2 beans in and 5 children put 3 beans in. It could be argued that the children in white schools felt they knew more about British white than they did about other cultures. However many children wrote stereotypical comments about British white on the Bean Sheet such as "eat roast beef and go to church on Sunday".

Likewise most children in the two high proportion minority ethnic schools placed more beans for Asian culture than the children in the predominantly white school. For

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[2] Research at B school took place in the Autumn term when the children had only been in year 5 for a few weeks whereas the research at X school took place at the end of the summer term when the children were almost a year older.

example, taking D and X schools again as a comparison, in D school only one child put 0 beans in the pot for British Asian, 2 children put 1 bean in, 4 children put 2 beans in and 14 put 3 beans in. Whereas in X school, predominantly white, 3 children put 0 beans in, 2 children put 1 bean in, 5 children put 2 beans in and 5 children put 3 beans in. This would suggest that the children in the high proportion minority ethnic schools thought they knew more about British Asians than the children in the white schools. This may probably be because many children in the minority ethnic schools were mainly of Asian heritage and knew a lot about their culture and communicated this to their non Asian peers, whereas the children in the predominantly white schools had few, if any, British Asian friends or teachers, and thus had no first hand experience of British Asian culture to learn from; I expand on this later in chapter 8.

Another interesting pattern concerned the children's self perceptions of their knowledge about British Chinese. In X and B school, which were predominantly white, together with D school, high proportion minority ethnic, no children put 0 beans in the pot because they all felt they knew about Chinese people from Chinese Take Aways, which they told me about in the interviews. This contrasts with children from R school, a high proportion minority ethnic school, where 7 children put in no beans. But I think this perception of 'no knowledge of British Chinese' came from a group consciousness, because in the focus groups several children discussed British Chinese and admitted that they did not know any British Chinese people and so had limited knowledge, I think this influenced them during the interviews.

This analysis of the Bean Sheet data sets a context for the analysis of the taped interviews which follows. In the next three sections I comment on children's knowledge, attitudes and the possible reasons for these, based on the evidence of the interview findings.

**2 Children's Knowledge and Understanding - Commentary**

I noticed that childrens' responses in the interviews could be grouped into categories. This relates to sections 1 and 3 in the matrix, table 7.2, namely, children's multicultural knowledge and comparisons of this within and between schools. These groupings do not 'label' the children themselves in fixed categories as Kincheloe and Steinberg's (1997) categories do; in the literature chapters I suggested that their

categories label people not comments. Rather 'Grounded Theory' as developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) was used. This suggests that:

> the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data. (1998:12)

I assumed the role of 'traveller' rather than 'miner' (Erriker 2001) as discussed earlier. I listened to what the children told me rather than having a particular theory to be proved or disproved. Categories sprang from the data and children's responses were grouped. Thus the children themselves were not ascribed to a particular category, rather their comments were grouped together. In this section I present results from an examination of the nodes "*KBC" (How much do you think you know about British Chinese people who live in this country), "*KBA" (British Asians), "*KBW" (British White), "*KBAF" (British African Caribbean) and "*KBO" (British Other).

As I familiarised myself with the data I noticed themes emerging. I followed Strauss and Corbin's recommendations:

> The important thing to remember is that once concepts begin to accumulate, the analyst should begin the process of grouping them or categorising them under more abstract explanatory terms, that is categories. (Strauss and Corbin 1998:114)

They go on to suggest that these categories can be developed in terms of "properties and dimensions" (1998:114). I found the NUDIST N5 computer data analysis package invaluable in aiding this categorisation efficiently and quickly, and optimising the use of grounded theory as a methodological approach.

I further categorised the children's knowledge and understanding of their own and other people's cultures and religions under the following themes.[3]

- **Own beliefs** a child's description of her/his own culture/religion
- **Misconceptions** for example "Bin Laden is a Hindu"
- **'Alien culture'** a child's negative description of an unfamiliar culture /religion
- **Stereotyping** children often used stereotypes when discussing their own and other cultures
- **Comparing cultures** instances where children draw attention to similarities and differences within and between cultures/religions

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[3] In N5 I created nodes for each of these themes and as I read through each of the nodes*KBA, *KBC etc I selected passages which seemed to fit a particular theme and stored them at this node.

- No knowledge examples of the child saying they know nothing about a particular culture/religion
- Deduction a child's attempt to deduce knowledge from pieces of evidence

In the following sections I take each of these themes in turn and select a sample from the interviews which focus on this theme together with my own interpretations and comments.

## 2.1 Own Beliefs

During my six weeks in each school I observed that in many cases the children from minority ethnic backgrounds had a detailed knowledge of their own culture, it was very important to them. For example in the playground, talking informally with the children, and also in the semi structured interviews, these children gave full accounts of religious observances. The following extract demonstrates this point.

Tazia and Zena were fairly strict Muslims, Zena wore the full hijab (head covering). Rosie was a Sikh.[4] The girls had a very good knowledge of their own culture and knew about other Asian cultures too. This is a good example of a child-led interview as the girls referred to their prompt sheets to begin with and then digressed to describe their own experiences as they were prompted by each other to remember certain customs from their own culture,

D3 [5]

Tazia: you're not allowed to eat other[6], White people's meat because, .in a day we have to pray 5 times a day and we have to keep a scarf over our heads sometimes when we pray and Muslims when it's a special Friday all the men they have to go to Mosque and pray

Zena: and the girls like have to wear long dresses and pray and go to a mosque[...]

Tazia: If your hair comes out you have to cover it because you get bad luck

[.....] And if you go to a mosque and like you need, you have to go to toilet and wudu it's like you have to like put water on you

Zena: You have to wash yourself before you go in the mosque so you have to be clean

Tazia: (at same time ) you mustn't be dirty. And if you like if you like fart (0.5)[7] miss you get a really bad look and you have to go back to the toilet and wash yourself again.

Sally: Right..............

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[4] Before each extract each child is described either using their own self identification, which they provided on the background information sheet, for example Black, African or I identify them by using Census categories for example British Asian, Sikh.

[5] Each extract is preceded by a code – for example D3 means D school, high proportion minority ethnic, 3 means the third interview at D school.

[6] To aid reading of extracts I have added minimum punctuation (see Silverman 1998).

[7] (0.5) means pause for 0.5 seconds. I estimated pause time when transcribing after the interview.

> Tazia: Ummm You know like Muslims if they swear there's a fairy on the shoulder, one is bad and one is good [....] And they say that if you be, if you swear, a bad fairy writes a line down and when you go to God he repeats it and says, this is what, and you say to the fairy, 'gimme the good one' and if it's 3 marks you will be proud and not that bad, because you have done like good stuff and if the bad one gets more than 5, or 3, then you are doing a cross sign he does somat to you, puni..punishes you.

The extract is a good example of the children sharing their knowledge about their own culture; and it is not the kind of information one would necessarily read in a text book about Muslim, Hindu or Sikh belief and practice (Thorley 1993, 2004; Penny 2000; Fisher 2002). This account springs from these children's 'lived' experiences. This kind of personal knowledge and understanding of the impact of their faith on their daily lives is what they shared with me, and to some extent what they share with their friends. To a certain degree children in the high proportion schools learned, by osmosis, a 'lived' experience of 'another's' culture. There are some resources, however, which do present Religion from the personal stance of a particular believer, for example the Warwick project (Barrett and Price 1996).

In the following example from R school (the other high proportion minority ethnic school) Harvir, a British Asian, Sikh girl, and Toxic, a Black boy of African heritage, demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their own beliefs. Harvir was an intelligent girl who not only told me about her own culture and religion but went further to comment on the relationship between Sikhism and Islam. She did not want the antagonisms of the past to impeach upon her life today,

> R2
>
> Harvir: I know that there are 3 Indian religions there are Hindu, Sikh and Muslim people . Because Indian doesn't just mean Sikh it means Hindu and Muslim as well.......sometimes, at one point, well, Sikhs had a fight with Muslims, but that was ages ago, a really long time ago, but that doesn't matter any more ... forget what happened in the past and just look to the future because I've got a Muslim friend and she doesn't fall out with me because we had a fight ages ago, like when our Gurus were alive, and Muslims and Sikhs had a fight .... I think, you know I'm not being horrible, but I think white British people they sometimes think like Indian people like wear- like Muslims - like what they wear like saris and dresses they might think they are a bit odd because they have never worn them.

Harvir is also aware of the dominance of white Western culture and she assumes that white people know little about the customs and the attire of Muslims and Sikhs.

In another interview in D school John, a Sikh boy of Asian heritage, who chose a Western pseudonym, had not forgotten the war which Harvir had wanted to forget,

> John: Our worst rivals are Muslims

As a Sikh, John, was not willing to forget this dispute and mentioned that Roy (a Muslim) was a bully. Thus the children related their knowledge and understanding to their own personal circumstances.

In D school, children talked about their own culture and why it was important to them, this is illustrated in following extract. Interestingly, although Zoe and Kate were both British Asian Muslims, they both chose Western pseudonyms. A number of Asian children chose Western pseudonyms because they either liked the name or because they thought the readers of my thesis would not be able to pronounce their name so they chose one which would be more familiar (background information sheets),

> D1 *KBA[8]
>
> Kate: Miss you know Saudi Arabians they are Asians aren't they?
>
> Zoe: Yeah - they're more, they've got umm Mecca yeah and that mosque that black
>
> thing called the Ka'ba yeah they go there a lot and I think I'm going to
>
> go there when I'm 11
>
> Sally: Are you?
>
> Kate: Yes I've been looking forward to it
>
> Zoe: Miss every Muslim has to go
>
> there once in their life and you have to go around the Ka'ba 7 times you
>
> have to go there once in your life ............
>
> Kate: Miss we've the Muslims - they've got 5 Pillars- yeah - one is going to
>
> Mecca yeah ......
>
> Zoe: One is Fasting ........The 6 prayers
>
> Kate: Yeah and you need to read the, you need to pray
>
> Zoe: 5 times
>
> Kate: 5 times a day and you need to read Qu'ran
>
> Zoe: And you need to have to give money to the poors [poor people].

In D school, when discussing the wearing of the turban in Sikh culture a British Caribbean boy Marshall was interested in the diversity of practice. One Sikh boy, Tejpreet, had uncut hair, the other John, mentioned earlier, had cut hair. It is

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[8] As noted earlier in this chapter *KBA is an example of the coding I used in N5. *KBA was the node title for knowledge of British Asians.

interesting that the Sikh with uncut hair (possibly a Khalsa Sikh[9]) chose a Sikh pseudonym whereas the Sikh with cut hair (possibly a less strict Sikh) chose a Western pseudonym. No one in the two predominantly white schools mentioned diversity of belief and practice *within* a religion.

> D2
>
> Tejpreet: When you go to the Gurdwara you wear a turban,
>
> Marshall: do you wear a Turban?
>
> John: no I've got cut hair. You can have, like Tejpreet got, or you can have cut hair. ..... You can have cut hair 'cos my dad's got cut hair and he wears a turban too.
>
> Sally: so what's the difference between what you wear Tejpreet, and your cut hair [John]?
>
> Tejpreet: It's up to you whether you want to cut your hair or not. My brother and my dad have got cut hair.
>
> John: the god says it's up to you.

Toni, of Italian heritage, in X school which was predominantly white, had very clear beliefs which could be described in humanistic terms. He was keen to defend his country of origin's position in the Second World War:

> X2
>
> Toni: I don't buy poppies because I think it's stupid to have wars......They [the Italians] went in hideout they didn't want a war, the drug dealers from America wanted to have a war and they came to England.

The next node I discuss is 'misconceptions'.

## 2.2 Misconceptions about Other Cultures/Religions

There is obviously a range of practices within and between cultures and religions but nevertheless some children made erroneous statements and had misconceptions about beliefs and practices. In B school which was predominantly white, there was a great deal of confusion about 'British Asian', Hindu, Sikh and Muslim, stories, customs and religious beliefs. Similarly in B school Bart, a British white boy, erroneously thought bin Laden was Hindu instead of Muslim. Also he assumed Daljit (a girl in his class) was Hindu too, she was actually Sikh.

> B4
>
> Bart: There are only 2 Hindus that I know - Bin Laden and Daljit - but I'm not sure about Daljit
>
> Sally: So you think Bin Laden is a Hindu?

---

[9] Khalsa Sikhs tend to be more orthodox wearing the 5 Ks and conversely non Khalsa Sikhs tend to be

Bart: Yeah cos he wears that turban.

Daljit, British Asian, Sikh, is also recognised as a Hindu by Kurt, also in B4 interview. Kurt dual heritage, Caribbean and white, described Daljit's religion.

B4

Kurt: Daljit's a Hindu [she was Sikh] they wear silver bands on

and they have long hair

Sally: Okay and are there any pictures here that show Hindus?

Sally: That's a Hindu family – M [picture][10]? ....... You think K is Hindu do you?

Bart: No that's the Taliban

Sally: K are Taliban you think?

Bart: miss M because there's two people and the woman's got a thing there

[points to spot on forehead]

James, Liam and Nicola all three British white pupils, did not, initially offer detailed knowledge of Asian culture. This interview was also from B school, a predominantly white school. They did, however, talk about Asians a little later in the interview and were prompted by the pictures to think of other things which they knew. The children often interspersed misconceptions with accurate knowledge as the following extracts demonstrate:

B1

James: Asians- They eat different things and they believe in different things and most of them own shops. ......... Miss there's another [thing] they wear different clothes.

Sally: What kind of clothes do they wear then?

James: Like dresses and turbans

Sally: How do you know that?

James: By looking at pictures of them at school

Nicola: Emm most of them have shops - emm they believe they have to keep their face covered because of their religion, most of them

Liam: Some eat curry and they believe in lots and lots of gods and wear turbans and shoes.....

James: 'Cos like when like .. For example, Pakistani, we go to church they go to Mosque. That looks like a mosque - I've seen it on the telly

Sally: Right OK - do you think that's a mosque?

James: Miss yeah 'cos they have to take their shoes off don't they?

Sally: What else do they believe in - Muslims?

Jamie: Rama and Sita...... Miss they believe in Allah

more liberal. (Cole 1994)

[10] These letters refer to the pictures which can be found in the appendix.

Jamie: Miss on picture P they pray before they eat their dinner

Another misconception, in the other predominantly white school X, concerned Jehovah's Witnesses. Lisette, Tanith and Violet, all three girls are British white, talk about Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs which Lisette has learnt about from her younger brother's friend and his nursery teachers. However the portrayal of Jehovah's Witness doctrine was somewhat pejorative as Lisette recounts the negative aspects of non celebration of festivals. Neither she nor the nursery teachers appreciated the positive nature of the Jehovah's Witness belief that each day is very special, and Jesus had not directly asked his followers to celebrate Christian festivals or birthdays so Jehovah's Witnesses should not do so either (Watchtower 2005). Lisette was also under the misapprehension that Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in God:

X1

Lisette: some people live in this country like, but umm Jehovah's Witnesses err

they don't believe in Christmas or Birthdays, Easter things like that,

that we do ......and they go to a different

church, and so they don't like pray to God what ever 'cos like some people

like pray before they go to bed errm and errr my brother he's four and he

goes to nursery and he once wanted his little friend, one of his little

friends to come to his birthday party, and that little friend umm his

parents were Jehovah's Witnesses so he couldn't come. ....We gave the invitations to Nursery

and she [the nursery teacher] said I don't think you'll want us to give that one out because they

don't believe in what we do and whatever. And umm and that little boy I feel sorry for him

really, because when they sing Christmas carols like 'We wish you a merry Christmas' and

all that errm he had to be taken out, that little boy, and like he might

not want to be Jehovah's Witness. He might want to be the same as everyone

else - 'cos like really, I wouldn't want to be taken out of a room where

everyone else is having fun

Tanith: In the infant school there's someone who, err my sister's friend, and she has to be taken

out when they do like things like that

Lisette: And they don't join in in assembly

Violet: 'Cos they don't worship God..........

Lisette: It's not so much they don't believe in God, because they can't say "Mummy I don't

believe in God ", it's more following in your parent's path

Violet: They might want to believe in God but their parents won't let them believe in God

'cos they want them to follow the right path, as they followed from their

parent's mum, and their parent's mum, and their parent's mum and so on

The following extract concerns children's misconceptions about the Jewish faith. When looking at a picture of a Jewish family (picture C in the appendix) Jamie Lee and Spike, both British white children at X school, a predominantly white school, were unaware of the Jewish practice of the Shabbat Meal and merely discuss the impropriety of reading and eating at the same time. Toni, of Italian heritage, however who also does not know about the Shabbat suggests that they may be praying. Thus he is aware that this culture is different but tries to understand it rather than condemn it,

X2

Jamie-Lee: On [picture] C they are all reading books at the table, and for some strange reason, all the children have got wine and they are reading books at the table,

and we don't read books at the table in England, well we probably wouldn't,

well some people [might], but in B town I don't read books at t' table

Toni: Your mum or your dad might do but you'd get food on it

Spike: Yeah you'd get food on it or keep your elbows off the table. The food isn't usual food not the food we'd normally have, and there's a

silver glass with like little beads in, and I think that might be a sauce

they've got a powder and they sprinkle it over

Toni: I think they are praying but without their hands - 'cos they've got 2 candles.


## 2.3 'Alien' Culture/ Religion

There were numerous comments children made which I considered came 'straight from the heart.' These comments could be termed racist or perhaps they expressed an '*un*politically correct' position. I named this collection of extracts 'alien' culture to denote the child's position towards unfamiliar customs, appearances and beliefs. Often the comments related to the physical appearance of someone from a culture which was different to the speaker's.


In interview B4, at the predominantly white school, B, Bart, Michelle, both British white and Kurt, dual heritage Caribbean and white, are discussing their knowledge of British Asians,

B 4   *KBA (knowledge British Asians)

Sally: Bart what did you put?

Bart: they are coloured

Sally: Coloured ?

Bart: Horrible

Sa; Why did you put horrible ? [all giggle]

Bart: Because I don't like looking at them. They talk a lot...................Miss they wear rags, talk a lot and I don't like the look of their faces

Here Bart spontaneously expressed his feelings towards British Asians. Bart did not identify himself as a racist but this comment indicated a negative attitude towards British Asians. Another negative reaction came from Kurt, also in B4 interview, when discussing British Chinese:

Kurt: Look like they're bozeyed [giggles)] they eat spicy food they wear tight clothes.'Cos I've seen a Chinese man and he had a vest, T shirt and it was dead tight on him

Kurt continued along these lines in his answer to "what do you think about people of a different culture?" Interestingly Kurt was of dual heritage, a Jamaican mother and white father.

Kurt: They're ugly [giggles]
Sally: They're ugly - *so you think people who aren't the same culture as you are ugly?*
Kurt: Yeah
Sally: Why do you say that?
Kurt: because they've got funny eyes and different to ours -ours are like
that, their's are bozeyed [*making facial gestures*].
Bart: Yeah but Heidi [Kurt's girlfriend] is a different culture to you and everyone else in, and some people in, this thing, in this school, has [a] different culture to you but you like em - you're friends with 'em. So I don't know what you're pointing that for - ugly. (0.6)[11] And so if Heidi's got a different culture to you are you gonna dump her?
Kurt: [embarrassed giggle] Nnooo.

Interestingly Bart, who previously had indicated a negative attitude towards those of a different culture, was haranguing Kurt about his negative attitude.
One of the most explicitly racist comments was made during interview B6, B school, a predominantly white school, where Max, British white, made the following comment:

B6

Max: My dad's ermm a racist because he don't like no brown skinned people
but he does like half caste cos there's a wrestler that's half caste De Roc

---

[11] 0.6 denote the length of a pause so 0.6 means 0.6 of a second (Silverman 1998).

Sally: So how did you describe your dad, your Dad's a what?

Max: Err a racist he don't like brown skinned people but he does like half castes, 'cos he's just fine with half castes, 'cos he used to take the rip out of half castes but I said 'don't dad because it's a bit nasty but you can take the rip out of Hindus because I don't like them'. 'Cos it's Bin Laden he's like the boss of all the Hindus (2.1) That's about all I know

………………………..

Jeremy: My dad says like errmm I'm not going to let you go to a mosque because it's not for your type and it's only Pakis that go and because my Dad doesn't' like em

Jeremy agreed, voicing his own father's disapproval of Muslims of Pakistani heritage. In this same interview Matt went on to say that his father did not like Bin Laden because of the destruction of the twin Towers in America and also because he was brown skinned. This extract denotes, like the others above, a description of a culture which was 'alien' to the child. Also it demonstrates a lack of knowledge, Bin Laden is Muslim not Hindu, and thus this links with the 'misconception' category.

These comments above were the nearest to overt racism which I encountered in any of the four schools. I noticed that all the examples above came from B school and in the main from less able boys. This led me to the conclusion that boys in predominantly white schools who were not middle class or in the more able sets were more likely to express negative attitudes towards those of a different culture. (I discuss this in more detail in chapter 8.)

In the high proportion minority ethnic schools, however, the children from all ability and ethnic groups tended to have less overtly racist stances, and their comments, which I have categorised as spontaneous, were more to do with customs of a different culture which the speaker finds unusual rather than being a comment on the actual person. Thus in the high proportion minority ethnic schools the children stated that they did not like the *behaviour* of the people of a particular culture, whereas in the predominantly white schools the children state that they did not like the *person* .

The following extract is from a high proportion minority ethnic school and exemplifies an example of 'alien culture' knowledge because the children in D2 were stereotyping British Chinese. They claimed that British Chinese eat cats, dogs and

snakes. D school was a high proportion minority ethnic school which had no children of Chinese heritage. Tejpreet and John are British Asian, Sikh boys and Marshall is Black Caribbean heritage,

> D2
>
> Tejpreet: British Chinese people have Chinese food and they eat with chopsticks and their faces be plain and stretched out and they don't get spots and stuff on your face
>
> Marshall: I don't know much about Chinese people but I know they have plain faces and their eyes are a bit weird and they usually go..they usually have spare ribs or something like that- noodles and rice
>
> Tejpreet: They have snakes or stuff like that
>
> John:(at same time) not snakes do they?
>
> Tejpreet: not in Britain
>
> Marshall: They don't eat snakes, they eat cats and dogs- that's what I've heard I could be wrong, and chickens - everybody eats chickens

This stereotyping of Chinese food preferences is echoed in another interview from D school, D3 where three British Asian girls discuss British Chinese:

> Rosie: Chinese
>
> Tazia: Yeah I've heard they eat with chopsticks they don't eat like proper food like we [do]
>
> Zena: (*speaking at same time*) I've written that they have quite wide eyes and they eat frogs and snails
>
> Tazia: Uggg

The children in both these interviews, the boys in D2, and girls in D3, were stereotyping Chinese and their 'peculiar' eating habits. It is interesting to note that D school had no Chinese children. In the same way B school is predominantly white and so it could be argued that these 'from the heart' views derive from schools where there were no (or few) children of that particular culture to challenge the erroneous, stereotypical view.

Many children referred to the physical appearance of British Chinese people, some described the shape of their eyes, others blatantly made facial gestures which one group later commented on as being wrong.

In D school a high proportion minority ethnic school Gurdeep, a Sikh boy, described British Chinese:

> Gurdeep: They have big clothes and thin eyes (stretched his eyes out).

Similarly in interview D6, Carlo, Roy, both British Asian, Muslim, and Jason, Black British Caribbean all made facial gestures.

> Carlo: They look like their eyes are closed.

The same reaction occurred in R school (also high proportion minority ethnic) in R4 interview with Rachel, a dual heritage Black and British white girl, Manpreet, British Asian, Sikh and Karen, British white:

> Rachel: they have round faces and their eyes are like that (pulling at the sides of her eyes).
>
> Sally: OK so you're making a gesture with the corner of your eyes.
>
> Rachel: I shouldn't have done that - but their eyes look different are kind of different.

In R6 interview however Lucy, British Asian, Sikh, Daniel of African heritage and Maxwell, white, were careful *not* to make facial gestures,

> Maxwell: Yeah their eyes are longer, what I've found out is their eyes are down to there. That isn't being like horrible but they come to there. *(Indicating with his finger)*
>
> Daniel: Some of the children there used to do this 'I'm a Chinese and I look like a dork'.
>
> Maxwell: yeah people do that.
>
> Lucy: Yeah people turn their eyebrows up.
>
> Daniel: they do like that.
>
> Sally: none of you did that did you just now?
>
> All: no
>
> Lucy: no none of us put our eyes like that ..... no we're just showing you...........
>
> Daniel: I think it's rude when people do that .
>
> Lucy: yeah it is and people might get upset.
>
> Daniel: What about how would they feel if Chinese people make fun of the way their eyes look.
>
> Maxwell: yeah 'cos our's are dead short 'cos our eyes are only like that big.

The above examples illustrate a variety of reactions towards the physical appearance of Chinese people which I have categorised under 'alien' culture. Some merely described the shape of the eyes, as in interview X3. Others blatantly made abusive facial gestures (interview B4). I have included the R5 interview in this section even though it is *not* an example of 'alien' culture because it illustrated the opposite point of view, all the children in interview R5 refrained from making these gestures and indeed pointed out that they knew other children do this but they thought it was

wrong. In R school Rachel made the gesture but then admitted she shouldn't have done so. It is interesting that R school was the only school where a significant number of children placed 0 beans in the pot for British Chinese, which signified they felt they had limited or no knowledge of British Chinese, I discussed this earlier.

The negative comments, and gestures, generally came from less able white children yet also Rachel, an average ability dual heritage girl (Caribbean and white), recognised that her behaviour was not correct. There were very few Chinese children in any of the schools, and no Chinese child was in any Year 5 class, and hence none were in my 73 child sample. I would argue that this is the reason for negative attitudes towards Chinese culture being across all types of school in my study. Indeed the following discussion in interview R1 supports this, Umadeep is a Sikh boy, Terri and Chloe are both white girls,

> R1
>
> Sally: What do you know about British Chinese people who live in this country? Do you want to put the number of beans in? None of you have put any in (general smiling)
>
> Umadeep: I only saw 3 British Chinese people in town but I didn't ask them any questions though.
>
> Chloe: No its not something ...one of the religions we talk about at school
>
> because we haven't got many Chinese people in our school.
>
> Terri: We haven't got any Chinese people in our school – it's surprising but we've
>
> got no Chinese or Japanese people in our school, so we don't really...I've never really talked to
>
> a Chinese person properly, I've never had a conversation with them.
>
> I mean if I'd bumped into somebody in town I'd have said "sorry" but I've
>
> never actually talked to a Chinese person properly, unless I've been to a
>
> Take Away or something.

This again suggests that the children were more knowledgeable and had more positive attitudes towards other cultures if they personally *knew* someone of that culture. I come back to this point again later, in the section 'acquaintance'.

Following on from this concept of children's knowledge and understanding of 'alien culture', is the closely related concept of stereotyping. In fact many of the quotations above fit into the stereotyping category too.

## 2.4 Stereotyping

In this section I present examples of the ways in which children tended to stereotype and talk in clichés. When asked what they knew about a particular group, for example British Chinese, children often referred to stereotypes. This is illustrated by the following extract. In B1 interview three white children from this predominantly white school discussed Chinese and then British white culture:

> B1
>
> James: They [British Chinese] eat noodles wear like long dressing gowns and shoes
>
> ...I put they [British White] have their own beliefs and most live in D city
>
> Liam: They wear jumpers, shirts trousers and shoes. ...[They] eat fruit vegetables and meat and believe in God Jesus [Christians]
>
> Nicola: They speak English, their clothes are ordinary- like jumpers and
>
> trousers and they play football and other games
>
> Sally: And you put most British people [*Actually I fell into the trap here of not saying British White*] live in D city. Do you agree with that? Do British people live in places other than D city?
>
> James: In England
>
> Sally: Did somebody put Christian, believe in God?.... Do all British white people believe in god
>
> All: no
>
> James: Not all
>
> Liam: But some do

Again in B2 one of the predominantly white schools, Claire, of African heritage and Daljit a Sikh girl, stereotype British Chinese and said:

> Daljit: Some of the women wear red robes. Some of the men shave their heads and wear white and yellow robes, sometimes they eat spicy food, they kind of wear dragons and all that sort of thing, and they have lots of parades
>
> Claire: I think most of the people are coloured, and they eat spicy food and they wear quite long clothes and sandals and they all believe in God.
>
> Sally: they all believe in God? What do they believe about God?
>
> Claire: (1.4) I think they believe that he helps people ...

In interview B3 (predominantly white school) Shana a white girl stereotypes British white. She said:

> Shana: British people like to eat fish and chips and full English breakfast

and a cup of tea. ....Chinese people like rice and noodles at festivals and meat. ...British and Chinese people like to wear trousers tops, trainers and flat shoes.

However, Joseph disagreed with this stereotyping but his reasoning was unorthodox!

Joseph: I'd like to disagree because they don't eat noodles in that language because they don't like spicy stuff.........because some of the people are allergic to it......Fish they can get ummmm they can get ummm rashes from it.

In R1 the children discussed their knowledge of Africa, and Terri, a white girl, dispelled stereotypes of Africa:

Terri: Because in some parts of Africa you get main roads and proper houses and

things and in some parts of Africa you get dusty roads and when you say

Africa, everybody always thinks of the dusty roads and small huts and

things like that ............I think some parts of Africa are like dusty roads and small huts and like they have to go and collect water from a well and things because they haven't got water coming from a tap. But some parts of African have got proper houses and

because in Africa, I watched this programme the other day, and there's this big bridge in Africa, and it's like a main road and lots of cars are going across it, and so some parts of Africa are like like England basically , lots of Technology and things.

Sally: And how do you know that that's what it's like? Have you been to Africa?

All: No

Terri: It's probably from Television and Comic relief [Comic relief

took place the previous week] and all the charities talking about other

places and Africans that are really bad, but there are good places in Africa.

Chloe: They don't tend to mention about all the places that are well off

Sally: Why not?

Chloe: Because it's just like us really so..you try to help the people that

are not well off so you don't really mention the people that are.

This particular extract is interesting because the children's stereotypical views have been created, and are certainly preserved, by the Media. I return to discuss the possible influences on children's knowledge and attitudes in the third section of this chapter.

2.5 Comparing Cultures

I noted instances in all schools where children compared different cultures, thus demonstrating an ability to see similarities and differences between religions. However not many children identified differences within religions, e.g. different denominations of Christians, Muslims etc. This was shown in the following set of

extracts. In interview B2 (predominantly white school) Fiona, a white girl and Claire of dual heritage, white and Caribbean, and Daljit a Sikh girl, discuss cultures in terms of the symbolic jewellery worn by believers. Daljit also refers to her own culture:

Fiona: I think people in other cultures, most of them anyway, believe in all the stories like Mary and Joseph and Rama and Sita, and I think they like stories and they believe in them, and sometimes if it's a sad story, when they believe in 'em, I think they always pray emmm to make sure they're all right

Claire: I think that some people in different countries and different religions and cultures and everything, they can get umm jewellery because British white people are lucky 'cos they've got a St Christopher's charm and St Christopher's ring and they've got a chain with Jesus Christ on. But some Chinese people they, 'cos I've seen something what they wear, they just have a bit of Chinese writing

Daljit:.... I think these [referring to picture P] are African umm Caribbean because sometimes if you're sitting around the table you pray before you eat ...Like a special occasion with Sikhs ummm like when you are getting married, you wear red; and the day before you get married (1.3) you ummm your aunty and uncle, your special aunty and uncle, you've got to pour a big, bowl of milk, and they put them [your hands] in milk and wipe them on a tea towel in case your hand gets dirty. To show you've been like accepted.

In interview D1 Melissa talked about the similarities between Islam and Christianity. Kate described how much time Muslims take off school at Id. These girls also compared Mohammed to Jesus, both being prophets:

Melissa: He [Jesus] went into the desert for 40 days and

Mohammed - their religion - he went into the desert for 40 days as well

so we've got nearly the same religion

Kate: Miss you know Jesus yeah? He's our prophet as well, the Muslim....

Zoe: We believe in Jesus as well

Melissa: Yeah but Jesus he's your prophet in our religion he's our God

Zoe: Yeah he's our prophet

Melissa: What is a prophet anyway?

Zoe: It's like a .....

