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IT'S NOT JUST BLACK AND WHITE:

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

Sally Elton-Chalcraft

Doctor of Philosophy

2008

Volume 1

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Preface

Statement of intellectual ownership

This thesis is totally my own work.

Abstract

Research Title It's Not Just Black and White: An Exploration of Children's Multicultural Awareness, Attitudes and Influences.

In the research I investigated the multicultural awareness of Year 5, (9 and 10 year old) children in four English schools, two with a high proportion of minority ethnic children and two predominantly white schools. I explored the opportunities for multicultural education in both the hidden and formal curricula for this age group. Research was also conducted in Southern Germany where I observed lessons and interviewed teachers and pupils in order to gain an insight into multicultural education in another European country.

The project is located in the wider debate about cultural identity, racism, 'equality' and multiculturalism. The research draws on literature concerning multicultural and anti-racist education. Methodologically, I adopted a qualitative research paradigm and was influenced by feminist methodology in my investigation. I employed a 'least adult role' and worked 'with' not 'on' the children. As a consequence I presented children's voices concerning the research themes.

Throughout the investigation I considered the possible links between ignorance, racism, knowledge and anti-racism. I explored whether children from the predominantly white schools in my study were ignorant of cultures different from their own, and conversely whether children from high proportion minority ethnic schools were more knowledgeable and thus anti-racist. I discovered, however, that many children, whatever their background, displayed anti-racist behaviour and opinions, and that attending a school with a high proportion of minority ethnic children did not necessarily lead to anti-racist tendencies. Moreover, there were children from schools with a high proportion of minority ethnic backgrounds who

displayed overtly racist behaviours. I also noted that the organisation of the school curriculum, in both England and Southern Germany, had an influence on whether anti-racism was promoted or whether racism remained unchallenged. My research offers insights into aspects of white, Western privilege in both the formal and hidden curricula, in the selected schools in England and Southern Germany. I conclude with a discussion of the influence of schooling on children's multicultural awareness and explore the implications for policy and practice.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my Director of Studies Professor Marie Parker-Jenkins, who has been a constant source of support throughout the process; also my second supervisors both Professor John Hinnells and Dr Brian Hall who have both offered advice and encouragement at various stages. I am indebted to the staff and children at all the schools who have participated in the research, and particular mention must be made to Frau I who acted as 'gatekeeper' and translator for the German fieldwork. Numerous colleagues and students at both the University of Derby and my present institution, the University of Cumbria, (formerly St Martin's College) have helped, in a variety of ways, to keep me on task – for which I am most grateful. To my family and friends I owe a deep gratitude for their support- especially to my late mother, Margaret Elton who would have been so proud to know I finally finished, and to my brother Robert Elton who helped with proof reading. My late father, Granger, and my late sister, Rosemary, died before I began this thesis but I would like to acknowledge their encouragement in former years which gave me the confidence to engage in this research.

My husband, Professor David Chalcraft, has been incredibly supportive, and encouraging from start to finish – reading drafts, proof reading and engaging in conversations - often amidst the chatter, banging and singing of our three beautiful children. I began the thesis when Holly was in Reception class and she is about to move to Secondary school. Jetta was born half way through and Izaak came along latterly. My children have been very patient sharing me with each other, and the thesis. Thank you.

Chapter 1: Context and Aims

**I don't want my child turning into one of 'them'.
(Personal communication with a parent school governor)**

The six sections of this chapter are described below:

1. Introduction
2. Aims of research
3. Organisation of the thesis
4. Educational context: Content versus child-centred curriculum
5. Educational context: RE in Europe
6. Terminology

1 Introduction

When working on a fixed-term contract as a Religious Education (RE) co-ordinator and part-time teacher in a Key Stage 1 (KS1) class in a rural village in Derbyshire, I organised a visit to a Hindu Mandir in the neighbouring city about 14 miles away. I was amazed to discover the reactions of some parents and one parent governor, who thought I was about to convert the children to Hinduism. He said:

I don't want my child turning into one of 'them'.

The antagonism towards a 'different' culture from this predominantly white and working class community was surprising to me.¹ This was especially so, since, when we had discussed Hindu worship and special places, in the preceding RE lessons, the children had not shown such antagonism; ignorance yes, but not antagonism. It seemed to be the adults who were prejudiced, not the children. I wondered if the antagonism was because the school was exclusively white, and whether prejudice had arisen from ignorance. I also wondered if these KS1 children were going to adopt their parents' prejudices or if school, and my RE lessons in particular, would make a difference. Would these 4-7 year olds have racist or anti-racist tendencies in the future and what could educationalists do to support the development of children's multicultural awareness/ anti-racism?

¹ It was surprising because I had worked previously in a high proportion minority ethnic school in Oxford city with a significant number of different nationalities represented.

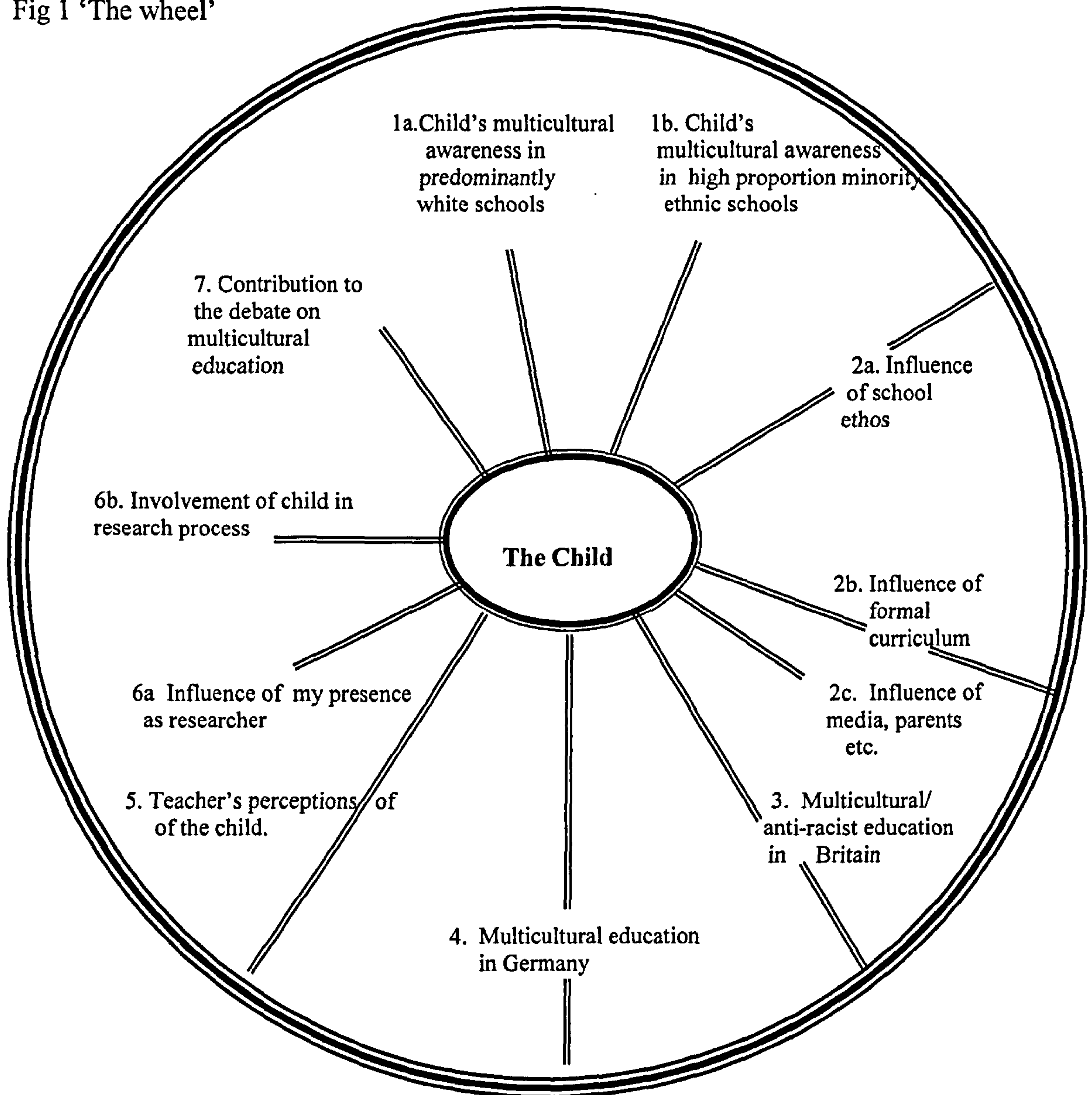
When I applied to the University of Derby for a Millennium Bursary to undertake PhD studies, I decided to conduct research which investigated children's knowledge, understanding and attitudes concerning culture and racism, and whether this was influenced by the type of school they attended, i.e. predominantly white or high proportion minority ethnic, or whether the children had in-born tendencies to be naturally racist or anti-racist (Brown 1998). From my experience as a primary school teacher I know that children are often influenced by external forces such as their parents, the media and the school ethos (nurture), but also they have their own web of belief (nature) in which I am particularly interested (Moyes 1995; Grainger et al 2006). Thus one of the aims of my research was to investigate children's multicultural awareness and the possible influences on this. This informed my thinking for the research topic which emerged as "It's not just Black and White: An Exploration of Children's Multicultural Awareness, Attitudes and Influences."

I was keen that my research should be centred on the child and her/his knowledge, understandings and attitudes, and that it also should involve the child in the process. There were various aspects to the research, which I envisaged diagrammatically, as spokes on a wheel - all separate but inter-related to the hub and the other spokes. But I kept coming back to the hub – the child – as always being at the centre of research, as shown in figure 1, 'the wheel'.

For example one of the spokes is the climate of RE in Britain at the beginning of the 21st Century, and how this has an impact on the child, i.e. to what extent does the formal curriculum have an influence on the child's web of belief? Another aspect involves looking more widely at the international context. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to undertake some research in Southern Germany which allowed me to look at the issues within another European context. Importantly this research was not a comparative analysis, but rather offered an insight into how multicultural education was organised and implemented in a sample of schools in Southern Germany. Other dimensions include the wider curriculum, anti-racist and multicultural education and cross-curricular issues. Further issues involve the teacher's perception of the child, relationships between the child and adults, and power relations between adults and children. I had to be aware of the possible impact of my presence as researcher on the child (Bernard 2000; Woodhead and Faulkner 2000; Alderson 2000), and this too is a

spoke connected to the hub. The spokes correspond to the aims which I discuss in the next section of this introductory chapter.

Fig 1 'The wheel'



2 Aims

My research topic encompasses children's multicultural awareness, their attitudes towards different cultures and factors which could have influenced their knowledge and attitudes. My central aims were fourfold:

1. To conduct a systematic appraisal of children's multicultural awareness in different types of primary schools
2. To consider the possible influences of the following on children's multicultural awareness:
 - the school type and ethos (relationships with staff)
 - the curriculum and in particular RE
 - parents, media, friends etc.
3. To compare the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of children from both predominantly white and high proportion minority ethnic schools
4. To 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.

Subsidiary aims have been:

5. To begin to explore forms of oppression, in particular, affecting children, and how this links with the development of children's multicultural awareness.
6. To involve children in the research process as much as possible

I did not begin my research with a predominant theory, or a hypothesis based on a positivist paradigm of research, which I set out to prove or disprove (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). Rather I have argued for the value of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin 1997), and I explored children's multicultural awareness by working collaboratively with children, and throughout I allowed their voices to be heard.

When undertaking a previous piece of research on Spirituality (Elton-Chalcraft 2000, 2002a), I had been particularly impressed with Coles's research (Coles 1990) because his book *The Spiritual life of Children* was very different to the academic texts with which I had been familiar. It read like a novel and the children's voices could be clearly heard. This was something I wanted to emulate, the children at the centre of the research. Thus I carefully considered my methodology, and the children's involvement formed an integral part of the whole research project; my results chapters provide a significant number of extracts from fieldnotes and interview transcriptions with the deliberate intention of letting the children's voices be heard.

3 Organisation of the Thesis

In this first chapter the aims of the research and the central role played by the children in the process is outlined. I discuss the context of the research, including a commentary on the political backdrop, and content-driven as opposed to child-centred curriculum which, I would argue, is prevalent in English education at the beginning of the 21st century (Grimmitt 2000; Arthur et al 2006). The thesis also has an international perspective because of the research undertaken in Southern Germany and in the penultimate section of this chapter I provide an overview of RE in Europe (Coulby 2000; Hull 2005). Finally I discuss key terminology used in the thesis.

Chapters 2 and 3 constitute my literature review. In chapter 2 I discuss philosophical positions in Social Science and outline my own views. My research is located in the wider debate of multicultural education and I explore the concepts of culture, identity, racism and types of multiculturalism from a variety of international perspectives (for example hooks 1992²; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1997; Delanty and Strydom 2003; Modood 1997; Modood et al 2006; Back and Solomos 2000; Leicester, Modgil and Modgil 1998). In chapter 3 I present a brief history of multicultural education and discuss different concepts of multiculturalism (Banks and Banks 1995; Jones 1998; May 1999; Jackson 2002 and 2004). Next I consider the theory and practice of multicultural education, particularly in terms of ‘oppression’, racism and sexism, especially in predominantly white schools (Nesbitt 2004; Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997; Tomlinson 1990; Gaine 1995, 2005). Case studies and major events concerning racist issues are analytically described (Parker-Jenkins 1995; Macpherson Report 1999; Halstead 1998). I then discuss racism in children’s lives (Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Conolly 1998; Lewis 2005). The chapter concludes with an appraisal of the literature dealing with citizenship and RE teaching (Crick Report 1998; Dadzie 2000; Jackson 2002; Knowles and Ridley 2005).

Chapters 4 and 5 address the methodology I used. I begin chapter 4 by focusing on my own research and discuss ontological and epistemological issues, building on the arguments presented in the literature review (Mason 1996; Blakie 1993), and I discuss my research design which is ethnographic and child-centred (Christenson and James,

² bell hooks uses lower case letters for her name, I have cited her thus throughout the thesis.

2000; Mayell 2000). I present my research questions and the issues they raise and I explain how I adhered to ethical guidelines (BERA 2004). I used protective pseudonyms throughout, and all names of children, adults and schools discussed throughout the research have been changed to ensure anonymity (BERA 2004; David et al 2001). In chapter 5 I demonstrate in more detail how my ideology informed the precise research methods. I critically review my English fieldwork including my use of collaborative research methods, my adoption of a 'least adult role' (Mandell 1991), and how I used the methodological approach of a 'bean sheet' (O'Kane 2000). These methods ensured the project was a collaborative venture and that it was embedded in a grounded theory approach (Mandell 1991; Strauss and Corbin 1997; O'Kane 2000). I explain the three phases of the research- the 'getting to know you', the focus groups and interviews, and finally the presentation of the interim report. The concluding section in this chapter provides a critical appraisal of the German fieldwork which offers an international perspective.

Chapters 6 and 7 present the results and accompanying analysis. In chapter 6 I present an analytical discussion of the character and ethos of the four schools which I visited during the English fieldwork. I discuss the relationships between staff and children, lunchtimes and playtimes, assemblies, curriculum issues and the Interim Report presented to schools. Throughout the chapter comparisons are made within and between schools. In chapter 7 I discuss the process and results of analysis of the taped interviews with the children in the sample. This is set within the context of the ethos and character of the four English schools, as outlined in chapter 6. I also describe my use of the data analysis package N5 (Richards 2000), which provided systematic analysis of the data, to help support reliability and validity in the research. I conclude chapter 7 with the matrix, table 7.2, which demonstrates the synergy between the research aims, research questions, methodology, and findings. This matrix is referred to throughout the thesis.

Chapter 8 brings together key issues raised by the research from both the English and Southern Germany findings. Firstly I present a systematic appraisal of the children's multicultural awareness and I consider whether knowing more about different cultures leads to anti-racism or conversely whether having a limited knowledge of different cultures leads to racism. I discuss the children's attitudes to 'other' cultures and

consider possible influences of the school on children's multicultural awareness. These key issues are informed by the findings of the thesis and draw together issues from the methodology and literature chapters.

In chapter 9 I provide a brief overview of the project. I also describe my findings and discuss the implications of my research for anti-racist/multicultural/intercultural education and RE in terms of policy and practice. Importantly I consider how my findings can be used to effect change (Strauss and Corbin 1997).

4 Educational Context: Content versus Child-Centred Curriculum

Having outlined the aims and organisation of the thesis I proceed in the rest of this chapter to describe the educational context of the research.

The present National Curriculum in England (QCA 1999), I would argue, is concerned predominantly with "content" which, as a teacher educator, I am required to communicate to student teachers, who in turn, impart this to children (Grimmitt 2000). Perhaps weighed down by the burden of paperwork and preparation for Ofsted visits (Ofsted 2007) and SATS (Standard Assessment Tests, QCA 2006), teachers do not have the time to consider why they are teaching what they are teaching. In my professional experience they want to be told what the content is and be allowed to get on and teach it. Brown also discusses this:

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)

Prior to the National Curriculum, teachers had more freedom in deciding on content – relating it closely to the child's needs (Stenhouse 1983). Following this model the teacher could find out what the children knew already, start from this point and 'scaffold', Vygotskyian style, the next stage (Vygotsky 1986). This model was in operation prior to Ofsted inspections, and thus child-centred learning meant allowing the child to pursue 'anything' without rigorous monitoring (Arthur et al 2006). I believe there has been a change and we are now returning from a content-driven curriculum, to one that is more child-centred. For example *Excellence and Enjoyment : A strategy for Primary schools* (DfES 2003:4) notes:

We want schools to focus on raising standards while not being afraid to combine that with making learning fun.....Learning must be focused on individual pupils' needs and abilities. (DfES 2003:4 and 5)

In my opinion this is a move in the right direction as 'nouveau child-centred' learning has all the benefits of the old style model with the enhancement of rigorous assessment and appropriate stimulus (DfES 2003).

This is relevant to the present thesis because the educational climate does, to varying degrees, affect what is taught, together with why and how it is taught. If teachers are engaged in a more content-driven curriculum rather than child-centred, this will have an impact on values. The content curriculum is ready made – with intrinsic but often hidden values (Grimmitt 2000). Conversely the child-centred curriculum is more concerned with a child's involvement in her/his learning, with less imposition of externally determined values (Moyes 1995; Arthur et al 2006). Sometimes teachers, especially new teachers and students, find it comforting to have the curriculum prescribed; certainly it is less challenging when teaching is reduced simply to a management of tasks which have been decided on by someone else. Thus the teacher merely has to be 'trained' to impart the curriculum in the most efficient way. Twiselton (2004) suggests that there are three categories of student teacher *Task Managers*, *Curriculum Deliverers* and *Concept/Skills Builders*. These can be seen as points on a developmental continuum where Task Managers are concerned with completing the task but are not so interested in developing learning. I feel that much of the National Curriculum positively encourages student teachers and in-service teachers to be, at worst, Task Managers, and at best, Curriculum Deliverers. I agree with Twiselton (2004, 2006) that children learn more if the tasks are vehicles for learning rather than being ends in themselves.

It is within this context then that the research took place. I was interested in exploring the links between the content-driven curriculum with its implicit values, multicultural and anti-racist education and the child's own multicultural awareness. I wanted to find out what the children said about their own and other cultures. I was aware that in recent years children have had very little influence on what and how they are taught (Devine 2003). Thus I decided to design a research strategy which would enable me to listen to the children themselves.

As well as considering the more general context of education in the primary school I also describe in this chapter the specific subject of Religious Education for two reasons. Firstly I feel that much multicultural and anti-racist education can be communicated through the RE curriculum. Secondly I have targeted RE more than other subjects because RE is my own area of interest. RE is central to my thinking, so during my research I was concerned to investigate the ‘intended’ and ‘actual’ RE curriculum (Arthur et al 2006; Moyes 1995). In the following sections I briefly discuss RE in England and Germany at the beginning of this century because this formed an important aspect of my research.

5 Religious Education in Europe

The curriculum delivered in schools and HE institutions is “assumed [to be].... true, worthwhile and useful” (Coulby 2000:1). However Coulby goes on to state that in fact the curriculum is the result of state and political control. This is especially true in terms of RE; in France, for example, RE is not part of the curriculum at all (Coulby 2000), and in some Länder (provinces) in Germany (Hull 2005; Baden -Württemberg 1994a, 1994b) RE is characterised by a ‘faith nurture’ approach which contrasts significantly with the English method of ‘learning about and from religion’ (Teece 2001; QCA 2004). I have considered literature which discusses RE and multicultural education in a variety of countries (Banks and McGee Banks 1995; Coulby 2000; Jackson 2002; Korn and Bursztyn 2002;), and this helped inform the research I undertook in Southern Germany.

5.1 RE in England

In this section I introduce another key aspect of my research - the organisation and status of RE in England which has been described in numerous texts (e.g. Teece 2001; Broadbent and Brown 2002; Jackson 1997; Bastide 1999).