Kate: It's a someone who tells people to believe in God

Zoe: Someone who God sends to teach people about different religions

Melissa: Jesus did that the same

These three girls were knowledgeable about their own religion and culture. Melissa is a practising Christian and Kate and Zoe are staunch Muslims who wear the hijab. But

also they knew about each others' faiths and customs. They were intelligent girls and appreciated some of the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity. Another example, also from D school, demonstrated Tazia and Zena's knowledge of Islam and Rosie's first hand knowledge of Sikhism. Tazia, in interview D3 began by describing Sikhs as white:

> D3
>
> Tazia: Umm they have white skin
>
> Sally: White skin?
>
> Rosie: No they don't, they have like brown skin, and they celebrate - the Sikhs celebrate Divali and Waisaki and the Muslims celebrate Id ...............
>
> Zena: And the Muslims go to mosque and Sikhs are like places like India and ours like Pakistan
>
> Sally: When you say 'ours is Pakistan' what do you mean?
>
> Zena: Like Pakistan
>
> Rosie: And miss in the Guardwara, you do like, when, when they have finished saying, they like give you err, in Indian, prashad, and they give it to you and then you have to eat it
>
> Sally: and is that different to what Tazia and Zena do?
>
> Rosie:Yeah 'cos they're Muslims and I'm Indian.
>
> Tazia: We don't like put that stuff in that bowl we don't do that
>
> Rosie: miss and the Sikhs don't do that as well
>
> Tazia: Miss different people have different cultures and different..
>
> Rosie:(at same time) they do different things they eat different to us

In interview D4 Ashley, a Muslim girl, talked to Kilik, a white boy, about the different Asian religions and cultures. Harry a knowledgeable and 'alternative lifestyle' white boy made perceptive comments:

> D4
>
> Ashley: And some Sikhs doesn't eat meat, Muslims eat Halal meat but not other meat, like Christians eat, and some of the Muslims wear scarves, and the boys have to wear turban [s].
>
> Harry: well I suppose that's actually the religion, because it's not true they're Asians, we think of Asians as Muslims. Because they're not all Muslims, because Muslims can't cut their hair but it's not particularly the Asians
>
> Ashley: There's a lot of Asians
>
> Harry: yeah but they're not all Muslims
>
> Kilik: because they are from Asia
>
> Ashley: they stay in Pakistan
>
> Harry: Yeah but you think of Asian as Muslim

In interview D5 Sharish, a British Asian Muslim girl, was familiar with the difference between Indian (Hindu and Sikh) and Muslim funeral customs:

> Sharish: Miss you know Indians when someone dies they burn the people but
>
> Muslims don't, they like bury them. Muslims bury, and Indians burn them.
>
> Tina: Miss you know Indian people their Gods are like Guru Nanak and
>
> Gobind Singh, I learnt at school and dad told me. [Tina's father is Sikh married to a white
>
> woman] Indians are different they are just a different culture really.

In all the above extracts taken from high proportion minority ethnic schools, the children had a good knowledge of different cultures (I would argue that this is from first hand experience, and thus they are more able to make comparisons within and between cultures.)


However there are also some examples of children in the predominantly white schools making comparisons. In interview X2 there was a discussion about prayer. The children talked about different cultures' prayers, but in the following extract it is clear that the children were speaking theoretically; they had no experience base. Spike and Jamie are British white boys; Toni is of Italian heritage:

> X1
>
> Toni: `Cos in England we might say "our Father which art in heaven" and then in their country
> they might say the same prayer but in their language
>
> Spike: And different people wouldn't know what they say .....And if they could speak English
> they would probably have prayers we've never ever heard of..
>
> Jamie-Lee: they might have their own prayer you see
>
> Spike: `Cos there's lots and lots of prayers
>
> Toni: Gemma just said we have our own prayer and when they come here they might learn it
> and when we go to Pakistan we might learn it
>
> Spike: Going back to that question [Do you think of cultures as separate? Does everyone have
> a culture?] I think quite a bit, because they are all good to learn about, because if there's only
> one culture you learn about that culture, it would be a bit boring, `cos you'd learn about that
> culture, and then you'd think isn't there any more cultures in the world. They are all interesting
> really -even Pakistan. You can find out what they eat and compare it to what we eat and see
> how different we are
>
> Toni: I think, you know, people, it's on the news once, that people in Manchester are being
> racist, and I think that's kind of cruel, because, and it's kind of not....[right] because they
> could be racist back, if they wanted to, so I think it's just a bit stupid.

This section demonstrates the sophistication of some children; not only do they know about different cultures, but they are able to make comparisons between cultures. The

next section however shows that some children's knowledge and understanding was very limited.

## 2.6 No Knowledge

A further section of results relate to a node I created in N5 software package (Richards, L. 2000) called 'no knowledge'. Here I collected together instances where children said they knew nothing or very little about a particular culture. Often they placed no beans in the pot (prompt sheet 'Bean Schedule'). It is interesting to note that the majority of the extracts in this section came from the predominantly white schools and from the less able children. For example in B1 interview James, Nicola and Liam, all white, discussed British Asians because James had mentioned mosques[12]:

> Sally: What do you know about mosques then? What religion is that? What culture is that?
>
> Nicola: Might be...Indian
>
> James: Pakistan
>
> Nicola: Don't know
>
> Sally: What about some of the other pictures - what about A[13]? What about their culture?
>
> (2.1)Liam: don't know really...

In B2 interview Fiona, a white girl, like many white children in the predominantly white schools, knew little of Asian culture, or the different religious and cultural groups

> Fiona: I didn't put anything down because I didn't know what British Asians were.
>
> Sally: OK now that you've listened to a few people is there something you could add now?
>
> Fiona: No

There were numerous other extracts reiterating this view. I return now however to the high proportion minority ethnic schools where there were instances of 'no knowledge' which centred around British Chinese. Even for the more able children, knowledge about British Chinese was limited. I quoted from this extract earlier where Terri and Chloe, both white, discussed British Chinese with Umadeep, a Sikh boy and they explained that they had limited knowledge because there were no British Chinese living near them.

---

[12] A mosque is the place of worship of a Muslim (Fisher 2002).
[13] See pictures in the appendix

In interview R2 Harvir and Toxic discuss their scant knowledge of British Chinese and Harvir also states that she is no expert in Asian culture:

> Harvir: I know that Chinese people have Chinese New year, but I wasn't sure if <u>British</u> Chinese people have Chinese New year that's why I didn't put it down.
>
> Toxic: I had the same idea as Baljinder. I forgot about that picture.
>
> Harvir: 2 [beans] even though I am an Asian I don't know lots about it because like some people think that I know every single thing about Asians but I don't, I only know a bit about Asians, but I am a Sikh.

From my professional experience, student teachers have an expectation that Asian heritage children in their classes will be 'Asian Religion dictionaries'; but as Harvir commented this is not necessarily the case.

In the high proportion minority ethnic school, a dual heritage girl Rachel, in interview R4, admitted a lack of knowledge about Sikhs when looking at picture K, a Sikh family. Her friend Manpreet dubiously equated British white with Christians:

> Rachel: Well I could tell that one was Muslim [picture A] but I didn't realise that he was wearing the hat, because in assembly we did that. But I know, well I don't know what K is. I don't really know that much.
>
> Sally: Right that's fine...............
>
> Rachel: I said nothing for that one [British Chinese], I know nothing ,
>
> Manpreet: I forgot about British Christians but that's the same as British white though in't it?

In the other high proportion minority ethnic school, Gurdeep in interview D7 went further than this and said:

> Gurdeep: I know nothing about white people.

From my observations this strict Sikh boy held a similar position to the white children in the predominantly white school who had little or no knowledge about British Asians. As I mentioned in my comments on table iii (see appendix), Gurdeep only placed 3 beans in the pot for 'Other' which he identified as Sikh, and he put in 0 beans for British Asian. Gurdeep did not socialise with the white children in his school and he adhered strongly to his religion. At lunchtime he spoke to me at length about his faith (D Fieldnotes pg 21). Some children, rather than saying they knew nothing, made an educated (or in some cases a wild) guess about a particular culture. I discuss this in the next section.

## 2.7 Deduction

Sometimes the children in my study, were unable to say anything about a particular culture, most often there was a gap in their knowledge. In these instances the children often made *deductions* from pictures (or snippets of evidence from their peers). This skill of deduction from teacher questioning, has always been promoted in British Primary school classrooms where children are encouraged to interact with material and engage with teacher questioning in order to learn in a more "active" rather than "passive way" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000:389 and Pollard 1997:257). Thus I created the node 'deduction' and collected extracts which illustrated this process in action. In the first example, three white children in interview B1, Nicola, Liam and James, in a predominantly white school, talked about British Asians and looked at the pictures to give them ideas, see appendix. They used their past knowledge to deduce the religion of the family represented in the picture:

> B1
>
> Sally: Do you know what that is - those wall hangings [picture A]?
>
> [Shake heads] you don't know...
>
> Nicola: Miss it looks like some kind of writing
>
> James: Miss it looks like them things they have on their hands
>
> Sally: What sort of things do they put on their hands then J?
>
> James: Mendhi
>
> Sally: Mendhi?
>
> Nicola: And they wear like these bracelets 'cos Daljit does- 'cos it's her religion
>
> Liam: She's a British Indian
>
> Nicola: Yeah
>
> Sally: and is she Muslim? [She's Sikh]
>
> Liam: Ummm I know Hassim - he's a Muslim

In the next extract interview B6 three white boys were looking at pictures A and B:

> Johnney: 'Cos you can tell 'cos they don't have letters like A and B and C and
>
> not many English people can umm read this writing
>
> Sally: So are these people not English then?
>
> Johnney: Probably not
>
> Sally: So do they live in this country - people in [picture] A?
>
> Max: Yeah I think they do. 'Cos umm in Africa, their houses, some of them, are made out of mud and sand, and umm that picture A, it's all made out of wall, and I think they live in this country because they've got all symbols on the wall, and umm there's a carpet as well. And you can tell when they're praying as well. 'Cos sometimes they always have like food in the

middle, and they all surround the food, and they've got some drums as well, to get like music, and they got like plates on the table and Rama and Sita.

In X6 Jim, a white boy, describes his learning process:

Jim: I'm just thinking, I didn't know anything about other cultures, so when Ms Kite was talking about it, and the group, I thought, 'ahhh now it's making some sense'. But I think that some of them have a really good culture

I discuss further issues raised from this section later, in chapter 8. Here I proceed to describe the node category 'children's attitudes'.

## 3 Children's Attitudes

In this section I systematise and compare children's attitudes, knowledge and understanding, see sections 1 and 3 in the matrix table 7.2 at the end of this chapter.

3.1 Responses to: 'Are People they've been Speaking about British?'

I collected together all the children's answers to 'are people they've been speaking about British?' in a node in N5 and I was able to draw several conclusions from this data. When considering children's attitudes towards their own and other cultures most children generally felt British identity to be dependent on being born in Britain, having British parents, and /or speaking English. This is a finding similar to that of Carrington and Short (1989), which I discussed in chapter 2. There was often, however, a change of mind when the children initially disagreed with the proposal that a Hindu family (as shown in picture B) could be British. After reflection many children said the family could be British Asians if they were born here, or if they spoke English. Thus some children extended British identity to include those of Asian, or other non-indigenous, descent. Some of the low socio economic and low ability British white children considered British whites constituting the only category of 'true' British people.

The following extract exemplifies this attitudes towards 'being British'. Liam, James and Nicola, three white children from B school, predominantly white, discuss whether people from the pictures were British:

B1

Sally: Are all the people in these pictures, are they all British?

James: Yeah.

Nicola: No! Not all of them

Sally: Which are and which aren't ?

Nicola: This isn't [picture of British Hindu family B]. It doesn't look like it

Sally: ...What would you need to look like to be British?

Nicola: well they wear different clothes and they're eating different food

Sally: So to be British you have to wear certain clothes and eat certain food?............

James: Miss some British eat their [own] food and sometimes wear their clothes if one of our religions marry another religion, then sometimes they choose to wear their religion's one

Nicola: If they like wear turbans on their head, we only wear like caps and hats. If it's winter we wear like woolly hats

Sally: And are they British James? What would you have to look like to be British ?

James: something like this picture, [white people in Buddhist posture] Picture H describes it. Some people believe in other religions

Sally: Right so you think [picture]H shows people believing in another religion ? How do you know that?

James: 'Cos like when like .. For example Pakistani we go to church they go to Mosque. That looks like a mosque - I've seen it on the telly.

## 3.1.1 Being British – Skin Colour

In interview B2 Fiona, a white girl, Claire a dual heritage, African and British white girl, and Daljit a British Asian girl who was Sikh, discussed 'Britishness'. It is interesting to hear what they said about each other's identity, especially in terms of skin colour and also socio economic status:

B2

Fiona: (1.3) I wouldn't describe the people from all different cultures as being British because they probably speak a different language and have a different coloured skin and I think sometimes..... it could be  different to what British people do

Sally: So to be British what colour skin do you [have]

Fiona: It's like peachy colour but the other it's either a really dark brown or a light brown like Daljit's.

Sally: Right - so would you say  Daljit is British then?

Fiona: Yeah yeah - I would say she's British because she can speak our language

Sally: So you have to speak what language to be British?

Fiona: English, I'll say English because if eemmm you're English and someone speaks a different language to you you won't understand them so I don't think they're kind of British

Claire: I think that 'no'. I don't think everyone is British because they won't have different cultures they will believe in Christianity not Sikh or any others - I think they would talk eat look dress and write the same as us ....

Fiona: On picture L [of a white family] this is what I think - people are British. Because I think that if they're British that's what people will look like. If they're not British, they probably wouldn't have all that stuff in the garden, or they probably wouldn't be a peachy coloured skin.

Similarly the following extract from B4 is interesting because the children talked about the literal colours of people's skins. Bart and Michelle are white, Kurt is dual heritage Caribbean and white:

Bart: Because I don't know a lot about British white... because British

white - you don't see many of them around but if you do, you don't know

they are British white sometimes. .....

Sally: Right so who would you describe as British white

people - are there British white people in this school?

Michelle: Loads of them

Kurt: Yeah all the teachers are

Michelle: all the kids are

Kurt: I'm orange

Sally: What did you say?

Kurt: I'm orange

Sally: You're orange?

Bart: Looks like brown

Kurt: I'm half caste

Michelle: And Shanice is

Sally: What do you mean by half caste Kurt?

Kurt: 'Cos my mum - I think she's from Jamaican and errm and so that makes

me half caste but I don't know what half caste means

Sally: Ok and what's your Dad? .......

Kurt: ....he's not from Jamaica - he's half he's quarter German

On another occasion, following a discussion concerning picture B (appendix), I asked three British Asian girls "How can you tell from the skin colour whether they're British?"

R3

Francesca: If you're born near the equator you have probably dark skin 'cos of

the atmosphere, if you're born in England then you would have lighter

skin because it's not as hot as near the equator.

Sally: So you're saying that they've got lighter skin than in B?

Emma: Yes maybe the grandma is Indian maybe those two are from the top part

of India. This one may not be fully British might be actually born in Africa.........

Francesca: Yes some British white people are actually Asian- its just their skin colour's been really light. Like I know someone, my friend, my mum's friend umm I think it's sister, she's really light and I think she's a Christian but she's Asian

Sally: Is that right?

Monica: Everyone thinks that my brother isn't Indian and they say he's Italian - he's really fair and he's got that hint of brown in it so he looks Italian.[Giggling] But he's Asian but they think he's Italian

## 3.1.2 Being British – Living in Britain, Speaking English

The three girls in D1 discussed 'being British' Melissa is British Caribbean and Christian, Zoe and Kate were British Asian and Muslim:

Zoe: It says on this sheet that 'would you describe people from all these cultures, all these different cultures, as British?' And I've said 'yes I would', because they're living in England they obviously become British

Melissa: Not really, I've put 'not really' because it says 'would you describe the people from all these cultures as British?' No, 'cos I'm not being nasty, but some of them don't talk proper British they talk their own language .... No I wouldn't describe them as British - well they are British but they do not talk how British, like how British people should really talk. Some of my friends don't talk right they say 'It be's tomorrow'. Somehow they talk like that . ......... This is a proper English family (picture F)- she's got blue hair!

Thus Melissa assumed that 'proper British' people are white, like the family in F. This perception is also echoed in the next extract.

In D6 interview, two of the boys, Roy and Carlo were Muslim, and the third Jason was dual heritage African /white. Here the suggestion was that people can choose whether to call themselves British or not. Both Carlo and Roy made derogatory statements about Pakistan at the end of the extract and stated that they preferred living in Britain.

Carlo: no [people in pictures A, B, J, K and N of Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus] because they came from a different place.

Sally: What if they came from a different place and then lived here?

Carlo: They are British.

Kirsten: Then you wouldn't call them British because they come from a different Place, M L H G [pictures] are British.

Sally: So are all the other people not British?

Jason: They can call themselves British if they want to, but if they don't
want to, they don't have to

Sally: You all said earlier that you'd describe yourselves as British.

Roy: Yes Miss because I've lived here all my life

Carlo: Miss if you come from another country and stay here for the rest of my life, then I'd
call myself British but I might go back to Pakistan. But I'd rather stay here than go back to
Pakistan

Sally: Why?

Carlo: Because it's not a good place Miss. The roads aren't properly made. The
cars and the vans and buses, they be packed of people, and you have to
stand up and sometimes you fall down  because of the bumps on the road

Roy: And Miss if you have an accident and go to hospital they charge you
money for the operations

Carlo: They take the money first and if they can't
save the person they still take the money .

In interview R2 the children discussed British identity being determined by whether
one lives in Britain, and people who are in this country on holiday do not fall within
this category. Similarly if parents were on holiday in another country when the child
was born the child would still be British. Asian heritage children discussed British
identity in R3, they too, consider the <u>place</u> of birth to be significant. Francesca who
was British Asian and Hindu, chose a Western pseudonym, as did Monica, who was
British Asian and Sikh. Emma was of Malysian heritage:

R3

Monica: Because some might have come from like all around the world
and they've just come to live here and they're not fully British

Sally: So to be fully British you are saying you have to be born here?

All: Not really

Monica: Like you could have like a mother from Derby or ..but
she's an Indian as well or Jamaican or something and..

Emma: You could have like the mother of the child born in somewhere, like
India, and the child was born in like England - but they are still British

Sally: Uh huh. But what about the mother who was from India?

Emma: She'll be partly British and partly Indian their child would be ..[0.2]

Sally: British?

Emma: Yeah.

Sally: So how would you describe yourselves?

Monica: I think I'm British because I was born in Britain

In interview X4 the three British white girls referred to the 'immigration' issue, which had been recent headline news, when they discussed British identity:

> Liz: there's been in the news about people escaping into Britain and they've been taken back because they're not allowed in and stuff
>
> Louisa: ......... they have actually come here and like they are British
>
> Faye: I put they are a different culture
>
> Louisa: They are a different culture but if they've been here quite a long time then I'd call them British.

The following interaction, in interview R4, between myself and Manpreet, a Sikh girl of Asian heritage demonstrated this point. I also asked the children to consider the concept of British identity on a personal level, Carrington and Short (1998) did not do this in their research, they asked questions in abstract terms. I tried to find out what children thought by asking them about their own, their parents' and their friends' identities, thus making the situations more concrete.

> R4
>
> Sally: Is it the word 'British' that you are not sure about?
> When I say 'British Asian' is it that that you think they might not be British?
>
> Manpreet: When you say British Asian I think you mean the people that are Asian but they live in Britain....My mum she was born in India but she came down here to umm get married, and then well she lived here for ever now, but we went to India the few past weeks- I can't remember .
>
> Sally: so would you mind me asking would you say your mum is British?
>
> Manpreet: I don't know, 'cos she was born in India.
>
> Sally: She lives here now and will do for the rest of her life, apart from visiting?
>
> Manpreet: I don't know she might move , we might move to India or something like that.
>
> Sally: but while she's living in this country and thinking that she's ..
>
> Manpreet: I think she would yeah.
>
> Sally: would you say that she's British, would she describe herself as British?
>
> Manpreet: I don't know.
>
> Sally: Do you describe her as British?
>
> Manpreet: Yeah because she lives in Britain....Actually I think I'll say she really isn't Britain because she was raised in India and she'd probably not be a Britain .

Significantly the Home office UK passport service is clear on the issue of who is eligible for British passports: that is who is a British national:

as a foreign national or Commonwealth citizen you may have been granted the right to stay in the UK for an unlimited time, but this does not give you British nationality or make you eligible for a British passport. (British Passports 2006)[14]

### 3.1.3 Being British – Born in Britain

In this section I discuss the issue of British identity further with reference to being born in Britain. In R6 interview Lucy, of Asian heritage, mentioned British passports[15]. Other issues were also raised in this extract by Maxwell, a white boy:

Lucy: people who are born here I put, are [British]. (1.1) and they have British passports.

Maxwell: because people call them Chinese and so they're not British are they? Cos if they come to this country they're not British they're still Chinese (2.1) I think...so if someone came from like Germany into this country they'd still be German.

Sally: Right but what about the people in these pictures here are they British.

Maxwell: perhaps (?) I think I got that one wrong.

Sally: no whatever you think is absolutely fine.

Maxwell: `cos I thought like, what do you describe, no, yeah, the people from all these different cultures as British..... People like come to this country and they're still like (0.8) like Lucy, she came to this country, and she's still Indian .

Lucy: No! I was born here, my dad's mum was from India.

Sally: Ok so would you describe yourself as British then Lucy?

Lucy: No `cos my family like, you know, my dad's mum is from India, so yeah, we probably are, `cos my Dad was born in India...... .......

Maxwell: If you want to be British you have to be born in this country.

At this point the children discussed how people 'act' British. They were not alluding to British white here. They also talked about how people speak with a variety of different accents, they concluded by defining, together, their different identities. These children all got on well together, they did not necessarily play together or sit together in lessons but I had noticed that all three were 'nice' children with kind dispositions and consequently demonstrated anti-racist attitudes:

Daniel: .. like my mum she's umm she was born in Uganda and she came and lived here and she doesn't sound Ugandan here, she doesn't have that

---

[14] Anyone who is a British citizen is entitled to apply for a British passport. That includes people who were born in the United Kingdom; were born in a British colony and had the right of abode in the UK (Those born in a British colony and did not have the right of abode in the UK will not become British citizens) have been naturalised in the United Kingdom; had registered as a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies; or could prove legitimate descent from a father* who one of the above conditions applied to. *Before the introduction of the British Nationality Act 1981, a person could not claim nationality from his or her mother. http://www.passport.gov.uk/general_rules_ami.asp

[15] British passports can be applied for by British Nationals (British Passports 2006).

accent anymore .....English, I think I'm English.

Lucy: African English.

Daniel: African yeah. I just call myself English African, because I was born here.

Sally: `cos that relates to what we were saying earlier [about Lucy] doesn't it that's what I'm interested in finding out.

Daniel: She's sort of English Indian.

Lucy: Yeah `cos I was born in India .

Maxwell: you look like me when I'm tanned, when I've really got tanned.

Similarly in X1 the three white girls consider the concept of British identity:

Lisette: They might wear their own clothes or they might wear ours - it
depends- it's their choice really ...............

Violet: Well ... Asian people, who,...or whatever, who are coming to our country on holiday or something and they just might want to blend in with our kind of clothes. They might buy some of our clothes and take them back and show them, the other people in their country, and those people might come to our country and try and get some of our clothes so like they want to blend in with us

Sally: but what about the Asian people that came to this country a long long time ago and their children were born in this country, and were born in this country

Lisette: Well you might have your mum or dad might say to you one day right we're going on holiday next week to where we used to live. But you don't know about it because you were born in this country so it'd be nice for them to go and see what clothes they wear there

In interview X2 two white boys Spike and Toni discussed Toni's nationality, he was of Italian heritage. They considered being brown as both a racist term and also how it signifies being tanned by the sun. Jamie-Lee, a white girl stated that if people came to live in Britain then their children would be British.

'Britishness' was also highlighted in interview X6:

Mark: Yes I would [say everyone we've spoken about is British], because they do everything like British people. But then they've got a different religion, so they worship a different religion than British people; but they do jobs like British people - paper rounds like a lot of British kids do; and grown ups, like if they're a solicitor or something; that's what I've put.

In my research the children provided a wide range of views about British identity and related this to the concept of culture.

### 3.2 Responses to : 'Are Cultures Separate? Does Everyone have a Culture?'

The concept of identity permeates the discussion about culture. The children had decided to include the questions "Are cultures separate/ Does everyone have a culture?", in the R school version of the Bean Sheet, (table 7.1), because Terri, a white girl from R school (high proportion minority ethnic) had asked about this during one of the first focus groups. Terri's focus group discussed the complexity of culture, for example some people were of dual heritage (Ali 2003). Some children also felt that culture and religion were very closely linked and they raised the point that if people did not subscribe to a particular religion did that necessarily mean they had no culture? During the focus groups I tried not to influence the discussion and so I refrained from contributing 'answers'. The children decided they wanted to include these questions on the prompt Bean Sheet. Their answers are presented in the sections below.

### 3.2.1 Choosing your Identity

Some children talked about choosing their own identity, as opposed to being born into a particular culture, with a particular identity. British white was categorised by the children in B3 as 'normal'. Joseph, and Louise, both British white, discussed culture:

> Louise: .... people have a right to choose their own culture.
>
> Joseph: What do you mean by that because when someone is born they've got their
>
> own culture- it's not up to them to choose a different culture they'll be
>
> still speaking a culture ............. Like what are you? Half Irish or somat?
>
> Louise: I'm normal
>
> Joseph: You're just normal English? Like if you were born in America and you wanted, and you were English, you were born as an English person, and you came over to this country and you wanted to change, go back to America and be American, you'd still be English even in America so you can't choose your own culture
>
> Sally: Do you think you can?
>
> Louise: You can yeah
>
> Joseph: You can't. If you've got like American
>
> Louise: You can
>
> Joseph: and you want to be English how you going to be English?......
>
> Sally: And can you choose your religion?
>
> Joseph: No. My dad says you can never choose your own culture or religion.
>
> Louise: That's your dad though not me !

During my research I was concerned that the children were using 'culture' and 'religion' interchangeably especially in their answers to this question (as I recorded in my fieldnotes for R school page 15). However this question provided some interesting data on the children's conceptions of culture and identity. In R school's focus group Manpreet, British Asian Sikh girl, said

> Manpreet: So you want to find out what we think – like we're a computer with information and you click on it.

Thus I was reminded that it did not matter if the children used religion and culture interchangeably because I was interested in what they thought.

The following extract from a high proportion minority ethnic school also demonstrates the idea of choosing one's own identity. Marshall, of African heritage, Tejpreet and John, both of British Asian heritage discussed this in D2 interview:

> D2
>
> Marshall: I put yes I think everyone has a culture and if you want you could be more than one and you can make your own up
>
> Sally: You could make your own up? Make your own culture up?
>
> Marshall: I don't know? Yeah like if I want
>
> ....... Like if I want to be naughty scruffy looking that would be my own culture ....... But I wouldn't, I got a *nice* culture ha ha
>
> Sally: Ok Tejpreet what did you put?
>
> Tejpreet: I think cultures are separate because they don't believe in the same gods and stuff like that yeah
>
> Marshall: Isn't that religions - they pray?
>
> Tejpreet: Everyone doesn't have - yeah they have I don't know about that one if they do or not ..........

Marshall had quite a strong personality and was confident in articulating his thoughts. On the other hand, another child Tina, dual heritage British Asian and white was less independent, and her father's influence on some aspects of Tina's behaviour was demonstrated in interview D5.

> Tina: Miss I'm not allowed to eat meat on Tues or Sundays.
>
> Sally: Why not?
>
> Tina: Miss I don't know my dad just said it.
>
> Karen: Some Sikhs on certain days can't eat meat.
>
> Tina: I go to Gurdwara, I go a few times.
>
> Sharish: I go to Mosque every day to read.
>
> Karen: I just play! I put my feet up as well.

The children in X school also talked about 'choice'. In interview X6 Mark said:

> Mark: Cos when I had a choice to believe in God or not I haven't chosen yet-
> cos I don't know yet
>
> Sally: So you say you choose your culture
>
> Mark: Yeah
>
> Jim: I think everyone needs to think of one when they're young but I think adults they need to
> choose like if they're going to be British Asian and what religion they're going
> to choose

In the next section I present extracts concerning dual cultures and religion.

3.2.2 Dual Cultures and Religions

In the following extract from interview D7 Gurdeep, a Sikh boy and Amy a Muslim girl discussed culture and colour:

> Gurdeep: I've seen a Christian lady in the temple.
>
> Sally: How do you know she's a Christian lady ?
>
> Gurdeep: because she's white.
>
> Amy: At my sister's school there are lots of white people Miss but they are
> Muslim and Indians and she wears a suit everyday. Just because they have Jess's [a white
> boy] colour hair doesn't mean they're not Sikh.
>
> Gurdeep: Some Sikhs are white like Jess and you, but this lady was Christian
> and she become a Sikh
>
> Amy: Probably half caste.

In R1 interview identity was discussed in terms of religion and culture. Terri, a white girl, considered the concept of 'pure' heritage. Her use of the term 'pure' suggests superiority as opposed to 'mixed', or 'dual'. Umadeep was a British Asian Sikh boy, and Chloe was a white girl.

> R1
>
> Umadeep: Everyone has a culture but some people have 2 cultures because they
> are probably mixed race.
>
> Sally: What do you mean by that?
>
> Terri: Dual heritage
>
> Umadeep: Yeah because the mum might be British, but the dad might be an African or
> something like that. So he's got two religions.
>
> Terri: Our caretaker Mrs Gadesby her mother is Italian and her father is Indian
>
> Sally: You used the word 'dual heritage' where did you learn that from?
>
> Terri: We've actually been doing about that this morning with Mrs Gardon [head
> teacher who took Mr Denton's class while he was on a course] she said they

call it dual heritage not mixed race.

Sally: *Oh I see - so why was she talking about that then?*

Terri: because a boy in our class called Div went to India and we started talking about him going to see his family and things and we started talking about different cultures and things. We know that heritage is like your family background and things, and if you've got like 'pure' heritage its just like, if you're Christian like, all the way back to your being an Anglo Saxon, you're probably 'pure'. .....

Sally: So what's the difference between culture and religion would you say?

Terri: probably culture is maybe (0.5). Religion doesn't usually talk about the colour of the people, culture is more about the colour and the things they do, and the places and things, religion's more of the Gods and where they pray and things like that - they're kind of different.

In the following extracts I present further thoughts about culture and religion from the children.

### 3.2.3 Remaining in your own Culture and Religion

In R2 Harvir, a British Asian Sikh girl, suggests that it is preferable to remain in one's own culture and marry within it too:

Harvir: My uncle got married to a white person, and it's not her fault, but we Sikhs say that you should get married to the same culture as you, and people who don't, they sort of - it's kind of a sin to God, sort of. You're not meant to, but some people do, and that's their decision, and my uncle did and now he doesn't believe in God. Like, his dad, who's my Granddad- he still talks to him, like that, but he just doesn't believe in God anymore.

Sally: *And, do you mind me asking - you don't have to answer any question at all, what do you think about that?*

Harvir: I think, well, because I am a Sikh it was a wrong thing to do, but because he's older than me I can't really say to him 'you're stupid, you're naughty - you shouldn't have done this'. It's his decision, if he's done that we can't change him and say divorce her or something like that. So what's done is done.

In R6 Maxwell, a white boy, was embarrassed that he did not have a religion like Daniel's Christianity, a Black boy, and Lucy's Sikhism, a British Asian girl:

Daniel: Maxwell in your religion what kind of things do you do on Sunday? 'Cos I was thinking about the people who don't have any religion what they do on umm Sunday ?

Maxwell: Sometimes I go out and go skating or something .

Lucy: what are you then [religion]?

Maxwell: Normal [embarrassed and surprised]

Sally: But do you think some people have no religion.

Lucy: I think everyone has a religion..........

Daniel's religion was so important to him that he was genuinely curious to know what non-religious people 'do' and 'think'. Daniel, Lucy and Maxwell continued to explore the concept of identity and considered other related concepts such as pride in one's own culture, and being a 'nice' person. This theme is picked up again in the next section.

> R6
>
> Daniel: There's a movie I watched that was made in 1951 and it's called
> Imitation of Life, and it's about this girl. And her mother's black, except
> when she was born she turned out to be white, and she keeps on pretending
> she's white, and ummm people abuse her because they find out that she's
> actually black. Her family's black except she's white, and she's
> embarrassed about that (2.3). You shouldn't be embarrassed about what
> colour you are
> Sally: Why do you think she felt she had to pretend that she was white?
> Daniel: Well mainly everyone she knew was white so she wanted to be like that .
> Lucy: She probably didn't wanna be black, but it doesn't matter what you are.
> Daniel: Having friends, it doesn't matter what colour you
> are it doesn't really matter - it matters about your personality really
> and what kind of friends you like to have .

The extracts above demonstrate the variety of the children's opinions about culture while the following section continues with this theme of culture and I proceed next, to categorise the responses.

### 3.3 Responses to : 'What do you Think about Those of a Different Culture?'

Numerous ideas emerged indicating children's 'thoughts about other cultures'. As I read the data I noticed themes emerging (Strauss and Corbin 1998), and I created nodes in N5 to store these ideas. I labelled these ideas (nodes) and present them below with a short explanation:

> *Same but not identical. Many children, in different ways, expressed the concept of all humans being the same but not necessarily being identical. People from different cultures may have different outward appearances, they may have very different customs and beliefs but nevertheless *inside* they are still human.
>
> *Politically correct Some children expressed 'politically correct' opinions, for example they did not use sexist or racist language or gestures.

* White privilege In this section I explore the general assumption that white Western culture is 'normal' (that is the benchmark) and all other cultures are 'different' to the norm thus implying inferiority.

*Important to be nice. What seemed to be important to many children is whether people are nice, moral, kind etc. This was given far more emphasis than what colour they are or their cultural roots.

*Knowledge leads to Harmony, Ignorance leads to Conflict. Numerous children said how important they thought it was to learn about other cultures, some also concluded that knowledge is important in order to dispel fear and ignorance which often led to racist incidents and conflict.


In the following sections I present the extracts which I coded in each of the node headings above and provide a brief commentary. I begin with the view that people are the same but not identical.

3.3.1 Same but Not Identical

A large number of children voiced an opinion that humans are essentially all the same but do not have identical cultures. By using N5 to conduct a text search "same" within the node "AThink?" (What do you think about people of a different culture?) I collected instances where this opinion was expressed, and here I present the extracts which are relevant. I begin with interviews from B school, a predominantly white school, Nicola and Fiona were both British white girls.

> B1
> Nicola: It doesn't matter about a culture - we are all the same (1.1) we're all
> alive and we're all people
> B2
> Fiona: I don't think it makes a difference if someone's
> just a different colour... if they've got a different coloured skin.


Sometimes a contradictory comment occurred. The following two examples from B4 and B5 both referred to different cultures as being different and not at all the same, Bart Matthew and Sophie were all British white:

> B4
> Bart: They're ugly (giggles)
> Sally: They're ugly? - so you think people who aren't the same culture as you are ugly? [Bart nods]

B5

Matthew: Like Tasim 'cos he's umm half caste and he's a vegetarian and so

we're not like him .....They [Chinese] speak different to us and like they they can read books

different and when we speak to them- they speak English to us and they can play a bit

different to us sometimes

Sophie: They are strange, and they are different

than us too. They ain't got the same stuff and the same religions as us

The majority of children, however, expressed the "same but not identical" opinion in a more positive way. In D3 interview Tazia, Zena, both British Asian Muslims and Rosie, British Asian Sikh, made this point repeatedly as the following extracts from the high proportion minority ethnic schools demonstrate:

Rosie: they are the same they're just a different colour to us ....they're just

persons, people they're not like animals or something

Zena: And I would be the same way that I always

am, and I wouldn't make them feel low about what I said or what I did...I think they should be

treated the same way as other people

This point is raised again in D7 interview where two British Asian children and one white boy agreed:

Gurdeep: [I think all people are] same as me. I don't think Jesus is good or bad or my God is

good or bad I think they are the same Hindus are [the]same, every culture [the same]. .

Jess: It doesn't really matter what colour you are

Gurdeep: I don't think, he's poor I'm rich, I think we're the same.

Amy: I've got a friend she's half caste she's half English half Indian it

doesn't matter we're all the same.

Similarly during a discussion in interview R3 two British Asian girls and one dual heritage girl discussed 'sameness':

Francesca: ..... we all have arms and we all have legs - it's just that we all

might be different sizes and we may have a different coloured skin or

lighter hair.

In interview R6 Daniel, a British African boy, and Maxwell, a white boy, discussed the non identical nature of religions but the sameness of the concept of 'religion':

Daniel: I think every religion is the same except in different

ways because every single religion has a God involved with it somehow -

it must be the same ...... errr gods are worshipped in different ways.

In the following extract from X5 interview Cassie and Saz, both white children, discussed 'normal' it is Saz's comment which entitled this section:

> Cassie: Because they look like Carl's dad - he's like that - Pakistani and
>
> errm he's like normal like normal like us like our culture -
>
> Saz: Everybody's normal ....
>
> Sally: What did you mean everyone's normal?
>
> Saz: I meant like everyone's the same but not really identical I think everyone should be
>
> treated the same .........People are all the same they've got umm the same hearts and that.
>
> Everything's the same inside them it's just where they come from that
>
> gives them different skin colour (3.1)

In this interview Cassie offered an explanation for everyone being the same but not identical because she had some Black relatives. This led Saz to contradict her 'evolution theory' and he offered a fundamentalist explanation for the origin of humans. Saz was one of only two children to write "Christian" as his religion on the background information sheet:

> X5
>
> Cassie: I don't know much about them [the Black relatives]- they are really
>
> distant but I know how I'm related to them
>
> Saz: Everyone's related to everyone
>
> Sally: Are they?
>
> Saz: Yeah cos in a way I'm related to her- only met up with her when I got to X town
>
> Sally: How do you know you are related to each other?
>
> Saz: Because of Adam and Eve the first people on the planet
>
> Cassie: Yeah but I believe that my Great great great grandad was a gorilla or something.
>
> Sally: Do you believe that [Saz]?
>
> Saz: No - I believe that humans were humans from the start. If we did start from gorillas then
>
> gorillas wouldn't be around now. And the gorillas in cages have been there for hundreds of
>
> years they would have evolved by now so I don't really think about it
>
> Sally: Have you thought that yourself or have your family told you?
>
> Saz: I saw it on walking with dinosaurs- something like that and history
>
> programmes on BBC 2.

Saz misunderstood evolutionary theory and also misrepresented *Walking with Dinosaurs* which is based on Evolutionary Theory [16]. However the extract offers an interesting insight into his attitude and its origin.

Many of these extracts demonstrate the viewpoint held by the majority of children that humans are the same because we all share similar physical characteristics but we differ from each other in beliefs we hold, and physical characteristics we may have. In the next section I look at the children's reactions to these 'differences'.


3.3.2 Politically Correct

When considering the differences between different cultures some of the children displayed 'politically correct' or 'non politically correct' positions (Garner 1994; Hutton 2001)[17], mainly concerning British Chinese. For example in interview R4 the children spoke and behaved in non politically correct ways, however Rachel, a dual heritage Caribbean and white girl, realised this and corrected herself:

> Rachel: they [British Chinese] have round faces and their eyes are like that [pulling at the sides of her eyes].
>
> Sally: OK so you're making a gesture with the corner of your eyes.
>
> Rachel: Hee hee that's Chinese. I shouldn't have done that - but their eyes look different, are kind of different.
>
> Sally: Why do you say you shouldn't have done that ?
>
> Rachel: Because it looks like, it looks really, it sounds really mean when I do
>
> it because well .... if someone like Chinese was in the room - they would feel
>
> really offended.

In interview R6 the children were 'very politically correct' although they recognised that non politically correct behaviour is prevalent, (I quoted from this interview earlier). In both these extracts the target of the non politically correct behaviour was the Chinese, who were not represented in R school:

> Daniel: Some of the children there used to do this 'I'm a Chinese and
>
> I look like a dork'.......
>
> Sally: none of you did that did you just now?
>
> All: no
>
> Daniel: I think it's rude when people do that ...What about how would they feel if Chinese people make fun of the way their eyes look.

---

[16] For debates surrounding Evolutionary Theory see http://www.spaceandmotion.com/Charles-Darwin-Theory-Evolution.htm

[17] I discuss political correctness later in chapter 8.

Some of the children in interview B6, are unashamedly non politically correct. I quoted earlier Max's comments about his father's dislike of 'brown skinned people'. This is a predominantly white school, the two white boys and one dual heritage child talked about other cultures. Importantly the fieldwork in B school took place shortly after September 11th 2001 when anti-Muslim feeling was prevalent.

> Johnny: I don't mind if someone's a different culture to me
>
> Max: I don't like them unless they are people that I know - like Sikh culture, only the people
>
> that I know that I like - I don't like the Hindus, some of them, because
>
> like they don't like us. Some of them, they hate whites and that's why we
>
> hate them. And Bin Laden he's like he's a (2.1) killer. He like tries to kill like
>
> British people and ermm America (2.3) and umm I don't like em.
>
> So I don't like em unless they're people that I know

Some children also spoke about name calling. The following extract is from R4 interview:

> Rachel: Joe called her a Paki and then she went off crying... 'cos people refer to people as
>
> Pakis as people who are Indian, and I'm not being racist, but they umm they do and the person
>
> [Joe] who called the person [the girl]...she isn't an Indian at all she's white, so.
>
> Sally: Oh so it was a person calling a white person Paki and they weren't
>
> Pakistani or Indian anyway.
>
> Rachel: no the person wasn't even Indian either. I'm not being racist.

The extracts above illustrate that to varying degrees, children were aware of politically correct and non politically correct behaviour and speech. As I became more familiar with the transcripts I began to notice that some children implicitly held a white privilege stance.

### 3.3.3 British Equals White (White Privilege Comments)

Many children made comments, which suggested a white privilege position. Many used the language of white Western, and often Christian, beliefs and values when describing cultures. I coded these comments at a node and present some examples below. In interview B6, two white boys described the Muslim festival of Id by using Christian language:

> Max: They [Muslims] have like a Christmas just before ours- it's because like the moon - they
>
> always have it at different times. It's called Id

Even the one Muslim boy in the group adopted this white privilege language describing a Muslim festivals in Christian language:

> Johnny : Cos I have 3 Christmases a year- one on 25<sup>th</sup> Dec one on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec and one on Feb the [ 0.9] 11<sup>th</sup>.[18]

Tina, Muslim and white dual heritage made a similar statement in interview D5:

> Tina: Muslims have Id like their Christmas to us.
>
> Sally: Why did you say Christmas
>
> Tina: Because English have Christmas Miss and their Christmas is like [pause 1.2] it's like their Christmas really.
>
> Sally : So do they have a Jesus then Tina?
>
> Tina: no miss but they have different gods.

It might be that these children compare Id with Christmas because that is vocabulary with which they are familiar (and which they presume I am also familiar). The 'Gurdwara' extract from R3 below, illustrates this. They may not have been able to articulate that Id is a festival which is of great importance to Muslims because of its historical significance (Fisher 2002). They might have found it difficult to describe, for example, the story behind the festival, what it means to Muslims today, its inner meaning and so on. Perhaps they thought it was easier to make the comparison with Christmas which they obviously considered to be universally recognised as an important time. Nevertheless the children were thereby assuming that Christmas was a benchmark which every other festival can be compared to, as Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) note in their pluralist multiculturalist category - "Hannukah is the Jewish Christmas". I never came across a child saying Christmas is the Christian Id.

Similarly when discussing clothes in D6 Carlo, a Muslim boy, refers to Asian and British clothes, with the implicit understanding that Western (white) clothes are British.

> Carlo: Miss Asians they wear mixed clothes, they wear everything saris trousers everything, their own Kameez and they wear British clothes- all kinds of clothes.

---

[18] Here Johnney was referring to Id-Ul- Fitr and Id Mubarak (Fisher 2002).

Some children did differentiate and call trousers, skirts, T shirts and so on, 'Western' clothes but these were usually children in the high proportion minority ethnic schools.

Another example of children using white privilege vocabulary can be found in R3 where two Asian girls use the word 'church' rather than Gurdwara.

> R3
>
> Monica: I come to know about other cultures because like at school I learn it from my friends and that, and from home. When I go to like church, on some days, and my family's..
>
> Sally: you go to what?
>
> Monica: Church on some days and my family like tells me about my religion...
>
> Sally: Could I ask you what your religion is? You don't have to answer.
>
> Monica: Sikh
>
> Sally: But you go to church as well?
>
> Monica: Yeah on some days - go to the Sikh temple
>
> Sally: So you go to the Sikh temple on Sundays and you call it church
>
> Monica: Yes still because when we say church we say 'Gurdwara' but it might be like hard for like English people to pronounce so we just say church as well
>
> Sally: Oh I see were you just doing that for me because I might not know what Gurdwara meant
>
> All; yeah [shyly]
>
> Sally: If I'd have been an Asian person would you have said Gurdwara
>
> Monica: Maybe maybe not, because if others are going to hear it, they might not, if they aren't Asian, they might not understand it. They'd want to know what it meant and it's easier to say it in English ......I say like to my friends "Oh I took Memuna to the Gurdwara on Sunday" 'cos now they all know what it means, because we talk about our religion to each other and so they know what it means.

It became clear from my line of questioning these Sikh British Asian girls were using a white Christian vocabulary because they expected this to be the language I would be using, and the readers of my research would be familiar with too. Thus white Christian language is the common language of usage. Similarly some of the British Asian children even described their own names as 'unusual' or 'difficult', - meaning that they were unusual, different or difficult for white people.

> Harvir: You'll never remember my name because it's long and peculiar.
> Because I'm different I'm Indian, Sikh.

As stated earlier in chapter 5, many of the British Asian children chose Western names as their pseudonym, because, they told me, they thought these would be easier to understand - thus denoting the children's assumption of white Western privilege in academia.

The next extract shows that the dominance of white Western culture is not all pervasive. (In the next chapter I refer to Kincheloe and Steinberg's (1997) types of multiculturalisms). As I have argued elsewhere (Elton-Chalcraft 2002b) there were a significant number of children in both types of schools who appreciated that Western white culture may be the dominant culture but one does not have to conform to it as this next example from interview D1 demonstrates. Melissa, Black African Caribbean heritage girl, high proportion minority ethnic school and Zoe British Asian Muslim, discussed Amy, a British Asian:

> Melissa: Amy's an Asian - she's an Indian and she wears proper clothes like white people, like normal people wear
>
> Zoe: It depends what you're allowed to wear......
>
> Melissa:....she doesn't really like wearing clothes like these [points to Zoe's] because she gets embarrassed ...that people might make fun of her, [of] what she wears because of her religion...
>
> Zoe: Really you shouldn't be embarrassed about your own culture because that's your own culture and if people don't like it then you shouldn't really care.....you should go ahead and wear what you want and be what you want with your own culture..........

However Melissa did not view all issues from the dominant white perspective (as Zoe and I were doing) as the following extract demonstrates where Melissa told me what she knew about British Asians:

> Melissa: It's not really my culture ... they go to the mosque every day - well most Muslims do. .....they have light skin.
>
> Sally: Light skin?
>
> Zoe: ....It's normally dark (laughing)
>
> Melissa: But it's lighter than mine 'cos mine is the darkest.

It could be argued that Melissa undermined the Kincheloe and Steinberg model (1997) of viewing the dominant culture as white Western. Melissa, viewed her own culture/ skin colour as the 'normal' one and thus defined Asian skin colour as light.

In interview X1 (predominantly white school) Lisette, a white girl, told me what she knew about British Chinese people:

> Lisette: British Chinese people would probably wear the same clothes [as us] because they would want to like blend in to us....I don't think they believe in God because that's like British- like master.....at home, they might not know how to use a knife and fork, so they might bring their own chopsticks over......

Lisette thought about this and later commented

> Lisette: 'cos it depends what you're used to - they're used to like a chopstick, and we're used to a knife and fork.

Lisette moved between the monoculturalist and liberal multi culturalist stance (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997) she expected those of another culture to 'adapt' to the dominant culture but she did not want them to seem 'inferior'. I discuss this in more detail in chapter 8.

In the three sections above, 'the same but not identical', 'politically correct', and 'white privilege', I have categorised some of the children's comments concerning their attitudes towards other people and also their own implicitly held beliefs. In the next section I describe another attitude which was common among many of the children, the importance of 'being nice'.

### 3.3.4 'Important to be Nice'

Many children felt it is "important to be nice" to people of a different culture. This benevolent attitude can also be detected in the comments categorised in the politically correct section where I show that many children thought it important to be politically correct and not make fun of other cultures. In the following extracts I present comments in which the children explicitly mention how important they think it is to be 'nice', which could be interpreted as adopting an anti-racist attitude. Melissa, a Black African Caribbean heritage girl, Zoe and Kate, both British Asian Muslim girls, discussed 'being nice':

> D1:
>
> Melissa: ...It says in our Bible that we should not judge ......if somebody's nasty to me, [the] Bible tells me that if somebody's nasty to me, I can still act nice to them and not be horrible to them but be nice back to them
>
> Zoe: And if someone does something to you you should keep it in your heart, just pretend that it never happened just carry on the same

It emerged that Melissa and Zoe had experienced an incident themselves. I found their re telling of this extremely moving and I was honoured that they felt able to disclose this:

> Melissa: [same time] I pulled Zarka's trousers down once I pulled her trousers down in there [points to classroom next door] ......Miss every day I was bullying her and everything
>
> Zoe: Now we're alright with each other aren't we Melissa? But in year 4 we were.....
>
> Melissa: Year 3
>
> Zoe: Year 4 it was year 4 last year. It used to be me and this boy called Bilal because we used to sit on this desk and Melissa was there too and she used to poke us with pencils and punch us and she used to make fun of us and our religion and so I didn't like that, I couldn't take it any more 'cos it had like been happening for 2 weeks and then I told my dad that I couldn't take it, and then my dad went into school, and he like talked to my teacher last year, and my teacher told Mrs Winter [the headteacher] and then [it got] sorted out, and then Melissa wrote a note of apology to me; and now we're friends
>
> Melissa: Miss I don't know, sometimes, I'm very cruel to people for some reason I've got this person in me that's telling me to do these things – 'do that and be naughty' but this other person in me is saying 'be nice Melissa don't be nasty to people' - don't know what it is. .......My sister loved this balloon it was so nice and I popped it yesterday.

Melissa obviously knew what being 'nice' entailed, she just found it difficult to implement. In interview D3 three British Asian girls raised this issue of being 'nice':

> Zena: You should behave the same way like you behave to other people, different like cultures, as they are to me like, should behave the same.
>
> Sally: Have any of you experienced ... people being not very nice to you?
>
> All: Yes
>
> Tazia: I was going home yesterday and this little girl she [was] calling something not polite and I said you shouldn't call other people and so she said to me you're one too and I said well I really don't want to say it to you just think about it yourself if someone said it to you and she went quiet

Some of the children suggested reasons why people might not be 'nice'. In interview R5 John, David, both white boys and Alan, British Asian Sikh boy who chose a Western pseudonym, talked about the importance of being nice and why they think some people are not:

> R5
>
> David: I just hate people who call people racist names.
>
> John: It makes the street all not nice - we want a happy world not like

umm not a sad world. We want everyone to be kind to everyone else, like

Chinese ...we want white people to be kind to Chinese people and Chinese people

to be kind to us .

Sally: Why do you think people are ..well we've talked about racist, why do

you think people are racist?

Alan: because they don't like our skin colour.

John: They look 'funny' and sometimes when they pray or something they

might get laughed at - they laugh at them because ..

Alan: [interrupted] Yeah and white people laugh at Indian names.

Many children added the clause of "I'll be nice to those of another culture if they are nice to me." Two white girls at X school in interview X4 said:

Louisa: I behave the same to people of a different culture to me if they are nice to me .

Faye: I think you should treat them how you wanted to be treated

The extracts above describe children's opinions in relation to 'being nice'. In the next section I present extracts where children developed this concept and suggested that it is important to learn about other cultures to ensure future harmony in the world and to avoid conflict.

3.3.5 Knowledge Leads to Harmony, Ignorance Leads to Conflict

Most children felt that it was important to learn about other cultures to promote racial harmony. In interview X5, Cassie and Saz, both white children, thought that social integration is the key to racial harmony:

Cassie: I don't think it's like this country is just for white people and it's very rare to see like

black people. I think it's just a country that we just like share

Saz: Cos you can't claim that one spot of the earth is to be ours ...

Cassie: I think we should have like more black people ....more white people in

black areas and more black people in white areas.................then we'll get to know what they

are like and it'll stop most wars

Sally: has anyone talked to you about that?

Cassie: I've just seen all the stuff on television about wars and stuff and murders of

Black people in Manchester.

This links with my research in Southern Germany where there was an experiment to integrate Turkish Muslims into indigenous German culture by housing the Turks alongside indigenous Germans living on the outskirts of Heidelberg. Unfortunately the experiment was not successful (according to many Germans I spoke with), as the

Turks, reportedly, vandalised public places and "drank too much vodka" (interview with Fr B).

Marshall, a boy of Caribbean heritage, in interview D2 however saw another important reason for learning about other cultures which he tells Tejpreet, a British Asian Sikh boy:

> Marshall: It's important to know about other people's religions because if you want to go on "Who wants to be a Millionaire?"[19] and he [Chris Tarrant, the presenter] says "Who was the King of Reggae in Jamaica?" and they [the multiple choice answers] go "Bob Marley, Cliff Richard, Spice girls..."
>
> John:[interrupted] Everyone would know that - Bob Marley.
>
> Sally: Right! Are there any other reasons [for wanting to know about different cultures] apart from winning "Who wants to be a Millionaire"?
>
> Tejpreet: because at secondary school you learn different languages and go to like other countries.

Despite the seemingly frivolous last extract, many children mentioned the importance of learning about other cultures to establish cultural and racial harmony. Many children talked about conflict, and in the next section I take up this point.

## 4 Behaviour Towards those of a Different Culture

When asked about behaviour towards other cultures many children described both national and global events e.g. Oldham riots, September 11th 2001 and also local events e.g. incidents in the local shop and events in which they had been personally involved. In the sections below I present these comments and interpret them in relation to my study. This relates to sections 1 and 3 in the matrix, table 7.2, where I systematise and compare children's multicultural awareness.

### 4.1 National and Global Events

In B4 interview Bart, a British white boy, and Kurt, of British white and Carribean heritage, discussed international events, not always respectfully:

> Bart: ...in Afghanistan my uncle's fighting with them [the Taliban] killing that
> man trying to kill that man errm ....Bin Laden ......
> Kurt: I've seen Sky sports errm sky sports news I've seen Taliban in their
> big army suits and their big bullet guns and that lot or the Taliban

---

[19] A television game show where contestants have to answer general knowledge questions to win money prizes.

troops and I've seen the Afghanistan having a war.... 'cos the army man come and he started getting stones and chucking them at the army man and one of them landed in his nose [giggles] and one landed in the gob.

In interview B2 British white girls discussed national and global events

Fiona: On the news people who are white have been fighting with people who are

Black in Oldham and Burnley.......

Claire: Well there have been two incidents between two countries India and

Pakistan, where people have been fighting over each other's town called

Kashmir .... There's this town in India and Pakistan - Kashmir - and the Indians

want Pakistani Kashmir and the Pakistanis want the Indian part of

Kashmir, and people are fighting and there was fighting in Afghanistan -

the terrorists were driving planes into the World Trade Centre causing

over 10,000 people to die, and they were doing that because this man Osama

bin Laden told them to get revenge, and whoever started it, like, that

people, and they are on the run and they are trying to find Osama bin Laden

and the war - lots of Afghanistan people are killed and they are living in

lots of underground caves.

As well as describing national and international events concerning behaviour towards those of a different culture, the children also talked about incidents nearer to home.

## 4.2 Local Events, Personal Experience

Children spoke of first hand experiences when discussing 'behaviour towards those of another culture'. In interview D4, Harry and Kilik two white boys, and Ashley, a Muslim girl, discussed the proper and improper use of terminology especially in terms of inter racial conflict:

Harry: He [Roy -a Muslim boy identified by numerous children as a bully] calls white people names sometimes

Sally: Oh right (1.2) And what do you feel when that happens?

Ashley: miserable embarrassed in front of Muslims

Harry: Well it depends how he [Roy] uses the names - if he calls us gora well I think that actually in Asian that means 'whitie' they don't use it in a racist way so I think it depends how you use the word.

Hasna: Gora?

Harry: Like if you say somebody's Black you mean it in a racist way like you say 'blackie' or something to them - to umm be horrible because of their race that is racist but if you say they're Black just as

Kilik: Yeah just saying they're Black

Harry: Yeah not as an insult then I don't think it's racist

In the following extracts children spoke of behaviour they had witnessed. In interview B3 Louise said:

Louise: Like umm last Friday I was going to the shop and there was this [British Asian] person there and this boy Anthony and he turned around to him and called him a Paki

Sally: And what did you do?

Louise: I just said Anthony stop being nasty to him 'cos you wouldn't like it if he was nasty to you

Sally: And what did Anthony say?

Louise: He just swore and went off

Sally: And how old's Anthony?

Louise: He's about 12

Sally: And do you know Anthony very well?

Louise: No but he's nasty and he beats people up.

In interview X1 two British white girls discussed a local event:

Lisette: There was once a fight in a chip shop over black and white skin, and black people aren't allowed in this country and that's what the fight was about...[they are] allowed in this country I think it's a load of rubbish.

Leah: I'm fine with black people in our country. IT'S A FREE COUNTRY [in capitals on Bean Sheet]

In interview X2 Toni, of Italian heritage, put forward another view of Blacks being racist towards whites:

Toni: The people on the news think they are so perfect and they think Pakistan is so perfect ohh and you're being racist. It's not always like that .

Sally: So you think sometimes the people in picture A are actually also being racist to the white people

Toni: Yeah 'cos they're not exactly perfect, they could, when they get home, say let's have a good laugh about them.

Toni also talked to Spike, a white boy, about what he did personally for those less fortunate than himself:

Toni: You know those Christmas boxes for Romania? Yeah well I never give my toys I ask my Dad to go and buy some new toys

Spike: It's a bit unfair getting old toys. Well it is kind of fair but if you go and buy new stuff it's even better

Toni: One of my friends came round my house when I'd got one of the boxes and I
can't remember what it was but it was really good in the new fashion it
might have been a yoyo and my friend goes 'Ohh my god you giving a yoyo to
one of them little kids over there' and I said 'why not you have one don't
you why can't they have one?' He probably put in a MacDonald's toy or something

In the following extract from interview X5 Cassie and Saz discussed episodes where they felt Asian or African Caribbean people were being racist towards white people:

Saz: Well in Sheffield the Pakistani man in the corner shop in Sheffield he ummm he was
being extremely nasty to my cousin ..... he was being racist- he said 'you English people you
get on my nerves'......Because we were taking too long to choose which sweets
we wanted. Anyway we didn't buy any sweets from there in the end.

In X6 interview Mark, a white boy, discussed a hypothetical local incident which illustrates behaviour from a white privilege stance:

Mark: If they don't speak your language and they're walking down the street and
there's an emergency they've seen yeah, and they want to talk to you about
what's happened and they talk a different language, you won't be able to
hear 'em, and so if they learn English I won't mind them, because I don't
mind people who are just a different coloured skin. I just don't like it
if they don't speak my language

Both these sections which record children's descriptions of behaviour towards those of another culture (both global and local) demonstrate a variety of stances. Indeed throughout the analysis I noticed extremes of opinion ranging from very politically correct and anti-racist attitudes of children who are aware of cultural differences, and who want all people to live in harmony with each other; through to the children who have strong, sometimes racist opinions, about those who 'are different' or who are a threat to the children themselves or their community. As stated at the outset one of my central research aims was to discover the possible influences for these opinions, which I describe in the next section.

## 5 Possible Influences

I was fascinated by the diversity of the children's thoughts and beliefs. I was curious to discover possible influences for their knowledge about, and attitudes towards, other cultures. Evidence for these possible influences can be extracted from what the

children actually said which I have referred to as 'grounded/explicit influences'. But also I have deduced from the data instances which I call 'deduced/implicit influences'. Nevertheless both deduced/implicit and grounded/explicit influences still need to be viewed in terms of *possible* influences as it is impossible to *prove* their absolute validity, although I have tried to cross-reference as much as possible and verify all possible influences, whether grounded or deduced, by reference to fieldnotes, documentation and other references in the interviews.

I have organised the possible influences for children's knowledge and attitudes under four headings:

- School – both hidden and formal curriculum (intended and operational)
- Acquaintances – both close friends, peers or people they know
- Parents
- Television (including videos and films seen at the cinema)

I realise that in fact there may be many more possible influences but these were the main ones either mentioned or deduced in the data. These four sub sections relate both to explicit answers the children gave to the question : How do you know about other cultures? (From home, school, television, friends etc.), which I coded in N5 under the heading '*I' (influence). Within each of the four sections there are both grounded/explicit possible influences and deduced/implicit possible influences.

5.1 School

In the previous chapter I discussed the formal and hidden curriculum within the context of the character and ethos of the four schools. Here I develop this theme further with particular reference to the semi structured interviews. I coded all references to school in a node using N5 the computer data analysis package (Richards, L. 2000).

5.1.1 Hidden Curriculum

I was interested in the influence of the hidden curriculum, this involves the teacher's attitude, their view of the child,[20] the ethos of the school, displays and assemblies. In interview B5 the children discussed assemblies, which were multicultural in R school. I observed a whole school assembly about Id Mubarak where children were told about the meaning of this Muslim festival and some were invited to participate in re enacting certain customs, as I explained in the previous chapter.

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[20] James's 4 fold typology of views of children (1995) as discussed earlier in chapter 5 of the thesis.

Children in B school, predominantly white, could recount the Hindu Ramayana story which they had heard in assembly. In B6 the three white children could identify features in B picture (see appendix) because of what they had learnt in assembly:

> B6
>
> Jeremy: I heard it in assembly
>
> Max: So did I. Ravana is like at the base of the sea
>
> Jeremy: He had to make a bridge over the sea to get to the island
>
> Johnny: And I can tell that's Rama and Sita 'cos like Rama is wearing a mask
>
> and he's got his bow and arrow and his sword

(I discussed the hidden curriculum in the previous chapter and I also return to this discussion in chapters 8 and 9.)


### 5.1.2 Formal Curriculum

Here I discuss what is taught and what is learnt, the operational and intended curriculum, (Arthur et al 2006), during formal lesson time. As mentioned above I would argue that there may be a link between teachers' views of children[21] and their teaching. Issues concerning 'socialisation, nature and nurture' are also explored (Waksler 1991, Mackay 2000).

During B1 interview the three British white children recount what they have learnt about different countries using maps, this implies that they consider people from other cultures who live in this country to actually 'belong' to another country not to Britain. In B2 Fiona, a white girl, discussed what she had learnt:

> Fiona: I learnt a lot from school because sometimes we watch videos
> about other cultures at school.


Numerous children in D school talked about 'study days', when all the junior children went off timetable and everyone had a day of RE which was often based around a festival. There would be extra people, parents and members of the faith communities who would work alongside teachers or act as consultants for art/ dance, poetry connected with the religious festival. Melissa, of Caribbean heritage discussed this:

> D1
>
> Melissa: Then we go round in our groups and one will be art and one will be

---

[21] Classifiable according to James's (1995) four fold typology which I discussed in the methodology chapter 5.

writing one will be drawing one will be making a big picture and
sometimes we even get to do a dance like we do a Chinese dance and we do
dances for Divali and Baisakhi as well, with sticks, and get someone to
dance around you. And a teacher comes, a teacher teaches us how to do the
dance- it's usually a teacher which is Indian. They know how to do the
Divali dance ... I asked my, our, Headteacher if some people in our class....could do
things about our own religion and we asked if we could do a dance or something ...she lets us
'cos we really want to show what we learn about in our religion as well

In the first of the next two extracts Zena a British Asian Muslim girl, suggested that friends and television told her more about other cultures than school. Whereas in the second extract from interview R2 Toxic has obviously learnt a great deal from school:

D3

Zena: And I think it was it was on Friday we did some RE we had a sheet and we had to order these things what's the most importantist... that you should believe in: 'God', and 'you shouldn't drink alcohol', and stuff about that and we had a sheet about RE; and school tells you about umm cultures as well. But I think that television and friends tell you more about it.

R2

Toxic: And in RE -it builds information on other religions like err Muslims because I ..until I was err about 8, I didn't even know there was any other religions - about Muslims, and now I know what their God is called and how they read their Qu'ran

Unfortunately sometimes learning about other cultures in school was not a positive experience as Alan, of Asian heritage, in interview R5 explains. John and David were both white:

Sally: So when you say school what kind of things do you learn at school
John: In year 4 we did India
Alan: We did the Gurdwara
John: We talked about all the Indian people
Alan: And when we did Indian songs white people start laughing at us
John: Because sometimes we do PE and we did some Indian music too .. This lady was making a dance to do, and everyone was laughing, because it was stupid
David: It's like the Israel one and European dance and that woman
started singing and everyone, nearly everyone in the class was laughing I was one that wasn't.