In England and Wales RE is determined by the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education); SACREs are informed by the National Framework for RE (QCA 2004). Unlike the National Curriculum there is no nationally agreed content and local authorities vary according to the prescribed content of their own RE Agreed Syllabuses. Many Agreed Syllabi make reference to two attainment targets which can be found in the National Framework for RE (QCA 2004). They are:

AT 1 Learning about religion

AT2 Learning from religion. (QCA 2004: 24)

The National Framework outlines the two attainment targets and the religions to be taught, namely Christianity plus a choice of two or more other principal religions, and or secular belief systems. It also identifies themes to be covered, for example in Key Stage 2 (7 to 11 year olds) these include beliefs and questions, teachings and authority, religion family and community, and religions in the world (QCA 2004:26-27). Through RE, the child in a community school, (the type of school used for all the main studies undertaken in England) is introduced to a range of religions and cultures. The School Standards and Framework Act (1998) created four categories of schools within the state system in England and Wales, which Parker-Jenkins et al list:

- Community schools (formerly County schools)
- Foundation schools (formerly Grant Maintained schools)
- Voluntary Aided schools; and
- Voluntary controlled schools (Parker-Jenkins et al 1995:17)

Parker-Jenkins et al (1995:17) proceed to explain that all community schools must implement the Agreed Syllabus for RE but these schools may not have a “religious character” (Jackson 2003d); but the other schools may do so “based on the school’s trust deed or traditional practice” (Parker-Jenkins et al 1995:17). Particular faith-based schools (for example Church of England, Catholic, Muslim, Jewish) receive state funding (Francis and Lankshear 1993). Independent schools, some of which are faith-based, promote various religions and philosophical positions (Independent school 2007).

5.2 RE in Germany

The curriculum in Germany is determined by province and this in turn is influenced by the ideologies of the particular political party in power in that province (e.g. FDP Die Liberalen 2001, Gruene Partei 2001). For my research I spent time in Baden-Württemberg, Southern Germany, collecting data about the status of multicultural education in a variety of schools. The RE taught in Baden-Württemberg is very different from that taught in English community schools, because the teachers are often representatives from either the Katholische or Evangelische church and there is a strong emphasis on ‘faith nurture’ (Hull 2005; Baden -Württemberg 1994a, 1994b), which is not present in the English RE curriculum in community schools, as I have

argued in the previous section. Also the financial basis differs because there are no fee paying schools in Germany.

In Baden-Württemberg, at the beginning of their school career children's parents sign a form choosing the type of Religious education they would prefer their child to be taught - Evangelische Religion (Protestant religion) or Katholische Religion (Catholic religion) (Hull 2005). During Religion lessons the class divides with children attending either Evangelische or Katholische Religion groups. In some schools where a viable number of children's parents so request it a third group is set up sometimes with the name 'ohne' Religion (without religion) and sometimes this third group is called Ethik (Ethics). Ethics is taught as a separate timetabled subject in the Gymnasium. For those children whose parents did not sign up for their child to have Katholische or Evangelische Religion lessons there was a difference in provision I discovered. In my research in Southern Germany I noted that in some schools these children attended 'ohne religion' (without religion) or Ethics classes which comprised of philosophical enquiry into beliefs and lifestyles. For other children who were in the minority, perhaps only two or three children in any given class, they simply did not attend the Religion lesson and sat in a library area or another classroom and they had no particular instruction as to how they spent this time. Interestingly after the twin towers incident September 11th 2001 it was felt that more information about Islam was needed and in my interview with Herr R I discovered that since my original research in 2001 a new Religion programme has been set up for secondary schools, namely, Islam Religion (Lähnemann 2006).

6 Terminology

Mention must be made at the outset, of my use of terminology throughout. I have been guided by various sources: regional LA (local authority) documentation; the 2001 Census; and common usage in the literature and by communities themselves. Thus when referring to groups, such as British Asians, British African/ Caribbean and so on, I realise that they are not necessarily homogenous (Dadzie 2000). Further, my research instruments, such as the interview prompt sheet, followed official documentation e.g. the 2001 Census. It has to be acknowledged that terminology is never static so terms which were once acceptable may become unacceptable. For the purpose of this thesis I followed the Derby City Council (2000) manual *Managing*

Cultural Diversity in my use of terms such as ‘heritage’, this is defined as the “cultural community to which the child belongs” (2000:5).

‘Racism’ and ‘prejudice’ are defined and discussed in chapter 2, so here I briefly point out that there are a variety of racisms (Boxill 2001; Solomos 2003), including institutional racism.

Aboud (1988:6) discusses children’s ‘minority ethnic awareness’ but I preferred ‘multicultural awareness’ because I felt it was a broader term, encompassing for example religious affiliation, belief and practice. Similarly I employed the term ‘minority ethnic’ (Dadzie 2000), particularly with reference to school intake, ‘high proportion minority ethnic schools’ and ‘predominantly white schools’ (Troyna and Hatcher 1992).

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the personal background to this research, introduced the central aims and explained how the thesis has been organised. Comment has been provided on the present wider educational climate, and in particular the status of Religious Education in England and Southern Germany where I undertook fieldwork. I have acknowledged that terminology is a contested area because of constant changes and I have provided explanatory notes as to its usage in my own research. Having provided an introductory contextual framework, the next chapter focuses on philosophical dimensions within the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review of Philosophical Positions in Social Science.

**Institutional racism [is] the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin.
(Macpherson report 1999:6.34)**

The four sections of this chapter are as follows:

1. Philosophical Positions in Social Science
2. Culture and Identity
3. Racism
4. Equality

Having discussed in chapter 1 why I embarked on the research, in this chapter and the next I locate my study in the appropriate literature. I begin with a brief summary of general trends in the philosophy of post-empiricist Social Sciences and comment on key debates, for example that concerning the nature of ‘a culture’ in relation to realism and anti-realism/constructivism.

1 Philosophical Positions in Social Science

It is not the case that a researcher can pose a research question (in my case “what is a child’s knowledge and what are her/his attitudes concerning her/his own and other cultures?”) then simply design a study, collect data, analyse it and (like an input/output machine) produce an answer. Rather, the researcher needs to consider her/his position about the nature of the concepts/issues to be studied (in my case ‘culture’, ‘identity’ and ‘racism’) in relation to notions such as knowledge, truth, uncertainty and essentialism (Delanty and Strydom 2003).

A range of positions could be adopted – for example, the reflexivity view (Giddens 1984), the post-modern feminist standpoint (Hill Collins 1986, 2006), the rational choice stance (Elster 2003), and the opposing positions of realism (Bhaskar 1975; Hill Collins 1998) and constructivism (Knorr-Cetina 1993; Hacking 2003). I shall discuss these key approaches and positions in Social Science research and outline my own position, which

draws on a feminist post-modernist standpoint (Haraway 1988; Hill Collins 1986), and subscribes to a constructivist rather than realist understanding of phenomena.

1.1 Reflexivity

In my research I felt, to a certain degree, that my presence affected the way I was able to collect data. Reflexivity has been defined as:

Self implication or the application of something to itself, and thus in social scientific methodology it indicates an epistemological position in which the researcher questions his/her own role in the research process. (Delanty and Strydom 2003:370)

This was especially evident in my research particularly my relationship with girls in school D and school X (as will be described in the methodology chapter – chapter 4). My ability to obtain access to the South Asian girls' social network in school D (high proportion minority ethnic group) in my opinion gained me the trust of these girls, who were very open in their interview (see for example D2). By contrast, I (unintentionally) alienated some girls at X school, as I did not occupy what I describe as traditional female space. Therefore I acknowledge the impact of reflexivity in terms of the impact of my presence in the research process.

1.2 Standpoint

There are several standpoint positions, which I describe in this section. Delanty and Strydom argue:

[K]nowledge is never neutral but reflects the standpoint of the knower. (Delanty and Strydom 2003:371)

The *strong standpoint* view advocates that only women can 'do' research about females and one would be led to deduce that only men can study men and only children, children. Although I recognize this argument (Delanty and Strydom 2003: 371), I think that it is possible to gain valuable insights into the lives of others, so long as one is aware of, and takes into consideration, the influence of one's own gender, ethnicity, class and age (both as to collection and interpretation of data), and the limitations of being an outsider (Hill Collins 1986). However, scholars have criticized the subjective, as well as the objective/masculine approach and Haraway (1988), in her *weak standpoint* position criticizes both *strong standpoint's* dismissal of the neutral masculine approach in favour of a feminist

subjective standpoint, but she also rejects subjectivism. Conversely Hill Collins (1986), who represents Black feminism, postulates a post-modern feminism which rejects both *weak* and *strong standpoint* in favour of multiple and overlapping standpoints (Hill Collins 1986; Delanty and Strydom 2003:371). In both my own research and that of Connolly (1998) (which I discuss at length in chapter 4), I would emphasize the importance of race, class, gender and, in the case of Connolly and myself, age. It is not possible to collect, analyse and interpret the data without recognition of one's own presence, and possible influence. Thus this post-modern feminist standpoint requires that thought be given to the way the children responded to me as a white, middle class, educated, female adult and how, as such, I interpret their words and behaviour, taking into account my intended audience.

1.3 Realism, Constructivism/Anti-Realism

Finally I address the realism versus constructivism/anti-realism debate (see Bhaskar 1979 and Hill Collins 1998). For realists:

An external reality exists which is independent of human consciousness yet can nevertheless be known. (Delanty and Strydom 2003:376)

Constructivism on the other hand argues that all Science is constructed by social actors so Social Science must be viewed as a "reality-creating force" (Delanty and Strydom 2003:372)¹. The stronger idea of constructivism has been criticized by Hacking (2003) in his example of 'teenage-pregnancy'. He argues that although that term has been identified as a social construction by scholars such as Arney and Bergen (1984), this may make sense but it is not useful.

[T]he idea of teenage-pregnancy is not an inevitable one, a mere description of the state of certain young women, but rather a label used both to identify, advise and control, and also at a later time, to work internally to create pride and self control. But there are much better ways of saying that than by talking about social construction. (Hacking 2003)

I would subscribe to the constructivist rather than the realist approach because I think that there is no such thing as 'Asian culture', 'white culture', 'African-Caribbean culture' etc

¹ See also Knorr-Cetina (1993).

which exists independently. I was not expecting children, in my study, to describe an 'actual culture' which existed 'out there' which could be found if the researcher were able to use the 'best' methodology. Rather, I think that children's attitudes and knowledge refer to cultures (their own and other peoples'), which are socially constructed. These do not actually exist independently, as the realist would argue; rather they are socially constructed, and what I was interested in discovering was the child's perception of particular cultures. I am also assuming that a child's perception might be different from an adult's (Alderson 2000). Indeed, I was interested in exploring the different kinds of 'constructions' which the children described to me. Interestingly, the children themselves initially spoke in realist language about these cultures. One said he did not know anything about, for example, Asian culture (interview B2); yet in the interview he was reminded of something he had seen on the news and talked in negative terms about Hindus, because the boy (erroneously) told me, "Bin Laden is a Hindu" (Interview B2). However he went on to say that not all Hindus were bad because "Amanjeet is one". This discussion highlights the social construction of a Hindu; this boy was not referring to Hindus and 'got it wrong' (although in some senses he had because Bin Laden is Muslim and Amanpreet is a Sikh), but rather he was referring to his own, socially constructed, version of a Hindu – i.e. a leader of a terrorist organization (as socially constructed by the media).

I have argued that my perspective tends towards a constructivist (Delanty and Strydom 2003) rather than realist (Bhaskar 1975) understanding of phenomena. This does not mean that I think reality is imagined but rather:

One sees things as real in their consequences but not in their causes as defined by conceptual systems within science. (Delanty and Strydom 2003:377)

I also adopt a post-modern feminist standpoint, which takes into account my own perspective, both as to the research and my interpretation of the data. I have tried to be transparent about who I am and why I chose to undertake the research- namely to encourage inter-cultural relations, and particularly to work towards the abolition of racist, sexist, adultist and classist attitudes in schools.

2 Culture and Identity

As part of this discussion I also include exploration of the concept of 'culture' with reference to minority ethnic groups, Islam and the media, popular culture and post-modernism.

In discussing the concept of 'culture' it is important to recognize that I do not consider there to be an entity 'out there' called culture which I could define here (as I have tried to show in the previous section). Rather I consider culture to be socially constructed, so throughout this section my definitions refer not to a real entity but rather a construction. To help inform this discussion I draw on the different perceptions of culture which various scholars have presented. (e.g. Gillespie 1995; Strinati 1995; Storrey 1996; Hall 1996; Long 1997; Delanty and Strydom 2003). Together with 'culture' I include the concept of identity, particularly that of cultural identity. Culture has been defined as 'high art' or popular culture (mass culture), to do with aesthetics (Storrey 1996) and with being human. I would argue that when discussing culture the social construction of what it constitutes may also have a political (or some other) agenda.

2.1 Minority Ethnic Cultures

Having introduced the concept of 'minority ethnic' groupings (Dadzie 2000) in chapter 1 here I examine in more depth this issue with reference to minority ethnic cultures. In the conceptualization of my research I have used the plural 'cultures'. When talking about such cultures, scholars often refer to a variety of items which all add up to the person's or group's culture (Modood et al 1997). Thus a particular culture can be described in terms of its constituent parts. To aid the definition of what a culture is and also to demonstrate how the researcher's philosophical stance impacts on the research, I draw on an example from Osler (1989). She presents the voices of 14/15 year old 'Black' girls from Birmingham who talk about their culture and their experiences from a political perspective. Osler has a particular standpoint of wanting to empower these girls. She considers her own ethnicity (1989) and acknowledges that 'standpoint' (Haraway 1988; Hill Collins 1986) is intrinsically bound up with the way she has conducted and presented her research.

There is clear overlap I think between the concepts of identity and culture. Culture can only be understood in terms of how different people identify themselves as being part of (and makers of) a particular culture (Modood et al 1997). It is this use of the word 'culture' that came to be adopted by the children in my research. As demonstrated in the methodology chapters, the children in my study, decided themselves how we should go about answering my research question – “What is your knowledge and attitude towards your own and other people’s cultures?” The children and I talked about what was meant by the word culture and they themselves suggested the following list, which we used as an ‘aide memoire’ on the bean prompt sheets filled in by the children prior to the interview:

- What food they eat
- What they wear
- What they do
- What they look like
- What they believe

Interestingly, Modood et al (1997), in their study of minority ethnic groups, had a similar list, but food was omitted. Modood notes (1997:291) that there is a “new form of ethnic identity emerging which supercedes former ideas” about the concept of culture. I explore this perspective below.

Modood et al (1997) argue that formerly there had been two rival approaches to the study of minority ethnic communities. Firstly, the anthropological tradition, with its belief in the distinct nature of individual cultures, highlighted the clash between Asian and African Caribbean heritage peoples, with indigenous white communities (Modood et al 1997). Interestingly here Modood et al (1997) equate British with British white. This contrasted with the second approach, i.e. post Marxism, which outlined the formation of ‘Blackness’ in terms of societal racism, cultural oppression and anti-racist struggles (Modood et al 1997). These two approaches are also identified in the history of Religious Education as outlined by Jackson (1997). Hall (1996) proposes that identities are not static or pure but rather change in new circumstances as they share space with people of a variety of heritages. The corollary to this is that a new ‘Britishness’ emerges to which everyone

contributes. However, I do not think Hall and Modood (et al) would have us believe that individual ‘cultures’ are vanishing to be replaced by one homogeneous ‘super culture’. Indeed they admit that there has been a resurgence in Muslim awareness (Modood et al 1997; Modood et al 2006). These theorists write about the individuals surveyed in their research who referred to themselves not only in terms of their ethnicity, but also their neighbourhood, job, leisure activities and so on (Modood et al 1997). Thus culture and cultural identity are to be seen as only one part of a person’s identity. Modood also makes this point in earlier work (1992) where he discusses the minority ethnic communities’ pride in their own distinctive history, language and culture. In earlier research Modood pressed for different ways of thinking:

What we need are new concepts of Britishness. (1992:5)

And he has gone some way to uncovering this in later work in discussions concerning the impact on multicultural debates of the societal and political contexts in a particular country (Modood et al 2006). In discussing European identity particularly, Modood et al highlight the fluidity of the boundaries of the European Union (EU):

The process of constituting the EU opens up a tripolar identity space in which existing forms of collective identification have to be re negotiated and re defined. This space is characterized by the simultaneous existence of three levels of identity and governance; the transnational or European level, the national or member state sphere and the local – regional context which includes minorities and immigrant communities. (Modood et al 2006:11)

Thus identity formation is influenced by external factors, such as national or in this case European factors. I found that there was a significant difference between the Southern German and English experience of identity, which Modood et al (2006) also recognize. In chapter 8, I discuss the monocultural attitude of Southern Germany and the possible influence this has on religious and multicultural education and children’s cultural awareness. Similarly when considering the English context in chapter 3, I discuss a range of positions as identified in Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997).

2.2 Islam in the Media

There are other references to identity and in particular cultural identity and ‘Britishness’ which I shall discuss later in this chapter, notably, racism and equality (Boxill 2001, Back

and Nayak 1993). But here I consider the portrayal of certain ‘cultures’ in the mass media. In the previous section I described how Modood et al (1997) presented Muslims’ perceptions of their own identity. In taking the same minority ethnic community, Muslims, I now look at how Islam is presented by the mass media, because there were many Muslim children in my study, and this was a recurring theme of my research.

In *Islam and the West in the Mass Media*, Hafez (2000) subscribes to a radical constructivist point of view, which I highlighted earlier, where it is admitted that reality does not exist and so the media are “justified in constructing reality” (2000:xii). However Hafez is critical of the ‘construction’ chosen by the media:

Disinformation and selective reporting are more prevalent in foreign news coverage than in domestic reports, and the consumer is less able to control and supplement information received through the media. (2000:xii)

Hafez goes on to cite the “MacBride Report” published in 1985 which compared foreign reporting in twenty–nine countries (1985:6):

Foreign reporting generally overemphasizes irrelevant news; presents disparate facts as artificial stories; misinterprets events and suggests wrong interpretations; creates pictures of enmity as a means of legitimizing the individual, society and politics, while failing to cover vital developments and problems. (1985:7)

I would argue that the findings in the report would still apply today. Various chapters in Hafez’s edited book point to a misrepresentation of Islam by the mass media, and this was published before the September 11th 2001 events. The ‘negative’ view of Islam which was evident in mass media reportage is more pronounced now (Hafez 2000, Modood et al 2006).

In my research, especially the fieldwork undertaken after September 11th 2001, I noticed a marked change in attitude towards Islam. There was more explicit racism particularly directed at Muslims (interviews B4 and B6). I would argue that the portrayal of Islam in the media played no small part in the collective perception voiced by several children in the post September 11th research in B school. (I return to this point later in chapter 8).

In her chapter *Islam as an Ethnicity? The Media’s Impact on Misperceptions in the West*, Wiegand (2000) offers reasons why Islam has this reputation. She argues that Islam has

become the 'new' enemy of the West (to replace the former USSR), but that the media have:

obscured the line between politics and religion...presenting an inadequate and often biased perception of Islam to their Western audiences. (Wiegand 2000:236)

The mass media is very influential in defining and representing culture. In fact it could almost be said that culture (particularly popular culture) is socially constructed, as post-modernists would claim. In the section below, I describe popular culture and post-modernism.

2.3 Popular Culture and Post-modernism

I here continue with the proposition of the social construction of culture. Strinati in his book *Popular culture* (1995) discusses the post-modern view of culture as a social construct. He compares this with previous views. Strinati (1995:224) outlines sociologies of popular culture which can be summarised as follows.

- 1) The liberal view that mass media used to hold up a mirror to reality in which we were able to look at ourselves and reality;
- 2) The radical rejoinder that mass media distorted the image;
- 3) The view that the media played a part in constructing our sense of being a part of this reality; and
- 4) The mirror IS the reality. (Summarised from Strinati 1995)

One is led to believe that post-modern views of popular culture are social constructions of reality; we take the mirror image to be reality, and this is a distorted image. I would agree with this argument but I would take it further. I think that society not only 'believes' reality to be the distorted image in the mirror but also the actual 'part' of reality 'chosen' to be reflected in the mirror is provided by the media. For example in September 2001, the dominant image reflected in the mirror (an image chosen by media) was the bombing of the twin towers in New York, USA. This 'real' event happened but was discussed by the media to the exclusion of any other tragedies which undoubtedly occurred at that time. I would argue that television presents a 'version' of reality which viewers believe to be 'real'. Strinati discusses television and consumerism being the only sources for identity formation, but "these are illusory" (Strinati 1995:238). In my research I considered the influence of television on the children's attitudes and knowledge of their

own and other cultures, and how the media amplification of events impacts on their construction of reality.