As I noted in chapter 5 in X school I was unable to observe an RE lesson. I was told that no RE was to be taught to any of the year 5 classes during my 6 weeks at the school. There was very little mention of RE lessons in X school. At the beginning of

my fieldwork in X school, when I asked the children to list the subjects they learnt in school very few mentioned RE. They seemed to either not know, or to have forgotten about it (X fieldnotes page 2). The following extracts highlight this point:

> Lisette: Yeah we watched a video, I can't remember ... I can't remember what culture they were from, like Chinese Hindus or what ever. But one touched like a little piece of metal sort of thing and rubbed it on their finger like and then did the sign of the cross on their forehead

During phase one of the research in X school I was told an interesting fact about the timetabling of RE by a white boy:

> Steve: Well we are supposed to have RE on Friday afternoon but if it's a nice day we do games outside instead.

As it was a very warm summer this may explain why I was unable to observe any RE during my 6 week research period at X school.

Other children from X school felt they had not learnt very much about other cultures from school. This can be seen in interviews X5 and X6 below. The white children were asked where they learnt about other cultures:

> X5
>
> Saz: From my granddad's house in Sheffield that's where [I learn about]most other cultures - cos we haven't been doing RE in our class for ages
>
> X6
>
> Jim: [I learnt about other cultures from] my mum and television and visiting things - like China town, and we normally learn about it at school in RE, Geography, science and something like that
>
> Sid: I learn about other cultures from school. When you first came here you asked us if we knew anything about other cultures and I don't think any of us did- I didn't.

The validity of these statements is re enforced by my observations, discussions with teachers and examination of the children's work. As I discuss in the next chapter there was a variety of practice concerning multicultural education in the four schools.

## 5.2 Acquaintances

Children often stated that they have learnt about other religions from either people who they know or from their friends, which I coded at a node 'acquaintances' in N5. For example in interviews X4, D1 and D5:

> X4

> Liz: My older brother's got a friend who's Hindi and that's how I came to know
> about this stuff he used to live by the Devonshire hospital but he's moved now.
> D1
> Melissa : ... I put I found out from my friends
> Zoe : I think Melissa did find out
> from her friends because she's always asking like what do you do and all
> that- she's asked me quite a few times as well about my religion - so, it's true
> D5
> Ashley: [I know about] Indians Divali – [you're] not allowed to go out their house at Divali
> and not allowed to eat meat- well that's what my friend told me.

The Sikh and Hindu children in interview R3 described how they told their friends about their religions:

> Monica (Sikh) : When I am talking to some of my like Asian friends I say like I went to the
> Gurdwara on Sunday and sometimes I like take my friend - she's like half caste she's half
> Indian and half English and her name's Anisha and we take her some days .....
> Francesca (Hindu): Not every Sunday but sometimes every
> month on Sunday - it's not regularly each month, sometimes we go to the
> temple and there's a dinner festival and we all sing some songs and I've
> learnt this one at home and I've written it in my book and I've learnt it
> and my friend came a couple of months ago in the church
> Monica: She sang it to us in front of the class and it sounded so nice.

Sometimes knowledge from friends or acquaintances can be negative because only one side of the story is presented. Lisette in X1 talked about Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs which she had learnt about from her younger brother's friend and his nursery teachers, which I quoted earlier in this chapter. However the portrayal of Jehovah's Witness doctrine was somewhat pejorative as Lisette recounted only the negative aspects of non celebration of festivals as I noted earlier.

By way of contrast in X6 Sid, a white boy has a positive attitude towards Chinese New year:

> Sid: I went with my friend to see the Chinese dragons in Manchester and I
> thought these people aren't doing this for the fun of it and for people
> to actually see it and enjoy it. They're doing it to celebrate their New
> Year, like when we celebrate Christmas by getting people presents they are
> celebrating as well by putting massive fire crackers on buildings.

In interview R2 Harvir spoke of a representative from the local Cathedral who came to talk to the Sikh community at the local Gurdwara.

As well as acquaintances (friends, peers, visitors) children talked a great deal about what they had learnt from parents as the next section demonstrates.

## 5.3 Parents

Children often cited parents or 'home' as being an influence on their knowledge and understanding and I coded instances of this at a node 'parents' for example:

> B2
>
> Daljit (British Asian): my mum [has] not many, but she's got a few books but I used to look in most of them but she hasn't got much now.

I had asked the children to write their <u>own</u> ideas on the prompt 'bean' sheet but I also encouraged them to be open about the origin of these ideas. Sometimes the children admitted they had been influenced by their parents:

> B3
>
> Joseph: I'd like to disagree because they don't eat noodles in that language
>
> because they don't like spicy stuff and I don't think what Sarah put
>
> about the fish and chips - because they don't umm like umm fish because it's ....
>
> Louise: My mum told me anyway
>
> Joseph: because some of the people are allergic
>
> to it. Fish they can get ummmm they can get ummm rashes from it
>
> Sally: you said your mum told you?
>
> Louise: No (giggles)
>
> Sally: She did, but I'm not going to tell you Ms Elton-Chalcraft! (all giggle) Did she?
>
> Louise: She told me that bit

Again in B3 Shana, of British African/Caribbean heritage, admitted that her mum helped her. Often the children seemed uncomfortable about leaving a section blank on the prompt sheet. This may be because the present climate in schools today is insistent that all answers be attempted (Arthur et al 2006), especially in SATS papers (QCA 2006):

> Sally: it says [on your sheet] where my mum works
>
> there are different cultures French German Polish Spanish
>
> Shana: my mum just told me to write that 'cos I didn't know at first and then I did the rest.

The children were sometimes explicit about the origin of their attitudes – "my dad says..." or "my mum says...." was often mentioned:

Again in interview B3

> Sally: And can you choose your religion?
>
> Joseph: No . My dad says you can never choose your own culture or religion.
>
> Louise: That's your dad though not me

In interview B4 and B6 the British white children have obviously listened to parental opinion:

> Bart (British white): And my dad said ahhh look at this Bin Laden ha ha, and I don't think he likes him
>
> B6
>
> Jeremy: Uh huh - my dad thinks Bin Laden's got something up his sleeve - he's
>
> going to hire something. My dad says he's got no chance of going to
>
> America. Cos my dad said America's not on our team but it's in our country

In interview D1 Zoe, a British Asian Muslim girl, was aware that her mother spoke little English. Melissa was keen to show that her mother did tell her some things

> Zoe: She just knows like 'Hello' and all that but she doesn't know how to
>
> speak like proper sentences in English not many of my family know how to
>
> speak in English but just my uncle he can like speak in English
>
> Sally: and your Dad?
>
> Zoe: Yeah and my Dad, not many ladies know how to speak in English.
>
> Some errr, people think that Asians are vegetarian but [they are] not because they
>
> do eat meat, but we cook it and eat it
>
> Melissa: You eat halal meat first don't you ?
>
> Kate: Yeah we say something special before we kill the meat ........
>
> Melissa: They eat halal meat
>
> Sally: What's that?
>
> Melissa: It's umm meat I think they pray on it and then they eat it and cook it
>
> Sally: How did you know that?
>
> Melissa: I just found out, miss my mum told me .......
>
> Kate: ..... China the country is ummm Asia , I think it's the biggest
>
> one in Asia the biggest country
>
> Sally: Ok how did you know that?
>
> Kate: miss my mum knows a lot and my dad

Terri, a British white girl, in R1 was embarrassed by her father's negative attitudes. Terri herself had a positive attitude towards those of another culture:

Terri: I learnt from school and home because sometimes, well my Dad isn't too keen on people from different countries coming into this country because sometimes my Dad, ummm well my Dad's left now, but sometimes my Dad said things and my mum said "What he means is .." and then she started explaining it all and that and then I'd understand it.

Children also spoke about watching films with their families. Monica, Francesca, and Alan, all British Asian children discussed this:

R3

Monica: Sometimes on television there's like programmes and you might like
get interested in it and you watch it and you find out by that.... 'cos
I've got this channel on my Sky Digital about half five in the evening,
and something that happens in our temple, the prayer and that comes on the
television, and 'cos my Mum likes watching it she puts a tape in in the morning
and everything, and so we just have we sit down and watch the television and you
learn from that. ........
Francesca : .... With my Grandma every week I do some Religious Education she teaches us
about, learning about only our religion, about letters and reading
Sally: In Gujurati?
Francesca: (nods)
R5
Alan (British Asian): Oh my mum sometimes brings Indian movies home from the shop and I
watch it.

From this it can be seen that children quote directly from their parents or they are influenced by films they watch with their parents. Television was often mentioned as a source for their knowledge as I outline in the penultimate section of this chapter.

5.4 Television

Most children referred to television, videos, and films as influential on their knowledge and understanding which I coded at a node 'television' in N5. For example:

B2

Daljit (British Asian): I learnt some stuff from home and religious programmes.

The power of the visual image cannot be underestimated. Portrayals of cultures on the news can have lasting impressions on everyone including children. Many children in B school talked about the events of September 11th 2001 and the Afghanistan war, which was headline news at the time. Bart, a British white boy, said:

B4

Bart: I've seen Sky sports errm sky sports news I've seen Taliban in their

big army suits and their big bullet guns and that lot or the Taliban

troops and I've seen the Afghanistan having a war

Television was an influence on Zoe's knowledge, she was a British Asian Muslim girl, as the following extract from D school, a high proportion minority ethnic school demonstrates. Zoe, related what she has seen on television to picture C of a Jewish family:

D1

Zoe: I saw a programme on television it showed like lots of Jews and

they prayed and they had those little hats on the top and I could

recognise it from the picture [C].

Sally: What video was it you were watching?

Zoe: about Jews .... It was about Jesus when he was born.

Interestingly when asked how he came to know about other cultures from school, home, television or friends? Harry answered:

D4:

Harry: Well I put [I know about other cultures from] home, school and friends because I don't really learn anything off television because I don't really have a television. ... and when I do watch television it's only cartoons and movies ....But I umm listen to tapes at home and read books because I haven't got a television.


In interviews R2 and R3 the British Asian children talk about Asian programmes or channels which they watched, from which they said they learnt about their culture:

R2

Harvir: .... because my Dad, he's a strong Sikh, and we watch sometimes, when there's programmes on about err Sikhs and things like that, and we watch them and I learn something from them as well.

R3

Francesca: Sometimes like when I'm watching in films, there's umm Asian films and when I'm watching, em they can teach quite a bit about life


Importantly, it is not only specifically Asian channels and programmes, which taught about Asian life. The children also mentioned cartoons from which they learnt about other cultures. For example in interview R4 Rachel, a dual heritage African Caribbean and white girl, and Manpreet a British Asian girl, described a programme:

Rachel: There's a programme 'hey Arnold' and there's a boy called Herald.

Manpreet: Oh he's Black isn't he?

> Rachel: No no no - that's *Gerald, Herald the fat Guy*...He he goes to this place, he smells some ham and he's not supposed to eat ham anyway so (0.4) .
>
> Sally: On Rugrats?[22]
>
> Rachel: Yeah I'm sorry ha ha. I think it's Jewish.
>
> Sally: Did they say on Rugrats that it's Jewish?
>
> Rachel: Yes they told the story. The story's in the Bible- it's when Moses makes water go out and then all his army, well not his army but, all his friends go through the water and then the water goes back and all the soldiers try to get through, (0.4) so I forgot what it is.

Toni, of Italian heritage, in interview X2 was critical of some television programmes. His father was a chef and so he stayed up to watch late night television. Toni also thought that the television companies would think that no children would be watching. Toni was not only able to discern the racist humour of some comedians whose programmes were broadcast late at night, but he also disapproved of their attitude.

In interview X5 Cassie, a white girl, said that she knew about other cultures from television. However she held a white privilege stance as she said that although Lisa is black she is still 'normal':

> Cassie: I've put home and television cos I've mostly I know quite a lot of people who are Black and other cultures and I know a lot of them on television, like, like say if there's a person on television, like a show like Lisa- she's black - I think of her as really, really normal, except that she wears designer clothes.

The range of possible influences could be much wider than this but these are some of the main ones which arose from data analysis.

## 6 Matrix showing Synergy between Research Aims and Questions, Methodology and Findings

The final section of this chapter is a matrix, table 7.2 below, which demonstrates the interrelationship between the different elements of my research. I refer to this matrix throughout the thesis, but I will draw on it particularly in the next chapter, chapter 8 where I discuss key issues arising from the English and Southern Germany fieldwork.

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[22] Rugrats is an American children's cartoon with children as the main characters.

Matrix table 7.2 Matrix to show correlation between aims, research questions, methodology and findings of the research.

| Aims | Research questions: | Methodology- validity and reliability | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.Conduct an appraisal of children's cultural awareness in different types of primary schools | 1.What do the children in each of the four schools know about cultures represented in Britain (their own and other peoples)? What are their attitudes towards different cultures? | Range of appropriate methods used, due consideration taken of influence of researcher on the research process thus ensuring validity and reliability. (Assuming a 'least adult role' (Mandell 1991) observation of lessons, playtimes lunchtimes, pupil teacher interactions. Semi structured interviews over period of 6 weeks in each school. | A) Anti-racist and more knowledgeable children Approximately 1/3 of children felt positive about their own culture. If proud of, and knew a lot about, their own culture they were often anti-racist in speech and behaviour. B) Anti-racist and less knowledgeable Roughly ½ of children were anti-racist, despite limited knowledge of other cultures. Reasons: 'important to be nice', be politically correct, anti-racist speech and behaviour because it is the right thing to do. C) Racist and more knowledgeable (i)A few children knowledgeable about most cultures and negative about cultures with which they were unfamiliar. (ii)A few made racist/negative remarks or displayed racist/negative behaviour which they subsequently regretted. (iii) One knowledgeable child displayed racist behaviour, he was described as a bully. D) Racist and less knowledgeable Minority of children made negative or racist comments and were less knowledgeable. Most were white, male, and the youngest in the year 5 sample. Most negative comments were made *after* events of September 11th 2001. |
| 2.Consider the possible influences of the following on the child's multicultural awareness: *the school type and ethos (relationships with staff, ) *the curriculum and in particular RE *parents, media, friends etc. | 2.What are the possible influences- formal and hidden curriculum, television, home etc? | Observation of lessons, playtimes lunchtimes, pupil teacher interactions plus analysis of semi structured interviews with members of staff, and documentary evidence (bean sheet, background information sheet, policies, OFSTED reports and schemes of work thus range of different layers of data ensure reliability and validity. | *The organisation of the curriculum in England and also in Southern Germany reinforces a white Western standpoint. *The formal curriculum in England and also Southern Germany is often ineffectual at challenging stereotyping, reducing prejudice and questioning the domination of a white Western perspective. *The hidden curriculum in England sometimes re enforces stereotyping and can implicitly communicate white Western privilege. |
| 3.Compare the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of children from both predominantly white and also high proportion minority ethnic schools | 3. In what ways are the children's learning experiences and 'knowledges' in the 4 schools similar to or different from each other? | Use of computer data analysis package -N5 to code and analyse themes arising from data. Cross referenced with documentary evidence, field notes and staff interviews thus ensuring validity and reliability. | * The most anti-racist children categorised in A) above came from D and R schools (high proportion minority ethnic) *The most racist and negative children categorised in D) above came from younger white boys in B school (predominantly white). * Children who were anti-racist but also less knowledgeable could be found in all four schools. * The racist yet more knowledgeable children who were a) prejudiced against an unfamiliar culture mainly came from D and R school (high proportion minority ethnic school. b) Children who were racist but later regretted it also mainly came from R and D school. c) the racist but knowledgeable child who was described as a bully came from D school. (high proportion minority ethnic) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.Gain an insight into how multicultural education is dealt with in England and in another European country in terms of the formal and hidden curriculum. | 4 .What evidence is there of multicultural education in both England and Southern Germany? | Interviews, in England and Southern Germany, reveal teachers' understanding of multicultural issues. Observation, in England and Southern Germany, of lessons provide access to what is being taught with reference to multicultural issues. Analysis of the possible influence of the teacher's/School's presentation of the formal and hidden curriculum on the child's knowledge. Cross referenced ensuring validity and reliability. | RE lessons and PSHE lessons in R and B schools were characterised by worksheets which did not stretch the children. Policies did not seem to be implemented. No RE was seen in X school throughout the six week period. Opportunities to discuss issues of ethnicity were missed. B, D and R schools did have multicultural displays. D school had RE study days but some of this teaching and learning was not anti-racist in nature. In Southern Germany children elected for faith nurture RE either Evangelische (Protestant) or Kathloishe (Catholic). Children whose parents chose neither, were identified as Ohne religion (no religion) and waited in a corridor, usually, catching up on other work until RE had finished. Or Etik (Ethics) classes were provided, one of which was characterised by the teacher comparing Islam unfavourably with Christianity |
| 5.(Subsidiary aim)<br><br>To begin to explore other forms of oppression in particular the oppression of children<br><br>. | Additional research question<br><br>5.What is the link between teacher's attitudes towards children and the possible development of children's cultural awareness? | Observation of lessons and interaction between teachers and children throughout the school day. observations of teachers and children throughout the school day provides evidence of how teachers perceive children by the way they treat them and speak with them.( Also observation of childrens' behaviour towards teachers gives an indication of how the child perceives the teacher's view of them). Systematic observation and interviews ensures reliability and validity | This finding sprang directly from the data and so was not an original aim or research question at the beginning of the research but was incorporated as a subsidiary aim and additional research question during the research process. I suggest that some of the children in the English schools seemed to be dominated, either intentionally or intentionally, by authoritarian teachers who had a view of children as inferior. I proceed to argue that the domination of children by adults may be linked with the domination of white Western culture. Children in X school (predominantly white) were, in my opinion, dominated by numerous teachers and in particular a long term supply teacher.<br><br>. |
| 6.Involve children in the research process as much as possible | Relates to research questions 1,2 and 3 | Children in English focus groups designed bean sheet with me. Interviews- child-led rather than researcher-led. Results shared with children at Interim report presentation session to guarantee reliability and validity | The children provided me with rich data which I believe sprang from their elevation in the English research project to co researchers, actively collaborating with me in designing the research methodology. Children made valuable responses to the presentation of the interim report eg D school children acknowledged that most teachers were white and most of the curriculum focussed on white people's history. B children were keen to show that the racism of the minority in their school was consistent with those children's bullying tendencies. |

**Summary**

In this chapter I have presented the English data around three main themes: firstly children's knowledge and understanding about their own and other cultures; children's attitudes and behaviour towards those of another culture; and the possible influences on their knowledge and attitudes. I began with an explanation of the categorisation of the interview extracts using the N5 data analysis package and I presented extracts which demonstrated the children's knowledge of their own culture, misconceptions about cultures, their views about 'alien cultures', comparisons between different cultures, and their lack of knowledge about particular cultures. I provided extracts which showed children's attitudes, for example, their thoughts about identity. I also commented on children's thoughts about people from different cultures and their responses towards being 'the same but not identical', being 'politically correct' and being 'nice'. The significance of 'white privilege' was also explored. Finally I demonstrated that television, school, friends and home, to varying degrees, influenced the children's viewpoints. Throughout each section I made comparisons within and between schools. I concluded the chapter with a matrix, table 7.2, which demonstrated the synergy between the aims, research questions, methodology and findings.

In the next chapter I discuss the key issues, which arose after analysis of both the English and Southern Germany data.

## Chapter 8: Discussion of Key Issues

*We ask them [Turkish Muslim immigrants] about their food and we compare it with our [German] food... they have too much fat [in their diet] and so they become fat ... In the Turkish bath they just sit and talk. In our culture it's important to swim....If you can't swim you are stupid. (Frau B Headteacher, German fieldwork)*

Significant emergent themes which were deeply rooted in the data were analysed in the previous chapter. In this chapter I move to a higher level of abstraction and provide interpretation and theorisation which attempt to explain the themes further. The data, discussed in chapters 6 and 7, are the basis for discussion here, but my aim is to demonstrate how the micro context can relate to the macro context of white privilege and cultures of dominance. I draw on literature to assist this further stage of interpretation, and to demonstrate how my research is similar to, or differs from conclusions reached by other scholars in the field.

The three sections in this chapter are:

1. Systematisation of children's multicultural awareness – English research
2. Micro context, children's attitudes - English research
3. Macro context, influence of the school - English and Southern Germany research

The discussion of the first two key issues relates predominantly to the research I conducted in the English schools. I draw heavily on the Southern Germany research in section three where I evaluate the influence of the school. As stated earlier in the thesis, I was not looking for something, 'mining' for treasure (Erriker 2001) or seeking to prove or disprove a theory. Rather, I adopted a 'grounded theory' approach where
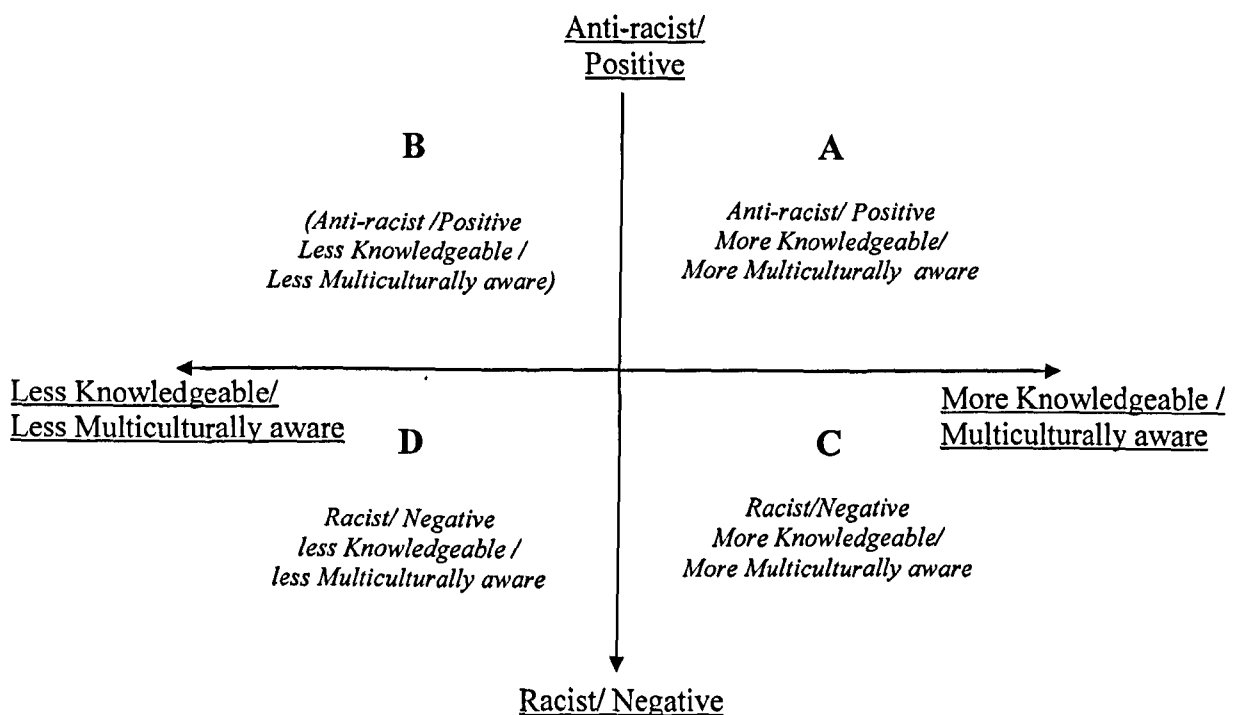
> the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data. (Strauss and Corbin 1998:12)

## 1 Key Issue 1: Systematisation of Children's Multicultural Awareness
In this first key issue I categorise the levels of the English children's understanding

of different cultures and the types of attitudes they held, either anti-racist or racist[1] (Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Connolly 1998; Knowles and Ridley 2005; Gaine 2005). This relates to my first aim and first research question (matrix, table 7.2), namely what do the children know about cultures and what are their attitudes. I considered whether knowing more about 'other' cultures lead to anti-racism and conversely knowing less about other cultures lead necessarily to racism. I discovered that the majority of children in all of the English schools in my study had a range of positive attitudes but varying degrees of knowledge which I illustrate diagrammatically below. There were a few children who I considered to have racist attitudes and these children were usually fairly ignorant about other cultures. There were, however, a minority of children who displayed negative attitudes and yet who could be described as multiculturally aware. Thus I have created a systematisation of the children's attitudes and knowledge in the table below.

Table 8:1 A diagram charting the range of children's attitudes and knowledge

Anti-racist/
Positive

**B**

*(Anti-racist /Positive
Less Knowledgeable /
Less Multiculturally aware)*

**A**

*Anti-racist/ Positive
More Knowledgeable/
More Multiculturally aware*

Less Knowledgeable/
Less Multiculturally aware

More Knowledgeable /
Multiculturally aware

**D**

*Racist/ Negative
less Knowledgeable /
less Multiculturally aware*

**C**

*Racist/Negative
More Knowledgeable/
More Multiculturally aware*

Racist/ Negative

---

[1] Racism refers to any comment, behaviour or institutional ethos either intentional or in ignorance which promotes one 'race' or culture above another (Solomos 2003).

In the following sections I discuss each quadrant of my table above- namely A, B, C and D with references to my research findings and the literature. I do not believe these relations were obvious to the children, rather they emerged from the analysis of the data.

<u>1.1 Most Children held Positive/ Anti-racist Views A and B</u>

After I had conducted my research in the two high proportion minority ethnic schools I had thought (journal page 30) that there would probably be less racism in the high proportion minority ethnic schools and more racism in the predominantly white schools. Thus preliminary analysis of the data (after working in the first two schools) led me to theorise that the high proportion minority ethnic schools would necessarily be less racist because they were probably more knowledgeable of other cultures. After collecting data in the first two schools R and D, I began to follow the Strauss and Corbin model of 'grounded theory' (1998). I deduced that many children from R and D schools (high proportion minority ethnic) held anti-racist opinions and I also judged them to be knowledgeable about other cultures. I anticipated that children in B and X schools, which I had not yet visited, may well be less knowledgeable and thus possibly more racist.[2] Connolly in an e mail exchange had suggested that this might not be the case (Connolly 2004) and indeed I now believe he was right.
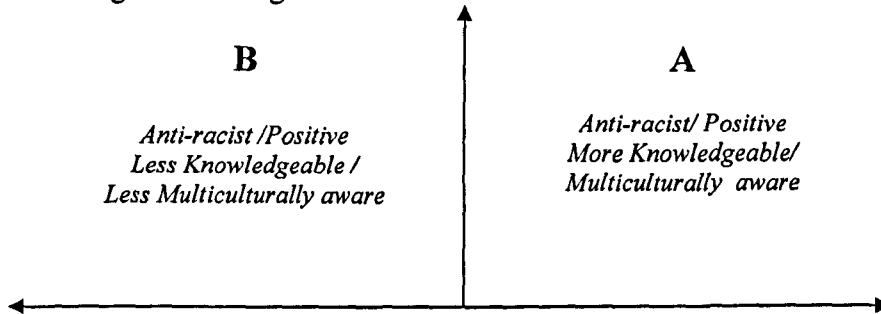
After collecting and analysing all the data I would now argue that the children who I considered to hold anti-racist views were not only from R or D schools (those with a high proportion of minority ethnic children), but there were many children who held positive attitudes in B and X school too (predominantly white schools). I also believe that the depth of a child's knowledge about their own and other cultures did not necessarily correlate with an explicitly anti-racist stance. Thus there were many children who, in my interpretation of the data, had a limited knowledge of 'other' cultures yet nevertheless were still, in my opinion, positive about other cultures and held anti-racist opinions. However it could be that although I discovered that the children with limited knowledge held anti-racist attitudes, if they were to encounter those of a different culture they might still have exhibited racist attitudes, but obviously I was unable to test such a theory given the limitations of this research. In

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[2] I had written in my journal (pg 30), children from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds all working together in a school may be less racist because they would be less ignorant of different cultures.

other words these children were potentially anti-racist. Nevertheless they still held anti-racist as opposed to racist attitudes, and they clearly differed from the children with limited knowledge who did express racist attitudes.

In the two sections below I expand on the top two quadrants in the table 8.1 tabulated here as A and B.

Table 8:2 A diagram charting anti-racism

| B | A |
|---|---|
| *Anti-racist /Positive*<br>*Less Knowledgeable /*<br>*Less Multiculturally aware* | *Anti-racist/ Positive*<br>*More Knowledgeable/*<br>*Multiculturally aware* |

I discuss firstly instances where children have, in my interpretation of the data, a comprehensive knowledge of their own culture and a good understanding of other cultures too. In the second section I discuss instances where children who I consider to have a more limited knowledge of different cultures, nevertheless exhibit, in my opinion, an anti-racist perspective in their communications and behaviour. It must be mentioned here that in discussing children's knowledge of different cultures I am talking about their construct of a particular culture. I would argue that these cultures do not actually exist independently, rather they are socially constructed, as I argued earlier in chapter 2 (Bhasker 1979; Delanty and Strydom 2003; Hacking 2003). I was interested in discovering the child's perception of their 'construct' of the particular culture and seeing the different kinds of 'constructions' which the children described to me.

1.2 Anti-racist/Positive and More Knowledgeable, More Multiculturally Aware: Quadrant A

Table 8.3 Diagram showing quadrant A

**A**

*Anti-racist/ Positive*
*More Knowledgeable/*
*Multiculturally aware*
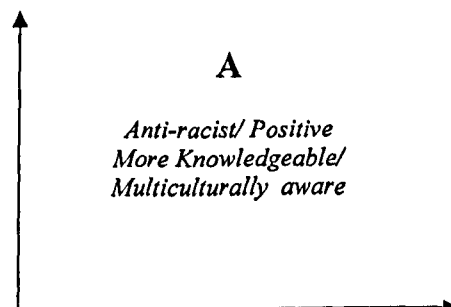
As I outlined earlier in Chapter 7 I coded the data from the taped interviews firstly into nodes '*KBA' (knowledge of British Asians), '*KBC' (knowledge of British Chinese) and so on, following the systematic approach detailed through the computer aided analysis (Nudist 5). Having scrutinised this data I saw further themes emerging and I coded this data into further second level nodes which I list below:

- **Own beliefs** a child's description of her/his own culture/religion
- **Misconceptions** for example "Bin Laden is a Hindu"
- **'Alien culture'** a child's description of an unfamiliar culture/religion
- **Stereotyping** children often used stereotypes when discussing their own and other cultures
- **Comparing cultures** instances where children draw attention to similarities and differences within and between cultures/religions
- **No knowledge** examples of the child saying they know nothing about a particular culture/religion
- **Deduction** a child's attempt to deduce knowledge from pieces of evidence

In chapter 7 I took each of these themes in turn and presented extracts from the interviews coupled with my commentary. In this chapter I refine my argument further as I theorise from this data (grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin 1998; Mason 1996; Erriker 2001). The three nodes where positive attitudes can often be seen are noted below[3].

- **Own beliefs** a child's description of her/his own culture/religion
- **Comparing cultures** instances where children draw attention to similarities and differences within and between cultures/religions
- **Deduction** a child's attempt to deduce knowledge from pieces of evidence

Children who I considered to be knowledgeable described a 'construct' (Delanty and Strydom 2003) of a particular culture which I deemed to be deep or complex, in contrast to the shallow or 'factually incorrect' construct described by children who were less knowledgeable. I found that children who had a strong awareness, or commitment, to their own culture were more likely to hold positive anti-racist attitudes. In fact many of the minority ethnic children showed considerable knowledge of their own culture and displayed anti-racist and positive attitudes towards other cultures as I demonstrated in chapter 7.

I would argue that children who are anti-racist and more knowledgeable about other cultures and more multiculturally aware, are so because they often have a deep respect for their own culture and this leads them to respect other cultures too. This is

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[3] In the next section I discuss the remaining nodes which relate to racist and more negative viewpoints.

confirmed by Brown (1998). These children spoke from a position of strength because they adhered to their cultural practices which differed from the majority culture and they were proud of their heritage. I would argue that a non intentional consequence of non assimilation of the minority culture is that this community becomes proud of their uniqueness and therefore respects other minority ethnic communities too. Conversely those children of white background who do not have a strong sense of their cultural heritage may not have this sense of security. This was probably the case in the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah which I discussed earlier, in chapter 3, where the murderer, Darren Coulburn, a white boy, felt marginalised (Nayak 1999). This also relates to the categories Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) put forward (which I adapted into table 3.1 in chapter 3), left essentialist multiculturalists who are extreme in promoting the minority culture to the extent that the dominant culture is seen as 'bad' which can be seen as "inverse dualism" (1997:21). Hence it is very important for white children to explore 'white identity', despite Sheet's reservations as mentioned in chapter 2 (MacIntyre 1997; Dilig 1999; Howard 1999; Sheets 2000). Therefore I would argue that multicultural teaching ought to include discussion of all cultures, minority ethnic and white, exploring the diversity within each[4].