The issue of culture, ethnicity and identity is important because of peoples' attitudes towards each other. I stated in chapter 1 one of the reasons I undertook this research was because of negative attitudes towards people of a different culture and ethnicity. This could be described as 'racist'. Next I explore the concept of 'racism' and its link with cultural perceptions.

3 Racism

Having discussed the concepts of 'culture', 'identity' and mass media, I now explain different understandings of racism, why and how the term has been coined and I explore some of the reasons for racism. (In my research I investigated children's attitudes towards their own and different cultures and the evidence of racist comments.) I begin by commenting on literature which examines the concept of racism.

3.1 Definitions

The word 'racism' suggests that there are such things as 'races', and, by implication, that some are better than others, and that people can be treated unfairly and/or abusively on account of their race, or in some cases religion (where religious belief is seen as an indicator of race) (Weller 2005). Legislation (Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations Amendment act 2000) concerning racism in the workplace

Makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, directly or indirectly on racial grounds in: employment; education; housing; and in the provision of goods, facilities and services. (Race Relations Act 1976)

Research for the Home Office undertaken by Weller et al on *religious* discrimination, (Weller et al 2000b) highlights religion as a factor of discrimination. The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006) now makes it illegal to incite religious hatred, which many religious groups have ironically seen as an infringement of their right to freedom of speech.²

² Discussions surrounding the Act can be accessed at the wikipedia website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racial_and_Religious_Hatred_Bill

I do not think there are 'races'; neither does Boxill (2001). Races have been described as social constructions invented by Europeans, who believed that races were different from each other in biological ways (Boxill 2001; Solomos 2003). There has been a recognition of diversity within the white race - in the 19th Century there was emphasis on the superiority of the Aryan, Nordic and Teutonic races over the inferior Irish and Celtic (Boxill 2001). Herrnstein and Murray's controversial book *The Bell Curve* (1996) gives the impression that Black people are inferior academically to white, despite Herrnstein's protestations in the foreword that the authors are not racist. Similarly during the struggle for black equality in the 1960s under the leadership of Martin Luther King, it was deemed necessary for black people to take a test to 'prove' they were intelligent enough to make an informed choice on voting (Oates 1998). Of course many 'failed' this test because they had not had the opportunity to learn to read and write.

In the next section I outline some of the reasons for racism.

3.2 Reasons for Racism

I concur with Marsh (2000) on the importance of distinguishing between

Racial prejudice- the holding of racist views and beliefs- and racial discrimination- the unfavourable treatment of a person or persons because of the real or imagined membership of a particular 'race'. (Marsh 2000:389)

Racial prejudice tends to precede racist discrimination. In my research I was interested in exploring evidence of racial prejudice and also racial discrimination.

It is necessary to consider possible underlying reasons for racism. Just as there are numerous types so have there been numerous explanations and scholars have charted the nature and development of prejudice in appraisals of its development in children (Aboud 1988; Mercier 1991; Brown 1998).

One explanation of racism is the cognitive psychological approach described by Goodman (1964), whereby individuals recognize their membership of a group which is distinct from other groups. Mercier (1991) describes this as a motive for racism in terms of cause and effect. Thus a racist might offer the following explanation:

Why do Black people live in slum areas? Because they don't want to work and so they are poor. (Mercier1991:82)

I consider such an opinion to be evidenced in the work of Herrnstein and Murray (1996) mentioned above.

A second explanation for racism is personality theory as anchored in the following:

The prejudiced person is one who grows up in a family environment where the roles are based on dominance and submission and in which discipline is harsh and geared to rigid keeping of rules requiring conformity rather than personal responsibility. The child learns to despise weakness in himself and others and develops a desire to be associated with the powerful and strong person. (Adorno et al 1950)

In this theory a weak 'scapegoat' is needed to attack, but this does not account for why a particular one is chosen. Aboud maintains that children of authoritarian parents are not necessarily more racist and this explanation does not account "for individual differences in the levels of prejudice" (Aboud 1988:21).

A third explanation, the socio conflict theory, has two elements (Mercier 1991:99). Firstly prejudice arises out of rivalry between groups fighting for the same resources, resulting in 'out' group hostility. The second is rooted in the Marxist belief in capitalist exploitation (Mercier 1991). According to Aboud the most popular theory accepted by the public and the research community is social reflection:

Prejudice reflects the differential values given to different ethnic groups in a stratified society. Because these differential values are based on the status of the group, the same set of values will be known by all members of the society. Thus the positive and negative values attached to different ethnic groups will be the same for all children regardless of their own ethnic membership. (Aboud 1988:26)

However as Aboud states, it is not enough to mix children up in a multi-ethnic school in the hope of eradicating prejudice and in particular racism, as proponents of the 'contact theory' would propose (Aboud 1988:82). (I agree with this as I discuss later in chapter 8). There is a weakness in the social reflection theory which Aboud relates to the significance of the age of the child (1988:100). The younger child is more likely to follow parental directives whereas the older child is more likely to:

attend to the individual qualities of other people rather than simply to their group qualities.(1988:101)

This point emerged in my research and is also discussed later in chapter 8.

Racism is part of the much wider concept of prejudice (Adorno et al 1950; Aboud 1988; Brown 1998). For example Aboud considers the influence of parents, and also the child's peers, on a child's attitudes towards different 'races' (Aboud 1988). I found in my research that many children repeated views they had heard at home, but there is a wider debate concerning children's 'in group'/ 'out group' identification (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Brown 1998; Wignall 2000), where children demonstrated prejudice towards groups to which they did not belong.

There are also numerous racial attitudes that cover a range of disciplines, historical situations and geographic contexts (as outlined by Back and Solomos 2000). They note the complexity of the colonial period movements and the fact that feminism has concentrated on patriarchy and neglected race and ethnicity as sources of women's oppression (2000). Some feminist scholars have taken this into consideration (for example Hill Collins 1986). Back and Solomos talk about racisms rather than racism (2000) and I found in my research that there were different 'degrees' of racism which I discuss later in chapters 7 and 8.

3.3 Experiencing Racism

It is important to consider the nature of racial abuse and many scholars have sought to communicate this from a personal perspective. The emotive subject of racism and cultural identity is explored next with reference to writers who describe the personal effects of racism.

Many feminist and Black scholars vividly describe their experiences of racism. Women such as hooks (1992) and Hill Collins (1986); and men such as Gilroy (1987) and Du Bois ([1903] 1989) are scholars who eloquently describe racism from a personal perspective. hooks in her book *Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination* (1992) describes the terror she feels in the presence of white people. Her powerful personal style makes clear what it is like to live in a white dominated world if one is not white. hooks writes skillfully as a post-modern feminist and uses the word terror over a hundred times throughout her book (1992). She forcibly communicates, for example, scurrying through

a white populated area on the way to her grandma's house, as a child, and the terror instilled in black people by the presence of white people (hooks 1992:344). Similarly she reports being stopped and interrogated at the airport (after giving a presentation on feminism and racism at the invitation of the Italian government) by white officials, who:

do not have to respond when I enquire as to why the questions they ask me are different from those white people in the line before me. (1992)

She cites her dismay that others (white academics both male and female) could not appreciate this terror. hooks' writing gives a graphic picture of the presence of racism from a personal point of view.

Similarly, supporting a 'personal' perspective is the work of Wright (1998), who recognises the problems which follow from being a black researcher torn between the black students who want her to be "on their side" (1998:68) and the teachers who expect her to act as a colleague during times of conflict. (Again this highlights the implications of Standpoint discussed in the first section of this chapter). Hammersley (1998) rails against the methodology characterised by Mac an Ghaill's 'partisan' approach in his article *Young Gifted and Black* (cited in Walford 1991). Hammersley thinks it wrong to be partisan, whereas Mac an Ghaill unashamedly sets out to show that teachers have different expectations of their black and white pupils (Hammersley 1998). Although I am supportive of the 'black' voice being articulated, I would tend to agree with Hammersley and feel that research is compromised by a partisan approach.

I think racism, and in particular the black experience, is expressed successfully (both academically and personally) in the work of Gilroy. Gilroy has the ability, like hooks (and others mentioned above), to use language to his advantage, as can be seen in the title of his book *There ain't no Black in the Union Jack*. (1987). Here he explains the changing nature of racism which should be understood as a process:

Bringing Blacks into history outside the categories of problem and victim and establishing the historical character of racism in opposition to the idea that it is an eternal or natural phenomenon depends on a capacity to comprehend political, ideological and economic change. (1987:27)

I agree with Gilroy that racist language used by tabloid newspapers fuels racism. Gilroy quotes the supposedly innocuous phrase “as British as you or I” (1987:49) which he points out is racist. Also in his book *The Black Atlantic* (1993), he includes his ideas about identity of black people and the need to overcome the inferior position accorded to them by whites, with their “pernicious metaphysical dualism that identifies blacks with the body and whites with the mind” (1993: 97).

Importantly, these writers are not wanting ‘race’ to be ignored. In Teacher Education Institutions in the UK Jones (1999) found that student teachers said they did not discriminate between children

I see them as all the same. (Jones 1999:140)

But Jones explains that this refusal to acknowledge a child’s cultural heritage is in fact a subtle form of racism. (I return to the concept of colour blindness in later chapters.)

3.4 Institutional Racism

As well as ‘personal’ presentations of racism there are key incidents which have raised awareness of racism in the public domain. The Macpherson Report (1999), which examined issues raised by the inquiry into the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence, illuminated the mistakes made by members of the Metropolitan police force who failed to treat the Lawrence family and his friend Duwayne Brooks in an appropriate manner.³ The report discusses the mismanagement of events after the murder (1999). Blair, Gillborn, Kemp and Macdonald (1999) discuss the report’s influence and present the Daily Mail’s headline “Parents to blame” as an example of the misunderstanding of institutional racism. They cite other equally erroneous explanations for racism, including the rotten apple theory – “We are all fine; there are just one or two racists” (Blair et al 1999). The Macpherson report clearly states however, that ‘institutional racism’ is rife. This is defined as:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage ethnic minority people. (Macpherson 1999:6.34)

³ This is also highlighted in Brooks’ own account of events (Brooks 2003).

As such an institution may, through its internal organization, be inherently discriminatory (Macpherson 1999). For example schools have been criticised for excluding black African-Caribbean boys, especially, for bad behaviour.

Blair et al (1999) discuss the OFSTED report *Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils* concerning the poor level of ethnic monitoring nationally. Blair et al (1999) cite research where teachers have been shown to hold:

systematically lower expectations of black and other minority ethnic students and often respond more quickly and harshly to apparent signs of unruly behaviour. (1999:9)

They strongly argue that institutional racism is not diminishing but indeed growing under current national education policy:

The fetishization of league tables and ‘standards’ measured by the crudest means possible actually provides exactly the circumstances whereby institutional racism flourishes. (1999:9)

This is borne out by my own experience teaching in a multi-ethnic school in Oxfordshire during the nineties; new policies were introduced both to monitor the attainment of minority ethnic communities and also to note the number of minority ethnic children who were excluded, placed on a level towards being statemented, or actually statemented. Even the introduction of these policies made us aware of our attitudes towards minority ethnic children’s ability and behaviour. It also raised awareness amongst parents.

The incidents surrounding the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the publication of the Macpherson report highlight the ongoing battle against racism. Institutional racism has been described as “an unhelpful term as it might lead to inertia” (Macpherson 1999), because people could abdicate personal responsibility by shifting the blame onto an institution. However the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) now obliges public bodies, including schools, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups. Journals such as *Race Equality Teaching* (formerly *Multicultural Teaching MCT*) contains accounts of good

practice in relation to the 2000 Act and work towards eliminating all forms of racism, including that based institutionally.

In my research I looked at the resources and displays in each school, together with observations of lessons and interviews with staff and children. I wanted to find out the extent to which schools projected an “institutional ‘body language’” (Dadzie 2000:39) which was non racist and inclusive. Lewis (2005) in her study of schools in America, discovered institutional racism. I return to this theme later in chapter 8.

4 Equality

In previous sections of this chapter, I have demonstrated how the concepts of culture, identity and racism relate to my research. In this final section I discuss the concept of equality and the interrelated issues in the ‘white debate’, of hegemony, privilege, and the concept of British identity. Racial discrimination can lead to unequal and unfair treatment of individuals from a minority ethnic heritage (Modood et al 2006; Gaines 2005) which is deemed illegal (Race Relations Amendment Act 2000). This is also highlighted in the Macpherson Report (1999) discussed in the previous section.

Marsh presents the functionalist’s solution to societal inequalities

The best system must be one in which everyone has an equal opportunity to be unequal. (Marsh 2000:279)

The egalitarian position, however, suggests that ability should not necessarily be rewarded

Even when the egalitarians concede that there are natural differences in ability and aptitude, they see no reason to accept that this is a fair basis for rewarding people differently....ending up with the right genes is no more fair than winning the national lottery and should not be rewarded as such. (Marsh 2000:281)

It has been acknowledged that inequalities clearly do exist (Blair et al 1999; Modood et al 2006), and here I discuss this issue with reference to the domination of ‘white’ over other groups.

4.1 The White Debate

Much has been written about the identity of communities and how schools, for example, should address minority ethnic issues (McIntyre 1997; Sheets 1999, 2000; Howard 1999,

2000; Nayak 1999). I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter the implications of theory for practice. Here I raise some of the wider issues such as ‘white identity’ formation, and awareness of different ethnicities in teaching and learning.

Scholars such as Back and Nyak (1993), Hands and Back (1993) and Thompson (1986) are useful for their discussion of ‘white hegemony’. The term cultural hegemony, defined by Marshall (1994), involves the:

production of ways of thinking and seeing and of excluding alternative visions and discourses. Marshall (1994:212)

Thus white hegemony (or white privilege as I refer to it in my fieldwork analysis) is the domination of white over other cultural or ethnic groups. Thompson (1986) discusses how folk cultures and sub-cultures can resist a hegemony, and Sheets (2000) discusses this with regard to schools. Both scholars demonstrate how hegemony operates and I used their work to inform my own thinking and to demonstrate how some children’s attitudes reflect a white privilege stance (see chapters 7 and 8).

Back and Nayak (1993) in their book *Invisible Europeans? Black People in the New Europe* demonstrate “that black people have contributed to the development of Europe over a long time” (1993:9). Thus minority ethnic culture ought not to be disregarded.

Hands and Backs (1993), discuss Back’s childhood memory of being asked by his teacher who he most admired. He replied King Oliver (the Black jazz trumpeter) whereupon the teacher said there was no King Oliver (1993:23). This, Back maintains, exposes ‘Little England’ mentality. With reference to the title of the book, Black Oliver was certainly invisible to Back’s teacher (1993) and thus not worthy of admiration.

Some scholars have argued that the concept of ‘white privilege’ can be countered through an exploration of white identity (Howard 1999, 2000; MacIntyre 1997; Dilig 1999). However I would agree with Sheets (2000) this is not necessarily aiding the drive for equality. Howard is concerned that whites are losing their identity and need to appreciate their own starting point before trying to teach ‘people of color [sic]’ (1999). MacIntyre also puts ‘whiteness’ back on the agenda (1997); she talks of people who are not aware of

their whiteness, or the system of whiteness (what I would term 'white privilege') which is largely invisible to those who benefit from it (1997:2). Dilig (1999) also addresses the issue of whites working with 'children of color [sic]'. In her review of Howard's, MacIntyre's and Dilig's books Sheets (2000) concluded that all three were subtly promoting white supremacy. In her review article aptly titled *Advancing the field or taking Center[sic] Stage: The white movement in Multicultural Education*. Sheets derides the three for concentrating on raising awareness of whiteness and whether this:

discourse advances the field or promotes individuals speaking exclusively to white educators about teaching the 'other'. (2000:15)

She attacks Howard (1999) for the treatment of 'people of color [sic]' (and whites) as monolithic groups. It is clear that Howard does make a valuable contribution to the 'white debate'; he sincerely wants white educators to acknowledge the impact their whiteness has on their teaching and their students' learning. However he fails to realise that, whereas this 'self awareness' can be transforming, it does not carry the same risks for whites as blacks. This is important for my own research because I think all teachers, especially those who are white, need to be aware of the impact of ethnicity on equality of opportunity and Sheets is correct in suggesting that these books are potentially another excuse for whites to take 'center [sic]stage', (Sheets 2000:15). Despite Howard's attempt to understand the experience of 'the other', Sheets believes he never can. The 'terror' spoken of by hooks (1992), as discussed earlier, cannot be empathized with. This is what Sheets, from the standpoint of a black academic, is trying to communicate. Sheets reiterates this in discussing Dilig's book (1999) as she states that even:

caring whites will not hear or understand the pain of racism. (Sheets 2000:19)

Similarly she also attacks McIntyre's (1997) use of terminology:

'White' is used in opposition to people of color [sic], they are reduced to a 'non-white' category. (Sheets 2000:19)

Rattansi (1989) also highlights how we are all ethnically located. In other words McIntyre's very use of language is suggesting that white is 'normal'. Dilig and Howard are attempting to show that white teachers need to be aware of their own whiteness in order to teach 'people of color [sic]'; on the other hand Sheets indicates this may not be

the way to advance multicultural education . Sheets' main concern is not to empower white teachers but to encourage more 'people of colour' to enter the profession⁴.

I would argue that Nyak in the article *White English Ethnicities* (1999) gives a more balanced view as he warns of the implications of failing to take white ethnicity into account. This will be mentioned again in the next chapter, where different types of multiculturalism are explored (Kinchelo and Steinberg 1997). Nyak suggests that less is known about the:

racialised identities of the ethnic majority (notably English whites) and who they are in the present post –colonial era. (Nyak 1999:176)

She cites the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah (MacDonald Inquiry 1989), which was identified as racially provoked, and states that anti-racism should have been extended to incorporate white youth, rather than retracted. (Nyak 1999:198). She is aware of the multiplicity of whiteness:

The deconstruction of white identity became then, a means of splicing Englishness, whiteness and ethnicity. (1999:195).

Having highlighted some of the debates and issues concerning white ethnicity, I now explore use of the term 'people of color [sic]', which has been used by Sheets and is prevalent in North American literature. The very use of this term suggests there is a group – white - and any other is referred to as 'people of color [sic]' (or essentially non-white). This terminology implies superiority of the designated 'main' group- white - while the 'rest' are 'people of color [sic]' (Sheets 2000; Howard 1999, 2000; MacIntyre 1997; Dilig 1999), 'white' obviously is not thought of as colour.⁵ The debate is centred on whites – how they ought to be aware of their 'whiteness' and how they ought to teach 'people of color [sic].' The North American terminology 'people of color [sic]' is not prevalent in Britain (Modood 1997 et al 2006; Gaine 2005; Connolly 1998). Terms such

⁴ The TDA (Training and Development Agency) have funded various institutions to encourage more students from minority ethnic communities to enter the teaching profession (www.tda.gov.uk)

⁵ I am reminded of the poem refuting this where an American Indian talks of white people who go blue when cold, red in the sun, green when ill and so on; yet it is black folk who are called "of colour" (Calmeagle 2007).

as ‘white’ and ‘minority ethnic’ are used (Dadzie 2000) but in essence, I would argue, it is the same division in society – white and ‘the rest’.

‘White privilege’ is a concept which I make reference to in later chapters and several scholars have discussed white privilege, dominance and oppression in their work (Heldke and O’Conner 2004; Howard 2004; Leonardo 2005a, 2005b).

4.2 British Identity

I have examined in the preceding section whether white identity can itself, ironically, be a possible contributor to white dominance. Here I draw together some of the themes and relate them to the British context – with particular reference to education. *Values Education and Cultural Diversity Book 3* (Leicester, Modgil and Modgil 1998) is informative on this subject. Part of a larger series, Book 3 discusses political and citizenship education. Edwards and Fogelman’s chapter (1998) *Citizenship and cultural diversity* states that learning is life long, and best when “ipsative not competitive, inclusive not exclusive” (1998:98). They warn that anti-racists are in danger of becoming racist as they look for difference. This is echoed in other chapters; for example Enslin (1998:155) states that the cosmopolitan identity that many embrace is one whose attitude towards diversity is of openness to difference and cultural competence, the ability to relate and act successfully across cultures.