### 1.3 Anti-racist and Less Knowledgeable Less Multiculturally Aware: Quadrant B

Table 8.4 Diagram
showing
Quadrant B

**B**

*Anti-racist /Positive*
*Less Knowledgeable /*
*Less Multiculturally aware*
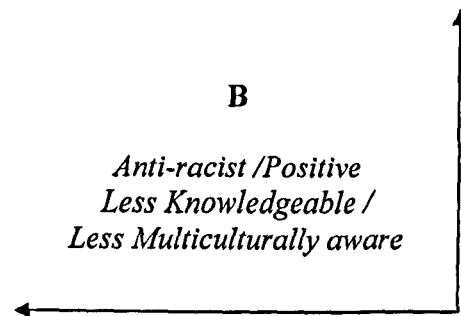
I also found that there were children who I judged to be "positive and anti-racist" yet I considered them to have limited knowledge and understanding of other cultures. There were children who displayed positive anti-racist attitudes yet, from my observations, I considered them to be less knowledgeable about different cultures. For example their 'construct' (Delanty and Strydom 2003) of a particular culture was shallow or they were 'wrong' about particular 'facts', in contrast to the children who were more culturally aware and had a 'construct' which was deeper and more

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[4] I discuss implications of my research for policy and practice later in chapter 9.

informed. These children were, in principle, anti-racist and were very vociferous about the "importance of being 'nice' " which was something mentioned by numerous children and which I discuss later in the next section of this chapter.

I would argue that numerous factors contribute towards racist attitudes. For example ethnicity, gender and social class but other factors include the emotional and also the academic ability of the children (Deleyanni-Kouimitzis 1998; Connolly 1998). I found children who were considered (by teachers) to be more able, were much more likely to be positive towards those from a different culture from their own, and it was the less able children who expressed racist attitudes. Connolly found that children from low socio economic backgrounds were more likely to be racist than those from professional families (1998). However when I asked him if he had looked at the correlation between more able and anti-racism he said he had not (Connolly 2004). Similarly Troyna and Hatcher (1992) considered socio economic background but not ability in their work.

My finding (quadrant B above table 8.4), is consistent with other research (Aboud 1988:82)[5] which shows that children in multi ethnic schools are more likely to be less racist. However Aboud also takes care to state that the contact theory (children mixing together in multi ethnic schools) does not necessarily result in a reduction of prejudice. She (1988:81), like me, thinks that the school has a profound influence on levels of prejudice, but she also places great emphasis on developmental stages within childhood and thus implies that children are necessarily more racist before the age of 7 and that work with children under 7 is of "paramount importance in prejudice reduction" (1988:129). Lewis (2005:87), like me, found that in multi ethnic schools issues of race were more openly discussed "rather than ignored"[6].

Undoubtedly the knowledge about and awareness of different cultures was necessarily richer in the schools with a high proportion of minority ethnic children because many children learnt about faith and customs from their peers. I have found, however, that children in the predominantly white schools, when compared with children in the high proportion minority ethnic schools, may have had less knowledge and awareness of other cultures but, nevertheless had relatively positive attitudes towards others. Anti-racist sentiments were detected in all schools but there was more cultural awareness

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[5] Aboud's work was explored earlier in chapter 3

[6] In Metro2 school Lewis states that "racial discourse was more explicit" (2005:87)

and knowledge about cultures in the high proportion minority ethnic schools. It cannot be claimed that children learn, by osmosis, to be anti-racist. One can 'know' about another culture but this does not necessarily mean that one is more anti-racist. I show this in my discussion of quadrant C (more knowledgeable but racist/negative), in the next section, where I discuss examples of children who are more knowledgeable about different cultures but who are nevertheless negative/ racist in some way. My findings are similar to Connolly's conclusion that it is not enough for children of different ethnicities to be in the same school, rather there has to be active anti-racist teaching (Connolly 1998, 1998b).

From my research I found many children in predominantly white schools seemed to have equally positive attitudes as their peers in high proportion minority ethnic schools. The only difference was that the children from predominantly white schools generally had less knowledge and awareness of their own and other cultures. What I came to realise was that most children stressed 'the importance of being nice' which I discussed earlier, in chapter 7 and which I discuss again later in this chapter. Where I judged children to have anti-racist attitudes there was also a strong belief in being 'nice' to all people, those of a different colour, gender, class and ability and so on. Many children from all four schools said they felt that knowledge about other cultures led to harmony and ignorance led to conflict. For example in X school Cassie, a white girl, and Saz a white boy, may have been inexperienced in their knowledge of different cultures but nevertheless expressed anti-racist attitudes.

The issue of British Chinese is a good example of a minority ethnic group of which none of the children in my study had much experience. Many children in both minority ethnic and predominantly white schools were racist towards this group, making facial gestures. In R school, however, there were two examples of children refusing to make these gestures thus suggesting they were explicitly being anti-racist and they were respectful towards this culture even though their knowledge of it was limited, and they knew very few British Chinese people. Evidence from my research, as presented in chapter 7, from my categories 'alien culture', 'comparing cultures', 'stereotyping' and also 'no knowledge' all point to this conclusion. Therefore I found that being in a high proportion minority ethnic school did not necessarily result in children being anti-racist, rather being surrounded by adults and children who are respectful towards everyone seems to be the most important thing. Many children

were positive about other cultures and anti-racist despite being less knowledgeable because they thought it was important to be nice and because they were being politically correct. Many of the children in quadrant B (anti-racist and less knowledgeable) were more able children, they were in the top sets for literacy and numeracy.

## 1.4 Racist and More Knowledgeable, More Multiculturally Aware : Quadrant C

Table 8.5
Diagram showing
Quadrant C

**C**

*Racist/Negative
More Knowledgeable/
More Multiculturally aware*
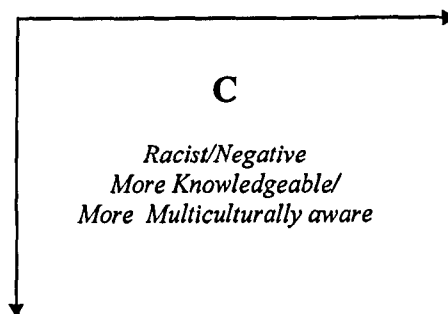
I found this to be the most interesting category because there were some children who I deemed to have a fairly good knowledge of different cultures yet were racist or negative about other cultures. There were three main reasons for this.

Firstly I describe 'alien culture' racism, which is similar to the category of 'gut racism' (Halstead 1988)[7], which I discuss in more detail later in this chapter. Many children in this category were racist/negative about a culture with which they were unfamiliar despite being knowledgeable about numerous other cultures about which they were usually positive. Secondly 'regretted' racism, a category which sprang from my research, some children who were otherwise knowledgeable were racist or negative and subsequently regretted it. Thirdly 'general bully' racism, there was one child who I deemed to be knowledgeable yet was reported as being racist towards those of different cultures but he was also described as a bully. Thus I suggest that racism is a very complex issue and in this section I have described these three different instances of negative/ prejudicial or racist behaviour/ speech. Connolly (1998:11) also discusses the "complexity" of racism which is bound up with power and identity issues. Lewis (2005) makes similar findings.

## 1.4.1 'Alien Culture'[8] Racism - (Quadrant C)

There were children in my study, who were generally knowledgeable but nevertheless were negative towards an unknown culture. The following example, from a high

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[7] Discussed earlier in chapter 3.
[8] I created a node 'alien culture' in N5 computer data analysis package to collect together all instances of racist, negative, stereotypical or prejudiced comments about different cultures.

proportion minority ethnic school, exemplifies an instance of 'alien culture' knowledge because the children in interview D2 were stereotyping British Chinese. They claimed that British Chinese eat cats, dogs and snakes, and the children expressed disgust at these eating habits. Such prejudicial attitudes towards Chinese culture are discussed by Gittings (2005) and Hesler (2002). Throughout most of the interview the boys had been very positive and expressed anti-racist views. D school was a high proportion minority ethnic school which had no children of Chinese heritage. I would argue that these boys were being negative because they were ignorant of Chinese culture. They all placed either one or no beans in the pot on the bean sheet denoting no knowledge or limited knowledge of this culture. Throughout the rest of the interview these boys had been very anti-racist, and in the Interim report feedback session I conducted with the children, Marshall in particular had been very vociferous about a 'Rule out Racism' initiative which his school had been involved in. Similarly three Asian girls from D school spoke pejoratively about British Chinese and their 'peculiar' eating habits. I found it surprising that the three girls and three boys who, most of the time, expressed anti-racist opinions were so negative about Chinese culture. Thus children who I deemed to be knowledgeable about different cultures, nevertheless made negative comments about a culture with which they were unfamiliar.

1.4.2 'Regretted' Racism - (Quadrant C)

The second example of racist/ negative comments from knowledgeable children also concerned attitudes towards British Chinese. Some children who I deemed to be knowledgeable were racist or negative about another culture but then regretted it. For example Rachel, a middle ability child of African/Caribbean heritage, made an offensive facial gesture when talking about British Chinese which she immediately said she should not have done. When discussing British Chinese, I had numerous examples of negative comments and stereotyping (which I discuss in section D below). There were a variety of reactions towards the physical appearance of Chinese people which I categorised under 'alien' culture in chapter 7. Some children merely described the shape of Chinese eyes; others blatantly made abusive facial gestures, yet all the children in interview R5 refrained from making these gestures and indeed pointed out that they knew other children did this but they thought it was wrong to (as I discussed in the section above quadrant B). Rachel however, made the gesture but then admitted she shouldn't have done so. Most negative comments, and gestures,

came from less able white children, but Rachel was an average ability dual heritage girl (Caribbean and White) and she recognised that her behaviour was not correct. Brown (1998; 2001) and Aboud (1988) both claim that younger children whose prejudicial attitudes are not challenged continue to develop racist attitudes. I would argue that Rachel had remembered that such prejudicial behaviour was not acceptable and so this is why she immediately retracted it. Children and adults may often, on the spur of the moment, say or do inappropriate things which they later regret. This 'regretted' racism, however, should still be challenged as I discuss later in chapter 9. It is interesting to note that R school had put in place group sessions, inspired by Mosley's work on circle time and citizenship (1996; 1998), specifically to address Rachel's challenging behaviour within a small group situation. I would argue that these sessions were possibly having an effect on modifying negative attitudes and behaviour. (This can be contrasted with the attitudes and behaviour of Roy from D school who I discuss in the following section.)

1.4.3 'General Bully' Racism - (Quadrant C)

There was only one child in my research in the four schools who fell into the category 'knowledgeable, but racist or negative, about different cultures' and he was Roy, a British Asian, Muslim pupil, from D school who was described as a bully. In interview D4 the two white boys tried to support Ashley, a British Muslim girl, who was obviously ashamed of Roy's behaviour, by saying that perhaps the term Roy used was not in fact racist. This is a similar finding to that of Troyna and Hatcher (1992) who discovered children in their research who said they had not meant to be racist in the choice of terms they used. Through my observations of, and discussions with, Roy I concur with the other children's description of Roy as a bully. Every time I met him he was dominant, out-spoken and opinionated. I would argue that despite Roy being knowledgeable about other cultures this child was just not a very kind person. Roy tried to dominate the other children and I would argue that domination and racism are branches of the same tree. In my conversations with Roy I gained the impression that he wanted everyone to know he was the best and the most important child in the class. When he did speak about being kind, the other children in his interview said that his statement was hypocritical and, from my observations of Roy, I would agree with this. It is interesting to note that my findings here contrast with Connolly's perceptions about British Asian boys who, in his study, were described as "small and helpless" (1998:127), and therefore not capable of being bullies. However Abbas and Balbinder

are described, in a work by Grugeon and Woods (1990), to be Asian boys who need support to meet their respective needs, but unfortunately in both cases this support was not forthcoming, as I described earlier in chapter 3. Roy's behaviour was recognised by the school as a cause for concern but I am not sure about the extent to which support was offered to him to challenge and modify his behaviour. This can be contrasted with Rachel, in R school mentioned above, quadrant B, who was given support to deal with her aggressive behaviour. I would argue that Rachel, in R school, was afforded more "dignity and respect" (Blair 1999:20) than Melissa, in D school, and thus Rachel exhibits more respectful behaviour.

### 1.5 Racist and Less Knowledgeable - Quadrant D

There were several instances where children were explicitly racist and many of these children I considered to have limited knowledge of different cultures.

Table 8.6 Diagram showing Quadrant D

**D**

*Racist/ Negative*
*Less Knowledgeable /*
*Less Multiculturally aware*
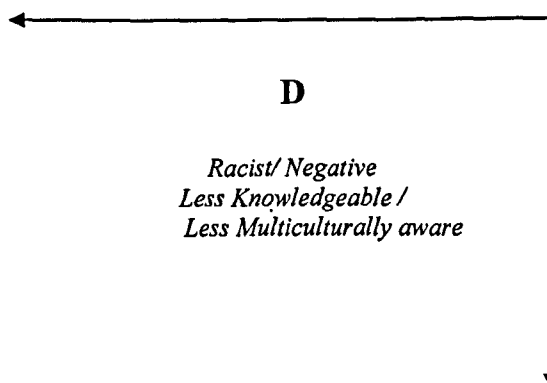
In discussing these issues I draw on the data as presented earlier in chapter 7. As I explained in the previous section, I created nodes in N5 to categorise themes arising from the data. I then created second level nodes where I saw further themes emerging. In this chapter I take these second level nodes and further refine my thinking, and in this section I list the instances where I categorised negative or racist comments:

- Misconceptions for example "Bin Laden is a Hindu"
- 'Alien culture' a child's description of an unfamiliar culture /religion
- Stereotyping children often used stereotypes when discussing their own and other cultures
- No knowledge examples of the child saying they know nothing about a particular culture/religion

The children in category D were mainly young (compared with the other children in the four schools), white and less able. Many were influenced by their parents or were reacting to events discussed in the media. This is consistent with other research (Cortes 1995; Brown 1998; 2001; Connolly 1998).

The following extract from Max a white boy in interview B6 is very interesting for several reasons. I coded it under both 'alien culture' and also 'misconceptions':

> Max: My dad's ermm a racist because he don't like no brown skinned people
> but he does like half caste cos there's a wrestler that's half caste De Roc

Max was responding to what his father said and also he made reference to the twin towers incident on 11th September 2001. Max expressed views held by his parents and opinions he had heard in the media. Troyna and Hatcher (1992) made similar conclusions in their research. They discussed one boy who 'tries out' the racist views of his grandmother thus distancing himself from the views

> he protect[s] himself from any personal criticism while he sees how well the ideas 'work' in debate. (1992:131)

I think this 'trying out of views' happened later on in interview B6, where Max referred to another of his father's views about a proposed school visit to the local mosque:

> Max: My dad says like ermm 'I'm not going to let you go to a
> Mosque because it's not for your type and it's only Pakis that go', and
> because my Dad doesn't' like em

Data which I coded at the 'alien culture' node denoted instances when I felt children had expressed opinions which had sprung from 'the heart'. This reflects the work of Halstead (1988), discussed earlier in chapter 3, whereby she categorises 'types' of racism (1988). Several definitions of racism are defined including pre-reflective (which includes gut-racism), post-reflective, cultural, institutional, paternalistic and colour-blind, (1988). Halstead claims that the latter forms of racism are sometimes unintentional. The 'alien culture' extracts correspond, I would argue, to Halstead's 'gut reaction' racism which is pre-reflective.

I have cited numerous examples of 'pre–reflective' or 'gut racism' (Halstead 1988) which I coded under 'alien culture'. For example in the previous section I discussed the boys in interview D2 expressing 'alien culture' views concerning Chinese eating habits. Also in interview B4 (predominantly white school) when discussing what he knew about Asian culture Bart, a white boy, described Asians as "horrible". Kurt expressed a similar derogatory view about Chinese people, despite the fact that was of dual heritage, he had a white mother and Asian father. Also later in the same interview Bart, who previously had indicated a negative attitude towards those of a

different culture, was haranguing Kurt about his negative attitude. Thus both boys, despite making racist comments, nevertheless also expressed anti-racist attitudes towards individuals. This is the same as Troyna and Hatcher's findings – they noticed that some children were racist towards a particular group but then anti-racist towards a particular individual who they disassociated from that group.

In interview B6 Max, (mentioned at the beginning of this section), said that his father did not like Bin Laden, both because of the destruction of the Twin Towers in America and also because he is brown skinned. This extract denotes, like the others above, a description of a culture which is 'alien' to the child. Also it demonstrates a lack of knowledge; Bin Laden is Muslim not Hindu and thus this links with my 'misconception' category. These comments were the nearest to overt racism which I encountered in any of the four schools. I noticed that all the examples above came from B school and in the main from less able boys. This led me to the conclusion that boys in predominantly white schools who were not in a high socio economic group or in the more able sets were more likely to express negative attitudes towards those of a different culture. These boys were also among the youngest children in the research. I would argue that the less able white children, who on the whole are in category D (see table 8:1) are like young children who have more tendency to be racist. The children in B school were mainly 9 years old because I conducted the research in the Autumn term 2001 (at the start of Year 5); whereas in X school most of the children were 10 because the research was undertaken in the summer term 2001 (at the end of Year 5). Brown (1998) advocates the reduction of racism in schools and her work reinforces my theory. Brown's work concentrates on Early Years and, like her I feel that this is where discrimination is learnt, as the examples above demonstrate, and where there is the possibility to 'unlearn' prejudice and discrimination.

Also the destruction of the Twin Towers happened only a month before my research in B school and the media contained high coverage of Islamaphobic opinions which, I felt, had been re-enforced by many of the children's families in B school, a predominantly white school. I agree with Hafez (2000), noted earlier in chapter 2, who claims that the media has a significant negative influence on public opinion about Islam.

In the high proportion minority ethnic schools, however, the children from all ability and ethnic groups tended to have less overtly racist stances and their comments, which I have categorised as spontaneous, are more to do with customs of a different culture which the speaker finds unusual, rather than being a comment on the actual person. Thus in the high proportion minority ethnic schools, the children state that they did not like the *behaviour* of the people of a particular culture whereas in the predominantly white schools the children stated that they did not like the *person.* Again this reflects the findings of Troyna and Hatcher (1992). Also the few children who expressed negative/ racist views, in D quadrant, appeared to have a stratified view of society, where British white culture is seen as superior and others, particularly ones with which they were unfamiliar, were seen as inferior. This is consistent with theories of prejudice presented by Adorno (1950) and Aboud (1988) which I discussed earlier in chapter 2.

In the next section I discuss key issue 2 which concerned the children's ideas about those from different cultures.

## 2 Key Issue 2: Micro Context, Children's Attitudes

The second key issue emerging from my research data, relates to English children's attitudes towards different cultures. On analysing the data I found that similar themes were emerging and children's ideas could be grouped. As such I created nodes in N5 to store these ideas, in keeping with the Nudist 5 system noted earlier in chapter 5 (L. Richards 2000; T. Richards 2000). I labelled these ideas (nodes) and in the sections below I draw conclusions from the data (Strauss and Corbin 1998:12). The previous key issue (the systemisation of levels of children's knowledge and the degree to which they were anti-racist), together with this key issue, (concerning other attitudes children held), all contribute to my theorisation of the micro context of my findings. These two key issues also relate to the macro context, (wider conceptions of white privilege (Leonardo 2005b) and dominance evident in the schools) which I discuss in the third section of this chapter.

### 2.1 'Same but Not Identical': Colour Blindness

Many children said they thought all humans were the same 'inside' despite looking or dressing differently. What the children were attempting to articulate, I think, is that hierarchical and prejudicial speech and behaviour is not acceptable, 'we are all the

same' no one should be discriminated against, which is, obviously commendable. Indeed this is consistent with theories of equality and discussions of white hegemony, which I outlined earlier in chapter 2, (Thompson 1986; Marshall 1994; Sheets 2000). However the reverse side of this argument is the refusal to acknowledge difference and inequalities which also includes debates around white hegemony and white privilege (Sheets 2000; Back and Nyak 1993; Parekh 2000; Leonardo 2005b). This suggests that the children were ignoring differences between people thus assuming a 'colour blindness' approach. This is similar to the findings of Jones (1998), Connolly (1998) and Lewis (2005) who noticed this 'colour blindness' stance, and which forms a controversial aspect of the debates on responding to multiculturalism.

I would argue that people are *not* all the same because the structural, political/idealogical, cultural, institutional situations would all have a different impact on a Black person than they do on a white person. This has been eloquently pointed out by numerous Black scholars whom I have referred to earlier in chapter 2 (for example hooks 1992; Gilroy 1987, 1993). This line of argument relates to Troyna and Hatcher's discussion of 'macro' and 'micro' contexts which they describe (1992:35). Here Troyna and Hatcher argue that it is a mistake to focus on the micro level, that is, what happens in school, between friends, at the expense of considering the macro situation where certain groups (namely Black) are consistently discriminated against. Jones (1999) also discusses 'colour blindness' in his work and notes that student teachers are unaware of the macro context of white privilege (Leonardo 2005b; Heldke and O'Conner 2004); and they make statements such as "I treat them all the same" which in fact discriminates against the Black students (Jones 1999).

I would argue that the children in my research made statements about different people being "the same but not identical" in terms of the need to treat everyone with respect. Thus the children were not being colour blind in that they were intentionally disregarding a person's culture, and the influence that may have on the way the person was treated. Rather they were trying to strip away any differentiating factors as possible contributors to unequal treatment, saying that everyone should be treated with respect. It was Saz in X school, who espoused this opinion within the context of a discussion about 'normal'. This extract from interview X5 is fascinating not least because Saz was described to me as a child with severe behavioural problems who had a teaching support assistant working with him constantly. Yet throughout his

interview he demonstrated an astute understanding of respect and fair play. I considered him to be one of the children who was positive/anti-racist yet had limited knowledge about other cultures.

> Saz: I meant like everyone's the same but not really identical
>
> Cassie: Yeah – I meant like that but just couldn't explain it that way
>
> Saz: I think everyone should be treated the same

This idea of some people being 'normal' is one which I continue to explore in the following section where I discuss 'white privilege'.

## 2.2 'White Privilege': Use of Normative Language

In this section I explore white privilege through the following themes, 'normal', language, names and clothes, colour and finally 'being British equals being white'.

The extract which follows illustrates the view of Cassie, a white girl in X school, and her understanding of white privilege. She equated her culture with normality and even though Carn's dad is Pakistani, he was still perceived by her as 'normal' because, presumably, he behaved in a white Western way and so could be categorised as 'normal'.

> Cassie: Because they look like Carn's dad - he's like that - Pakistani and
>
> errm he's like normal like normal like us, like our culture -

Cassie is saying that Carn's dad is 'normal' or 'acceptable' because even though he is Pakistani he behaves as if he were white Western. Thus implying that this is the preferable culture because it is her own culture. Lewis makes a similar finding in her discussion of Rodney's ascription of Mike's ethnicity as 'white' (Lewis 2005:130) even though Mike was Latino.

Many children made comments, which suggested a white privilege position. Several children used the language of white Western, and often Christian, beliefs and values when describing cultures. I coded these comments at a node and present some examples below. In interview B6 two white boys described the Muslim festival of Id by using Christian language. Even the one Muslim boy in the group also adopted this white privilege language:

> Johnny (D school) : Cos I have 3 Christmases a year,  one on 25th Dec one on 17th Dec and one on Feb the (pause 0.9) 11th.

The children were thereby assuming that Christmas is a benchmark to which every other festival can be compared. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) note in their pluralist multiculturalist category, "Hanukah is the Jewish Christmas". Interestingly, as I stated earlier in chapter 7, there was no instance of a child saying Christmas is the Christian Id.

Another example of children using white privilege vocabulary can be found in R3 where two Asian girls used the word 'church' rather than Gurdwara which I presented in chapter 7. It became clear from my line of questioning that these Sikh British Asian girls were using a white Christian vocabulary because they expected this to be the language I would be using, and the readers of my research would be familiar with too. Monica seemed to be working with a double consciousness here as she was living within two cultures, her own and the dominant one. Du Bois (1903) points out that the minority group are in fact cleverer because they are working in two or more languages, but nevertheless 'concede' to the dominant culture in order to be understood and not feel as though they are a 'problem'. Thus use of white Christian language in my study seemed to be the common language. The children could have used the term 'place of worship' which is the generic term and thus neutral. In chapter 9 I discuss the implications of the research and I suggest that teachers ensure such generic terms are used to avoid white privilege and Christian domination (Leonardo 2005b; Heldke and O'Conner 2004).


## 2.3 White Privilege: Names and Clothes

Some of the Asian children described their own names as 'unusual' or 'difficult',- meaning that they were unusual, different or difficult for white Western people. Many of the Asian children chose Western names as their pseudonym, because, they told me, they thought these would be easier to understand, thus denoting the children's assumption of white Western privilege in academia.

In this section I refer to Kincheloe and Steinberg's (1997) types of multiculturalisms including the monoculturalist and the liberal multiculturalist which I used to analyse the example below (I tabulated Kincheloe and Steinberg's categories in table 3.1 in chapter 3). As I have argued elsewhere (Elton-Chalcraft 2002b), there were a significant number of children in both types of schools who seemed to appreciate that Western white culture may be the dominant culture but one doesn't have to conform to it. In interview D1 Melissa, of African heritage, and Zoe, a British Asian, were

discussing Asian dress, Zoe was adamant that British Asians should be proud to wear traditional Asian dress if they so chose. This is in contrast with the debate of the wearing of the Muslim niqab (veil) and hijab (scarf) discussed earlier in chapter 3, (Parker-Jenkins 1995; Wright 2002; Asser 2006; Sturke 2006; Suleman 2006). In the Jack Straw incident (Sturke 2006) noted earlier in chapter 3, the assumption was that Muslim women should comply with white Western dress codes because visibility of the face was recognised as being vital for communication. Thus there was a dominance of communication over cultural dress etiquette (Suleman 2006). I will return to dress and, in particular school uniform later in this chapter.

## 2.4 White Privilege: Colour

Despite most children, in my study viewing white as 'normal,' Melissa in fact did not subscribe to this perspective. She describes Muslims as having light skin which Zoe, a British Asian, laughingly disagreed was 'dark'. This was because Melissa insisted it was 'light' compared to her own Black skin. There was a tendency by most children to define skin colour with reference to white rather than Black as the 'norm'. Connolly discusses ethnicity and skin colour and how he believed some Black and Asian children were unwilling to talk with him because he was white (Connolly 1998). The concept of white privilege and indeed white hegemony is evident in interview X4, presented earlier in chapter 7 where the three white girls demonstrated a white privilege attitude because they put themselves into the shoes of a black person who 'should be grateful' for being 'allowed to live in Britain'. The identity of minority ethnic people living in Britain has been discussed by various scholars (Osler 1989; Modood et al 1997; Modood 2001; Modood et al 2006; Ali 2003). Parekh (2000) and Richardson (2004) view Britain as a 'community of communities' (Richardson 2000) thus illustrating diversity.

Thus many children equated British with white as being 'normal. I explore the concept of Britishness in the next section. However to end this section I discuss Kurt's comment which is interesting because he talked about the literal colours of his skin. Kurt, of dual heritage, was reluctant to say he was either black or white. Perhaps this was because he was struggling with identity issues which, he acknowledged, he had not had an opportunity to discuss. Therefore Kurt 'created' his own identity, 'orange'. In exploring this issue further it is useful to look at how we define and explain dual

heritage identity. Derby City Council (2000) recommends the use of 'dual heritage' in preference to 'mixed race'. In her book *Mixed- Race, Post Race* Ali (2003) discusses dual heritage identity and claims that this is an area which is under researched[9]. Ali opens her book with a heart rending episode in her life where a white person she has known for a long time, called Peggy says

> I'm not racist but two cultures shouldn't mix. Some of those black people are alright, but the half-castes, well they're a breed apart. (2003:1)

Thus Ali demonstrates that Peggy uses culture instead of 'race', to "prove herself unprejudiced" (2003:2). However Peggy used the word 'half caste' which Ali found offensive because this was used in a derogatory way and was especially hurtful to Ali because of her own dual heritage background.

The concept of identity is discussed further in the next section where I consider the findings in terms of 'Britishness'.

## 2.5 Being British Equals Being White

In the first decade of the 21st Century there has been much discussion, especially at election and by election times, concerning immigration and British identity. There is now a 'Britishness test', *Life in the UK* (Border and Immigration Agency 2007), and Charles Clarke (Home Secretary) supposedly resigned in 2007 because of his department's mismanagement of the release of immigrant criminals due to be deported (Fry 2007). Children listen to the news and their parent's and other's opinions about news items and from an early age, I would argue, they begin to formulate ideas about being British, who is 'in' and 'not in' the 'British' club. Brown (1998) also claims that prejudice is not innate but 'learned'.

When considering children's attitudes towards their own and other cultures, most children in my research deemed British identity to be dependent on being born in Britain, having British parents, and or speaking English. This is a finding similar to that of Carrington and Short (1998) highlighted earlier in chapter 2. There was often a change of mind when the children initially disagreed with the proposal that a Hindu family (as shown in picture B appendix) could be British. After reflection many children said they could be British Asians if they were born here, or if they spoke

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[9] Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU) in the Institute of Education at the University of Warwick is carrying out new research (funded by the Arts and Humanities Research council). The focus is 'Investigating the Religious Identity Formation of Young People in Mixed-Faith Families' running from June 2006- May 2009.

English. Some of the lower class/ low ability British white children in my study considered British whites as the only category of 'true' British.

The following example exemplifies this attitude towards 'being British'. Three white children, Liam, James and Nicola, B1 predominantly white school, thought that to be British one had to be white, wear Western clothes and speak English. Similarly in interview B2 one white girl Fiona, Claire of dual heritage (African/white) and Daljit, British Asian Sikh, discussed 'Britishness'. Claire and Fiona argued that a British person was someone who is white, Christian and able to speak English, yet they also accepted that their friend Daljit was British even though she did not have white skin and she was Sikh. This is similar to Troyna and Hatcher's (1992) findings, mentioned earlier in this chapter, where children make 'exceptions' for their friends who may not be part of the 'in group' but nevertheless are accepted.

Many children in my schools found it difficult to identify exactly what British white was. I would argue that this is a very difficult task as there are myriad strains of 'white' for example British Polish, Geordie, Northern Irish, Greek and white Jews (Nyak1999). I would argue that it is important for British white to examine their own ethnicity. However I have some sympathy with Sheets (2000), as I discussed earlier in chapter 2, who fears that authors who write about the diversity of white culture are merely ensuring that white culture is given centre stage again (Dilig 1999; Howard 1999, 2000; MacIntyre 1997).

Just as the word 'Black' is used as an umbrella term for Asian, Caribbean, African and so on so, 'white' can be a term which covers a large number of discrete ethnic and cultural groups. I would however argue that the 'white Western privilege' which I have been discussing in this section relates to the white American or English culture which is often promoted in the media (Hafez 2000). It is this monocultural view of Britain which scholars such as Modood et al challenge (Modood et al 1997; Modood et al 2006). My findings have shown that most children in the predominantly white schools believed the 'in' club of 'Britishness' was restricted to white, Christian people and they had little awareness of the diversity within whiteness. Neither did they have an appreciation of minority ethnic groups of Asian, African Caribbean and Chinese heritage being British. In chapter 9 I discuss how teachers could challenge this monocultural view of Britain.

## 2.6 Harmony Versus Conflict

As I highlighted earlier I found many children in my research expressing how important they felt it was to be 'nice' to everyone, which included those from a culture different to their own. Many children also believed that ignorance often led to conflict and harmony was a result of knowledge about different cultures. This benevolent attitude can also be detected in the comments categorised in the politically correct section, in chapter 7, where I show that many children thought it important to be politically correct and not make fun of other cultures (Garner 1994; Hutton 2001). Hutton believes it is important to consider the words we choose to use because politically correct terminology has been used, successfully he argues, to subvert its intentions; that is to create a non- sexist, anti-racist and egalitarian community.