The issue of equality in terms of British identity has also been considered at length in the Parekh Report *The Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*. In the summary Parekh (2000) outlines important issues such as the complex nature of British society. The Report was received with mixed opinion; Richardson, a consultant to the Report, refutes the criticisms that the Report wanted to drop the word ‘Britain’ in favour of ‘community of communities’ (Richardson 2000). What is needed are models which have a grounding in empirical research (such as Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997; Troyna and Hatcher 1992; and Connolly 1998); these issues will be explored in the next chapter. A more balanced appraisal of the Parekh report is that of Diniz (2001). Diniz describes his family’s background and legitimises his authority to comment from a personal as well as professional perspective. He describes himself as:

a black man, a naturalised British citizen, born in Africa of Indo-Portuguese heritage, married to a Brazilian woman of Japanese origin, [our] daughter was born in England and we now all live in Scotland. (Diniz 2001:45)

I agree with Diniz that the report:

is comprehensive in its articulation of forms of racism but skewed in its analysis of the effects of contextual differences within Britain. (2001:46)

He also notes that Northern Ireland has been neglected. This is an interesting area where affiliation to Catholic or Protestant religion is also political (Connolly and Keenan, 2001, 2000a, 2000b; Connolly and Magin 1999). Diniz cites a black anthropologist who observes: "Asians have cultures whereas African Caribbeans have problems!" (Diniz 2001:47). British identity and how minority ethnic communities live and work as British citizens has formed the basis of a number of studies (Appiah 1999; Diniz 2000; Carrington and Short 1995, 1998; Alibhai-Brown 2000) all of which point to a complex and controversial picture of society.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed philosophical positions in the Social Sciences and outlined my own stance - a post-modern, feminist standpoint, which takes into account my multiple characteristics in the research, and in my interpretation of the data. As such I have acknowledged that being a white, female, middle class, adult is significant in my research. I described culture as being a social construct and I closely related this to the overlapping concept of identity. I considered the influence of popular culture and the mass media's presentation of 'reality'. The concepts of race and racism were also discussed and I described the work of Black writers and their personal experience of, and engagement with, the concept of racism. The chapter concluded with an examination of the concept of equality including discourses on the white debate and British identity.

In the next chapter I look specifically at how the concepts and issues raised above have implications for educationalists, and how the theory and practice are manifested in the area of multicultural education.

Chapter 3: Literature Review of Multicultural Theories and Practice

White people think they're better than coloured people. They think they rule the world but they can't. (Troyna and Hatcher 1992)

I outlined my philosophical standpoint in the previous chapter and also discussed the concepts of racism, culture, identity and equality. This chapter focuses on educational theory and how policies are implemented in practice. The seven sections of this chapter are described below:

1. The history of multicultural education
2. Types of 'multiculturalism' and multicultural education- an international perspective
3. Theories of multicultural education
4. Multicultural education in white schools
5. Key racist incidents
6. Racism in children's lives
7. Multicultural teaching, Religious Education and Citizenship

In reviewing the literature I will demonstrate that multicultural education has been understood in different ways. Catalytic events have caused a re evaluation of multicultural education over the years, challenging the current practice. Another influential factor on the shaping of multicultural education has been research which concerns itself with the experiences of children themselves. My own research is located within this area and I comment on literature which focuses on the experience of racism in children's lives. I remain with this theme in the concluding section as I review pedagogies for supporting children's learning about different cultures.

1 History of Multicultural Education

I understand the term 'multicultural education' in the context of 'multiculturalism', a political concept which, like multicultural education, has been viewed both positively and negatively over the decades (Modood 2007). Modood (2007:12-13) cites recent criticisms of the separatist nature of multiculturalism but he argues that this is an unfair view. Rather multiculturalism

is the form of integration that best meets the normative implications of equal citizenship and under our present post – 9/11, post -7/7 circumstances stands the best chance of succeeding. (Modood 2007:140)

Thus in this section I highlight some scholars' understandings of multicultural education (Modgil et al 1986; Figueroa 1995; Jackson 1997; Jones 1998; Davies 1998; Modood 2007) which I draw on later in chapter 9 where I consider the implications of my research for policy and practice. In order to understand the present fully, I believe it important to have some understanding of the historical context of multicultural education. Thus in this section I comment on perceptions of the history of multicultural education. Some see multicultural education as a failed endeavour (Jones 1998) whereas Figueroa (1995) and Jackson (1997) are more positive about the benefits of multicultural education which has adapted and developed over time.

I begin this section with Jones' amusing but disheartening paper *Multicultural Education is Dead* (1998) where he anthropomorphosises multicultural education and his discussion takes the form of an obituary.

Jones (1998) believes that multicultural education is being marginalised and he is concerned that it has no place in the classroom or ITE (Initial Teacher Education) courses. Multicultural education's short and

turbulent life....passed through the infancy of assimilation, the adolescence of integration and reached a schizophrenic adulthood which manifested itself in two competing forms; anti-racism and cultural pluralism. (1998:1)

Jones writes of the immaturity of infancy with its ideals of assimilation- i.e. invisibility. He points out that this is impossible for the minority ethnic child in terms of "language, religion, dress and life experiences" (1998:2). He goes on to discuss the adolescent stage of 'integrationist' policies which contained some degree of the 'celebration' of minority ethnic cultures (1998:4). The only surviving child of multicultural education is described as the Swann Report *Education for all* (DES 1985). With the schizophrenic split of the supposedly militant 'anti-racist' versus the liberal 'cultural pluralism' movements came the death throes of multiculturalism argues Jones (Jones 1998:5). Jones cites John Major's speech to the conservative Party Conference in 1992, where he said

Primary teachers should teach children to read, not waste their time on the politics of gender, race and class. (John Major cited in Jones 1998:7)

This legacy lasted for over 14 years in some ITE institutions where little or no time was given to educating beginning teachers about issues of race, gender and class.

Like Jones (1998), Figueroa (1995) traces the history of multicultural education. However in his chapter, in Banks and Banks (1995) *Handbook of Research on Multicultural education*) Figueroa identifies six main overlapping and interrelated approaches:

laissez-faire, assimilationist, integrationist, multicultural /pluralist, anti-racist and multiculturalist. (Figueroa 1995:776)

This thematic understanding of overlapping approaches to multicultural education is in contrast to Jones' (1998) chronologically organised re telling of the history of multicultural education. However in contrast to Jones (1998), Figueroa's account challenges anti-racism (1995) and instead he discusses the merits of approaches such as:

immigrant education, 'colour blindness' eradication education, compensatory education, education for the disadvantaged minority ethnic education, Black studies, multi racial education, multi ethnic education, intercultural education and 'education for all'. (Figueroa 1995:779)

Much has happened in education since Figueroa and Jones wrote in the mid and late 1990s - in many schools funding has been allocated to support children in their learning¹ (DfES 2007) and this is in direct contrast to the assimilation and integrationist policies of the past. Now there is more emphasis on recognition of minority ethnic children not to be perceived as 'problems', or having problems which are obstacles to academic attainment.

Other scholars would agree that multicultural education still flourishes, for example Davies' chapter in Leicester, Modgil and Modgil (1998), suggests that citizenship might be the vehicle for multicultural education's survival. Davies discusses political learning and charts its history over the past three decades- Political literacy of the 1970s, global education of the 1980s and Citizenship from the 1990s (Davies 1998:29). Davies (1998), like Figueroa, sees intercultural education, rather than multicultural education, as a way forward. This is also echoed elsewhere in Europe as

¹ EMTAG teachers have been employed (ethnic minority and traveller's achievement grant DfES 2007). One such teacher was employed in one of the schools where I undertook my research – D school.

I highlight later in chapter 8, where I discuss my research in Southern Germany. Dietrich's book *Voll Integriert* (Dietrich 1997) calls for an abandonment of 'old' multiculturalism.² Davies commends the international journal *Intercultural Education* and he also commends the whole notion of "critical and reflective thinking" (Davies 1998:30). Intercultural education can be defined as understanding about and interaction between diverse communities (Nesbitt 2004; Ipgrave 2001, 2003a). Whereas multicultural education is an approach which encourages appreciation of and acceptance of the benefits of a diverse community (Gaine 2005; Knowles and Ridley 2005). Given my research focus in Southern Germany and England, the different interpretations of 'multicultural' and 'intercultural' education helped provide an understanding of educational policy and practice in the schools.

Jackson (1997) charts the history of Religious Education, which as mentioned earlier, can be closely associated with multicultural education. He like Figueroa (1995) and Jones (1998, 1999, 2000), describes the conflict between anti-racist and multicultural approaches but discusses them with particular reference to RE (Jackson 1997). Jackson accepts many of the "criticisms of multiculturalism" from the anti-racists (1997: 74) however he maintains that anti-racism

was limited in its suggestions with regard to the school curriculum [and] naïve [in dealing with the] complex issues of culture, ethnicity and religion. (1997:75)

Jackson is supportive of multiculturalism and his history of RE culminates in the presentation of his ethnographic and interpretative approach to RE, The Warwick Project (Jackson 1996). The Warwick project is an approach to RE which does not see religions as static belief systems, but rather Warwick RE resources are firmly rooted in the ethnographic data collected from members of certain religious traditions which shows diversity and growth. Despite isolated critics (Thompson 2004)³ I would argue that the inclusive approach in RE, particularly in community schools⁴, shows that multicultural education is certainly still active.

² During our interview Dietrich told me she fought hard to have bestowed the title Professor of Intercultural studies (Germany fieldnotes pg 7).

³ Thompson argues for the confessional approach to RE claiming that Christianity should be taught as the true belief.

⁴ See Surry CC (2007) for explanation of different types of schools.

To end this section on the history of multicultural education I draw on a few other scholars whose work usefully informs this discussion. Sleeter 1995 demonstrates the popularity of the discipline of multicultural education, which has grown from 2 citations in 1970s, 6 in 1980s and 51 between 1990 and 1992. I would support this claim because governmental directives while at one time focused on the national curriculum now are considering issues concerning ‘diversity’ which has a prominent place in Curriculum 2000 (QCA 1999). Similarly it is clear that multiculturalism has evolved from the debates as outlined by Modgil, Verma, Mallick and Modgil (1986), compared with the approaches as described in Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) and May (1999) which I discuss in the next section. Finally Gaine highlights the move in the 21st Century to a

race equality stance, where detailed monitoring, obligatory policies and curriculum checklists amount to a fairly coherent approach both to minority ethnic achievement and a curriculum dealing with race for all pupils. (Gaine 2005:30)

This shift is also evident in the change of name of the journal Multicultural Teaching (MCT) to Race Equality Teaching (RET).

Thus different perceptions of what multiculturalism and multicultural education have been and what they are currently (Figueroa 1995; Jones 1999; Jackson 1997; Modood 2007) and the debate about what they claimed to have achieved are important for my thesis because schools need to be clear, I would argue, about what type of multicultural education is effective and in chapter 9 I draw on this literature and my own findings, to present a series of implications for policy and practice. In the next section I elaborate further on the different approaches to multicultural education.

2 Types of Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education, an International Perspective

There is not one definitive approach to multicultural education, so here I draw attention to different types of multicultural education and discuss international and British perspectives.

In the American context May (1999) states the black-white relations issue has

remained prominent which he ascribes to the historical significance of slavery. I feel it is important to make mention of the international perspective because multicultural education does not have the same aims, successes (whatever they may be judged to be), or influence in different countries.

May begins his book *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education* with the words

Over the years multicultural education has promised much but delivered little.....trends suggest we may be turning a corner. Multicultural education may finally be about to realise its potential. (1999:1)

May acknowledges the conflict between anti-racism and multiculturalism especially in Britain, but there is a suggestion of future hope in critical multiculturalism (May 1999; Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). May suggests it is only recently that multiculturalists have sought some accommodation with anti-racists (1999:3).

In Britain however Carrington and Short (1998) talk of a multiculturalism which does not concentrate so much on the inferiority of Blacks (as suggested by American authors Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). Rather they discuss the racism summed up by Conservative MP Winston Churchill, grandson of the wartime Prime minister (Carrington and Short 1998:173) who was concerned that the British ('white' Christian) way of life would disappear if migration from the Caribbean and Indian sub continent were to continue. It is this ignorance which leads to a type of multiculturalism which 'tolerates' those of another culture but does not actively promote equality.

In Southern Germany I noticed a difference from British and American approaches to multicultural education. In the previously mentioned book *Voll Integriert* Dietrich (1997) calls for full integration of minority ethnic communities, namely Turkish Muslims, into German society.⁵ Similarly Boes (2000) discusses the difficulties immigrants face in integrating into German society. Professor Boes works at the Karl Ruprecht University, Heidelberg and his research interests include Immigration and Nationality Laws in Germany and modes of multiculturalism (Boes 2000; Roberts,

⁵ At present Turkish Muslims represent the largest minority ethnic group in Germany (Boes 2000).

Boes and von Below 2001). As well as interviewing Professor Boes and Professor Dietrich, I also travelled to the province of Bavaria to interview Professor Lähnemann at Nurnberg University who was involved in Initial Teacher Training for RE (Protestantism). Professor Lähnemann was very involved in both a professional and personal way in Intercultural Relations (Lähnemann 2000, 2006). When I undertook my fieldwork in Baden–Württemberg, Southern Germany, I discovered prejudice towards Turkish Muslims. One headteacher, in particular, was openly critical towards this minority ethnic community, whereas I did not hear any explicit prejudice from British teachers during my research and I would surmise that this was because in Britain a politically correct stance would forbid explicit prejudicial talk (Dadzie 2000).

Hull (2005) discusses RE in Germany and England in his review article of Ziebertz (2003) and comments on the difference between German and English RE as follows:

In Germany the Protestant and Catholic churches continue to have substantial control of religious education, and this is in striking contrast with the more secular situation in England and Wales. (Hull 2005:7)

However in his article Hull also says that both English and German RE should change and “move closer together” if it is “to attain a form acceptable to the plurality of European life.” (2005:15) I would agree with this but, I would not agree with Hull’s methods of ‘moving closer’ because he seems to suggest that there needs to be a greater emphasis on Christian theology in England.

The RE curriculum is also discussed by German Professor Schweitzer (2005), who argues that RE ought to be the right of the child so that issues concerning Death, the meaning of life and definitions of God can be openly discussed. Although Schweitzer acknowledges the discrepancy between faith nurture and education in RE in different countries, nevertheless he argues that such issues should find a place in the curriculum in some shape or form. Differences between countries can be quite startling. In Southern Germany, for example, the curriculum syllabi demonstrate a clear faith nurture stance in either Protestant or Catholic Religion (Baden –Württemberg 1994a). Other faiths were viewed from the Christian perspective; for example the title of one unit of work in the Baden -Württemberg syllabus was ‘Moslems leben bei uns’

(Muslims who live with us) (Baden -Württemberg 1994a). Whereas in Britain a community schools' RE syllabus tends to be more 'egalitarian'; for example the Non-Statutory National Framework for RE⁶ includes study of

Christianity, at least two other principal religions, a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate and a secular world view, where appropriate. (QCA 2004)

Thus different religions and belief systems are taught side by side and all are seen as equally relevant and important. However in faith-based schools⁷ (Brown 2003; Mason 2003; Wright 2003; Francis and Lankshear 1993) there is usually an emphasis on a particular faith and/or denomination within that faith, and here faith nurture is normally encouraged. For example in the forward to the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education and North Lancashire Methodist District's RE syllabus (2000), there is an emphasis on "nurturing the faith of our young people" and "maintaining the distinctive Christian ethos" (2000:foreword). Thus RE in a faith-based school can be seen as a vehicle for evangelising:

In a Church school we are in a recognisably distinctive position where we are able to present Christianity as a true and living faith, therefore, making a valuable contribution to the mission of the church. (2000:2)

However in the Diocesan syllabus aims, which follow the quotation above, there is also a call for due regard of other faiths (2002:2). Nevertheless I would argue that multicultural education would seem difficult given this emphasis on a particular faith stance because although children can be taught, on the one hand, to respect different cultures as equal; on the other hand, the children are to be explicitly nurtured into one particular religion. The corollary to this is that one particular religion is somehow seen as superior to the others. I would argue that this is the situation in Southern Germany and in faith-based schools in Britain.

The American perspective is succinctly described in Kincheloe and Steinberg's book *Changing Multiculturalism* (1997) which lists definitions of multiculturalism, which

⁶ This is used by Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education in each local authority when writing their Agreed Syllabus for RE so it is an influential document.

⁷ For discussion of different types of schools see Surrey CC (2007)

are also particularly useful for this discussion. I have summarised these in tabular form below in table 3.1. Importantly I used this conceptual framework in feedback sessions in schools where I undertook my research, (discussed later in chapter 6):

Table 3.1 Types of multiculturalism adapted from Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997)

1) Conservative multi culturalists (mono culturalism)	are 'tokenist'. They attempt to address multicultural issues but deep down, they believe in the superiority of Western (white), patriarchal culture.
2) Liberal multiculturalists	are dedicated towards working to 'one race'. They attempt to gloss over differences in an attempt to make everyone equal and the 'same' ('they' are the 'same' as 'us' they just happen to be a different colour.)
3) Pluralist multiculturalism	Pluralism becomes a supreme social virtue, diversity is pursued and exoticised. There is cultural 'tourism' where 'they' (as opposed to 'us') live in an exotic parallel world. Eg Hanukkah is the Jewish Christmas (an example of neo colonialism.)
4) Left essentialist multiculturalists	are extreme in promoting the minority culture; to the extent that the dominant culture is seen as 'bad' and the marginalised as 'good'.
5) Critical multiculturalists	believe in the promotion of an individual's consciousness as a social being. They promote an awareness (self reflection) of how and why his/her opinions and roles are shaped by dominant perspectives. They appreciate that there are differences within as well as between cultures.

Kincheloe and Steinberg's main argument throughout their book is embedded in the critical theorist tradition of the Frankfurt school which includes Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Lowenthal and Marcuse (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997:23). They emphasise that critical multiculturalism, which is their preferred type of multiculturalism, should permeate the whole learning experience (1997). They argue that teachers must appreciate their own "locality in the web of reality" (1997:30). This relates, for example, to the white movement proponents, like Howard (2000), who discusses the need for white teachers to be aware of their own ethnicity, a point argued in the previous chapter. Kincheloe and Steinberg identify a problem for middle and upper middle classes who have little exposure to 'struggle' and thus are "often blind to their own privilege" (1997:83). I found that their 'types of multiculturalists' categories were very rigid; a deputy headteacher, in my research, noted that he was "part liberal multiculturalist, part pluralist and mostly a critical multiculturalist" (pilot 1 field notes page 28). I appreciate that scholars categorise to make sense of data – I have done so myself in this thesis. However the categories

must have some fluidity and there must be an acknowledgement of the variety within as well as between different groups. Kincheloe and Steinberg strive to engage teachers in transferring their theory into practice and they realise that most teachers are not overtly racist themselves but, nevertheless, fail

to protect students from the radioactive fallout of hidden structures of racism, patriarchy and class bias.(1997:104)

Throughout their book, Kincheloe and Steinberg refer to popular media characters to illustrate their points.⁸ They use television characters to illustrate another of their ‘types’ of multiculturalists. The *Cosby Show* is identified as an example of liberal multiculturalism. The Cosbys are a Black family but lead an upper middle class life and they adopt white western patriarchal values. Thus liberal multiculturalist educators and television producers

speak the language of diversity but...normalise Eurocentric culture as the tacit norm everyone references. (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997:11)

The Black characters in the programme are rarely affected by the fact that they are black – there is invisibility or colour blindness which I mentioned previously in the work of Jones (1998, 1999). Conversely this is not the case in the British television series *Dr Who* where Dr Who’s Black companion, Martha, can be seen as an example of ‘critical multiculturalism’ because her heritage is often commented upon. For example in one episode, Martha is able to disprove the myth of Black people’s inability to learn, by reciting the bones in the hand (she was a trainee doctor) (Davies 2007). Significantly Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) aim to bridge the gap between theory and practice, but in fact they merely exhort teachers not to do certain things. For example they disagree with a separation between education and politics and I agree with their point:

How is a teacher to choose a textbook or how is she to decide what knowledge to teach? These are obvious political decisions that must be made on a daily basis in the classroom. [Teachers have to constantly incorporate or reject] a multiplicity of competing ideological constructions. (1997:12)

⁸ This relates to my philosophical stance of post-modern standpoint, discussed in the previous chapter, where I identified the media’s distortion of a ‘supposed’ reality which then ‘becomes’ reality.

The third 'type of multiculturalism is pluralist multiculturalism which Kincheloe and Steinberg consider to be the "mainstream articulation of Multiculturalism." (1997:15). It differs from liberal multiculturalism in that it focuses on the 'difference' between cultures rather than their 'sameness'. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997:16) discuss pluralist multiculturalist teachers who encourage the celebration of heritage by encouraging the students themselves to take pride in their heritage and encouraging all students to read texts from a variety of cultures. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997:16) maintain however, that this is not enough; positive feelings and working hard do not necessarily bring about success for a minority ethnic person, women, low socio-economic and other traditionally discriminated against groups.

Pluralist multiculturalism promises an emancipation that it can't deliver, as it confuses psychological affirmation with political empowerment. (1997:16)

However I feel that at times Kincheloe and Steinberg intermittently use language which identifies them as being part of the 'white, western, dominant culture'. They speak constantly of multiculturalism from the perspective of a white person.

When discussing 'left essentialism', another inadequate form of multiculturalism, Kincheloe and Steinberg begin to consider 'other' perspectives. Left essentialists reduce 'races' and cultures to a static essence which is "distinct from other cultures" (1997:22). An example of this multiculturalism is the case of the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah by Darren Coulburn (Nayak 1999). This event was interpreted as a reaction by Darren, a white boy, to the celebration of minority ethnic culture and denigration of white culture.⁹ Similarly Kincheloe and Steinberg are referring to the white dominant culture and how others regard themselves in relation to it. I agree with their main argument, namely that cultures cannot be boiled down to essential components. Jackson is a firm believer in the fluid nature of culture (Jackson 1997), and I agree with this position. However I appreciate that Kincheloe and Steinberg are contrasting the 'wrong', or inadequate, concepts of conservative (monoculturalists), liberal, pluralist and essentialist multiculturalists with the 'right' or preferred perception of critical multiculturalists and they admit this themselves (1997:23).

Kincheloe and Steinberg's preference for critical multiculturalism is "dedicated to the

⁹ I discuss this event and others in a later section in this chapter.

notion of egalitarianism and the elimination of human suffering”(1997:24).¹⁰ They write convincingly and eloquently about the need for teachers to realise that “power shapes consciousness” (1997:25). I would agree that critical multiculturalism is the way forward and that contrary to Jones’ (1998) obituary, multiculturalism is certainly not dead but rather has emerged after mid life crisis into a wise and powerful force equipped with the experience of age and maturity to open people’s eyes to a world riddled with domination and oppression and empower all to bring about change. Lewis (2005) in her research in America discovered that racism and discrimination flourished in a variety of schools and schools were not taking into account the fact that

Race is a social construction, we must pay attention to how racialisation processes work- that is how race is produced and perpetuated on a daily basis.
(Lewis 2005:189)

Educationalists, scholars and researchers like Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997), Troyna and Hatcher (1992), May (1999), and Lewis (2005) present important ideas but these are not necessarily translated into practice in schools. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) in particular seem to have resurrected multiculturalism successfully but the next step is to see what the situation in schools might be and this can only be achieved through the gathering of empirical data. This is one of the aims of my thesis and in my fieldwork the focus was children’s perceptions of their own culture and ‘other’ cultures. In the next section I discuss educational theory and how it relates directly to practice in schools in terms of multicultural education.

3 Theory and Practice in Multicultural Education

So far I have discussed how multicultural education grew as an approach and the various forms it has taken. In this section I evaluate how different theories have had an impact on practice. Some educationalists believe research should necessarily bring about change. For example, Cohen et al (2000) discuss their tripartite form of educational research which involves description of the situation, understanding and change of practice. This can be related to Kincheloe and Steinberg’s (1997) preferred

¹⁰ Their theory takes up the gauntlet of Black writers mentioned in the previous chapter, namely hooks (1992), Mac an Ghail (discussed by Hammersley 1998) and Gilroy (1987) who all passionately call for justice and equality.

type of multiculturalism, critical multiculturalism, with its central aim to eliminate oppression and dominance.

Banks in his book *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (1995), states that there is a gap between educational theory and practice. He lists goals similar to those outlined by Kincheloe and Steinberg – firstly a reformation

of the school and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social class groups will experience educational equality. (Banks 1995:3)

Of the five dimensions Banks postulates to achieve this, two which relate particularly to the aims of critical multiculturalism are: prejudice reduction and empowering school culture and social structure (1995). In Gay's chapter in the *Handbook* (Gay 1995) there is a call for policy makers to adopt multicultural curriculum theory designs "to maximize school success for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and social class backgrounds" (1995:41). Gay is aware of the racism which holds back many minority ethnic children. Indeed since the publication of the Swann Report in 1985 there has been a continuing battle between educationists and government about the underachievement of minority ethnic children (Modood 1992), and more recently articulated in the Aiming High agenda (DfES 2004, Parker-Jenkins et al 2007). In the next section I discuss this issue.

3.1 Underachievement of Minority Ethnic Children

Blair cites examples of good practice in her work *Successful Strategies in Multi-Ethnic Schools: A summary of recent research* (1999). She poses reasons for the efficacy of multi-ethnic schools whose pupils are all achieving well – equality of opportunity, all staff working together with a shared vision and goals, high expectations and motivation for all pupils, and rigorous monitoring procedures. She notes that these schools are mostly primaries and I would argue that this may be because of the leadership style in primary schools where there is often more corporate decision making and delegation. Also, Blair argues, primary schools are generally smaller than secondaries and thus, on the whole, communication can be more effective and more personal (Blair 1999:18). In her appraisal of recent research Blair also notes that one glaring weakness has been the under representation of minority

ethnic staff in educational institutions. This issue links with the point made in the previous chapter where I suggested the way to address white teacher's 'problems' in teaching minority ethnic children is not necessarily to ask those teachers to appreciate their own ethnicity but rather to encourage more representation of minority ethnic communities as teachers in our schools. Significantly the TDA (Training Development Agency) has various projects which seek to encourage people from minority ethnic communities to apply for teacher training courses (TDA 2005)¹¹. Also the TDA have funded the *Multiverse* project (Multiverse 2006), which seeks to provide resources for practitioners.

Blair mentions significant features which contribute to high achievement and it is interesting to note that several of these relate directly to the teacher's attitude to the child, towards parents and towards the curriculum (i.e. being sensitive to the child's background and making lessons relevant).¹² There has been an ongoing concern about minority ethnic underachievement and recently grants have been introduced to address the problem – EMTAG (Minority Ethnic and Travellers Achievement Grant) (DfES 2007).

In their report *Race Equality and Education in Birmingham* (2003) Gillborn and Warren admit that even in Birmingham- a leading locality in the field of race equality (under the inspirational leadership of Tim Brighouse who was chief education officer for Birmingham at the time the report was commissioned), only 17% of African Caribbean boys achieved at least 5 GCSEs A*-C compared with 49% Indian boys, 39% white boys, 31% Pakistani boys and 27% Bangladeshi boys (Gillborn and Warren 2003). Gillborn and Warren claim that minority ethnic parents complain that teachers under-estimate the achievement their children are capable of whilst over estimating the trouble they cause, and these parents are not asking for preferential treatment but fair treatment (Gillborn and Warren 2003).

Blair also talks of "treating students with dignity and respect" (Blair 1999:20). She raises this issue in her chapter in Connolly and Troyna's book *Researching Racism in*

¹¹ There are numerous Minority Ethnic Recruitment and Retention Projects at various HEIs funded by the TDA (TDA 2005)- at present I am the co ordinator for the project at my institution.

¹² I would argue that minority ethnic children's (especially African Caribbean boys) underachievement may be directly related to the concentration on the content of the curriculum rather than on the child.

Education (1998:18) where she considers whether Black pupils behave differently to how white children behave, and suggests it is probably more a case of the teacher's perceptions. Thus a positive relationship between teacher and child is very important. In my own research I noticed that some teachers singled out the behaviour of a child of Caribbean heritage more so than any of the other children, which I discuss later in chapters 6 and 8. Sometimes it is a teacher's low expectations of minority ethnic pupils which hinders their achievement as Verma and Pumpfry explained as early as 1988. I would argue that this is still the case nowadays. Verma and Pumpfry also highlighted the fact that minority ethnic children sometimes perform badly because of a lack of appropriate language skills, not because they are inherently less able than their peers (1988:40). I will discuss individual case studies in a later section taken from Wade and Souter (1992) and Grugeon and Woods (1990). Both of these books cite examples where minority ethnic children perform badly accidentally because the system lets them down rather than because of their own lack of ability.

3.2 'Education for All'

The theme of underachievement of minority ethnic children was taken up by the Swann Report (1985) and many manuals and books followed to address these issues. I cite a few examples of these and also discuss more recent works. The discussion revolves around the issue of whether minority ethnic children are seen as a 'problem' or an 'opportunity'. Hessari and Hill (1989) in their manual *Practical Ideas for Multicultural Learning and Teaching in the Primary Classroom* address the issue of supporting all children by emphasising the need for teachers to have positive attitudes as well as schools being adequately resourced. They argue for:

peaceful and equitable co-existence [which] depends in some measure on mutual understanding and a willingness to accept variety as normal. (1989:13)

Thus minority ethnic children are not seen as a 'bolt on' which has to be incorporated into the present school body – rather the body of the school is the 'variety' of cultures. The intention of this manual is to celebrate diversity and Hessari and Hill suggest practical ways of achieving this. For example a teacher could explore the universality

of language and bring this into all aspects of the children's work (1989:138).¹³

Hessari and Hill's practical manual contrasts with Nixon and Watts' book *Whole School Approaches to Multicultural Education* (1989) which is more managerial than 'tips for teachers'. Nixon and Watts state that, "Multicultural education..... is essentially patronising and voyeuristic". (1989:62)

They are aware of the difficulties experienced by minority ethnic young people especially when it comes to job prospects. Thus, their vision goes further than Hessari and Hills' because Nixon and Watts (1989) (like Ebbeck and Baohm 1999) consider it important for minority ethnic children's cultures to be taken seriously and their background acknowledged, not just because the classroom ought to reflect multicultural Britain but because all children should be entitled to equal job prospects regardless of their race. Ebbeck and Baohm restate this when they say "the rhetoric of multicultural policy is not matched by the reality of practice" (1999:32). They go on to argue that:

relevant multicultural perspectives must include issues of gender, race, language, class, religion, age and ability....to avoid only a narrow view of the world being presented. (1999:33)

Ebbeck and Baohm do not agree with the view of minority ethnic children being a 'problem,' rather they have the right to feel "confident and proud of who they are and the key to achieving this is the incorporation of multicultural perspectives into every aspect of the curriculum" (1999). Ebbeck and Baohm suggest that the knowledge and expertise of the teacher is of crucial importance in the success of minority ethnic children in British schools. A contemporaneous project arrives at different conclusions. Edwards' survey (1998), poses an interesting hypothesis, namely minority ethnic children's success is dependant on whether they are voluntary, (came to the country to seek better opportunities), or involuntary (descendants of African slaves). He also maintains that the teacher's expectations of immigrants is a factor in the child's success (1998:1), and that the maintenance of their first language will help rather than hinder children's acquisition of a second language (1998:3). I discuss

¹³ They discuss the universality of Maths and the variety of ethnic diversity around the school reflecting "multicultural society of Britain" (1989:139). They suggest themes such as 'Ourselves' including an investigation of head coverings, hats and celebrations.

issues of language in chapter 8. Edward's position is very clear as 'bilingual' rather than 'limited proficiency in English' is the preferred terminology. Edwards also includes an interesting discussion about children's differing responses to mispronunciations of their names (1998:16). There are various practical 'tips for teachers' in the book which are not tokenistic but rather seek to combat 'institutional racism.' The theme throughout Edward's book is that diversity is seen as a "resource" and not a "problem" (1998:77) and this informs my research, and professional practice. The manual *Aiming High* Parker-Jenkins et al (2007) provides a useful practical support for raising the attainment of pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds.

In this section I have explored the achievement of minority ethnic children and how the curriculum and ethos of the school can have either a positive or negative effect – whether these children are seen as problems or as a resource. In the next section I examine the theory and practice of multicultural education in schools where there are few if any minority ethnic children. This is of central importance to my own research, because I investigated the cultural awareness of children in both high proportion minority ethnic schools and predominantly white schools.

4 Multicultural Education in White Schools

In this section I will focus mainly on the work of Tomlinson and Patel who have independently conducted extensive research in predominantly white or all-white schools in the 1980s and 1990s. I also draw on the work of Gaine (1995, 2005) and Jones (1998, 1999, 2000) whose work is located in the late 1990s and 2000s. (I discuss the work of Troyna and Hatcher (1992) and Lewis (2005) later in this chapter.)

4.1 Research Conducted in 1980s and 1990's

Patel's book (1994) like Tomlinson's (1990), charts the introduction of Education Support Grants projects in all white schools. Patel argues that many books and articles purporting to discuss multicultural and anti-racist education focus on black children-their underachievement and racist name calling and attacks, even when the focus is on all white schools (Patel 1994:29). His book by way of contrast seeks to consider how multicultural and anti-racist policies are implemented in all white schools and he

comments on the process. Patel argues that it is easier to implement multicultural curriculum development than anti-racist initiatives (1994:47). However he admits that theory, policy and classroom practice are not integrated, a finding I also discovered in my research, discussed later in chapters 6 and 7. Patel's literature review gives examples of anti-racist approaches which "lead to a re examination of one's world view" (1994:52) such as the choice of Arnos Peter's accurate 1960's projection of the world map in preference to Gerhard Kramer's (nicknamed Mercator) more well known one which emphasises Western superiority (Rosenberg 2007). Patel criticises Brown, Barnfield and Stone's *Spanner in the works* (1990) for their multicultural approach in its superficial treatment of, for example, the Chinese New Year which the authors Brown, Barnfield and Stone (1990:84) suggest will encourage "positive images of Chinese people."¹⁴ I would agree with Patel that this in itself is not enough because

the theme is not expanded to include the number of Chinese restaurants and take-always found in Cumbria, and how the Chinese people in the United Kingdom have been for a long time an 'invisible' presence. (Patel 1994:53)

I would argue that the new direction of multicultural education (as I discussed in the previous chapter) namely critical multiculturalism, goes some way to addressing these problems – the heritage of the minority ethnic group is discussed as well as the celebration of festivals. This approach is, in part, covered in Citizenship lessons rather than RE (Stern 2006). *Another Spanner in the Works* (2005 Knowles and Ridley) builds on a previous Cumbrian case studies book mentioned above (Brown, Barnfield and Stone 1990). In the preface Knowles and Ridley address Patel's (1994) criticism as they state:

This book is also about moving on in another sense: from the starting point of multicultural activities and celebrating other cultures, to tackling hard issues of negative perceptions, intolerance and prejudice. (2005:v)

Thus multiculturalism as an approach, has moved on from being a celebration of different cultures to challenging racism and prejudice and actively promoting anti-racism.

¹⁴ This book used examples from Cumbrian predominantly white population.

Patel's work (1994) in this field has been greatly informed by that of Tomlinson (1990). Patel while obviously holding Tomlinson's work in esteem, nevertheless criticises her on several fronts – firstly her use of 'non-white' instead of 'Black' (Patel 1994:54). I agree this terminology is not helpful: however, use of terminology is constantly changing. Use of language must not be underestimated and, as I have argued in the previous chapter, I find the use of the term 'people of colour', popular in the literature of America, to be unhelpful. As a Black writer Patel argues that "non-white" is inconsistent with anti-racist sentiments (1994:55) and I would agree that feminists would be outraged if women were referred to as non-men. He also points out that non-white implies that white is the 'norm' - the term non-black is not used to denote white people.

Tomlinson and Patel do agree however about themes emerging from the literature (Patel 1994:63). These include negative attitudes towards "the implementation of a more appropriate education for a multiracial society," and a "softly softly approach especially towards multicultural education in all-white areas" (1994:63). Patel suggests that he and Tomlinson both see the need for a model of multicultural education in all white areas which is couched in a wider political education which takes account of class, gender and racial inequalities (1994:63). In my discussion of Citizenship within the curriculum, at the end of this chapter, I stress the need for this sort of approach. Connolly too looks at factors of race and gender in his work (1998).

Despite Patel's concerns I feel that Tomlinson's research has contributed significantly to the debate of multicultural education –especially in all white schools and in fact her work is often among key texts today in many ITE courses on Multicultural education (Tomlinson:1990). In *Multicultural Education in White Schools* she addresses two important issues namely why there is:

such a strong resistance to the idea that a change in education is necessary for a multi ethnic Britain and an interdependent world. (Tomlinson 1990:21)

I would argue that this strong resistance is still evident. She also charts the kinds:

of initiatives and developments [which] are in progress in schools in white areas, particularly the Education Support Grants. (1990:21)

Tomlinson also raised the influence of colonial attitudes in Victorian times fuelled by the doctrine of Social Darwinism which put forward claims of "a genetic white British

superiority over non-white races” (1990:31).¹⁵ Here Tomlinson and Patel express a similar view, since they were writing at the time of the debate between ‘softly, softly’ multicultural education, and a hard-hitting anti-racist approach. With hindsight we can easily regret the fact that these two approaches may well have achieved much more if they had combined forces rather than opposing each other. However, as I have stated before I am not as pessimistic as Jones (1998) whose obituary of Multiculturalism suggests that all is lost – rather I see a turn in governmental policy which brings together the strengths of early works like Patel and Tomlinson together with more recent writings on critical multiculturalism which result in a renewed interest in celebrating and living constructively with diversity in multi ethnic Britain. For example Black culture is actively celebrated in high profile and well-organised events and projects – the Black History Month magazine (Sugar Media 2003) is a testimony to this, and also websites such as 100 Black Britons¹⁶. In the next section I discuss more recent research in this area.

4.2 Recent Research concerning Mainly White Schools

Russell’s research conducted in the late 1990’s on white, newly qualified teachers, suggests that there are many misconceptions concerning minority ethnic children. For example in confusions between English as an additional language (EAL) and special needs, and also with the premise that racism is tackled if schools have a policy irrespective of whether this is embedded in practice (Jones 1999).

Likewise the work of Gaine (1987, 1995, 2005) traces the opinion towards racism in mainly white schools. In his most recent book Gaine discusses the variety of problems which together contribute to racism and he uses an image of an octopus which he names “excusopus” (2005:172). He argues that there are a “range of excuses” for “things staying as they are” (2005:172), and he highlights fifteen ‘excuses’. For example employing the metaphor of “White shoes” (2005:177), Gaine quotes a Bangladeshi man:

‘You people, you don’t wear the shoes of racism every day, you don’t know where they pinch and where they hurt. We do, but you don’t ask us about them, you just keep on designing new shoes, but they’re white shoes and they don’t fit.’ (Gaines 2005: 177)

¹⁵ See *Roots of Racism, Patterns of Racism and How Racism came to Britain* (Institute of Race relations 1985) compared with *What do we think about Racism* (Green:1999).

¹⁶ Also see http://www.100greatblackbritons.com/bios/yvonne_brewster.html

Gaine argues that consultation is crucial even though it is “not always easy in a white area” (2005:177). Gaine then proceeds to show how the tentacles of the excusopus can be chopped off with the axe of legitimacy and motive. The two most important motives are:

To equip all young people with an appropriate education, to free them from the shackles of uncritical acceptance of racist myths and enable them to relate to people and groups positively and not fearfully or resentfully. The second is to provide a safe and affirming educational experience for minority pupils.” (2005:180)

Gaine exhibits greater optimism about race relations in his later work (2005) than he did in earlier work (1987), especially regarding mainly white schools. However Britain is far from free of prejudice and racism and some of Gaine’s findings correlated that of my own research, discussed later in chapters 6 and 7. Lewis (2005) made similar findings in America in her study in three schools where she emphasises the influence of the school in the “racialization process” (Lewis 2005: 188).

In the next section I explore some key racist incidents and case studies which have focused attention sharply on the issue of racism and which, in turn, have caused a re evaluation of multicultural and anti-racist education.

5 Key Racist Incidents

Here I select and discuss key case studies which have been influential in informing and shaping multicultural education today. I refer to Kincheloe and Steinberg’s categories of multiculturalism (1997) as they are helpful in measuring ‘degrees’ of racism/multiculturalism, as I argue elsewhere (Elton-Chalcraft 2001).

5.1 The Honeyford Affair

Halstead (1988) and Todd (1991) both discuss the Honeyford affair as an example of racism at its worst. Roy Honeyford was a Bradford headteacher who disagreed with multicultural education and wrote an article to this effect in 1982 in *The Times Educational Supplement*, *Salisbury Review*, *The Spectator* and *The Headteacher’s Review*. His main argument called for immigrants to adapt to their new country, and he said that schools should not have responsibility for cultural maintenance, this, Honeyford claimed, was the role of parents. He argued that minority ethnic pupils

should be taught 'British' culture and he also disagreed with the critical approach to British history. He felt that underachievement by 'West Indian' [sic] children was due to the lack of encouragement by parents (Todd 1991:118). He was suspended but then reinstated and finally took early retirement (Todd 1991:118). His school roll fell by half and the whole affair was detrimental not only to pupils in his own school but the whole education establishment as people came out as defenders or in opposition to Honeyford's opinions. Todd highlights the misrepresentations in the press over this case and others. In 1987, another affair, the Dewsbury school debate, caught media attention as white parents wanted to take their children out of a predominantly Asian school and have them educated in a predominantly white one. Again misrepresentations in the press fuelled racial hatred (1991).

Halstead (1988) devotes the whole of his book to this debate and identifies several definitions of racism useful to our understanding of multicultural theory. These include pre-reflective (which includes gut-racism), post-reflective, cultural, institutional, paternalistic and colour-blind (1988:138). Halstead claims that the latter forms of racism are sometimes unintentional (Halstead 1988). This whole affair polarised public opinion into pro-Honeyford groups who felt that a Headteacher should be given the right to free speech and those who felt Honeyford was a racist who fuelled the antagonism felt towards anti-racist and multicultural education. Using the conceptual framework of Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) I would argue that Honeyford was a conservative multiculturalist. Although the Honeyford Affair brought about some re-evaluation of multicultural education, nevertheless over twenty years on there is still concern about the achievement of Black children and discrimination still exists, despite the introduction of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which I have discussed earlier.