I would argue that being 'nice' could be interpreted as adopting an anti-racist attitude. For example in interview D1, Melissa, Kate and Zoe described the importance they placed on being friendly and 'nice'. In chapter 7, I described the incident which they chose to tell me about Melissa pulling Zoe's trousers down and how Melissa apologised, and Zoe forgave her. Melissa obviously knew what being 'nice' entailed, she just found it difficult to implement. Here the children were talking about one individual being 'nice' to another and why that was sometimes difficult. However anti-racism is not just about being 'nice' to a particular person: institutional racism must be avoided. I discussed institutional racism and personal accountability earlier in chapter 2, (Macpherson 1999; Blair et al 1999; Lewis 2005). I would argue that the curriculum ought to include discussion of this rather than encouraging children to think solely about individual accountability (QCA 1999).

Thus the micro context of children interacting in a positive way with each other is very important but I believe that children should be made aware of the macro context as well, as discussed by Troyna and Hatcher (1992) and also Lewis (2005). I develop this further, later in the final section of this chapter and also in chapter 9.

In another example, which I highlighted in chapter 7, Spike, a white boy interview X2, thought the Northern Ireland debate was 'childish' and compared it to fighting over sweets, an underestimation of how important this conflict is. Spike expressed his opinion concerning the conflict between Protestants and Catholics and who should 'own' Northern Ireland. Interestingly work has been done with different religious

groups in Northern Ireland by scholars who have also written about ethnicity in Britain (Connolly et al 2006 Lovett 1998). Spike's 'naivety' could be attributed to lack of understanding of such a complex issue. As I argued in the previous section it is my belief that children 'learn' prejudice, they are not born innately racist and therefore schooling and especially early year's experiences are crucial. Likewise Klein writes:

> The early years of children's lives are critically important for learning positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. (2006:2)

In this section I have selected from the previous chapters some of the key attitudes which the children held and analyse them further. I was impressed by the 9 and 10 year olds ability to reflect. In many cases I witnessed the children's attitudes developing as they thought about issues of race and culture, they were 'creating themselves'. I do not think children are empty vessels into which teachers 'deliver' a curriculum (Twiselton 2004). Rather children synthesise material into their existing 'web of belief' which changes and adapts to new information. Thus when discussing attitudes towards those who are different, children can have positive or negative dispositions towards the unfamiliar and this is where the school can make a significant difference, as I explain later in chapter 9. The discussion above illustrates the variety of attitudes children have in discourses on culture.

In my discussion of the third key finding I consider possible influences for these attitudes, in particular the influence of the school. Thus in the next section I theorise the extent of both white privilege and cultures of dominance (Leonardo 2005b; Heldke and O'Conner 2004), even in areas where ostensibly a positive attitude has been expressed, and this shows how the micro context (discussed in the two sections above) may have been influenced by the macro context, namely the school.

**3 Key Issue 3: Macro Context, Influence of the School.**

The third key issue relates to the possible influences or possible contributory factors on the children's knowledge and attitudes. This refers to sections 2, 4 and 5 on the matrix, table 7.2 (my aims, research questions, methodology and findings.) I chose to concentrate on the school, rather than parents or the media, because I was more interested in the school as a possible influence on children's multicultural development. But, more importantly, cultures of oppression (Devine 2003) have

institutional settings, and I would argue that the formal and hidden curriculum (ethos) in each school provided climates for the children's positive or negative attitudes to thrive or remain unchallenged. I draw on both the Southern German and English fieldwork here to support this claim. I also make reference to the teacher /child relationship as a possible contributory factor in the formation of a child's attitudes towards cultures and I mention oppression and domination (Devine 2003; Lewis 2005) of children and possible links with racism. As well as the teacher's attitudes towards children I also discuss the teacher's attitudes towards lessons such as RE.

Throughout my research, in both Southern Germany and England, I considered the organisation of the education system, together with the formal and hidden curriculum of the school as having a possible influence on the development of children's cultural awareness. I would argue that the positive and negative attitudes held by the children, as discussed in the previous section, can be either challenged or re enforced by their experiences at school. The implicit and explicit messages expressed in the organisation of the curriculum, what is taught and learnt in the formal and hidden curriculum, all contribute, I would argue, towards the development of a child's multicultural awareness. In this section I draw heavily on the data presented earlier in chapter 6 (the character and ethos of the four schools), together with data from the Southern Germany context in the Baden-Württemberg schools.

Firstly I discuss the organisation of the education system and curriculum and consider the opportunities for children to develop cultural awareness and anti-racist attitudes. I also discuss the Baden-Württemberg fieldwork where, in RE, children explored their own religious belief if they were Catholic or Protestant. Children from other Christian denominations, however, together with those of other religious backgrounds had no formal curriculum time to consider their own beliefs. Again I consider the possible impact this may have had on children's multicultural development.

Secondly I consider the formal curriculum and discuss the status of RE, together with learning and teaching in RE, and also I consider the impact of PSHE (personal social and health education) and school assemblies. I evaluate the possible impact on anti-racism of content selection, teaching and learning styles and use of resources in the formal curriculum. Finally, in this section, I discuss the hidden curriculum. I evaluate

the possible impact of the ethos of the school; for example the way staff talk with and behave towards children, issues surrounding playtimes and lunchtimes.

I evaluate to what extent, in my opinion, schools promote multicultural Britain or multicultural Germany, or a monocultural (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997) white Western standpoint, and to what extent I consider this to have an influence on children's multicultural awareness.

### 3.1 Organisation of the Education System and Curriculum

I begin by discussing the German fieldwork and examine Baden-Württemberg's organisation of the curriculum. Then I discuss the English context.

### 3.1.1 Organisation: Germany

After a conversation I had with my translator and companion Frau I[10], I deduced that the organisation of the education system in Germany necessarily created a divisive society. The German Education system is quite different to the British one in several respects. Children attend Kindergartens (aged 3-7 years old) before starting formal Grundschule (primary school) at 7 years old, Klasse 1 and 2. In Klasse 4 children undergo tests and assessments to determine which secondary school they will attend. It is difficult to present definitive percentages and obviously each local area is different but generally I was told by one of my respondents in the German fieldwork

> About 30-50% go on to Gymnasium, age 10-18/19 (grammar school), and 20-30% attend Real schule age 10 - 16 (secondary modern), the last group continue on to Hauptschule age 10-14 (for the less academic children), which often has strong links with Berufschule (apprentice work). If children do not achieve the required standard, at any stage in any school, they are expected to repeat a year and this is not an unusual occurrence. (Frau I German fieldnotes 7th Sept 2001)

I had a discussion with one mother at a local Kindergarten who told me that this tier system did not work as well for borderline children who may just have missed getting into the Gymnasium, and then they did less well than other children who managed to attend the Gymnasium. Likewise, those who just missed being placed in the Realschule and who ended up in the Hauptschule, were equally disadvantaged. This parent obviously saw the Hauptschule and Realschule as schools for second rate citizens. Thus the idea of superiority and inferiority could be said to be inherent in the

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[10] See table 5.6 in chapter 5 for details about each of the respondents in the German fieldwork.

actual school system and the three types of schools seem to be used to categorise an individual. For example Frau I spoke of upper class Afghanistan, Italian and Iranian people who arrived in Germany 40 years ago and whose children speak perfect German and who usually go to the Gymnasium:

> Frau I: They've made it..... But the government preferred to send the Ausländer[11] [foreigners] home [awhile ago] but Germany can't do without foreigners.

These children are seen as 'virtual' Germans because they are from the upper classes of their countries, and yet the lower socio economic classes, the migrant workers, who are also necessary to Germany as they provide cheap labour, are viewed less favourably according to Frau I. She said most of these 'lower class Ausländer' go to the Realschule and then take apprenticeships or go into the catering business.

> Frau I: Many [lower class Ausländer] work in restaurants. Most [indigenous] Germans don't like to do that because the hours are unsociable and the pay isn't very good.

During an interview with Prof Boes, who had conducted research into immigration issues and modes of multiculturalism (2000), a similar point was made. He described the difference between nationality and citizenship in Germany:

> Prof B: Many immigrants try to 'become' German by applying for citizenship – there is a new law about this, but there is resistance to this. There is a difference between citizenship and nationality. Some [immigrants] cannot gain German nationality – therefore they cannot be voted into a democratic political position. (Personal interview with Prof Boes)

We discussed the consequence of this as being the insular nature of German society and the continued ostrasisation of 'Ausländer' who were often seen and treated as second class citizens. This is consistent with claims by Boes (2000) and Hoff (1995).

I would argue that this ostracisation continued into the organisation of the schools because the three tier system discriminated against the Ausländer. Children appear to be labelled at 10 when they go to their assigned upper school and their career prospects are often determined by this decision (Hull 2005). I would argue that many lower class Ausländer are therefore not afforded the opportunities in the Realschule which other 'upper class' children gain who attend the Gymnasium. Frau I's comments led me to deduce that lower class Ausländer are not considered important enough to attend gymnasium or even Realschule. Thus it could be said that there is an

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[11] Ausländer is a common term meaning 'foreigners' or immigrants (Boes 2000).

inherent racism in the organisation of schooling in Baden-Württemberg, where lower class Ausländer are seen as second class citizens. In fact one interviewee in Baden-Württemberg, Frau B, spoke explicitly in a derogatory way about a group of 'Turkish immigrants' which I describe in more detail in a later section. (The quotation at the beginning of this chapter is an extract from her interview).

This view of Ausländer being seen as second class citizens is corroborated by Prof L's student teachers Herr R and Frau R[12], both of Muslim background, they said:

> Herr R: Immigrants often don't speak German at the age of 6 or 7 when compulsory education begins. Many do not send their children to the Kindergartens and so they don't get to learn German – they are therefore at a disadvantage when they start in Klasse 1 and they never catch up. When they get to take the test at 10 [Klasse 4] they don't do well and most go to Hauptschule.
>
> Frau R: We both did well at Primary school and we made it to Gymnasium but most Ausländer go to Hauptschule

It is important to note that Germany does not have a private school system (fee paying schools) as there exists in Britain and so the high achievers go to the Gymnasium and the less able students tend to attend the Hauptschule. Herr R added:

> Herr R: Hauptschule are not very good schools and no one wants to teach in them – the children who attend are really difficult. Hardly anyone from the Haupschule and very few from the Realschule make it to university

Thus the organisation of the schooling in Southern Germany, discriminates, I would argue, against Ausländer who find it difficult to get in to the Gymnasium and therefore their prospects of attending University are reduced, thus limiting their job prospects. This is a similar finding to Lewis (2005) who, in her study of American schools, claimed that Latinos and African American children were disadvantaged because of the schools they attended, and their life chances limited compared with their white peers who attended predominantly white schools in 'nice' neighbourhoods and went on to "get good jobs"(2005:155).

The curriculum in the German province of Baden-Württemberg is set out in the Bildungsplan (syllabus), which all schools follow (Baden-Württemberg 1994a). (I discuss this in more detail in the next section, where I refer to particular lessons.) All

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[12] Herr R and Frau R were interviewed 5 and a half years after the original data collection in Germany (see table 5.6) . It was interesting to find out how Education and Religion teaching in particular, had changed over the years since my initial interviews, and this helped confirm or in some instances refute my earlier findings.

schools tended to have a content-led rather than child-led curriculum. The teaching and learning which I observed was mainly whole class teaching of a particular theme which had been dictated by the Bildungsplan (Baden-Württemberg 1994a). Frau I informed me that whole class teaching from the Bildungsplan was the norm and she had never encountered a child-led curriculum approach in Grundschule (primary school). However the Early Years education in Baden-Württemberg was very different. This was predominantly a very child-centred curriculum. I visited one such Early Year's Setting, which was a Katholische Kindergarten (Catholic Pre-school) on a regular basis for two months, and here the children were engaged in Early Years activities such as art work, sewing, design and technology, physical education and activities which developed fine and gross motor skills (e.g. threading beads, and climbing activities)[13] (Drake 2003). This contrasted with the English system, at the time of my research, where 4 to 6 year olds had been introduced to reading and writing in a more formal and structured way (QCA 1999). Yet this 'formal' approach has been replaced by recent initiatives to make Early Years education in Britain more 'play' orientated especially with the introduction of the *Early Years Foundation Stage* (Macintyre 2001; Dfes 2007b).

Early Years educators who are particularly interested in issues of discrimination, for example Brown (1998, 2000) advocate a system which is more 'play' orientated and less concerned with subject teaching:

> How we encourage children to learn is as important as, and inseparable from the content of what they learn. Active collaborative learning in small groups can promote the development of concepts, skills attitudes and the ability to argue rationally. It is a challenging approach which does not fit easily with a curriculum geared to compartmentalised knowledge, back to basics and formal teaching methods. (Brown 1998:91)

Thus the German system, in Baden-Württemberg, supports the ideologies of a child-centred and 'play'-led curriculum for the Early Years, yet ironically I would argue that the German system after pre-school is less child-centred. Similarly the pre-school

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[13] My eldest daughter attended this Katholische Kindergarten when she was five years old. In England Reception and year one children, at that time, 2001, were often engaged in a content-driven curriculum. Early learning goals (for reception) included literacy skills such as learning to read and recognise letters, and the literacy strategy for year 1 had a heavy emphasis on formal reading and writing skills (QCA 1999). Whereas in Baden-Württemberg the emphasis was on the children choosing an activity which was 'play' centred and there were no formal reading or writing sessions.

appeared, in my opinion, to advocate a more egalitarian ethos whereas the upper schools seemed to segregate children and Ausländer often seemed to be at a disadvantage (Lähnemann 2000, 2006).

### 3.1.2 Organisation: England

In England there are also different types of schools but currently parents can, to a certain extent, choose which school to send their child, as noted earlier in chapter 1. For example community schools, and various types of faith-based schools (Francis and Lankshear 1993; Parker-Jenkins et al 2005; Surrey CC 2007).[14] Also in England parents can choose to send their children to fee paying schools which, by nature, usually bar children from low socio economic backgrounds, although scholarships are sometimes available (Independent School 2007).

Currently in England there is an emphasis on assessment of particular skills. When considering racism Blair et al (1999) consider the very organisation of the curriculum to be at the heart of the problem. They discuss the OFSTED report *Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils* (1999) which highlights, among other things the very poor academic level of ethnic monitoring nationally. This has improved in recent years (DFES 2003), however, it is still the case that minority ethnic pupils are often disadvantaged and some would argue that this is a direct result of the organisation of the curriculum (Multiverse 2007), despite various DFES initiatives (2004, 2007). The TDA funds a project, *Multiverse* which developed a website for supporting the achievement of minority ethnic pupils and exploring issues of diversity (Multiverse 2007). Articles on this website advocate a reconsideration of the organisation of schools (Richardson and Wood 2000; Dadzie 2000; Multiverse 2007). These authors recognise the need for schools to consider how their school policies and organisation may in fact be discriminatory. For example Dadzie in her book *Toolkit for Tackling Racism in Schools* (2000) lists as one objective of her book:

> Suggest some practical strategies for tackling institutional racism and
> promoting equality and positive relations in your school. (2000:xi)

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[14] All the schools in which I collected data in England, were community schools and so discussion of the influence of church or faith-based schools on a child's multicultural development is outside the remit of this present study.

For example Mrs Winter headteacher of D school voiced her dissatisfaction with government testing of literacy standards at KS1 (6 year olds). She said

> They are more interested in what the children can't do rather than seeing what they are capable of. I have tried for years to explain that these children [from minority ethnic families] are more intelligent because they can speak two or sometimes more languages. There seems to be no recognition of what they can do.

In 2006 Maths and Science SATs papers were, for the first time, translated into languages other than English (Klein 2006). Finally children for whom English is not their first language, were not penalised in exams due to the language barrier. Thus children's knowledge of Maths and Science was being tested, not their proficiency in English. I think this is a commendable initiative and the way forward in reducing some of the negative aspects that the British National Curriculum can have on the success of minority ethnic pupils.

The emphasis in England of a literacy and numeracy based morning (QCA 1999) necessarily means that the 'other' subjects can seem less important because they are relegated to the afternoon, when children are often more tired. Thus the fact that the Primary curriculum is divided up into discrete subjects some of which are taught in the afternoons means that learning about Global citizenship and anti-racist education can often be forgotten unless the school actively promotes these issues.

I would argue that minority ethnic children, in England, are beginning to receive a more 'equal' education than previously. I highlighted in chapters 2 and 3, after the Macperson Report (1999), an overhaul of the education system began in the UK with a view to ensuring parity of opportunity for all children. As well as organisation of the curriculum sometimes it is teacher's low expectations of minority ethnic pupils which hinders their achievement (Verma and Pumpfry 1988; Blair 1998,1999). In the next section I discuss in more detail opportunities for anti-racist education in both Germany and England.

3.2 Formal Curriculum

In this section I evaluate opportunities for anti-racist, multi cultural and intercultural education in the formal curriculum, the taught lessons. I begin with discussion of the Southern Germany context and explain how the formal curriculum is determined thus

showing how the design of the curriculum is an example of white privilege (Heldke and O'Conner 2004; Howard 2004; Leonardo 2005a and 2005b, Lewis 2005).

3.2.1 Formal Curriculum: Germany

As noted earlier in chapter 1, Education in Germany is de centralised and each of the provinces (Länder) have autonomy (Hull 2005). However their respective Ministers of Education co operate and consult with each other in the "Kultursministerkonferenz". Thus the curriculum is determined by province and this in turn is influenced by the ideologies of the particular political party in power.[15] Many parties have a Christian base (Christlich Demokratishe Union 2001), and so this is transmitted into the school curriculum.

In Baden-Württemberg, Grundschule teachers work from a Lehrsplan (curriculum) *Bildungsplan für die Grundschule -Kulturs und Unterricht, Amtsblatt des Ministeriums für Kulturs und Sport Baden-Wurttemberg* (Baden -Württemberg 1994a and b). These are usually updated every 10 years. As noted earlier in chapter 5, I focussed on Klasse 4 (9/10 year olds), the nearest corresponding class to year 5 which I concentrated on in my British research.

Each Klasse 4 child has lessons in Religion (Religion - discussed below), Deutsch (German), Heimat und Sachunterricht (homeland and topic), Mathematik (Maths), Bildende Kunst (practical art work), Textiles werken (practical Design and Technology), Musik (music) and Sport (PE) (Baden -Württemberg 1994a:169-219). The children are taught via either a cross curricular theme approach (Facherverbindende Themen) or discrete subjects. Thus the organisation of the formal curriculum has an impact on the development of the children's conceptualisation of learning. For example Heimat and Sachunterricht (homeland and topic) includes a study of indigenous Germans and 'others' who have come to live in Germany therefore creating, I would argue, a 'them' and 'us' culture.

Religion (RE) is monitored by the Protestant and Catholic churches. Herr R told me that the Islam Religion classes will be monitored by Muslim communities, because there is no formal hierarchy of Islam in Germany comparable to the Evangelische or

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[15] Internet sites presenting the ideaologies of particular political parties can be accessed for example the Christlich Demokratische Union http://www.cdu-bw.de/ the Green Party www.gruene.de/archiv/grem/bdk/98Magdeburg.htm accessed 4.11.01 and the PDS party www.pds-online.de/partei/structuren/agigs.htm accessed 4.11.01
And the FDP Liberals www.fdp.de/fdp/lv/nrw/schule-im-arseits.htm accessed 4.11.01

Katholische churches. Teachers of religion are expected to have a personal belief and some are teachers at the school who have undergone specialised Evangelische or Katholische training and are practising Protestants or Catholics; the other teachers of religion classes are priests/clergy/lay people employed and trained by the church to undertake Religion lessons in their denomination (Dietrich 1997). All priests have an obligation to teach in schools each week whether they are particularly suited to this or not. Religion lessons are mainly confessional in approach and appeared to concentrate on faith nurture which is in contrast to British RE, as I noted earlier in chapter 1. However RE is given a very high status in Germany which is different from many schools in England where sometimes RE has a very low profile (Teece 2001 see also The European Forum for Teachers of RE 2006); and as I noted in X school findings.

Thus children from Southern Germany have a very different experience of Religious Education than their English counterparts. I think this is very significant when talking about the influence of the Curriculum, and in particular RE, on the child's cultural awareness. Also in Germany Islam Religion teachers have to be Muslim and again the emphasis is on confessional RE.

> Herr R: After September 11th we needed to do something for Muslims – to know what is Islam and what isn't.

Herr and Frau R both said that Islamophobia had become a problem for Muslims and they felt it their responsibility to inform indigenous Germans, through the curriculum, that Muslims, as well as others, condemned the attack of September 11th, and that this was not "true Islam" (Lähnemann 2006).


There were opportunities for Multicultural and Intercultural education in the Lehrplan (Curriculum Syllabus) in the sections 'Cross Curricular themes' which Baden-Württemberg teachers follow in the Grundschule (Baden- Württemberg 1994a).

In the Klasse 4 curriculum I identified several opportunities for multi cultural/intercultural education, "Menschen aus anderen Landern leben bei uns" (People from other lands living with us) (Baden- Württemberg 1994a:173). This scheme of work can be found in the section Facherverbindende (cross curricular framework) and references are made to the discrete subjects section thus ensuring all of the subjects are covered. The guidance states that people from other lands who come to live in Germany 'with us' are often seeking refuge from persecution "suchen Schutz vor Verfolgung" (Baden -Württemberg 1994a:173). There is an emphasis on

'them' and 'us', as noted above, the dominant 'us' being the native Christian German. The guidance states that Christians believe that in spite of differences "we" are "all God's children" and Biblical references are given (Baden -Württemberg 1994a:173). Thus despite the good intentions of encouraging these children from other lands to tell about their country, animals, religious beliefs, cuisine etc this is done from a monoculture perspective where the unwritten but implicit message is that these people are not a part of 'us' but nevertheless 'our' religion requires 'us to tolerate them'. Referring to Kinchelo and Steinberg's (1997) table of types of multiculturalism, discussed earlier in chapter 3, this stance is most definitely, I would argue, conservative multiculturalism. An attempt is made to address multicultural issues but deep down they believe in the superiority of Western (white), Christian patriarchal culture (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997).

Also in the section Schrift und Schriftkultur (Writers and Writings) (Baden - Württemberg 1994a 175), there are opportunities to learn about the Torah, Bible and Qu'ran. This seems to be the most objective perspective towards different cultures in the Lehrplan as these writings are seen from a literary standpoint rather than a dominant religious one. This is in stark contrast to another cross curricular theme "Schopfung als Gabe und Aufgabe" (Creation as Gift and Responsibility), where the perspective is undoubtedly Christian and reference is made to the world being a gift from God, as outlined in the Evangelischer scheme of work (Baden -Württemberg 1994a). There are Biblical references but no mention is made of other World Religion Creation stories (Baden -Württemberg 1994a). Again a conservative multiculturalist or monocultural standpoint is implicit. There is also an emphasis on Green issues and a call for the children to adopt attitudes of appreciation, awe and responsible stewardship towards the 'Created' world, implicit is the message that this is every child's duty as one of (the Christian) God's children.

I found that in both the Evangelische (Protestant) and Katholische (Catholic) Schemes of Work the content was mainly explicitly Christian and denominational. For example in the Evangelische Religionslehre (Protestant scheme of work) (Baden -Württemberg 1994a:178), most of the themes are Biblical. Schweitzer (2007:95) discusses the influence of Religious Education lessons on adolescents' levels of "tolerance" towards different cultures. I would concur with his criticism of Lähnemann (1998) whose model is embedded in the Christian tradition. Both the Baden –Württemberg

(1994) syllabus and also Lähnemann (1998) promote multicultural education but only from a Christian perspective. However I would also question Schweitzer's stance because the word 'tolerance' suggests 'putting up with' which is not often used by RE educationalists in Britain. However Jackson (2006) uses the term positively. Often the term 'intercultural dialogue' (Grimmitt 2000; Nesbitt 2004) is advocated, as I mentioned in chapter 3.

### 3.2.1a Teaching, Learning and Resources- Germany.

As mentioned in chapter 5, I visited an RE resource centre in Baden-Württemberg and I noted that nearly all the resources were books, pamphlets, worksheets or posters but there were no artefacts. This was a missed opportunity because in my experience children are more engaged when handling or looking at artefacts than being presented with an old pamphlet or an out of date or inaccessible book (Teece 2001). I was taken to the resource centre by Frau J who was a part time teacher in a Gymnasium and part time advisor for Evangelische Religion. She was employed by the church to monitor and advise about Religion. I was surprised that she had not encouraged the buying of artefacts.

The formal teaching of RE in the German province of Baden-Württemberg was very didactic and the emphasis was on faith nurture in either the Protestant or Catholic denominations of Christianity, as discussed earlier in chapter 1. However the status of Religion lessons was, in my opinion, much higher than in many English schools where RE is often relegated to Friday afternoons (typically the least productive time for teaching and learning to occur).

From my research findings I noted that children from Southern Germany had a very different experience of Religious Education than their British counterparts. I think this is very significant when talking about the influence of the Curriculum and in particular RE on the child's multicultural awareness. I would argue that because of this didactic approach the children from Baden-Württemberg are more likely to be less anti-racist because they are taught that their denomination of Christianity is 'right' and therefore other denominations and indeed other religions are at best to be tolerated and at worst they are to be thought of as 'wrong'.

In one lesson I observed in T school children were asked to complete a worksheet of two life cycle's for Juanita

Reiche (rich) Juanita and Arme (poor) Juanita

When I asked the children about this task and what they had learnt Claudia said:

> We need to learn to read and write so we can grow up to get good jobs and earn money to buy things.

The children suggested that they had to work hard in their primary school to get to a Gymnasium so they could get good jobs and earn good salaries. The implicit message was that Ausländer (immigrants) would be unable to do this because often they were 'too lazy' to work and so did not get good jobs and remained poor.

One of the 'ohne religion' lessons which I observed was taught by Frau B, the headteacher. While obviously being a very caring teacher as I argue elsewhere, (Elton-Chalcraft 2002), nevertheless Frau B makes some comments about Ausländer (foreigners) in her lessons which, I would argue, influenced children's multicultural awareness in a negative way. For example despite being very knowledgeable about Islam and trying to present this religion in a favourable light Frau B joined in the laughter when Sigrid made a joke about Muslims not eating pork. The extract from a discussion between Sigrid and Frau B demonstrates this:

> Sigrid: Why don't Muslims eat pork?
>
> Frau B: Because they think pigs are dirty.
>
> Sigrid: But I'm sure they could eat German pigs because our pigs are clean! [laughing]
>
> Frau B: Well that's a very clever answer Sigrid – I think you have a point there. [laughing]

At this point there was general laughter from the class apart from an Afghanistan Muslim boy, Massam, who remained silent and sullen. Thus Frau B was promoting a white Western viewpoint. This ethos of German superiority was prevalent throughout my visits to schools especially in terms of curriculum where, as I have discussed above, religions other than Protestant and Catholic (and cultures other than native German) did not seem to be afforded the same status.

For example Frau B, the headteacher of a Grundschule, and former Oympic swimmer, spoke of the 'lazy' and 'wrong' lifestyle of 'Turkish immigrants'. When she was describing what was covered in Heimat (homeland) studies she said:

> Frau B: They [Turkish immigrants] do take part in swimming lessons though, at least. I think swimming is very important. In the Turkish bath they just sit and talk. In our culture it's important to swim. There was a Greek philosopher who said if you are educated you can read and write and swim. So I explain to them it's a part of our life. If you can't swim you are stupid. In India they don't swim. When you are born you have an instinct- you want to crawl,

walk and swim. You have to learn [to do them all]. Poseidon was a *very high God* – everyone ought to swim, including girls.

Frau B, in her speech, (cited in part at the beginning of this chapter), makes a clear distinction between the Turkish immigrants and the indigenous German children using 'us' and 'them' language and the indigenous Germans are definitely seen as the superior group. This was similar to the finding at T school mentioned earlier.

I felt Frau B was well meaning although her opinions were inherently racist because she believed in white German superiority. She had little respect or even tolerance of other cultures especially Turkish. This is confirmed in the following extract:

Frau B: Children come [to our school] from abroad and they leave with a perfect [German] accent, they are great ambassadors [for Germany]. It's a record you know, [our school has] 18 different nationalities- in fact German natives are a minority. The European children want to be open and they want to learn our language, they want to learn German culture. Whereas the Kosovan, Albanian, Balkan – the Eastern are not interested, not involved – they are Muslim. Their parents don't like to learn.

Likewise Frau I, also discussed this and informed me that the 'immigrants' were often drunk, had no money and were uneducated. Thus I would argue that, from the context of my study, children from these communities were stereotyped before they had the chance to prove otherwise. If they did not speak perfect German, were not willing to learn about and integrate into native German culture and were not willing to swim, then they were to be thought of as second class citizens. The curriculum was organised around the native Germans and in Frau B's school it was dictated by her own interests in swimming and fencing (in which she also excelled). Thus in her school, Frau B had swimming and fencing as part of the formal curriculum.

However this German superiority attitude was not prevalent in all the Germany schools in my study. Frau N a class teacher in N school, talked about a Turkish girl in her class:

We talk about her difficulties, yes, but look at what she <u>can</u> do- she has 2 languages- she's clever. My classes are very tolerant- today they clapped her [the Turkish girl].

Frau N was a very caring teacher who strove to address inclusion issues by not stereotyping. She had high expectations of all children and she kept behavioural problems under control without being authoritarian.

In the next section I discuss the situation in England, which provides another perspective of provision for multicultural education.

### 3.2.2 Formal Curriculum – England

In faith-based schools, RE can sometimes take a very different form and is often more confessional in nature (Francis and Lankshear 1993; Brown 2003; Mason 2003; Wright 2003; Parker-Jenkins et al 2005). The extent to which the faith community has an influence on the curriculum is dependent on the status of the school. For example voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, independent (Surrey 2007). In all community schools and many faith-based schools RE is taught as Religious Education and not faith nurture as set out in the Non-Statutory National Framework for RE (QCA 2004:3). This does not mean that educationalists want children with a religious faith to leave their convictions outside the door as they enter the neutral ground of the RE classroom, but rather children, and teachers, are to critically engage with all beliefs in an open way, where no one belief is thought of as superior to another. I would however argue that the National Framework (QCA 2004) does not promote this aim exclusively, because Christianity is still dominant in terms of teaching time and thus the impression is given that Christianity is necessarily more important than others. This is an ongoing debate and one which cannot be entered into here (for further discussion see 2003 *British Journal of RE* Vol 25:2; Francis and Lankshear 1993; Parker-Jenkins et al 2005). It is important, however, to realise that this is the climate within which our children are learning and within which this research is located.

### 3.2.2a Teaching and Learning – RE in England

In chapters 6 and 7 I stated that I believed the children's multicultural awareness was often developed through the Religious Education curriculum as well as through the general school ethos (I consider the latter in the final section of this key issue where I discuss the influence of the hidden curriculum). In this section I discuss the status of RE and the role of the RE subject leader or co-ordinator (DFES 2002b). As noted earlier in chapter 1, Religious Education in England is determined by the local SACRE (the standing advisory council for Religious Education) who produce an Agreed syllabus for all state schools to follow (QCA 2004)[16]. Faith-based schools

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[16] For an example of an Agreed Syllabus for Cumbria see www.cleo.net.uk

have their own diocesan or faith syllabus (for example Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education and North Lancashire Methodist District 2000). RE in England is very different to the Religion or Ethics lessons of Baden- Württemberg because the aim is not about faith nurture, as it is in Southern Germany. Rather in England RE is education about belief systems (including a wide range of religions and belief systems such as Humanism) together with learning from religion, where the child reflects upon what they have learnt and develops their own web of belief (Teece 2001; QCA 2004). Thus the English system theoretically encourages mutual respect and supports the child in their own personal spiritual development. In community state schools, RE does not nurture the child in one particular belief system (QCA 2004).

I would argue that this necessarily encourages anti-racism because the child is encouraged to view different belief systems as valid as well as allowing the child to reflect on and deepen their own beliefs, whatever they may be. I would argue that in the schools in my study, where RE was given status and children were encouraged to explore different belief systems there was more anti-racism. Yet there was still evidence of some racism (as I identified in the first key issue). However I would argue that it is more likely for children to be anti-racist and have positive attitudes towards different cultures if they have learnt about them, and learnt how to be respectful towards those who are 'different' from them. Unfortunately despite these 'worthy' aims of RE in England in practice the aims are not always translated into effective teaching and learning as I discovered in my research. For example during the first phase of the research where I was getting to know the children, and I was not explicit about my intentions, I asked the children about their curriculum. RE was nearly always one of the last subjects to be discussed and children in the predominantly white schools rarely mentioned it. Despite being in X school for six weeks in the summer I did not observe any RE lessons.