5.2 The Murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah

Another key catalytic event was the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, noted earlier in this chapter. Nayak argues that one of the possible motives of the murder of Ahmed by Darren Coulburn was a lack of attention to white ethnicity (Nayak 1999:176). This reflects Kincheloe and Steinberg's left essentialist type of multiculturalism (1997). Thus when Nayak states that anti-racism "should have been *extended* to incorporate white youth rather than retracted" (1999:198), the implication is that the teaching at

Darren's and Ahmed's school involved the promotion of Black culture and lifestyle and a denigration of white culture which, supposedly, led to the attack. Troyna and Hatcher discuss this incident with reference to a model they adapted from Waddington et al (1989) (Troyna and Hatcher 1992:40). I found this model of 8 terms a helpful one as the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah murder can be explained as both not provoked by racist motives yet at the same time being described as a "racist incident" – because of the "racist culture and context" in which it took place (1992:41).¹⁷ The school had an anti-racist policy but this does not in itself preclude racism (Dadzie 2000). Troyna and Hatcher's model is represented here in its narrative form:

Structural: The differential relations of power and structurally induced conflict between groups perceived as racially different in society.

Political/ideological: Prevailing systems in play at the time of the incident. On the one hand, racism: justified in terms of the current *zeitgeist*. On the other, anti-racism: defended in terms of egalitarian ideals.

Cultural : The level of lived experience and common-sense understanding within the locality and community, especially as these are refracted through the family and its networks.

Institutional: The ideologies, procedural norms and practices which are promoted, sanctioned and diffused by the school.

Sub-cultural: The children's subcultural worlds

Biographical: Those factors and characteristics which are specific to the individuals involved in the incident.

Contextual: The immediate history of a racist incident.

Interactional: The actual event/incident; what was done, what was said.
(1992:41)

Thus Troyna and Hatcher's comment on the different layers of meaning which arise from the incident demonstrates that the killing was not a simple matter of a white boy being prejudiced against a Black boy. Rather the culture of the setting, i.e. the school and community context also had a bearing on the incident.

5.3 The Murder of Stephen Lawrence

The findings of the Macpherson Report (1999) made it clear that the 'rotten apple theory' was not an acceptable explanation for the murder of the Black teenager

¹⁷ See also the MacDonald Report (1989).

Stephen Lawrence. Blair et al (1999:7) emphasise the findings of the report which pointed to institutional racism within public services, as the main explanation. The Macpherson report, noted earlier in chapter 2, defines institutional racism as:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin.
(Macpherson 1999:28)

This criticism was primarily directed at the police in their handling of the case and in their dealings with the family and friends of Stephen Lawrence. In terms of the educational context, Blair et al consider the organisation of the curriculum to be at the heart of the problem as they attack teachers who say they are willing in principle to discuss racism with children but in practice do not have the time:

Indeed the fetishization of league tables and ‘standards’ measured by the crudest means possible actually provides exactly the circumstances whereby institutional racism flourishes. (1999:9)

The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), highlighted earlier in chapter 2, was the government’s attempt to address some of the issues raised in the Report and yet Richardson (2004) notes that many schools failed to have a policy in place and, even worse,

Eighteen months after the law came into effect, not a single college or university had actually reached the first stage of what was required.
(2004:40)

Richardson hopes that the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) will fulfil their promise to bring to account employers who “continue to drag their heels” but he expresses concern that the status and power of the CRE is at risk as the government merges the CRE with the Equal Rights Commission and the Disability Rights Commission to make one single national body for Equality and Human rights. (2004:40).¹⁸

5.4 Minority Ethnic Experiences

In addition to key racist incidents which have occurred in the last twenty years, our understanding of the efficacy of multiculturalism has been informed by research on

¹⁸ In 2007 CRE became CEHR (Commission for Equality and Human Rights) (CEHR 2007)

minority ethnic experiences of schooling. For example Grugeon and Woods (1990) cite instances where children from minority ethnic communities have been failed by the education system. For example they discuss the case of Balbinder whose family did not receive the support they needed for their son's educational needs. I would argue from the evidence that this was due to institutional racism as the family were not able to demand from the education system what they deserved for their son: instead, in this particular case, Balbinder was sent from school to school as each Headteacher tried to avoid doing anything about addressing his special needs (1990).

Language acquisition can be a special issue for minority ethnic children and Gregory (1997:146) discusses language used in the home. The National Curriculum (QCA 1999) encourages 'standard English'¹⁹ but Gregory argues for an attention to the differences in language:

difference is the norm in post modern nation states where people are crossing borders- physical, geographical, cultural, symbolic and intellectual. (Gregory 1997:14)

Gregory cites the case study of Elsey and her grandmother who converse in Torres Strait Creole yet Elsey is fluent in 'standard' English and interchanges effortlessly between the two (1997). Gregory insists that teachers must work in partnership with parents and the child where there is mutual teaching and learning. I think this is an important point – the teacher learns from the child just as the child learns from the school and home. Similarly, Straker-Welds (1984) discusses the involvement of the family and urges teachers not to make value judgements about 'right' and 'wrong' child rearing, rather the family's approach may be different, possibly culturally different but must not be perceived as 'bad' (1984). Straker-Welds also discuss the case of Gayhurst Infant school (Inner London), which is a good example of left essentialist multiculturalism as described above (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). The school supported Mr Singh and his family who were subjected to a series of racially motivated attacks, one of which left him with brain damage. This same school voted off a National Front candidate from the governing body and refused entry of the police onto the premises except in an emergency because the police were believed to be inherently racist (Straker-Welds 1984). Almost 20 years later many groups would

argue that institutional racism is still prevalent. For example the case of the teaching assistant who was suspended for wearing the niqab (veil) (*School Sacks Woman After Veil Row* 2006). I discuss the niqab and hijab (headscarf) in the following section.

5.5 Wearing the Niqab and Hijab

Continuing the theme of minority ethnic experience, in this section I discuss various incidents relating to public opinion of Muslim women or girls who choose to wear the niqab (veil) or the hijab (headscarf). This is important because some of the Muslim girls in my study wore traditional Muslim dress. An incident which, I would argue, relates to racism was recorded in the *Times Education Supplement* in 2002 and concerned the wearing of hijab (Muslim headscarf). The headline read “Dark ages ban on Muslim scarf” (Wright, 2002:10). The deputy headteacher of a High Wycombe junior school told Mr Kalil of the Muslim Parent’s Association that the wearing of the hijab had to be considered by the board of governors for three reasons: because they contravened uniform policy, because they might be considered a fashion symbol, and because they might be a health hazard (2002:10). All three reasons demonstrate a monoculturalist perspective (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). Firstly, the uniform policy is discriminatory towards minority ethnic communities thus advocating a white western privilege stance. (This is a theme I introduced in the previous chapter). Secondly, there is a total lack of understanding of why Muslim girls wear the hijab – it is usually thought of as an expression of a woman’s cultural and religious values, so to suggest that the girls were wearing it as a fashion statement would probably be deeply offensive to the Muslim community.

Parker-Jenkins discusses the issue of school dress at some length in her guide to meeting the needs of Muslim pupils (1995). Parker-Jenkins outlines that it may be a “cultural rather than religious tradition” for females to cover their heads and that “[t]here is a variety of attitudes amongst Muslims themselves towards the requirements for females” (1995:65). However Parker-Jenkins states that “in Britain, disagreement over the wearing of hijab has only arisen in isolated instances” (1995) whereas in other European countries it is still controversial (Parker-Jenkins et al 2007). My fieldwork in Germany confirms this, as I explain later in chapter 8. Thus it is all the more surprising when incidents such as that at High Wycombe occur in

¹⁹ See <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/features/literacy/818741/>

Britain as Parker-Jenkins states “for many teachers schools dress may appear to be an issue of little consequence since the matter was effectively resolved several years ago.” (1995:65) Yet I would argue that it still remains an issue in some British schools. It is interesting to note here that communal showering is a contentious issue for many Muslims and Parker-Jenkins explains that timetabling PE for the end of the day when students can go home to shower has gone some way to alleviate the problem (1995:66).

More recently however, a furore was caused by Jack Straw’s comments in the Lancashire Evening Telegraph (Sturke 2006), which sparked a national debate about the integration of Muslim women who choose to wear the veil. Asser (2006) charts the different forms of covering worn by Muslim women and the reasons behind their choice. Suleaman (2006) also argues that Muslim women are being unjustly stigmatised. I would agree because in my research I found some children expressing hostile views towards anyone who appeared to be Muslim. However, in an article on BBC news (*The Islamic Veil Across Europe* 2006) it can be seen that other countries have banned the wearing of headscarves and or the veil in schools, at work and in public places where Britain has not. Thus Britain can be seen as being more sympathetic to a variety of cultural symbols being worn.

In a symbolic way this incident of wearing the hijab also relates to points made by Weller (2000). Weller’s first proposition for Europe suggests that there needs to be some acknowledgement of the existence and contribution of minority ethnic communities, we do not live in a monocultural society :

European self-understandings which exclude people of other than Christian religious traditions, either by design or by default are, historically speaking, fundamentally distorted. Politically and religiously such self understandings are dangerous and need to be challenged. (Weller 2000:9)

Thus I would argue that being allowed or forbidden to wear the veil may be used as a litmus test for a country’s cultural tolerance. So Britain, despite the isolated incidents described above, has moved towards acceptance of diversity of dress compared with France and Germany (*The Islamic veil across Europe* 2006). On this point Hammond argues against intolerance towards the wearing of the veil where he states:

When veiling as an act of piety stands also as a symbol of resistance against the insults of local Islamophobes and the perceived Western anti-Muslim crusade, it is not surprising that the practice is passionately adhered to and attempts to remove it fiercely resisted. (Hammond 2006)

The sections above highlight a variety of incidents and experiences which I would argue have influenced the shape of multicultural education. Other research has been conducted which is rooted in children's experiences and my research falls within this category.

6 Racism in Children's Lives

Both Troyna and Hatcher (1992) in their English study, and Lewis (2005) in her American study use the term 'racialisation'. Troyna and Hatcher describe the aims of their study to understand "the extent and ways in which the cultures of childhood may become racialised." (1992:49). 'Racialisation', coined by Miles (1988) denotes:

the political and ideological process by which particular populations are identified by direct or indirect reference to their real or imagined phenotypic characteristics in such a way as to suggest that the population can only be understood as a supposedly biological unity. (Miles 1988:246)

I have argued in the previous chapter that the concept of 'race' is an invention. In their examination of name calling Troyna and Hatcher present numerous extracts from their work with children. I find these the most interesting parts of their discussions and also their commentary on the child's perspective. They make the point that some children who use racist name-calling in fact hold racially egalitarian beliefs, as they identify in their model for locating racist name-calling (1992:76 fig 5.1). Thus they explain that some racist name calling is done by non-racist children who want to achieve offence and hurt. The implication is that this should then be dealt with differently to those instances where children use racist language which expresses racist attitudes.

Further Troyna and Hatcher (1992) make the point that interpretation of quantitative data about racist name-calling (collected in all LAs under governmental directives) does not show whether the name calling is racially motivated or used by non-racist

children as a means of causing hurt. I think this is a very important point and strengthens Troyna and Hatcher's argument for research into race related issues to be qualitative rather than quantitative. (I share this view as I argue later in my methodology chapters.)

Another issue discussed later by Troyna and Hatcher is that of white privilege²⁰. They recount Mandeep's words-

White people think they're better than coloured people. They think they rule the world but they can't. (1992:78)

Children in their study offered reasons for this white privilege. For example, Simon thought it was like gender oppression "It's like some men think they're better than women" (1992:78).

David talks about the fear of Blacks 'taking over' as he describes the Black family who he used to live next to.

We used to live next to black people and when somebody dies- because our entry came off theirs as well- and when somebody died millions of them came down the entry and we just couldn't do with it, so we moved. (1992:100)

Troyna and Hatcher relate the reasons behind David's fear of a 'take over' – he thought Blacks would favour Blacks, and whites would favour whites and there might well be a war "and whoever wins gets this country, but I doubt it" (1992:100). They claim later in a discussion of Stacey's comments about 'same and mixed race' marriage, that because of the limitations of language some researchers do not know what children really mean or think. Stacey makes the point that it "doesn't matter what colour skin you are – it shouldn't make a difference"(1992:92). Troyna and Hatcher (1993:140) examine the influential nature of television and parents. I also undertook research about the influence of parents and television in my study. Finally Troyna and Hatcher consider the relationships which children have both with adults and peers. I discuss this later in both the methodology and analysis chapters.

There are other notable works which detail racism in children's lives, notably are:

Jackson and Nesbitt (1993) *Hindu Children in Britain*, Bauer (1997) *Interviews with Muslim Children*, Hull (1988) *God Talk with Young Children*, Brown (1998) *Unlearning Discrimination in the Early Years*, Connolly (1998) *Racism, Gender Identities and Young Children* and Lewis's American study (2005) *Race in the School Yard*. Other work which has children's voices at the heart of the research are (Ipgrave 2001, Osler 1989, Wade and Souter 1992, Carrington and Short 1995, 1998), and I expand further on this later in the methodology chapters.

In this section I have highlighted what I consider to be key works which present the voices of children concerning the topic of racism. In the final section I discuss some of the recent and relevant research which I feel has had an influence on children in terms of multicultural awareness and cultural development.

7 Multicultural Teaching, Religious Education and Citizenship

In the desire to develop and enhance children's multicultural awareness, a connection has been made with the value of citizenship education and Religious Education (RE) in schools.

7.1 Citizenship and RE

In my professional practice I have had conversations with numerous RE teachers over the concern that Citizenship will replace RE as the 'new' secular morals dispenser, and so Citizenship is seen as a threat to RE. However I believe that the issue is more complex: I think it is through an alignment of Citizenship and RE that the 'ailing' multiculturalism may well be resurrected and anti-racist and multicultural approaches can aid British society in challenging prejudice, oppression and racism. I think that learning about citizenship can be helpful in that it encourages children to consider issues of identity. Wright holds a similar view and he discusses community awareness which Citizenship encourages (Wright 2000). Wright deplores the 'smash and grab' mentality and distortion of the learning 'from' religion attainment target. He disapproves of the child being offered experiential RE at the expense of interrogating truth claims. (2000). However I would disagree with his caricature of liberal Religious Education's dependence on self understanding (2000:171). He disparagingly

²⁰ In the previous chapter I introduced this concept with reference to policy and practice which privileges white pupils.

describes this as follows:

The fact that we feel good about ourselves becomes more important than whether or not we understand the world correctly. Being a contented pig is preferable to being a discontented philosopher. (Wright 2000:171)

I would argue that the two are not mutually exclusive and also I would question Wright's assumption that one can know the 'world correctly' in any case.

The work of Wright (2005, 2004) and White (2004) concerning compulsory Religious Education is interesting and thought provoking in this debate of citizenship and RE. White questions how justifiable RE is in an increasingly secular society (White 2004:151). Conversely Wright stresses that because we live in a pluralist world with "conflicting ontological assumptions" which "vie for our attention," pupils must be equipped with critical skills to evaluate them (Wright 2004: 165)²¹. I would agree with Wright here, and in the following sections I demonstrate how RE, Citizenship and multicultural education can work together to bring about knowledge and understanding of different cultures within an anti-racist educative framework.

Gates (2006a) too, discusses the link between citizenship and religion in his editorial for the special issue of *Journal of Moral Education* which focuses on debates about Citizenship education. In his own article, Gates makes a strong case for the place of RE in discussions of citizenship because "beliefs are at the core of a human being" (Gates 2006b: 521). I would agree with Gates that RE must figure within Citizenship:

Citizenship education which pays scant attention to the process and content of both moral and religious believing is likely to stumble. (Gates 2006b:589)

In the following sections I discuss the issue of teaching Citizenship because multicultural education forms a part of this curriculum, and my research aimed to explore children's multicultural awareness, and the influences on its development.

7.2 Citizenship in Education

In Chapter 1, I briefly outlined the history of RE in Britain and mentioned Citizenship education which was introduced into British schools in the late 1990s, after the

publication of the Crick report in 1998 *Education for Citizenship and the teaching of Democracy in schools* (Crick 1998). Teece attributes this Report to the Labour Government's desire to follow other European governments like France where citizenship education is more common (Teece 2000:2). Global citizenship is now one of the key areas which the government is keen for teachers to address (DfES 2000).

When looking at the Crick Report I am concerned about the value laden term 'good' as used in the following:

PSE, RE, moral education, whatever we call education specifically for values, are necessary but not sufficient conditions for good citizenship and good behaviour. (Crick 1998:44)

The suggestion is that teachers should be part of the process of 'delivering' a curriculum about 'being a good citizen,' yet the values of the teacher is taken for granted, as being pro democracy and pro being a 'good' citizen. The DfES guidance booklet and website, concerning the citizenship curriculum (2000, 2006b) outline schemes of work for older children (Key Stage 3 and 4). These include units such as 'Britain a Diverse society?' (unit 4) and 'Citizenship and RE: How do we deal with conflict' (2006b). These two units address issues concerning life in a multi cultural and multi ethnic society. Laudable as these units are I have some reservations about the "expectations at the end of the unit". For example "they discuss their opinions of conflict, forgiveness, compromise and reconciliation, and make an informed response" (2006b). I would argue that this implies there is one informed response which is more preferable to another. Also one might ask how a teacher is to conduct debates concerning: conflict with Al qua' ida and the events of September 11th 2001 in USA; Turkey's events of November 19th 2003; the London bombings 7th July 2005 and disputes between Israel and the Lebanon 2006. One learning outcome requires the pupil to realise that

not forgiving may lead to a chain of further events involving anger, hatred and escalation of the conflict. (DfES 2000)

Lynch (1992), Leicester et al (1998) and Jackson (2003a) have suggested ways

²¹ See also *BJRE* (Wright 2005).

forward for the teacher in dealing with controversial issues in the curriculum. In the following sections I discuss how their works contribute to the debate of Citizenship and multiculturalism in education.

At the early stages of Citizenship education there was a 'raising awareness' stance which was developed by later writers as I show below. Lynch (1992:2) outlines "three levels of personal consciousness and social participation: *local, national and international*" which are seen as independent and mutually supportive. These levels comprise an "inter related network of human rights and social responsibilities across all 'domains' : *social, cultural, environmental and economic*." (1992:2). Lynch is writing with beginning teachers in mind, therefore there are 'principles of procedure' which are like ground rules (basic, agreed rules) which bear reference to the United Nations Rights of the Child (1992:5). The ensuing discussion involving the implementation of Global Citizenship education is commendable but I wonder whether in fact it would work in practice. Craft and Klein's book on the other hand (1986) offers more practical suggestions and is more teacher friendly.

Recent theorists weave theory and practice more closely together. For example Leicester, Modgil and Modgil's (1998) third volume of the series *Values Education and Cultural Diversity : Political and Citizenship Education* mentioned earlier, is, in my opinion, a very stimulating resource. Davies's chapter (1998) discusses Intercultural education which I think is a helpful way forward and this approach might successfully synthesise the aims of Religious Education and citizenship.

The theme of intercultural education, noted earlier in this chapter, is taken up by various other contributors in the volume, Lichman and Sullivan (1998:74) describe a joint project between Arab and Jewish children in Israel where in the first instance the children were encouraged to see what they shared in common rather than focussing on difference (1998:75). Intercultural education in this scenario is about offering children:

a world in which there is the possibility of co existence, than to encourage them to accept a world consisting of communities of people who cannot get along with each other, who cannot recognise the value of each other's ways. (1998:76)

Other scholars have discussed the concept of intercultural education in Northern Ireland (Lovett 1998; Richardson 2003; Connolly 1999; 2000a, 2001, 2003), including examinations of intercultural activities with children from different religious backgrounds. This literature is relevant to my own research because I was interested in the extent to which children of different ethnicities and religions related to each other. I was also interested in the influence of the hidden and formal curriculum on children's cultural awareness, which I discuss in more detail in chapter 8.

Darum (1998) appreciates the influence education can have as he presents three domains of education – the cognitive (critical thinking), affective (emotions) and values (attitudes/preferences) (1998:19). Darum questions the concept of values by asking “whose values?” and answers by proposing 3 components (1998:20). Firstly the personal (independence of thought, personal responsibility, moral thinking and acting and a work ethic), the interpersonal (co-operation, non-manipulation, non-violence, caring acceptance of others different to oneself) and the social (respect for human rights, ecological awareness and active support for oppressed minorities) (1998:20). Darum acknowledges two dangers of indoctrination and values neutrality; there is a thin line between “political education and political propaganda” (1998:21).

I think this is what teachers find most difficult and, in my experience with student teachers, there is often confusion between educating and indoctrinating, especially when teaching PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education). I agree with Darum in his assertion that “the hidden curriculum is loaded with value messages, students ‘inhale’ them in their 12 years of schooling” (1998:23). This could be described in terms of institutional racism, explained earlier, where teachers and the school ethos ‘unwittingly’ give hidden messages. Darum asserts that the major message is “be obedient to authority” (1998:25). (This too was an issue I explored in my research and which I discuss later in chapter 8.)

I was also interested in the impact of the media in my research and the issue of media portrayal of conflict is addressed in Seger's chapter in the Leicester et al volume (Seger 1998:57). She claims that “the camera not only reflects society it shapes it.” This echoes my constructivist view of reality which I outlined earlier in the previous chapter. I too agree that media has a powerful influence on peoples' attitudes. Seger's

chapter argues that the teaching of values now lies in the domain of the entertainment industry now that religious myths have been overtaken by film and television myths. In other words, as Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) point out, media has a powerful influence in presenting images of 'normality'. Thus Citizenship education is 'learnt' from values presented by the media and the entertainment industry, as much as values presented in our schools in organised citizenship or PSHE lessons. (In this thesis I discuss the influence of television and film with the children, and I report my findings in chapters 6 and 7.).

If Citizenship teaching is to be thought of as one way of challenging and eliminating prejudice and racism, then one would imagine that there is consensus about its aims. However not all citizenship education programmes are consistent with each other. For example Arnot et al's chapter describes experiences of a range of student teachers where the students in right wing dictatorships (Greece, Portugal and Spain) suggested the critical citizen is one who does not always obey (Arnot et al 1998:221). A Welsh female student teacher, quoted in Arnot et al, sums up my own attitude towards Citizenship in British schools, Arnot states

the current government is seen to be promoting citizenship for political reasons, which isn't necessarily the best way to go about it. (1998:223)

Edwards and Fogelman (1998:101) make the point in their chapter that when looking for 'difference' the anti-racists themselves are in danger of being racist, highlighting the fact that Citizenship education is problematic.

Jackson's (2003a) *International Perspectives on Citizenship, Education and Religious Diversity* highlights some of the key issues concerning citizenship in education. In this book Jackson brings together ideas from various countries about Citizenship and RE and provides some interesting perspectives about Citizenship in Norway (Skei 2003) and South Africa (Steyn 2003), feminist issues (Tobler 2003) and issues concerned with communication and dialogue (Ipgrave 2003b, Leganger-Krostad 2003 Weisse 2003). Jackson's introductory chapter makes the point that citizenship is not just to do with the nation state (2003b:14). Also he emphasises that there is diversity within as well as between religions (2003b:13). Blaylock's concluding chapter (2003) helpfully draws together many of the themes in the book.

In this section I have shown how Citizenship education has been the vehicle for multicultural education and yet Jackson has also argued for RE to continue to be a useful approach as well. In my own research I examined PSHE as well as RE for evidence of multicultural education and the development of children's cultural awareness.

Summary

I began this chapter with a humorous account by Jones which charts the life and death of multiculturalism. I critically examined the theory and practice of multicultural education, including an appraisal of types of multiculturalism providing an international perspective. I examined the situation of minority ethnic children in British schools and considered different views, such as perceiving children as 'problems' or 'opportunities/possibilities'. Next I examined multicultural education in white schools which relates specifically to my own fieldwork.

A substantial part of the discussion was devoted to key racist incidents including, the Honeyford affair, the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, the Stephen Lawrence case, the wearing of the niqab and hijab, and major events, for example September 11th 2001. These events, I argue, have had an impact on the direction of multicultural education as governments and educationalists have had to respond in terms of the adequacy of policy. I examined texts exploring racism in children's lives which have also had an impact on the development of multicultural education. Importantly I concluded this chapter with an appraisal of multicultural and Citizenship teaching as vehicles for enhancing multicultural awareness.

In the next two chapters I discuss my research design and the methodology I adopted, to explore key issues raised so far, namely, children's multicultural awareness, attitudes and influences.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Research Questions

In the *miner metaphor*, knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is the miner who unearths the valuable metal....The alternative *traveler* [sic] *metaphor* understands the interviewer as a traveler on a journey that leads to a tale to be told on returning home. (Kvale 1996:3-4)

In the previous two chapters, I discussed how my research is embedded in literature on race/racisms, culture, and multicultural issues, and I highlighted the debates surrounding children's cultural awareness. In this chapter and the next I focus specifically on my own research, the research design and methods I employed. Discussion here is presented in two sections:

1. Research design
2. Research questions- ethical, practical and methodological considerations.

I build on the arguments presented in the previous chapter concerning the nature of the debate on multicultural awareness, and I consider the ontological and epistemological issues relating to my research. I discuss my research design including my commitment to child-centred, ethnographic and open-ended research and the reasons for these choices. I explain how my research design ensured the results were valid and reliable, and I conclude by tabulating my research questions with reference to methods, practicalities and ethical issues.

1 The Research Design

1.1 Ontology

My first question is ontological- "What is the nature of the phenomena, or entities, or social 'reality', which I wish to investigate?"(Mason 1996:11). I believe teachers and children have attitudes and beliefs, they interpret the social world in particular ways and they have their own 'world view.' This stance is similar to Interpretivism's ontology, as outlined by Blaikie (1993:96):

social reality is regarded as the product of processes by which social actors together negotiate the meanings for actions and situations. Human experience is characterized as a process of interpretation.

Ontologically I consider that humans have their own 'world views' and I am interested in what children's' world views are and in particular their knowledge of other cultures and their attitude towards multicultural issues. This standpoint reflects the argument I voiced in the literature chapters- my perspective tends towards the constructivist rather than the realist understanding of phenomena.

1.2 Epistemology

My second question is epistemological -"What might represent knowledge or evidence of the entities or social reality which I wish to investigate?" This refers to the theory of knowledge -what I count as evidence /knowledge about teachers' and children's attitudes and beliefs- their world view? My observations of teachers and children during their engagement in the formal and hidden curriculum, together with my interpretations of semi-structured interviews with them, are all possible sources of data which count as evidence about their world view. There is a problem with this which Blaikie outlines (1993:111), as the relation between "meanings and their causal relations". Thus I limit my discussions to 'possible influences' for the child's knowledge/beliefs/attitudes.

I subscribe to Mayall's view (2000) in crediting the children with *knowledge* as opposed to 'perspectives', 'views' or 'opinions'; this raises the status of what the children have to say. In my research this *knowledge* concerns multicultural issues. Mayall, too, prefers to see children as *different* rather than *inferior* to adults.

I considered possible approaches to collect evidence about this *knowledge* and I saw advantages in assuming a 'least adult role' which I adapted from Mandell (1991) and which I describe in more detail in the next chapter.

In the following sections I discuss how I went about this with an explanation of my research methods.

1.3. Validity and Reliability

My third question concerns validity and reliability. "Is my research valid and reliable and to what extent does my research design ensure I use appropriate methods to collect relevant data to answer my research questions?" I considered external validity, face validity, construct validity, triangulation and catalytic validity (Robson 1993; Tonkiss 1998; Seale and Filmer 1998). First I considered external validity and sampling issues. I took time carefully choosing a sample of schools and groups of

children, for both my pilot and main studies in England, as I describe in more detail in chapter 5. They were all community schools (Surrey CC 2007) and I worked with year 5 children, 9 and 10 year olds, in all schools. In Germany, my translator acted as gatekeeper and I ensured I used a sample of schools in Germany which were representative in the local province and I worked with children of a similar age to the children in England. I chose to work in Year 5, (9 and 10 year olds), because I thought Key Stage 2 (KS2) children would have experience of the whole of KS1 and KS2 curriculum content to draw on when discussing their knowledge and attitudes towards their own and other cultures. I did not choose Year 6 (the last class in KS2) because I did not want to disrupt the KS2 SATs tests (QCA 2006) and likewise I thought the KS2 SATs tests might also have a disruptive effect on the data collection.¹ I used a 'quota sample' (Seale and Filmer 1998:139) of children within the English schools which meant I had a fair representation of gender, ethnicity, socio economic status², ability and age.

When selecting research methods I took into consideration the four validity requirements originally coined by Lather (1991: 65-69) and summarised by Bernard (2000):

1 *Triangulation*: Critical in establishing data trustworthiness, moving beyond multiple measures, to include counter patterns and divergence.

2 *Construct validity*: operating within a conscious context of theory building. Systemized reflectivity must reveal how *a priori* theory has been changed by the logic of the data.

3 *Face validity*: recycling description, emerging analysis and conclusions back through at least a sub-sample of respondents; acknowledge potential of the notion of false consciousness to limit the usefulness of member checks.

4 *Catalytic validity* : represents the degree to which the research process reorientates, focuses and energises participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it, a process Freire (1972) called conscientization.

(Lather 1991, summarised by Bernard 2000)

Throughout this chapter and chapter 5 I refer back to these validity requirements, to demonstrate how they shaped my research.

¹ Sometimes schools abandon timetabled subjects to prepare year 6 children for the SATs tests in May.

² I determined socio economic status of the children from the register of children eligible for free school meals.

1.4 Researcher as 'Miner' or 'Traveller'

When deciding how to collect data which would be reliable I was keen to adopt a grounded theory building approach (construct validity – Lather 1991; Bernard 2000 as mentioned above). I was influenced by many articles in the *British Journal of Religious Education* (Jackson 2001); the whole of this issue is devoted to research methods in RE. Jackson (2001:138) in his editorial describes how this selection is a “behind the scenes” issue where authors (who had published their research in earlier editions) had been invited to discuss in more details the methodology behind their research. For example, I noticed similarities between Erriker’s (2001) methodology and my own. Erriker, (2001:156-164) describes his methodology in his article “From Silence to narration: A report on Research Method(s) of the Children and Worldviews Project”, and was influenced by Kvale (1996). Both Kvale (1996) and Erriker (2001) talk about engaging children in conversations rather than interviewing them as they believed this to be a more powerful way of discovering what a child thinks or knows. Kvale discusses how he understands the art of interviewing:

An interview is literally an *inter view* , an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest. (Kvale 1996:1 and 2)

This is what I had endeavoured to achieve in my research which I describe as child-led rather than researcher-led; thus my theoretical approach is informed by Kvale and Erriker. Like Erriker I decided to site my research in the school which not only provided a wide range of children but was also a neutral location with a supportive infrastructure within which the interviewing could take place (Erriker 2001). However whereas Erriker involved the Headteachers and staff, I kept this to a minimum as I felt it would have conflicted with my ‘least adult role’ which I describe in the next chapter.

Erriker (2001) was influenced by Kvale’s (1996) approach to research and how he viewed data gathering. Kvale uses two metaphors to illustrate this:

In the *miner metaphor*, knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is the miner who unearths the valuable metal....The alternative *traveler [sic] metaphor* understands the interviewer as a traveler [sic] on a journey that leads to a tale to be told on returning home. (Kvale 1996:3-4)

Thus there is the comparison between the objectivist, positivist epistemological framework, with what I would describe as a more feminist, standpoint position

(described earlier in chapter 2 of this thesis) which I adopted for my research. My stance encouraged the children to tell me their stories rather than making them think I was looking for something specific. However I was, to a limited degree, a 'miner' because one of my aims was to find out about children's cultural awareness and their attitudes towards those of another culture; nevertheless I was a 'traveller' because I learnt things that the children chose to tell me. However when considering the verbal form of these two concepts I tried to avoid a 'mining' method - a metaphor which brings the image of carving into the life of the child to extract knowledge. Rather I 'travelled' alongside the child as a traveller asking initial questions, but as I travelled I gave the child the opportunity to tell me their stories using their own words.

Like Erriker, Bernard (2000) sees the researcher as a committed participant

the researcher is a committed participant and learner in the research not a distant observer. (2000:170)

Bernard takes the argument one stage further and she discusses the idea of the research having an empowering character. She is influenced by Freire's consciousness raising with peasants in Brazil and their challenge of oppressive conditions (2000). This stance of Bernard's, which I see as akin to liberation theology (Gutierrez 1983, 2001), addresses the issue of power inequalities and she is committed to engaging in research which bridges the gap between academia and the communities. She involved the participants in her research in the transcribing process and she feels passionate about the participants benefiting from the research as well as herself (2000:174).

Given the philosophical standpoint outlined above I adopted an ethnographic research technique in which I felt a strong ethical commitment to the children in my study. They were involved as much as possible and I tried to avoid the 'smash and grab' research which Holdaway (2000:165) warns against. Like Erriker (2001), Bernard (2000) and Holdaway (2000), I preferred to listen to the children and I endeavoured to take the time to understand the children's knowledges. I agree with Holdaway

without close observation and interaction one simply glosses over the complexity and diversity of the world one seeks to study (2000:165).

1.5 Views of Children : Working 'with' not 'on' children

My ontological perspective informed my view of the children themselves and my relationship with them throughout the research. This relates to 'triangulation' validity (Lather 1991; Bernard 2000; Robson 1993), and I would argue that my data is trustworthy because of the relationship I had with the children. I was interested in what the children had to say about their own and other cultures. Respect for the children pervaded my methodology and I tried to ensure I worked 'with' not 'on' the children. In this section I record different perceptions of children as represented in the literature. I felt it was very important to have thought this through before I embarked on my research involving children, because the researcher's perception of children can have as much an influence on the results as the impact of the researcher's own identity on the research process which in turn affects the validity of the findings. In their discussion of validity Lewis and Lindsay (2000b) stress the need for the researcher not to impart their views to the child, and also:

Great care is needed to ensure that questions used are related to the child's developmental status. (2000:195)

I discussed the influence of the researcher's identity on the research process earlier in the literature review chapters. In this section I discuss the influence of the researcher's view of children on the research methodology and subsequently on the results.

I decided to work 'collaboratively' *with* the children thus affording them some degree of 'ownership' of the research, in line with my ontological perspective of viewing the children as *different* rather than *inferior* to adults- as beings in their own right not as emerging or potential adults (James 1995; Anderson 2000, Woodhead and Falkner 2000).

When working with children in a research project I think it is important to consider one's view of the 'child'. James's (1995) four fold typology illustrates ways children can be understood:

- 1) The 'developing' child' is seen as lacking in status and relatively incomplete.
- 2) The 'tribal child' is a competent member of an independent culture which can be studied in its own right, but not as belonging to the same communicative world as the research.

3) The 'adult child' is socially comparable to an adult.

4) The 'social child' has different but not inferior social competences.

(adapted from James 1995)

In my research, I subscribe to the fourth attitude as I endeavoured not to assume an authoritarian role or treat the child as 'exotic'.

Sinclair Taylor highlights opposing views of young children as either the "little monsters" of 'Green's Toddler Training' or the "fantasy angels" of Mothercare catalogues (Neumark 1997 cited in Sinclair Taylor 2000:24). Sinclair Taylor also discusses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and draws the conclusion that in many instances children are not invited to participate in the decision making processes which affect them and

teenagers are demonised and seen as problems rather than contributors.

(2000:25)

There certainly appears to be great emphasis on the academic, and testing of what children cannot do, so that teachers are forgetting to look at what children can do.

Sinclair Taylor notes that there is a perception that behaviour is deteriorating and

between 1990 and 1995 there was a 450% increase in exclusions. (2000:29)

However I would agree with her that that this is merely a statistic which reflects the behaviour of children who are not keen to conform to an imposed curriculum (2000:31). Children who have relatively little involvement in the design of their education are therefore likely to be disinterested. In a popular book amongst teachers *How to Make the Buggars Behave*, Cowley (2000) discusses children as if they were 'objects' rather than human beings – but there is not space here to enter into this debate³. What is clear from this literature though, is that children's behaviour, attitudes and, I would also argue, their knowledge, is often dependant on the way they are perceived and treated – thus in my research I endeavoured to treat the children with respect and saw them as active participants rather than passive objects. Lloyd – Smith and Tarr (2000:62) also note the marginalisation of children because:

parents rather than pupils are seen as consumers of education.

Lloyd –Smith and Tarr (2000) expanded Jenkins' (1993) ways of seeing children, which I summarise as follows:

³ For further resources concerning discipline refer to TDA funded website www.behaviour4learning.ac.uk (TDA 2006)

- 1) Children seen as possessions, vulnerable for a long time.
- 2) Children seen as subjects requiring protection - anchored in ideas from Piaget and Freud and also content led-curriculum. Children are seen as dependent, irrational and vulnerable.
- 3) Children are seen as participants and their voices should be heard but not in a tokenistic way.
- 4) Children as citizens.

(summarised from Lloyd-Smith and Tarr 2000:63-69)

According to Lloyd-Smith and Tarr the last approach is preferable and they criticise the QCA for the Citizenship programme which “considers that adults need to protect children” (2000:68). I would agree with Lloyd-Smith and Tarr that in many aspects of life children are dominated by adults. I would also argue that children often allow themselves to be dominated (as women often did and in many cases still do) because they have a self perception of being inferior or feel a need to be protected/ dominated by adults.

In my research I found that the children often presented themselves to adults in a particular way demonstrating *their* self perception. For example, I observed a Muslim girl, who wears a veil, interacting with teachers and her demeanour could be described in terms of her self perception as a ‘developing child’ (from James 1995 model) or ‘subject requiring protection’ (from Lloyd-Smith and Tarr 2000 model):

she acted in a very obedient and compliant way. (Field notes 30th April 01)

Thus this child was socialised into such a role. Waksler’s critique of Berger and Berger’s socialisation theory discusses views of children in terms of their socialisation (Berger and Berger 1991; Waksler 1991). Berger and Berger (1991) said children come into the world empty and thus were socialised into a particular group, as such:

Individuals come to resemble members of their own categories....Parents impose their values and the child resists at his peril. (Berger and Berger 1991:6 and 7)

Waksler points out that not all adults do socialise their children as Berger and Berger seem to imply, and children do not come into the world empty, and indeed many children teach adults as well as adults socialising children (Waksler 1991:21).

Jenks (2000) also takes up this point of not seeing the child as inferior. Like Waksler (1991) he sees the child as socially constructed but points out that this may also be

dependent on the cultural background and geographical situation of the child. Jenks' academic approach to studies of childhood have been criticised as he, himself, admits he has been:

jovially criticised for reading and doing research from my armchair.

(Jenks 2000:72)

His academic polemic on the advantages of using ethnography with children does however, further the cause. I would agree with his point that

because children lack adulthood this is seen as deficiency, disadvantage and or oppression. (2000:75)

He admits that the writing up of ethnographic research may well have similarities to journalistic writing but he emphasises that this should not undermine its validity (2000:76). These concerns are embedded in my own research methodology. I wanted to listen to what the child had to say. Children found this a very difficult concept at first – they thought I wanted them to tell me about different cultures – i.e. that there are 'religions/cultures' which are 'out there' and which I needed to know about. Eventually I made it clear that I was interested in their knowledge – I wanted them to tell me what they knew about different cultures /religions not what their parents or teachers knew, or what could be found in a book. Of course, the children appreciated that their knowledge sometimes originated from their parents, or from school, or their friends, or books, and they told me when this was the case. (I was also interested in the possible influences on their knowledge as stated earlier in my research aims in chapter 1). Thus the children and I were considering socialisation issues.

I appreciate that thinking of the child as 'different' rather than 'inferior' could be thought of as disingenuous. However I am not claiming that the child is not inexperienced. I would accept that they are growing/developing in knowledge and understanding about the world around them and their place in it. Thus I do not refer to this state as inferior to an adult's - rather it is a different state. Also the very fact that I am judging the child to be different rather than inferior suggests that I have some notion of 'childhood' that is somehow 'different' from where I am located as an 'adult' - I am keen that this very concept of 'difference' should not imply that the child is inferior because she/he is not the same as me.

Given my view of children as the 'competent social child' (James 1995), and as 'citizens' (Lloyd-Smith and Tarr 2000), and certainly not inferior to adults I necessarily decided to work collaboratively with the children thus affording them respect. I was working *with* children - seeing them as participants rather than subjects or objects of my research (Woodhead and Faulkner 2000, Nobes and Pawson 2003, Warren 2000). Woodhead and Faulkner emphasise the need to listen to the child and although they note that many researchers are

warm, considerate and humane, nevertheless when writing up are objective, dispassionate and adopt the technical jargon of hypothesis testing. (Woodhead and Faulkner 2000:12)

I refer again to Coles (1990) who allows the child's voice to be heard and thus, this strengthened the reliability of the research because, I would argue, the data has been collected collaboratively. Woodhead and Faulkner (2000) describe various models of how researchers have worked with children. They are politely critical of the model of researcher as neutral observer who claims to be invisible, and Woodhead and Faulkner insist this is "impossible and unethical" (2000:17). They are also critical of researchers who view children as objects, subjects or participants but admit that the USA have more detailed guidance about the rights of 'participants' (2000:17) which thus affords the 'participants' some degree of status in the research. They record tales of what they deem to have been unethical projects such as researchers who are investigating children's emotional responses who are separated from their mothers. They suggest that unethical things can be done to children which would not be deemed acceptable for adults such as

the hypothetical case of a child colluding with a researcher about getting lost at a Zoo while the researcher monitors the parent's distress! (2000:20)

Woodhead and Faulkner suggest this should never be allowed. Yet

inflicting distress in young children is justified because it is commonplace, doing the same to their parents might well be seen as sufficient cause for litigation! (2000:20)

Thus Woodhead and Faulkner would subscribe to a similar position as mine in respecting the child and viewing them as different rather than inferior (2000). Indeed they advocate research which values the child and emphasises the need to work *with* rather than *on* children. They promote research which

respect[s] children's status as social actors but also recognise[s] adult responsibilities ...[and]...enables their social participation in ways consistent with their understanding. (2000)

Thus in my research design I tried to involve the children as much as possible bearing in mind their experience and ability.