In chapter 6 I discussed RE subject leadership with reference to table 6.1. Here I reflect on the impact of teaching and learning in RE for the development of children's multicultural awareness, which forms a key element of my research question. The least effective RE was in X school where there was no RE subject leader and the previous one had been ill resulting in a year without leadership, as noted earlier in chapter 5. Mr Hans the acting head teacher had been very honest about RE being a

low priority because the school's previous headteacher had been on long term sick leave, and he had to prioritise other issues including discipline, and teaching and learning in Maths and English. This was confirmed by the children at X school some of whom had little idea about RE.

When I asked the children they could not remember doing any RE since the Autumn term, or in some cases the previous year. As outlined in my results chapter 6, at X school there was, I found, an ethos of the acceptable 'normal' (white Western superiority and bourgeoise attitudes) and the unacceptable 'unusual' (characterised by spiritual, minority ethnic, alternative lifestyle.) However, the children of X school, despite being arguably the least knowledgeable about different cultures, were not the most racist. The most racist comments came from white boys from B school, as I discussed in the first key issue section of this chapter. But I would argue that this was the case because B school's children were young year 5 children[17] and also because they were less able, and Islamophobia was prevalent since September 11th events in 2001 which occurred just before I commenced my research in B school. The status of RE in both predominantly white schools differed from D and R school. In B and X school RE was not prioritised. However RE did occur in B school but this was characterised by a Christo centric stance which was not in evidence in D or R schools.

As noted earlier in chapter 6, Mr Modood, the subject leader for RE in D school, saw himself more as a mediator between the school and the community, rather than a curriculum leader. Thus RE was seen as a race relations exercise rather than educating the children 'about' different cultures, some of which may not have been represented in the school, as well as offering opportunities for them to learn 'from' this knowledge. This is in contrast with the DFES (2002b) who view RE subject leaders as curriculum leaders. I would argue that Mr Modood saw himself as a mediator between the faith communities, (of which he himself was a member) and the school, (which was made up of predominantly white staff and governors).

I realise that I was researching in the four schools for relatively short periods of time but, nevertheless, I felt that there was a correlation between the RE and knowledge of different cultures in the school and to a certain degree the level of anti-racism in the school. Patel (1994) argues that it is "easier to implement" multicultural curriculum development than anti-racist initiatives, the 'softly softly' approach being "more

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[17] As noted earlier in chapter 7, the children in B school were mainly 9 years old.

palatable" for many teachers especially in all white schools (Patel 1994:47). I made similar findings in my research. Despite commitment to anti-racism by the headteachers of R, D and B schools, nevertheless not all the staff shared these sentiments and certainly not all lessons were anti-racist.

I noticed in the predominantly white pilot school and also in X school, that Christo-centric dating was used, dating systems AD and BC, rather than BCE and CE (Before the Common Era and the Common Era) were used. Also the whole of the National Curriculum, Grimmitt argues (Grimmitt 2000:4) has a white, patriarchal, content-driven, and exam-led slant which teachers at the moment are duty bound to abide by. There is some acknowledgement of 'diversity' in Curriculum 2000 (QCA 1999), but generally my research findings reflect Grimmitt's view.

As well as the formal curriculum the hidden curriculum also had an influence on children's multicultural awareness, as I discuss in the next section.

### 3.3 Hidden Curriculum- England and Germany

I would argue that the hidden curriculum, or the ethos of the school, is influential on the children's multicultural development. As I had an opportunity to spend longer in the English schools than in the Southern Germany ones my discussion here draws predominantly on the English context to explore this view further. In chapter 6 I presented data concerning the ethos and character of the four English schools under the themes

- Relationships between staff and children
- Lunchtimes and playtimes
- Curriculum issues
- Children's background information sheets and Interim report

In this section I refer to data from some of these themes together with my findings concerning dress and language. I interrogated the data findings further to show how the character and ethos of the schools may have had an impact on children's multicultural awareness. As the researcher I have the advantage of seeing the 'bigger picture' and thus I am able to theorise from analysis of the data from all four schools (Giddens1987:5-12). For example the children from one school would not be aware of what I had found out in another, and so it was only when I returned to the school and

discussed my findings with them, that the children were able to see a correlation between ability levels and knowledge of different cultures, degrees of anti racism, and cultures of oppression.

### 3.3.1 Relationships between Staff and Children

In chapter 6 in the sections 'relationship between staff and children' I attempted to draw out how teacher's comments and ways of communicating with children had a bearing on the children's multicultural awareness. (This relates to section 5 in the matrix, table 7.2). I believe that the teacher's view of children (James 1995)[18] and the way they behave towards children can be linked with a domineering ethos (Devine 2003). Thus if adults see children as inferior, then children grow to learn that inferiority and superiority exists, which in turn could be directed towards different cultures being superior and inferior. This is a similar finding to Adorno et al (1950), Aboud (1988) and Mercier (1991).

In R school, Mr Denton had 'favourites' who were encouraged and praised for contributions and only mildly rebuked if at all for misdemeanours. Conversely the 'non-favourites' were often criticised for the same behaviour which had been admissible for the 'favourites.' From my observations I considered Mr Denton to be a caring and competent teacher, but nevertheless, I felt that he did not treat the children with equal respect. This of course is very difficult to do when as a human being we naturally have preferences for certain types of people, usually people who are more like ourselves. But I feel that it is important for teachers to ensure they at least 'appear' to treat children with the same degree of respect. This is a requirement of the QTS Standards (QCA 2007), and is a recommendation for all QTS student teachers (Moyes 1995; Pollard 1997; Arthur et al 2006).

In D school Mrs Moser did not, I felt, treat the misdemeanours of Melissa, a girl of Caribbean heritage, with the same leniency as other children. In fact both she and Mr Millan seemed very intolerant of Melissa. Connolly (1998) has noted such behaviour, as I discussed earlier in chapter 4, where African Caribbean children are stereotyped and discriminated against. Blair also discusses minority ethnic underachievement and

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[18] In chapter 5 I discussed James' (1995) typology of views of children.

teacher's stereotypical views (Blair 1998, 1999). In D school the stereotyping could not be described as excessive by any means, rather there were a few isolated incidents where I detected teacher expectations were not value free. This contrasted with the treatment of Rachel, an African heritage girl in R school, whose behaviour had been recognised as 'disruptive' but she was offered support in the form of 'sharing sessions' with other children. These sessions followed the work of Moseley (1996, 1998) as I discussed in chapter 6 and 7. Thus I would argue that in comparing the treatment of these two girls, both in high proportion minority ethnic schools, R school's ethos reflects egalitarian principles more so than D school. Although this was one isolated case and thus not generalisable, I was not aware of such a scheme for another 'miscreant' child in D school, Roy who I also observed to exhibit aggressive and domineering behaviour.

In X school the turnover of staff, and also of headteachers, I think had an influence on the relationships between staff and children. During the time of my research there were three headteachers, two acting and one newly appointed. Also two of the four staff teaching Year 5 children were supply teachers. I would argue that the instability of staffing at this school led to an ethos of authoritarianism, which was felt necessary to achieve and maintain discipline. There had been an arson attack on the school by a former pupil the previous year and several members of staff treated children as though they were soldiers in an army being told what to do, rather than children in a school engaging in learning. My observations showed that the children were dominated by some of the adults, and in some classrooms there was a tense atmosphere. I felt that this domination of children meant the children were not always respected and this was certainly the case with Toni, white and of Italian heritage, who showed himself to be a very thoughtful and sensitive boy in my study. Yet in the classroom he was very often being reprimanded by Mr Penny as I described earlier in chapters 6 and 7.

B school had gone through a difficult period a few years before I undertook my research, and had implemented a behaviour policy which had made a significant difference. Like D and R schools, most staff at B school had productive relationships with the children where children felt a sense of responsibility which was not explicitly in evidence in X school. However despite this good practice there were other teachers who did not afford children the same respect. Mr Benn the special needs teacher I

observed, was domineering towards some of the less able white boys and it was these boys who exhibited the most prejudicial behaviour in the whole study. Lewis (2005), in her research at West City Elementary school, noted a similar trend where "authority and control were regularly asserted in dramatic fashion" (2005:42).

Thus I would argue that the relationship between the children and their teacher may have a profound influence on the way children behave towards others.

### 3.3.2 Lunchtimes and Playtimes

In D school time and money had been spent on resources for playtime activities for the children. I noted that there were very few incidents and certainly no boredom related behavioural incidents. Lunchtimes were 'civilised'. R school had a similar commitment to addressing playtime issues and school council representatives were involved in planning for an extension to R school's small playground. Again lunchtimes were seen as a social event. In X school however the children were given free reign over the play area which was large in comparison to the other schools, and combative games were played resulting in a culture of dominance where bullying flourished. B school had a very small playground which, like R school, had been a cause for concern. However strategies were implemented to reduce 'incidents'. For example there were 'skipping zones' and 'talking zones' but as no running was allowed several active children were visibly frustrated and, like X school, problems were addressed in terms of 'playtime partners' but the root causes of the problems were not addressed, namely the lack of space for children to let off steam and play in a structured, safe way. Unfortunately unlike R school there was no scope for enlarging the playground. But perhaps staggered lunchtimes and playtimes could have aided the congestion.

Thus space and equipment meant that some schools were able to prevent racist and bullying incidents occurring because children were gainfully participating in safe play. But space does not necessarily avoid incidents as this can sometimes lead to domination of one group over another as was the case at X school. This is a similar finding to that of Devine (2003).

### 3.3.3 Dress and Language

From my findings I concluded that there was a difference between the schools in terms of school dress. It was on the playground that this became most noticeable. All schools had a school uniform or school colours but this was least strictly adhered to in D school and X school. In D school many Asian girls wore shalwar and kameez,

(Shukr 2007) as I explained earlier, and many Sikh boys wore patka or a topknot (Cole 1994). Thus the cultural dress of different groups was explicit. Whereas in R school the majority of children wore school uniform and British Asian girls predominantly wore trousers. No one in R school wore shalwar and kameez, nor the hijab (head covering), top knot or patka. In X school there was, like D school, more freedom and some of the girls actually spoke of the propriety of some clothing :

> No bear midriffs or shoulders. (Cassie)

In B school uniform was worn by most children. I deduced that this was another example of the 'hidden curriculum' where different cultures were either implicitly or explicitly either promoted or ignored. Thus D school looked and felt like a multi ethnic school whereas R (even though it was multi ethnic) and B school had more conservative, traditionally Western dress codes. X school had a less disciplined attitude towards dress.

The wearing of the hijab and niqab has become controversial again in Britain as I discussed earlier in chapter 3 (Wright 2002; Asser 2006; Suleman 2006; Sturcke 2006; The Islamic veil across Europe 2006). Some Muslim girls chose to wear the hijab in my study. The hijab was mentioned in my discussion of the German fieldwork, namely a Turkish heritage German Muslim teacher who was 'forbidden to wear the hijab' (Ott 2001; Filter 2001; see also chapter 5). I appreciate the argument that teachers should not influence their pupils by explicitly talking about their religion or proselytising. However banning the wearing of explicit religious clothing is, I feel a violation of human rights and an individual should be allowed to wear symbols of his or her cultural or religious heritage. This is provided for in the United Nations Human Rights legislation (Robertson 1993). France as well as Germany has faced this issue and has refused to let women wear the hijab (Filter 2001; Asser 2006). This was evident in my German fieldwork discussed earlier in this chapter where Frau B was very negative about Turkish culture, lifestyle and diet.

Another example of 'dress' concerns the uniform policy of each school. R school's prospectus very clearly outlines the recommended school dress. Thus none of the children of Asian heritage wore shalwar and kameez but rather wore sweatshirts, tops and trousers or skirts in the school colours. As a visitor to school I was struck by the uniform nature of the children and I saw no girl or female teacher of Asian heritage

wearing the hijab. Thus the dress code was Western in nature. Similarly the school prospectus, signs around the school and displays were written in English. This contrasts with the other minority ethnic school, D school, where the children mainly wore non school uniform and many children of Asian heritage wore shalwar and kameez. Many displays were bilingual and the prospectus was written in both English and Gujerati. Dadzie (2000) believes schools should consider their "institutional body language" (2000:39,40) which, I would argue, is evident (or absent) in the hidden curriculum, as demonstrated in my research findings.

## 3.4 Domination of Children by Adults

I would suggest that some of the children in the English schools seemed to be dominated, either intentionally or unintentionally, by authoritarian teachers. I proceed to argue that the domination of children by adults may be linked with the domination of white Western culture. (This relates to section 5 in the matrix, table 7.2). As noted in chapter 6, and also earlier in this chapter, Melissa was described by both Mr Millan and Mrs Moser as a 'troublemaker' and their expectations for her to act as such seemed to be self fulfilling prophecies. Wright (1998), Blair (1998), Sewell (2000) and Lewis (2005) have all noted such behaviour, as I discussed earlier in chapters 3 and 6, where African Caribbean children were stereotyped.

I would argue that the behaviour of teachers towards children could be categorised using James' fourfold typology (discussed earlier in chapter 4) and some teachers I observed viewed the child as 'developing child' lacking in status and relatively incomplete" (James 1995). Thus there was a domination of superior adult over inferior child which, I believe, led to an atmosphere, in some schools, of antagonism, and was characterised by inferiority/superiority rather than equality. This, I would argue, is an ideal situation for racism to flourish.

**Summary**

In this chapter I have identified the key issues, which emerged from data collected in England and Germany, which I theorised using relevant literature. The first two issues related mainly to the English research, and offered a micro context in which to locate children's knowledge and attitudes in the four schools. The first key issue concerned findings about children's levels of knowledge and degrees of anti-racism, which I

categorised into four quadrants in table 8.1. In the second key issue I analysed attitudes which were common across all four schools and which demonstrated white privilege and politically correct, or non politically correct, viewpoints. I also considered issues of colour blindness and ignorance of underlying inequalities raised by the children in the English research. In the third key issue, I looked at the macro context and I drew on fieldwork from both England and Southern Germany, and explored the influence of the school on a child's multicultural awareness. I discussed the impact of the organisation of schools, especially the three tier system in Germany. I highlighted the issue of domination of children by adults and considered the possible correlation between the concepts of oppression and racism. I critically analysed the influence of both the hidden and the formal school curricula, with particular reference to the teaching of Religious Education in both countries. I suggested how the hidden and formal curricula can reinforce, intentionally or unintentionally, white, Western and often Christian values.

In the next and final chapter I provide a review of the research process and explore the implications of the findings for future policy and practice.

## Chapter 9: Reflections and Conclusions
**I'm orange. (Kurt, dual heritage, B school, predominantly white)**

The three sections of this concluding chapter are as follows:
1. Review of the research aims and process
2. Summary of research findings
3. Implications for policy and practice

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the research process including what I consider to have been successful elements; what I have learnt as the process developed; the coherence and synergy between the research methods and the findings; and finally the potential for future research. Next I present a summary of the research findings and finally I explore the implications of the findings for ITE (Initial Teacher Education), schools, TDA (training and development agency) and other professional groups. I also discuss the extent to which the research may have an impact on teaching and learning in this country and internationally.

**1 Review of the Research Objectives and Process**
In this section I demonstrate how the research process fulfilled the aims of the thesis. In chapter 1 of this thesis I identified the aims of the research and I elaborated on these in the matrix, table 7.2 (end of chapter 7). As stated at the outset the research questions were not postulated theories which I intended to prove or disprove, but rather they had the potential to identify relations and correlations which subsequently would need to be explained and accounted for (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998). In this section I take each aim and evaluate the efficacy of the methodology in providing validity and reliability for the findings.

1.1 <u>Research Design</u>
Before embarking on the research I had to consider my philosophical position and I adopted a feminist, post-modern standpoint (Hill Collins 1986; Delanty and Strydom 2003), as discussed in chapter 2, which took into account how the multiple characteristics of my own identity might impact on both those involved in the research and on my interpretation of the data (Haraway 1988). I tried to be transparent about who I am and why I chose to undertake the research, namely to try to encourage intercultural relations and challenge racist attitudes (Nesbitt 2004). I have also been

transparent about my constructivist as opposed to realist understanding of phenomena (Bhaskar 1975; Hill Collins 1986; Delanty and Strydom). This was taken into consideration in formulating the research design to investigate children's multicultural awareness and the possible influences for this (aims 1, 2, 3 and 4 see matrix table 7.2).

Aim 6, see matrix table 7.2, was to investigate children's multicultural awareness by involving children in the research process and I believe my research methodology, as well as my findings (to be reflected upon below), contribute to the originality of my thesis. At the beginning of the thesis I showed in figure 1, chapter 1, that the child was the hub of the wheel, at the centre of the research. As I explained in chapter 4, I was interested in what the children chose to tell me and so I adopted the role of 'traveller'(Erriker 2001), listening to what people chose to tell me, rather than that of the 'miner' (2001) searching for a specific result. I feel I have developed immensely as a researcher not only in terms of improving specific research skills, for example reading and selecting relevant literature, organising field work, gathering data, using data analysis packages and so on; but also I believe I have extended research methods (Mandell 1991; O'Kane 2000), which I intend to develop further in research studies which I hope to undertake in the future.

## 1.2 Gathering Rich Data

I set out to investigate the knowledge and attitudes of a variety of children in a selection of schools in England, aims 1 and 3, (see matrix table 7.2) and collect "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1975). I tried not to treat the children as 'subjects', (Christenson and James 2000b, Alderson 2000) as discussed in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, but rather I worked collaboratively with them in the English research. I tried to offer opportunities for the children to raise issues, rather than preparing a list of questions which they had to answer. I listened to what they chose to tell me in the first phase of the research. In the second phase, although I used a series of prompt questions, (the 'bean sheet' adapted from O'Kane 2000), this was open ended and was intended to help the children think about issues rather than requiring specific answers. Also I refrained from asking questions about particular religions because, as I explained in chapter 4, I was interested in the children's 'constructs' of particular cultures and if I had asked about particular religions they would have assumed that these existed in a 'realist' way (Delanty and Strydom 2003).

I think that the research methodology had particular strengths because of the collaborative way in which I worked with the children. Thus my adaptation of the 'least adult role' (Mandell 1991) and the 'bean' sheet (O'Kane 2000) demonstrate the originality of the methodology and contributed, to the successful collection of rich data as I argued in chapter 5. I have had positive feedback from audiences where I have presented my work in conferences, (Elton-Chalcraft 2004b, 2006a) concerning the 'least adult role' and use of the 'bean sheet' which I adopted in the field work.

I have been pleased with my child centred approach (Lewis and Lindsay 2000; Lloyd Smith and Tarr 2000), which I used throughout all phases of the research, (as described and evaluated earlier in chapter 5). By working *with* the children rather than *on* them, I used a collaborative approach which, I maintain, gave me richer data than if I had assumed a superior 'adult' role (Alderson 2000). As I argued elsewhere, I think the methodologies I used were successful because:

- Getting to know the children during the first phase ensured they were more 'at ease' during the taped interview
- Working collaboratively *with* the children ensured they had ownership of the research
- Explaining that it was *their* opinions I wanted to find out about ensured they could not be wrong
- Assuming a 'least adult role' ensured the children probably gave me more honest answers, than they would have, if I had been seen as an authority figure

(Elton-Chalcraft 2006b:slide 11)

Ethnographic research has been attacked for being partisan (Hammersly 1998), in that the researcher and subjects have already decided on the outcome of the research. However I would argue that to some degree the interpersonal skills of the researcher in eliciting certain data coupled with the researcher's interpretation of both the spoken word, context and body language can produce research findings which it would be "hard to replicate" (Simco and Warin 1997:668). Thus one might ask, is the data verifiable and valid? It could be said that much ethnographic feminist research (Hill Collins 1986; Haraway 1988; Wright 1998), of the type I have been engaged in, is necessarily value laden, and positivists (Denscombe 2002), might challenge my methods and their validity. However I feel that social scientific methods are by nature open to multiple interpretations and I would argue that rather than this being a

weakness it should be seen as a strength. How could one ever categorically state what a person means when they make a particular comment or express themselves in a particular way? The social science researcher is only able to hazard an, albeit educated, guess at what was meant. This is dependant on many factors, the motives of the person at the time, the context, the presence of others, the presence of the researcher and so on. Thus I would argue that my research has internal validity, (Seale and Filmer 1998) and the findings are reliable because of the range of data I collected which has internal correlations.

The serendipity of Social Science research must not be underestimated. For example, in chapter 5, I cite numerous examples of children and adults making comments which they may not have made to other people. The serendipity of research does not invalidate the chosen methods, because they could be applied in a different setting and, I would argue, similar findings would emerge. For example I believe the 'least adult role' adapted from Mandell (1991) helped me gain the trust of the children and thus provided rich data. I found that some children seemed to have a different relationship with me than they did with their teachers, I was not seen as an authority figure and so I believe they were more 'open' with me. Such strategies could be replicable in settings. Similarly my unexpected opportunity to conduct research in Southern Germany gave me the chance to look at multicultural education in another European context.

From the point of view of data analysis I felt that the use of N5 and N6 data analysis packages (Richards, L. 2000; Richards, T. 2000) enabled me to handle and effectively draw on the huge amount of data I had collected. As I argue earlier, in the methodology chapters, I do not feel the computer package 'straight jacketed' the analysis, on the contrary, I feel I was able to be more creative because the computer was able to speedily retrieve information which it would have been impossible to do manually. I do, however, accept that the skill of the researcher in creating appropriate 'nodes' (containers for data) is crucial. I would argue that I used N5 creatively because I created the categories or nodes (themes for coding) including first level and second level nodes. I analysed the data and then theorised, which I discussed in chapter 8 (Richards, L. 2000). Thus a theory was not constructed and then proved or disproved during the research; rather, in Strauss and Corbin's style (1998:25) I

"constructed" from the data a number of generalisations or theorisations, which drew on various themes throughout the research. I would argue that this is one of the strengths of my thesis, the research design, the data collection, its analysis and the findings all link together as I demonstrate in the matrix table 7.2.

### 1.3 Involving the Children

In all four schools we had similar discussions which began with the children and myself exploring together the nature of the research process during focus groups. This helped fulfil aim 6 involving the children in the research process:

> We are like dictionaries Miss you can look things up in us. (Merrish)

I used this comment from a Muslim girl of Asian heritage in H pilot school in all subsequent schools because I felt it gave the children a clearer idea of what I was trying to do. By the end of the focus groups phase of the research, the children were clear that they could not tell me a 'wrong' answer, but rather I was interested in what they chose to tell me based around the prompt questions on the bean sheet. This gave them a sense of ownership of the project.

I constantly evaluated the extent to which the children were involved to ensure I achieved aim 6 of my project, (matrix, table 7.2) as I describe in chapter 5. I did not involve them in the analysis as I felt this was not ethical because it might have involved breaching anonymity (BERA 2004). However I did offer them an opportunity to discuss issues with me during the presentation of the Interim Report.

The children liked being able to choose their own pseudonym (Seale 1998; Burton 2000; Lindsay 2000; David et al 2001), and also seemed to relish the fact that this was confidential between me and them. I made a point of speaking to them individually in a private space so that no one else heard what they had chosen as their pseudonym. I thought it important for the children to be involved in this activity as it again gave them ownership of the research and also I was interested to see what name they would choose. Children choosing their own pseudonyms not only fulfilled aim 6, (matrix table 7.2), but also offered insight into some children's perception's of academia being white and Western.

## 1.4 Ethical issues

I grappled with ethical dilemmas throughout the research, especially when assuming my 'least adult' role. I believe I behaved appropriately adhering to ethical standards (BERA 2004).

Throughout each of the phases of the research, as I explained in chapter 4, I constantly asked the children if they were happy to talk with me and for me to record their answers in my fieldnotes. I felt it important to do this each time I spoke with the children because, although I had gained parental and school consent, I believed in the collaborative nature of the research. I thought it was important to continually gain consent from the children to establish my role as not being superior to the child, but confirm the 'least adult role' both in terms of my data collection, and also in terms of my relationship with them as human beings (France et al 2000; Masson 2000; Warren 2000).

Importantly it was very difficult when children expressed racist or prejudiced attitudes because my immediate reaction was to challenge these, but this would have halted the discussion and the children would not have been so open (Lindsay 2000). If I challenged their behaviour I would be contravening my 'neutral' 'least adult role' but if I did not act then I would be an accessory to racism. I decided not to challenge behaviour at the time but when I returned to present the Interim report I felt able to discuss such incidents with the children and then, together they concluded that such behaviour was inappropriate. However I am not sure of the impact of this course of action because I believe the best time to challenge behaviour and discuss issues is at the time of the event, not at a later date. As I noted in my research journal I struggled with this issue

> I should challenge racism – it can be too long to wait until the Interim report
> .......but I know I shouldn't (least adult role compromised). (Journal pg 25).

I highlighted this problem in table 4.1, presented in chapter 4 (adapted from Mason 1996), where I considered ethical issues. I also recognised that in this research I was assuming the role of the researcher primarily, rather than that of the teacher.

I also had to grapple with safety issues. In X school the boys were dominating the playground and on several occasions I saw children being hit by a flying football. As a former teacher I had a strong urge to intervene and point out the dangers of kicking

the ball so hard especially at the edge of the playground. I felt that it was important to mention this to the staff because it was a safety issue, but I did not go over to the children myself thus I did not contravene my intended 'least adult role'.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, serendipity is the friend of the social science researcher and I acknowledge that I would not have gained access to the six schools in Germany without the translator. However as I described in chapter 5, I had to ensure that my translator was made aware of ethical issues (BERA 2004) which I realised after the pilot interview in Germany, and subsequently implemented in the substantive study there.
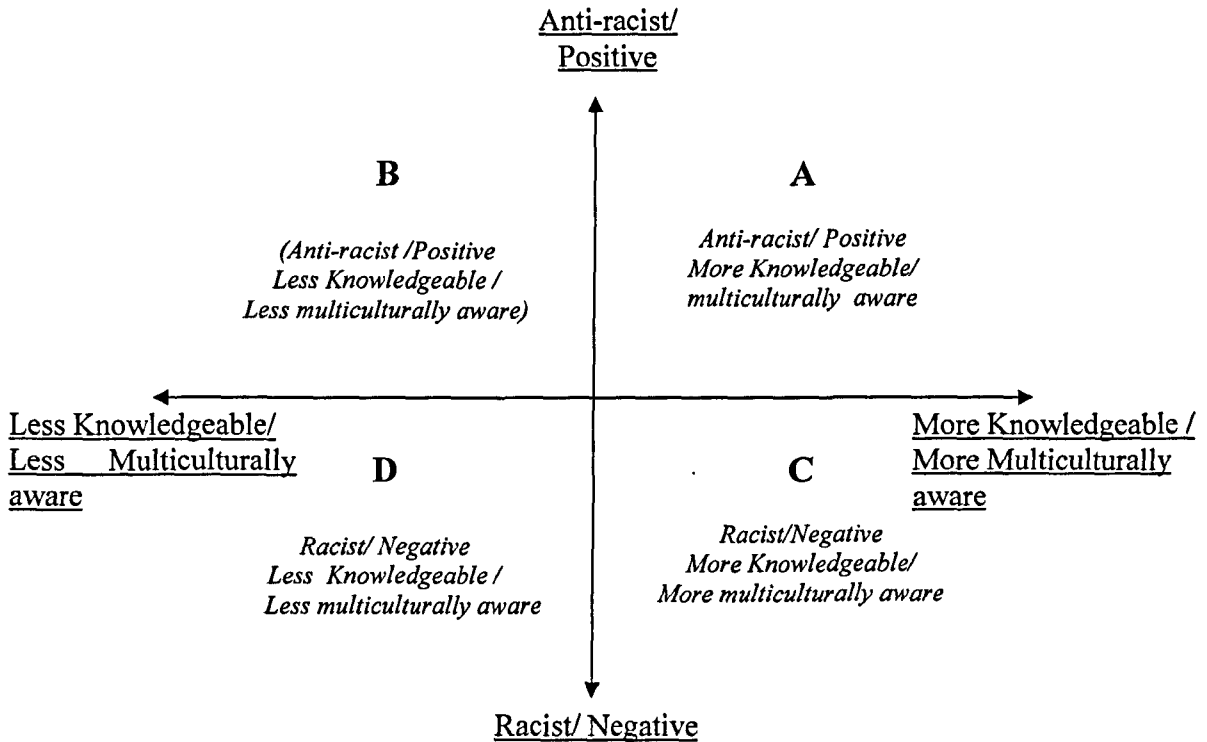
## 1.5 Validity and Reliability

I felt that the research questions I asked and the methodologies I used in both the English and German research afforded me rich data which I could analyse to reach valid and reliable findings, as I outlined in chapter 5 (Seale and Filmer 1998; Bernard 2000). Thus my findings about the possible influence of the school (section 2 matrix table 7.2) and also the insight into multicultural education in both England and Southern Germany (section 4 matrix table 7.2), I believe, make a valuable contribution to the debate on multicultural education. If I had had more time it would have been interesting to re interview the children to see if their participation in the research had had an impact on their attitudes and behaviour. Also I would have liked to investigate the extent of the impact of the Interim Report on multicultural and anti-racist education in the schools in my study.

## 2 Research Findings - A Summary

As I outlined in chapter 1, I was interested in finding out about children's multicultural awareness and the influence that various factors, (including the school, and relationships with teachers) had on their understanding in the contexts of both England and Southern Germany. In the following section I summarise each key finding making reference to chapter 8, and table 9.1 below, and I refer to these findings in the final section of this chapter, implications for policy and practice.

Table 9:1 A diagram charting children's attitudes and knowledge

Anti-racist/
Positive

**B**

*(Anti-racist /Positive
Less Knowledgeable /
Less multiculturally aware)*

**A**

*Anti-racist/ Positive
More Knowledgeable/
multiculturally aware*

Less Knowledgeable/
Less    Multiculturally
aware

**D**

*Racist/ Negative
Less  Knowledgeable /
Less multiculturally aware*

**C**

More Knowledgeable /
More Multiculturally
aware

*Racist/Negative
More Knowledgeable/
More multiculturally aware*

Racist/ Negative

## 2.1 Anti-racism, Racism and Children's Multicultural Awareness

Here I summarise each key finding making reference to table 9.1. This categorisation forms part of the micro context which, I have argued may be influenced by the overarching macro context of the school. In my study the majority of the Year 5 children, in the English schools, seemed to be naturally anti-racist whether they were knowledgeable about other cultures or not. I would place them in quadrants A or B in table 9.1. A small minority displayed racist or negative speech or behaviour as identified in quadrants C and D in table 9.1. I feel these findings, detailed earlier in chapter 8, are significant because they correlate with other research (Brown 1998, 2001; Connolly 1998; Lewis 2005) which identified that children often 'learn' to be racist/ prejudicial from society, but, these theorists state, they are not born so. The findings relate directly to the research aims and questions as presented in matrix table 7.2.

### 2.1.1 Anti-racist and More Knowledgeable: (Quadrant A)

Approximately a third of children felt positive about their own culture and so wanted to accord the same degree of respect to those of a different culture. If they were proud of and knew a lot about their own culture they were often anti-racist in their speech and behaviour.

### 2.1.2 Anti-racist and Less Knowledgeable: Quadrant B

Approximately a half of children were anti-racist despite having limited knowledge of other cultures this seemed to be because they thought it was 'important to be nice'. Also many were aware of the need to be politically correct and thus displayed anti-racist speech and behaviour because they believed it to be the right thing to do (Troyna and Hatcher 1992).

### 2.1.3 Racist and More Knowledgeable : Quadrant C

A few children who were generally knowledgeable about most cultures were negative about cultures with which they were unfamiliar (Gittings 2005). A few made a racist/negative remark or displayed racist/negative behaviour which they subsequently regretted. One child, who I considered to be knowledgeable, was described as both a racist and a bully, to children of his own culture and also different cultures.

### 2.1.4 Racist and Less Knowledgeable : Quadrant D

The minority of children who made negative or racist comments I deemed to be less knowledgeable about different cultures. Most of these children were white, male and tended to be younger than the other children in the study. Most negative comments came from the research which I undertook *after* the events of September 11th 2001 in B school (Brown 1998). Their comments seemed full of anger and they felt threatened by what they perceived to be 'alien' and 'bad' cultures. These children mainly seemed to be repeating the views they had heard from their parents or in the media.


### 2.2 Children's Attitudes to 'Other' Cultures?

In chapter 8 I discussed the children's attitudes towards their own and different cultures. Many children believed that being 'nice' to everyone would solve the problems of the world. This value has, I would argue, been impressed upon our primary school children from an early age through assemblies and PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) lessons (Pierce 2003). However it is argued that this bland, naïve and simplistic message masks underlying inequalities which children do not learn about (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997; Connolly 1998, 1998b; Lewis 2005).


Many children said 'we are all the same' thus displaying an ignorance of, or unintentional blindness towards, different cultures, resulting in a lack of awareness of the potential dominance of one culture over others. This is described as a colour

blindness position, noted earlier in chapter 3 (Jones 1998, 1999; Gaine 1995, 2005). Some children thought that humans are 'the same but not identical' and everyone should be accorded the same respect whatever their culture, thus acknowledging the variety of different cultures. Some of these children are aware of the domination of one culture over another (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997).

Many children held white privilege viewpoints and spoke of 'being normal' which, for many children, meant being white and Western (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997; Connolly 1998; Lewis 2005). Many children were politically correct; whether naturally or because they had learnt to be is difficult to determine (Brown 1998, Connolly 1998, 1998b; Troyna and Hatcher 1992). Thus the micro context of children's attitudes displays a white privilege stance, in my research schools.

## 3.3 Influence of the School

My third key issue concerned the possible influence of the school with reference to the English and German fieldwork and this is the macro context. I argued that the organisation of the school (and also the content of the formal curriculum, together with implicit values in the hidden curriculum) may in fact contribute to institutional racism because white Western values are presented as 'normal' (Dadzie 2000; Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). This finding was discovered in both the English and Southern Germany schools. I considered this to be an important finding because it offers opportunities for the research to be of relevance to schools, teacher education institutions and other related bodies both nationally and internationally.

In chapter 8 I presented the following theorisations emerging from my research: Firstly the organisation of the curriculum in England and also in Southern Germany reinforces a white Western standpoint. Secondly the formal curriculum in England and also Southern Germany is often ineffectual at challenging stereotyping, reducing prejudice and questioning the domination of a white Western perspective (Blair 1998; Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). Thirdly, the hidden curriculum in England sometimes re enforces stereotyping and can implicitly communicate white Western privilege (Back and Nyak 1993; Jones 1999; Gaine 2005). Finally I suggest that some of the children in the English schools seemed to be dominated, either intentionally or intentionally, by authoritarian teachers who had a view of children as inferior (James

1995). I proceed to argue that the domination of children by adults may be linked with the domination of white Western culture (Adorno et al 1950).

The distinction between faith-based schools and community schools (Parker-Jenkins et al 2005; Surrey 2007), (both in England and internationally) was beyond the scope of this present thesis but I would argue that the RE lessons in faith-based schools would offer a more biased view of the dominant religion, (for further discussion see: Jackson 2003d; Brown; 2003; Mason 2003; Short 2003; Wright 2003). For example in Southern Germany the Religion lessons were faith nurture and so obviously the particular religion elected by parents, for example Katholische, would be presented as 'true' and consequently their children would be taught to be good Catholics with Catholic values. The schools in which I worked in England were not faith-based schools but, nevertheless, there were hidden values and I would argue that faith-based schools in England can have an influence on the development of children's beliefs (Mason 2003; Wright 2003; Brown 2003). This does not mean I think faith-based schools are a bad thing, in fact many service the needs of their pupils appropriately (Short 2003; Brown 2003; Francis and Lankshear 1993; Parker-Jenkins et al 2005). However I agree with Mason (2003) who argues that faith-based schools should ensure that other stances are discussed, and their own faith is engaged with in a critical manner, as I elaborate in the final section of this chapter.

## 3 Implications for Policy and Practice

There is often an emphasis in educational research (Straus and Corbin 1998, Cohen et al 2000), on the importance of implications of the research for pedagogy. I hope that my own research has some value in the educational arena and will, in some way, make a difference. Strauss and Corbin (1998:25) state:

> *Theorizing* is the act of **constructing** ….. from data an explanatory scheme that systematically integrates various concepts through statements of relationship. A theory does more than provide understanding or paint a vivid picture. It enables users to explain and predict events, thereby providing guides to action.

In the section below I critically discuss twelve action points. Firstly, five implications for teaching and learning about different cultures; followed by three challenges to

change attitudes; finally I present four recommendations specifically targeted at schools.

## 3.1 Teaching and Learning: Planned Opportunities

Are there planned opportunities, in curriculum time, for positive discussions about different cultures, and the diversity within as well as between cultures? Are children encouraged to be positive about cultures with which they are familiar and unfamiliar? A greater understanding of the 'lived experiences' of a range of different communities with diverse beliefs and practices, (for example through RE, Geography and PSHE lessons) may result in a more positive attitude towards different cultures (Hessari and Hill 1989; Adams 1989; Wignall 2000; Institute of Race Relations 1985; Green 1999; Sanders and Myers 1995, 100 Great Black Britons 2006). Yet at the same time there should not be a bland "acceptance of all" cultures without any critical analysis. The contentious issue here lies in the fact that some teachers and children may find it difficult to show respect towards a culture or religion whose practices and beliefs they may disagree with. For example some children and teachers may disagree with Muslim women wearing the hijab, (I discussed this earlier in chapter 3 and chapter 8) (Asser 2006; Strucke 2006; Suleman 2006; Parker-Jenkins 1995, The Islamic veil across Europe 2006). However the teacher would need to ensure that cultures were discussed in a positive manner and children encouraged to be proud of their own culture whilst at the same time allowing critically analytical evaluation of those opinions or practices. The Global Citizenship curriculum encourages critically analytical teaching and learning about different cultures (DFES 2000; Oxfam 2006; Jackson 2003a).

I found that most knowledgeable children were also anti-racist because they respected the variety of different perspectives on life from a variety of cultures with which they were familiar (quadrant A table 9.1).

## 3.2 Teaching and Learning : Own Culture and Unfamiliar Cultures.

Do teachers encourage children to be proud of their own culture whilst stimulating a healthy respect for a variety of cultures especially those unfamiliar to them? Are opportunities provided for all children to discuss their own culture? I found that many children in high proportion minority ethnic schools were very proud of their own culture and thus, I would argue, were respectful to other minority cultures. However it

is important not to neglect the study of cultures which are not represented in the school (Troyna and Hatcher 1992). In my research, knowledge of British Chinese (Fisher 2002) was minimal in all schools including the high proportion minority ethnic ones. The few children who were racist and yet knowledgeable (quadrant C table 9.1) were children who were racist about British Chinese – a culture with which they were unfamiliar (Hesler 2002; Gittings 2005). This relates to my discussions in chapter 2 about 'in' and 'out' groups and racial prejudice and racial discrimination (Aboud 1988; mercier 1991). Geography, PSHE and RE lessons could focus on cultures not represented in the school, and websites to support this include Christian Aid Global Gang site (2007), Brit Kid and Euro Kid (2007). Other resources include Oxfam 2007; DfEE 2000; DfES 2006; Knowles and Ridley 2005.

## 3.3 Teaching and Learning : 'Contact Hypothesis' and More

Is the 'contact hypothesis' (Troyna and Hatcher1992; Connolly 2000) enough to eradicate racism and develop anti-racism? The 'contact hypothesis' is the belief that by integrating children of different ethnicities in one school, children will necessarily be more tolerant of each other because they work alongside each other and thus will necessarily get on with each other. This has been challenged by Troyna and Hatcher (1992), Aboud (1988) and in my own research, because I discovered that there were racist children in the high proportion minority ethnic schools and there were a great many anti-racist children in the predominantly white schools. I discovered that children from predominantly white schools displayed equally anti-racist and positive attitudes as those from the high proportion minority ethnic schools. However there were more children in the predominantly white schools who displayed negative or racist attitudes and one contributory factor could have been lack of the osmosis effect (Tomlinson 1984; 1990) or 'contact hypothesis' (Troyna and Hatcher 1992), where they did not soak up a tolerance towards different cultures because they were not surrounded by a variety of children from different ethnic backgrounds. However, another explanation for the racism, may have been the media portrayal of September 11th events where children had copied prejudicial attitudes from their parents and the media (Brown 1998; Hafez 2000). Thus all types of schools could ensure there is a multicultural ethos in school, for example displays and resources which reflect a multi ethnic society (Derby City Council 2000; University of Derby Library Services 2000). Thus the osmosis effect (Tomlinson 1990) of being surrounded by positive images of

the multiethnic society could provide a good foundation to encourage the development of anti-racism. Linking schools of different ethnic mixes has been suggested as a positive measure to promote anti-racism (Ipgrave 2001, 2003b). I would argue that the passive 'contact hypothesis' (Troyna and Hatcher 1992) and osmosis effect (Tomlinson 1984; 1990; Patel 1994) are not enough to challenge racism and promote anti-racism on their own, rather they need to be supplemented by more pro active approaches as suggested earlier in this section. Thus the high proportion minority ethnic schools cannot rely on osmosis alone to eradicate racism and promote human equality.

### 3.4 Teaching and Learning : Predominantly White Schools.

Do children in predominantly white schools have sufficient and regular opportunities to learn about a variety of cultures? It is even more important to learn about different cultures for children in predominantly white schools because they do not have the advantage of high proportion minority ethnic schools in having a variety of cultures represented (Tomlinson 1990; Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Patel 1994). But teachers in predominantly white schools often fail to recognise the need for multicultural education (Gaine 2005; Jones 1999). Tomlinson (1990), Gaine (1995, 2005), Jones (1999) and Lewis (2005) have all conducted research which correlates with my own findings, namely that teachers in predominantly white schools think that multicultural education is for minority ethnic children. I found that children in predominantly white schools have limited knowledge of different cultures and so it is more important for them to learn about a variety of cultures (Knowles and Ridley 2005). I also found that whilst many children 'seem' to hold anti-racist views, quadrant B table 9.1, if presented with unfamiliar cultures there can be little assurance that racist tendencies would not occur (Aboud 1988). Therefore it should be highlighted to ITE student teachers that multicultural and anti-racist education is even more crucial in predominantly white schools – to combat both ignorance and potential racism. Numerous resources are available to support the teacher such as Dadzie (2000) *Toolkit for talking Racism,* Oosthuysen (2006) *Here I am –Children from Lancashire and Around the World,* Knowles and Ridley (2005) *Another Spanner in the Works,* and websites such as Oxfam Cool Planet (2007), Global Link (2007) and Multiverse (2006).

## 3.5 Teaching and Learning : Starting Early to Eradicate Racism

Do early year's practitioners offer sufficient and appropriate opportunities for children to learn about different cultures? Do they encourage positive attitudes towards different cultures to avoid young children copying the discriminatory attitudes which surround them from, for example the Media, their families, the school, the local community etc? (Brown 1998, 2001). In my study I found that the most racist children were the youngest and least able, (in category D table 9.1). These children often displayed "gut racism" (Aboud 1988) and had not achieved the mature reflective state of their more anti-racist peers. My findings are supported by the work of Connolly (1998) and Brown (1998) who also suggest that children 'learn' to be racist thus it is important for anti-racist education to start in the early years. The problem is that many early years practitioners have limited training in issues of Diversity. CACHE trained staff (Diploma in Childcare and Education) (BBC 2007), usually have one or two sessions devoted to issues of Equal Opportunities, which includes discussion about gender, disability, social class as well as ethnicity (Sure Start 2007). They may also opt to attend training provided by the LA or within their own setting (Early Years Educator 2007). The curriculum for these practitioners therefore needs to provide opportunities for a more comprehensive training, to avoid 'tokenism' teaching and learning about different cultures.

It has been argued that prejudiced attitudes remain unchallenged throughout the primary phase and possibly continue into secondary education and adulthood (Brown 1998, 2001). The use of Persona dolls can support learning about different cultures and encourage adopting positive attitudes (Brown 2001, Cantell Report 2001). I have argued elsewhere (Elton-Chalcraft 2006) that Persona dolls can be used not only in the Foundation stage, but also in Key Stage 1 and years 3 and possibly 4 in Key Stage 2 and this would support the 'unlearning' of discriminatory attitudes.

In order to eradicate racism I would argue that racism needs to be "unlearned" (Brown 1998) and so it is vital to evaluate the Early Year's curriculum and ethos and start early to eradicate racism.

## 3.6 Attitudes : Being 'Nice'- Equality

There were particular attitudes which I found to be prevalent amongst many children. I have selected three to discuss, in the next three sections, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8, because these attitudes reflect a set of values which may be taken for granted but which, I

argue need to be critically analysed and challenged if anti-racist education is to be successful.

In my research many children talked about 'being nice' not just in terms of 'race' but to everyone. Many children felt that harmony was preferable to conflict. However this could be a result of schools enforcing an egalitarian message to be kind, thoughtful, respectful and so on which is often characteristically conveyed in school assemblies (for example Peirce 2003) and through Circle time and PSHE lessons (Moseley 1996, 1998). Do teachers and children treat all people courteously and with respect, including those who are characteristically discriminated against, either knowingly or unwittingly? The problem here is that teachers and children may disagree with or dislike a person's values and yet they are required not be racist by law (Race Relations Amendment Act 2000). Teachers are also required by the standards to be respectful (Standards for the award of QTS 1.1, 1.2 and new standards, TDA 2007). Many of the children in my research were either naturally respectful, or had learnt to be respectful towards those of another culture. As I demonstrated in the previous chapters many children were anti-racist and positive about different cultures whether they were knowledgeable, or even if they were less knowledgeable about different cultures. However, as I discussed earlier in chapter 3, anti-racism is not just about 'being nice' to a particular person (Blair 1999), institutional racism must be avoided too (Machpherson 1999). Thus schools need to go further than 'being nice' to each other and think additionally about the macro climate (Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Lewis 2005). I would agree with Troyna and Hatcher (1992:37) that it is not sufficient to think about the "micro perspective" of bullying and racist incidents in the school without also taking into account the "macro" situation which could be described as "institutional racism" (Macpherson 1999; Lewis 2005). Thus issues of equality need to be extended beyond the concept of equal opportunities within the classroom to realise that equality is not in evidence in society at large (Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Lewis 2005). The implication for schools, is to encourage children to 'be nice' to each other in school, but also to encourage them to acknowledge, explore and challenge injustices that they see in the world outside the school gates. I discussed issues of equality earlier in chapter 2 (Edwards and Fogelman 1998; Leicester, Modgil and Modgil 1998). Specific resources to support children to become responsible 'global citizens' (DfES 2006) are available, for example those produced by Oxfam (2006).

<u>3.7 Attitudes : 'We are all the Same'- Identity</u>

Are teachers and children 'colour blind' and are they aware of the influence and dominance of white Western culture? (Jones 1999; Sheets 2000; Gaine 2005; Lewis 2005). I found that many children used white Western language and referred to white Western culture as being the 'norm'. Some teachers argue that they do not want to discriminate between children of different ethnicities because this in itself is racist and may lead to conflict but this has been disputed by Jones (1999). I would agree , such an attitude denies a child's identity and also may deny that prejudice exists (Jones 1999; Gaine 2005). Thus teachers need to explore differences as well as similarities between peoples. I agree with both Gaine (1995, 2005) and Jones (1998, 1999) who acknowledge that racism can flourish where there is a denial of difference. Different people hold different ideas; for example in RE children can learn about a range of beliefs about what happens after death, and then explore similarities with or differences from their own beliefs; intercultural education promotes such exploration where children are encouraged to learn about and from each other's beliefs (Nesbitt 2004, Thorley 2003). Thorley's book (2003) *Talking Together: Conversations about Religion* offers primary children an opportunity to listen in on conversations between fictitious children from a range of belief systems - Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim Sikh and also children from no particular religious affiliation. The children discuss a range of topics including names, food, appearance and death. One of the aims of the book is for children to be :

> Sensitive to and enriched by each other rather than suspicious and intolerant of our differences. (Thorley 2003:30)

Also it is important for teachers to explore the multi faceted nature of identity, which I discussed earlier in chapter 2 (Nyak 1999; Modood 1992, 2001; Modood et al 1997). People cannot be stereotyped into one category. Thus not all Muslims are terrorists, not all white people eat traditional Sunday roast dinner, which some children in my research had wrongly believed. The concept of identity is an important issue which can be explored in the classroom for example using 'philosophy for children' (P4C) to consider prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes (Knowles and Ridley 2005; Philosophy for Children 2006).

## 3.8 Attitudes : 'White Privilege'

One of the findings of my research in both England and Southern Germany, pointed to a widely held belief (whether expressed implicitly or explicitly) of white Western culture being 'normal'. This attitude needs to be challenged, I would argue, by teachers and children acknowledging the ways in which white Western culture could be seen to dominate; for example in the formal and hidden curriculum, as I have described in chapters 6 and 7 and which I refer to again in recommendation to schools section 3.10 below (Gaine 2005; Jones 1999; Parker-Jenkins et al 2005). However there must not be an exoticism of 'different' cultures which would be an example of pluralist multiculturalism (Kincheloe and Stenberg 1997) where 'they' as opposed to 'us' live in an exotic parallel universe as I discussed in chapter 2. Rather anti-racist education should ensure that children learn about and value different cultures (Knowles and Ridley 2005; Brit Kid and Euro Kid 2007; Global Gang 2007). White, Western, Christian language, dress and beliefs and so on should not be presented as the 'norm' (Back and Nyak 1993). I would argue that the curriculum used in English schools at present does not reflect adequately the multicultural society in which we live, as I have argued elsewhere (Elton-Chalcraft 2007).

## 3.9 School: Organisation of the Curriculum

In this section I present five implications for future practice based on the findings which relate to the influence of the school in children's multicultural awareness. I would argue that schools need to do more than lay foundations for anti-racism to develop. In fact I have found that the organisation of schools and the very curriculum itself may be partly responsible for allowing racist attitudes to flourish. This is a similar finding to earlier work by Troyna and Hatcher (1992) and to Lewis's American study.

I have argued in the latter chapters of this thesis that the organisation of the curriculum in both England and Southern Germany, could be said to reinforce a white Western standpoint. Thus there is a need for teachers and children to acknowledge this situation. To counteract this I would recommend that Local Authorities, advisors, governors and Head teachers use resources which promote 'whole school' approaches to tackle racism, for example Dadzie (2000), Knowles and Ridley (2005) and Devine (2003).

I have argued that some teachers, especially in predominantly white areas in England and in some schools in Southern Germany have prejudiced views and this is a similar finding to Knowles and Ridley (2005), Gaine (1995, 2005) and Troyna and Hatcher (1992). Thus Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Professional Development courses need to promote anti-racism to ensure new teachers and in service teachers examine their values and attitudes to ensure they are more consistent with the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000). Guidance to support this includes Multiverse (2006), DfES (2006) websites and resources.

### 3.10 School: Curriculum Time for Anti-racist Teaching and Learning

There also needs to be an overhaul of the curriculum which Parker-Jenkins et al suggest is

At best Eurocentric and at worst Britocentric but rarely multicentric. (2005:145)

My findings support this claim. As I have discussed in the first five implications, there need to be planned, regular and appropriate opportunities for anti-racist and multicultural education in schools, to counteract the Britocentric and Eurocentric values which I have shown permeate the curriculum. There are some fundamental implications of my research, the need for children to be offered opportunities to consider sets of values other than white, Western, adult-dominated ones. Schools could refer to alternative dating systems, for example, the Muslim and Jewish (Fisher 2002). Teachers and children could use CE and BCE rather than BC and AD which are Christo-centric, and which, ironically are recommended in the History QCA schemes of work (QCA 2005). Lewis's work also supports such an initiative, as she calls for schools to fulfil,

The role they have been cast in- that of the great equalisers. (Lewis 2005:37) Teachers could ensure there is sufficient curriculum time for developing multicultural awareness, for example effective RE lessons where children learn 'about' and 'from' a variety of different belief systems, religions and cultures. Whilst there is evidence of good practice in RE (Ofsted 2002), which is one of the key subjects for multicultural education, there is also evidence of very poor lessons which have been graded by Ofsted as not satisfactory (Ofsted 2002). Also PSHE lessons offer opportunities for multicultural education and anti-racism to be promoted (Philosophy for Children 2007; Moseley 1996,1998; DfES 2006b). But again the problem is limited time allocation because many teachers focus on SATs tests (QCA 2006) and little time is

left for such areas as Global citizenship and anti-racism. (As I mentioned earlier in chapters 6 and 7, many children did not discuss RE, and in school X no RE was observed during the entire 6 weeks).

However initiatives which offer opportunities for children to discuss anti-racism are becoming more popular, for example Philosophy for Children (2007) and Global Citizenship (DfES 2000, 2006b). Other resources include Brown 1998; Dadzie 2000; Knowles and Ridley 2005. However such resources cannot be used, I would argue, without a commitment to the underlying values which I discuss in the final recommendations below.

3.11  School: Links between Racism and Bullying Behaviour

Are bullying incidents identified and appropriately addressed? I would argue that it is not only racist bullying incidents which need to be eradicated – because, in my own research, the one child who was deemed to be racist and yet knowledgeable was also deemed to be a bully (quadrant C table 9.1). Any bullies, whether racist or not, should be challenged in order to create a co-operative and mutually respectful ethos in the school which is the pre requisite, I would argue, for anti-racism to flourish. This is confirmed in the findings of Troyna and Hatcher (1992).

As my research progressed I considered the links between domination of children, racism and oppression (Adorno et al 1950; Devine 2003). As I discussed in previous chapters this was not an original aim of the thesis (matrix table 7.2) but the theory emerged as I collected and analysed the data, aim 5. Further research is needed to correlate this finding. However I believe it is important for teachers to consider how they treat children; because if there is a domination of teacher over child, or child over child, then this could foster 'domination tendencies' which could result in racism and discrimination (Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Devine 2003).

As I have argued earlier in chapter 3, racism is often linked with domination of one group over another (Adorno et al 1950; Aboud 1988) and schools need to challenge such mind sets (Dadzie 2000:2). This relates directly to the 'Every Child Matters' (DfES 2006) initiative which has come to permeate most areas of education. The influence of the school 'climate' should not be underestimated. Similarly if teachers view children as 'inferior' and lacking in status (James 1995), then they are creating an atmosphere of antagonism which could promote racism and prejudice. I have argued that the behaviour of teachers towards children could be categorised using James' fourfold typology (discussed earlier in chapter 4 of this thesis). Some teachers

I observed viewed the child as 'developing child' lacking in status and relatively incomplete (James 1995). Thus there was a domination of superior adult over inferior child which, I believe, led to an atmosphere of antagonism. Schools could ensure they create an open, egalitarian ethos where anti-racism would flourish as suggested by Dadzie (2000) and Knowles and Ridley (2005).

A great deal of work has been undertaken by Devine (2003) about children and power relations in schools. I would argue that children who are afforded respect and given responsibility are more likely to afford respect to others including those who belong to a different culture. I would agree with Devine that "treating children seriously as humans in their own right" is a relatively new phenomena (2003:2). This is despite the existence of a children's rights movement which spans many decades (Wiggin 1892; Gross and Gross 1977; Freeman 1992; Parker-Jenkins 1999). Devine (2003), like me, is keen for children's voices to be heard as the following extract from a child demonstrates:

> The children have the least power 'cos they're not allowed do anything... say what they want, do what they want... the principal has the most power and the teachers.. they're grown up so they're meant to be the bosses (Grade 5 boy, Parkway.) (2003:2)

Conversely R, D and B schools the children were involved in decision making, all three schools had 'school councils' (School Councils 2007) where issues were discussed such as playtime equipment, bullying and so on. In X school in my study, there was no school council as such but the children were involved in an anti bullying campaign, which the children told me was not always successful. I would argue that the establishment of a child-centred school council could challenge cultures of dominance and thereby encourage anti-racism to flourish.

The new Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards have limited explicit references to establishing positive, respectful etc relationships between children and teacher (QCA 2007). Yet the reports on the Children's Act 2004 suggest that this is very important (DfES 2005). As such policy on teacher training should more adequately reflect emerging norms and values concerning the status and treatment of children.

### 3.12 School: Teacher's Mind Set

My final recommendation relates to teacher mind set. It is important for teachers to understand that they cannot pick up a book and teach from it without first engaging with the values behind the activity. For example in discussing different cultures in an

RE lesson, I often use the *Dr Xargle: An Alien's View of Earth Babies* picture book (Willis and Ross 1988), with my student teachers as an illustration of how language can be culturally biased. Dr Xargles, an alien teacher who instructs his class about "earthlets", human babies, uses terminology from his own species or the 'jargon' terminology of the humans, thus demonstrating cultural dominance for example:

> They [earthlet babies] have one head and only two eyes, two short tentacles with pheelers on the end and two long tentacles called leggies. (1988:3)

Dr Xargles has five eyes and two long tentacles and is thus using his own cultural language to describe another culture. This is similar to Kincheloe and Steinberg's pluralist multiculturalism, Hannuka is the Jewish Christmas, (1997) and my own finding "Gurdwara is the Sikh Church" (see chapter 7). Teachers could avoid this by ensuring their mind set is non- biased and they refer to a religion or culture using its own terminology (Elton-Chalcraft 2006c). This relates to the white privilege attitude described earlier. Thus teachers need to be aware of the macro context of cultures of dominance, and be aware of any bias there may be in their language or use of resources.

I hope that my research will contribute to the debate on multicultural education and will also help to bring about change which I have explored in the implications for practice section above. My final quotation from the theorists is taken from Brown *Unlearning Discrimination in the Early Years* (1998); as it sums up some key anti-discriminatory principles which I would endorse [my italics]:

- Educational practice based on equality and justice is good educational practice and involves developing empowering relationships built on trust, respect and an appreciation of diversity

- Racism and other social inequalities are deeply rooted in British history and still profoundly affect the lives of children and their families. These inequalities were created by and are being perpetuated by people *so they can be changed by people.*                    (Brown 1998:2)

## Summary

In this concluding chapter I began by reviewing my study and I showed how the methodological approach yielded rich data from both the English and Southern German fieldwork. Throughout this section I demonstrated how the research aims,

research questions, methodology and findings were interrelated, with reference to a matrix, table 7.2. In the second section I reviewed the research findings and related these, to future policy and practice.

The findings have demonstrated that there is no simple problem with a simple solution, it's not just Black and White. Consequently I listed twelve implications of my research for policy and practice. The first five recommended teaching and learning which is regular, appropriate and planned for, and involves analytical exploration of a variety of cultures. I demonstrated how the 'contact theory' is indeed valuable but needs to be developed, for effective anti-racist education to be successful. In the discussion of key attitudes I highlighted the need for teachers to acknowledge and challenge the dominance of white Western culture. I also described the need for teachers to expand their own and the children's understanding of the concepts of equality and identity. The final four recommendations related to the school setting. I argued that the organisation of the educational institution and in particular curriculum timetabling, could in fact allow racism, and specifically institutional racism, to remain unchallenged. I made recommendations for schools to examine possible links between bullying and racism and the effect of dominant behaviour by adults and children on the development of an anti-racist ethos.

At the beginning of the thesis, I described the spokes and hub of a wheel in explaining the interrelated nature of the various elements of my research: the child was always at the centre, and so it is fitting that I end with one of their voices. I have travelled a long way since first formulating the research proposal for this doctoral thesis and I have learnt a great deal, especially from the children with whom I have been privileged to work. I would like to end with words from one of them:

> Grandparents might think differently. In the olden days people seemed to be more racist. We've been brought up to know about different religions and we're friendlier .....Children know more and are less racist than adults. (Terri a white girl, Interview R1, high proportion minority ethnic school)

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# APPENDIX

<u>Appendix - Bean Sheet: Self perceptions of knowledge</u>

The presentation of results from the bean sheet for each school give an indication of the confidence of different children concerning their knowledge and understanding of different cultures and thus I provide a qualitative commentary alongside each table. I also provide an analysis of patterns suggested by this statistical data in chapter 7.

<u>X school   Predominantly white 16 respondents</u>
F = female M = male
Table 1  X school

| *Question* | 0 beans F | M | 1 bean F | M | 2 beans F | M | 3 beans F | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How much do you think you know about **British Chinese** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| How much do you think you know about **British Asians** who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 1 | 3 | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| How much do you think you know about **British White** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | | | | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| How much do you think you know about **British African/Caribbean** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 2 | 4 | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| How much do you think you know about any **other cultures** (not already mentioned) who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 4 | 5 | | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 1 |
| Occurences | 7 | 12 | 1 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 14 | 11 |

Qualitative comments:

Faye, a white girl, in interview X4, said she knew more about British Asian than British white.

In her interview she spoke of "Hindu, Muslim and Sikh people" but confessed that her mother had told her this. Thus she probably put more beans into the pot because she felt the knowledge was 'superior' and 'correct' for British Asian whereas her knowledge for British white was less informative. She said

> Faye: they [British white] are white have different varieties of clothes, drink a lot, have any job and have less people in their family"

But again she admitted her mother had told her about the large families of British Asians.

One white girl in interview X1 originally put 3 beans in for British Asian but during the interview changed this to 2 as she felt her knowledge was not as secure as she had originally thought.

Toni, white of Italian heritage, Interview X2, was, on the other hand, more self critical and put 0, 1 or 2 beans in for cultures other than his own thus demonstrating his self perception of limited knowledge of 'other cultures'. This is an excellent example of a white child in a predominantly white school who, despite limited knowledge of other cultures, nevertheless had a positive anti-racist attitude. But this was possibly because he knew what it felt like to be 'different' because of his Italian heritage.

### D school    High proportion minority ethnic  20 respondents

Table 2 D school Bean Sheet

| Question | 0 beans F | M | 1 bean F | M | 2 beans F | M | 3 beans F | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How much do you think you know about **British Chinese** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | | 1 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| How much do you think you know about **British Asians** who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 6 |
| How much do you think you know about **British White** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | 1 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| How much do you think you know about **British African/Caribbean** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 1 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | | 3 | 1 |
| How much do you think you know about any **other cultures** (not already mentioned) who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Occurrences | 9 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 18 | 13 | 15 | 11 |

Gurdeep, a Sikh boy, put in 1 bean for Chinese and 1 for Asian and 3 for 'Other' because he distanced himself from British Asian and identified his own Sikh culture as 'other'. Similarly Ashley, of Asian heritage, put in 3 for 'other' because she is from Banglasdesh which she wrote about in 'other' rather than including it in British Asian.

R school high proportion minority ethnic 13 respondents (some children forgot to hand their sheets in)

Table 3 R school Bean Sheet

| *Question* | 0 beans F | M | 1 bean F | M | 2 beans F | M | 3 beans F | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How much do you think you know about **British Chinese** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 2 | 1 |
| How much do you think you know about **British Asians** who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) |  |  |  | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| How much do you think you know about **British White** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| How much do you think you know about **British African/Caribbean** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| How much do you think you know about any **other cultures** (not already mentioned) who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |
| Occurrences | 9 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 11 |

Daniel, an able boy of African heritage, put 3 beans in for everything, which I felt was more an indicator of this able boy's overall self confidence. Actually he was as knowledgeable as Harvir whose self confidence was, however much lower than Daniel's.

Conversely Harvir, a very able girl, put in 2 beans for Asian (even though this was her heritage), 2 for white and 1 for African/Caribbean which said more about her self perception and self confidence, than about her actual knowledge.

Similarly Chloe, able British white girl put in fewer beans than I would have expected again showing a limited self confidence. Interestingly the two girls displayed lower self perceptions of their knowledge and the boys had a higher self confidence where I would have judged their knowledge to be very similar.

David a very able white boy also put in 3 beans (apart from 'other' which he did not complete and so put in 0).

B school  predominantly white 18 respondents

Table 4  B school Bean Sheet

| Question | 0 beans F | M | 1 bean F | M | 2 beans F | M | 3 beans F | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How much do you think you know about **British Chinese** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| How much do you think you know about **British Asians** who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| How much do you think you know about **British White** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| How much do you think you know about **British African/Caribbean** people who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 1 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 | | 2 |
| How much do you think you know about any **other cultures** (not already mentioned) who live in this country? (Food, clothes, what they do, look like, believe, etc.) | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Occurrences | 5 | 4 | 21 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 11 | 16 |

Matthew a less able white boy put in more beans than I would have credited him, especially for 'Other' where he talked about Johnathon the new French boy of African heritage. Joseph, a less able white boy, had a number of misconceptions about different cultures but nevertheless put in 2 or 3 beans for each one as he had written quite a lot in each box on the bean sheet and spoke a great deal in the interview. Also the less able children often over rather than under estimate their knowledge, many of the 2 and 3 bean occurrences were from less able children especially in B school.