Warren also talks about involving children and he advocates the need to "go beyond the passive involvement of children to a more active role" (2000:75). Lindsay (2000:17) discusses ethical issues concerning researching children's perspectives which "respect the rights and dignity, competence responsibility and integrity." I have endeavoured to apply this in my own research design – not only because I believe it to be ethically correct but also because it strengthens the validity and reliability of the results.

1.6 Feminist Methodology, Validity and Reliability

As I argued earlier in chapter 2, aspects of my research reflect an affinity with the feminist perspective (Oakley 1981; Webb 2000). Although I am not adopting feminist research approach per se (I am not predominantly concerned with the investigation of females and liberating/empowering them from oppressive situations) nevertheless I am using a methodology which has more in common with feminist principles, as opposed to so-called scientific objective ones (Blair 1998; Connolly 1998). I do not see myself as a neutral objective observer because my physical presence as a white, middle class, adult female has an influence on what the children say to me. I also think that because of my pre occupation with children not being thought of as inferior to adults this too aligns my methodology to feminist principles which deal with oppressed groups. This relates to the 'catalytic validity', discussed above (Lather 1991; Bernard 2000), because I would argue that the children's collaboration in the research gave them the opportunity to validate the findings, I evidence this later in chapters 6 and 7.

Feminist research often deals with methodology and looks at the impact of the researcher on the research and in this section I discuss how my methodology incorporates this perspective. Feminist research traditionally looks at the oppression of women; I would argue that just as women have often been viewed as inferior to men - challenges to this oppression fill sociology books (Oakley 1981; Brunskell

1998; Webb 2000) - so I think children can be seen as an oppressed group. Thus my sympathy with a feminist perspective involves acknowledging my integration within the research *with* the children, as expressed by Webb

feminist research frequently attempts to develop special relations with the people studied. (Webb 2000:36)

This stance is contrasted with that of the 'neutral, objective researcher.' (Woodhead and Faulkner 2000). Webb disparagingly discusses researchers who feel their presence has no influence on the data, she calls into question

the surgical gloves of objectivity that appeared to prevent contamination of the research data by the researcher....It is the methods, methodology and epistemology which determines whether a piece of research is feminist or not. (Webb 2000:36)

I would argue that my research is feminist in that I have acknowledged the impact my presence has on the children. For example when discussing British Asian culture with a group of children one British Asian girl who was a practising Sikh, Monica (who incidentally chose a Western pseudonym) remarked that she

went to church on Sundays. (Interview R3)

I asked her if her family called it church and she replied "Gurdwara". When I probed further she said she had used the term 'church' because she thought I would not understand what a Gurdwara was -the implication being that I was a white, Western, Christian woman who would not know the word 'Gurdwara'. These issues are explored further in chapters 7 and 8.

My presence as a white, middle class, adult female probably had more of an influence in the high proportion minority ethnic schools where the majority of children were of Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi or African/Caribbean heritage. However I was able to use my appearance to probe children's conceptions of identity in pilot 2. "You are white and a Christian, Miss," said Wassim (Year 5 Muslim boy pilot 2, 2pm day 4). When I asked if I might be a Muslim even though I was white they said "yes". They suggested that I could 'pass' as a Muslim because I had dark hair and Wassim's mother had green eyes too and she was a Muslim; and if I went to Pakistan my colour would darken then I would 'pass' quite successfully as a Muslim woman. Interestingly these Pakistani Muslims did not mention 'white' Muslims, for example Turkish Muslims. I recorded my own perceptions about the whole research process in

a journal and when I re-read entries which I had made at the beginning of the research I realised that my research methodology had been influenced by feminist perspectives. I discuss the journal below.

1.7 Journal/ Log book

Another issue I considered when designing my research was how to collect data. Nesbitt recommends the use of a log book (2000:150). I kept a journal in which I recorded my own thoughts on the research process and also ideas for the future analysis. I recorded both personal reflections and practical details. For example I considered the limitations of writing prompt questions rather than just showing pictures (Journal pg 16). In the end I decided to keep the questions because I felt that although I expected the children to tell me stereotypical views about a particular culture (which in fact many children did), nevertheless, I believe that we all hold stereotypical views to some degree and it would be interesting to find out what the children's stereotypes were. The journal was also useful because it provided another source for triangulation (Lather 1991; Bernard 2000; Robson 1993) of the data thus ensuring validity of the results. I continued to use the journal to chart the development of my thoughts throughout the research process.

1.8 Research which Listens to Children's Voices

In the next sections I discuss the impact of the relationship between the child and researcher as I discuss the research of those who have children's voices at the heart of their work. I admired the work of the following researchers and I wanted my research design to be informed by their practice.

1.8.1 Children's Dialogue

This theme of relationships can be explored through the work of scholars from the University of Warwick - Nesbitt (2000) Ipgrave (2001), Jackson and Nesbitt (1992, 1993). For example all of the above share a common 'respect' for children and their views (which I tried to emulate in my fieldwork). To take Ipgrave as an example she also, as part of her research analysis, looked at the children's relationships with each other –in her analysis charts (Ipgrave 2001:13) she discusses 'group dynamics.' She notes the "interest in each other's views (asking questions) (2001:13) and discusses at length other issues concerning dialogue such as "trust, equality, inclusion and

collaborative thinking.” (2001:17).

Troyna and Hatcher (1992) and Ipgrave (2001) both quote at length extracts from the children with whom they have worked. I think this is important as the child’s voice should be heard. In fact the main thrust of Ipgrave’s paper concerns the benefits of dialogue in RE. She proposes a “threefold pattern of dialogue as a basis for a dialogical RE” and “gives guidance on preparation for dialogue in RE lessons” (Ipgrave 2001:3). She suggests that children are quite capable of deep intellectual debate about ‘difficult’ religious concepts (2001:16). She bemoans the fact that over the last half century RE has been influenced by those, namely Goldman in 1960s, who believed that teachers should ‘wait’ for children to be ‘ready’ for RE and complex religious concepts.

I firmly believe that young children are very capable of participating in reflective dialogue and often express very sophisticated ideas as Ipgrave (2001:9,10,11) and Troyna and Hatcher (1992) have demonstrated. Costello (2000) has done much work with children developing their reasoning skills (Lipman 1992). Ipgrave’s approach is to not intervene so readily but to allow the children some ownership of the dialogue. However she does stress that dialogical RE should not merely be “an exchange of differing points of view” but rather there should be:

an interplay between them; does child A agree with what child B has said, does child C develop any of her ideas in the light of what she has heard from child D; or is it possible to draw child E and child F’s thoughts together?
(Ipgrave 2001:9)

I would suggest however that in practice this requires great skill from the teacher in the classroom, especially when there is a class of 32 children.

I compared Ipgrave and Troyna and Hatcher’s work with that of Hay and Nye (1998) whose theory of relational consciousness is firmly rooted in the fieldwork conducted in schools yet its weakness, in my opinion, is the absence of children’s voices. Conversely Coles (1990) predominantly uses lengthy extracts from interviews with children; this works well because the reader is able to appreciate the full meaning. In this thesis I have endeavoured to let the children’s voices be heard. Ipgrave presents two dialogues of about one and a half pages each thus offering the reader a more

comprehensive understanding of the characters of the children as they discuss “The Beginning” and “New Religion” (Ipgrave 2001:9-11). Ipgrave makes no excuse for not ‘tidying up’ the “grammatical imperfections” and I agree. I feel it is important to present the children’s words as they are spoken. Their expression may well be imperfect but this in no way suggests that the ideas and concepts they are communicating are ill-formed. Crystal (1986) captures this point brilliantly in his portrayal of a mother and her 3 year old child’s dialogue:

Child: Nobody don’t like me.

Mother: No. Say Nobody likes me.

Child: Nobody don’t like me.

Mother: NO. Say Nobody likes me.

Child: Nobody don’t like me. (This exchange is repeated 7 more times, then-)

Mother: NO, now listen carefully, say Nobody likes me

Child: Oh! Nobody don’t likes me!

(Crystal 1986: 154,155)

The parent in this extract completely misses the point in correcting grammar whilst failing to respond to the child’s needs.

The art of dialogue with young children has been summed up by Wells (1986) in his metaphor of playing ball. Talking with young children is very much like playing ball with them. What the adult has to do for this game to be successful is, first, to ensure that the child is ready, with arms cupped, to catch the ball; then the ball must be thrown gently and accurately so that it lands squarely in the child’s arms. When it is the child’s turn to throw, the adult must be prepared to run wherever it goes and bring it back to where the child intended it to go. Such is the collaboration required in conversation – the adult doing a great deal of supportive work to enable the ball to be kept in play (Wells 1986). At times I had to do this when a child’s train of thought digressed from the discussion point.

1.8.2 The Voices of Minority Ethnic Children

The voices of the young people are presented particularly well in two studies both of which tell of the experiences of Asian and Black African/Caribbean girls (Osler 1989;

Wade and Souter 1992). Osler (1989) wanted the voices of these 14 and 15 year old girls to be heard and she reports that the black girls themselves were pleased to be given the opportunity to say what they wanted. She states that the girls are not typical representatives of 'Asian' or 'Black' culture (1989)– this implies that Osler thinks there 'exists' a typical Asian /Black culture which I have argued against in chapter 2. However she goes on to say that the sample did reflect the range of cultures which can be found (1989:3). Osler states that these girls are defined as 'problems' – which is the more likely explanation for her desire to distance them from 'typical' Asian or Black girls. It would have been interesting to know why and by whom these girls were identified as problems and how this could be related to Troyna and Hatcher's (1992) macro/ micro debate, mentioned earlier. I would suggest that the 'personalities' of these girls have possibly been in conflict with others who may arguably have conservative views on behaviour. I certainly found this to be the case in my own research as I discuss later in chapter 8.

Unlike Osler, I would argue that Wade and Souter's (1992) research is more analytical, and they describe their study as an investigation of the relationship between cultural pressures and expectations and the demands of the education system. One of the strengths of this study I think is their rigorous methodology. They also are committed, like Osler, to letting the girls' voices be heard. They describe Parveen's monologue as

naturally unstructured and untidy kind of evidence...[but] after all it is her story. (Wade and Souter 1992)

Like Osler's narratives these are also interesting for their content – Parveen describes her struggle to prove to her father and the whole of 'Muslim culture' that she is able to achieve and she can cope without his blessing doing what she believes is right for her, "I can just feel it in my bones" (1992). In contrast to the child-centred research described above, in the next section I discuss researcher-led work.

1.8.3 Researcher-led Research

I was influenced by the work of Carrington and Short (1995; 1998) in my research design. I adapted some of their ideas but I did not copy their researcher-led design. One of the prompt questions used in my fieldwork was based on their article *What*

makes a person British? Children's conceptions of their national Culture and Identity (1995). In this article they discuss research with 8 and 9 year olds, and in another article they used a similar methodology but with adolescents (1998); which worked better because the questioning was more appropriate for older children. In their earlier article Carrington and Short comment that for the bulk of 8 and 9 year olds:

being British meant little more than being born in Britain (65%), speaking the same language as other British people (42%), having relatives in Britain (27%) and living in Britain (20%). (Carrington and Short 1995:222)

They observe that the older children (10 and 11 year olds) "seemed to regard place of birth as the crucial determinant of nationality" (1995). Carrington and Short used a quantitative methods approach, here whereas I preferred a qualitative approach which I believe afforded richer data. They posed an open ended question "What makes a person British?" and quantified the answers into percentages. I, however, asked the children to tell me what they knew about various cultures aided by pictures (see appendix) and then asked them if all these people were British. I analysed the results qualitatively. Carrington and Short asked hypothetical questions such as:

If someone moved to another country would they still be British? (1995)

I, however, rooted many of my questions in actual scenarios – for example in interview R1 I asked the children to refer to the pictures as they explained whether an Indian family were British or not and I referred to children at the school – "If Daljit's family moved to France would they still be British?" I found Carrington and Short's question "Is being British important to you?", too difficult, since the children may well have not thought about this before. Even if they had, they might have considered the concept 'British' to mean 'white'. In many cases children were not even given the opportunity to respond:

Only 15 of the British Asian or British African-Caribbean children in the sample were asked about the importance of being British. In the majority of cases the question was rendered redundant by comments already made by the individual concerned about her or his preferred national identity (or identities). (1995:233)

There is an assumption that these children will not say being British is important to them because they have aligned themselves with African Caribbean or Asian cultures and thus Carrington and Short may be suggesting that British culture is, therefore, 'white'. Again another question which I felt would be difficult for younger children to answer was "What are the best or worst things about being British?" Carrington and Short mention that British Asians are more politically aware and mention racism, whereas the white children spoke only of hooliganism (1995:236).

Their conclusion suggested that they were surprised that children did not hold racist views and they accounted for this by saying that the racism of adults has had little impact on children. It seems to me that Carrington and Short began with an expectation that children are racist and when they encountered the "comparative dearth of comments which were self evidently racist" (1995:237) they presented reasons for this situation. Firstly:

it may be that the ideological construction of African Caribbean and Asians as an 'alien wedge' in British society has had a negligible impact on the thinking of primary school children." (1995:237)

Or secondly, they admit that children may well be too polite

the preponderance of socially accepted responses could be seen simply as a reluctance on the part of well socialised children to discuss the taboo issue of 'race' in the presence of a comparative stranger and authority figure. (1995:238)

I would argue that Carrington and Short's positivistic methodology, (the proving of a hypothesis), (Strauss and Corbin 1990; Bell 1999), may well have given them such a set of results because they were searching for answers rather than letting the children tell them what they thought. In my research I tried to avoid being an authority figure - as I argue in the next chapter where I advocate the stance of 'least adult role' (Mandell 1991). Also I tried to 'get to know' the children so that I was not seen as a stranger. I appreciate that this kind of methodology takes time and that time constraints to some extent dictate the researcher's scope, however in some cases the results can be so skewed that little of worth may be discovered if methodologies which are inadequate are adopted. Carrington and Short (1995) do admit that they

were relative strangers to the children and I would further argue that this would have an influence on the results. I would argue that richer data can be gleaned if research is interpretative (Strauss and Corbin 1998; Mason 1996). By ethnographic methods discoveries can be made of children's perceptions; these are the children's descriptions and constructions rather than being perceptions of the researcher's postulated views. Many younger children were unfamiliar with the term British and so this is why Carrington and Short admit they had more success in 'discovering' views of adolescents than with the younger age group (Carrington and Short 1998:135).

I do, however, commend Carrington and Short for their derision of governmental policies for imposing a concept of British culture which is "monolithic and ethnically undifferentiated" (1995:217).

1.8.4 Child-led Research

In contrast to Carrington and Short's researcher-led research, Connolly, in his child-led research, discusses how he engaged children "in meaningful ways" (1998:3). He claims that his work is one of the first substantial pieces of work to place young children's perceptions and experiences at the heart of its analysis. In other publications he takes a similar stance; in his article *Seen but Never Heard* (1996), Connolly argues for a recognition of children's social competency and he calls for research which places children at the centre of the research process as "subjects" rather than "objects" whose voices and experiences can be heard (1996:171). I take this idea even further in my research as I worked collaboratively with the children (as I explain in the next chapter). Connolly argues in another article his preference for qualitative rather than quantitative methods when discussing 'race' issues with children and I support his rather than Carrington and Short's perspective on this issue. I think that Connolly's appraisal of methodologies and his consideration of perspectives has enabled him to gather richer data. In a conference paper Connolly considers the impact of doing feminist, anti-racist research despite being a white male. (1993). I too immersed myself in methodology literature (as I argued earlier) and considered my own standpoint and I have as a result, I would argue, paid close attention to the influence of my presence on the research. Also I engaged with the children in a more demonstrable way and subsequently their 'voices' can be heard, thus strengthening the validity and reliability of the results.

Connolly discusses his relationship with the children in his research, and how they actually involved him in their masculine 'domination' games. The 'bad boys' introduce "specifically 'adult' and 'taboo' themes precisely to challenge my dominant position" (1998:109). Connolly is interested not only in 'race' but also gender issues and the following extract, described by Connolly as "graphic and worrying" (1998:108), shows that the 'bad boys' were not afraid to speak out:

PC: Where's Jordan today?

Stephen: He's at home boiling his head off!

Paul: No kissing his girlfriend!

PC: Kissing his girlfriend? Who's his girlfriend?

Stephen: He's waiting at his girlfriend's house.

PC: Is he? Whose?

Paul: Yeah, waiting for her.

Stephen: And when she comes in, he's hiding, right, and when she comes in he's going to grab her and take her upstairs and then she's going to start screaming and he's going to kiss her and sex her!

PC: And sex her? And why's she going to be screaming?

Stephen: Because she hates it!

PC: Because she hates it?

Stephen: Yeah!

(1998:108)

Connolly offers numerous extracts from the 'bad boys' and the children's voices can be clearly heard. He spent a year at the school and made 3000 pages of notes and undertook 73 interviews with the children, and 81 with adults including staff and governors (1998:8). He describes his role as a facilitator who encouraged the children to "elaborate" on what they had just said (1998:8). Connolly admits that racism is complex and it can actually *form* individual and collective identities, and he describes the negative stereotyping of Black people as volatile, aggressive and physical, while South Asians were regarded as obedient and hardworking but also culturally 'strange' and different (1998).

Connolly is also sensitive to the different projections of identity which children present, which I also noticed in my fieldwork. For example he notes that:

When she [South Asian girl] is talking to a teacher it may be her identity as a child that is foregrounded and which informs how the teacher decides how to relate to her. However when she is on her own in the playground it may be her South Asian identity which is most prominentother children taunt her. (1998:15)

Yet with a small group of female friends it is the female side which is at the forefront as she discusses “girls, jewellery and boys” (1998:15). I am interested in the way in which children behave differently especially with peers and adults (I discuss this later in chapter 8). As well as presenting the ‘voices’ of the children Connolly also discusses at length a sociological framework which he adapts from Bourdieu (Connolly 1998:17). The first part of this framework, or conceptual tool, is Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’ which is defined as the implementation of lived experiences and lessons learnt from the past helping to guide future action (1998). Thus Connolly gives the example of children from violent home backgrounds who are more likely to display violent reactions. Different forms of ‘capital’ are seen as giving economic, cultural, social and symbolic advancement; white skin being an example (1998:20). I explored issues of white privilege earlier in chapter 2 and return to this theme later in chapter 8. Connolly adapts Bourdieu’s last conceptual tool, ‘field’, significantly as he uses this original ‘field of forces’ to mean both the field of national politics and also the field of black boys streetwise and aggressive behaviour which signifies status amongst peers but ‘trouble’ to the teacher (1998:22 and 28).

Connolly concludes his book by saying “these children are the future and need to be treated as such” (1998:193). I think this sums up Connolly’s sentiments; that children are important and this is why I think this book, and his work in general (especially the Northern Ireland work, Connolly et al 2006, Connolly 2000), is of value in education. I was influenced by his methods, which informed my thinking methodologically; and also I discuss his findings later in chapter 8.

I have discussed how various scholars used children’s voices in their research (Osler 1989; Wade and Souter 1992; Jackson and Nesbitt 1992; 1993; Carrington and Short 1995; 1998; Connolly 1998; 2000; Ipgrave 2001;) and I chose to have children’s voices as central in my own research. As I stated at the beginning of this section I also worked as a ‘traveller’ rather than a ‘miner’ (Erriker 2001) listening to what the children chose to tell me and using this to generate a theory. Thus in the final sub

section of this chapter, I discuss this concept of theory generation and I examine 'grounded theory'.

1.9 Grounded Theory

In this final subsection under the main heading 'Research Design' I would like to discuss 'grounded theory' (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998). As I have emphasised earlier, I conducted my research as a 'traveller' (Erriker 2001) listening to what the children chose to tell me about their own cultures and the cultures of others. I tried to pre-empt limitations described by Strauss and Corbin (1998:39) by ensuring I was listening to what the children wanted to tell me rather than having my own agenda, which happened to a young Botswana researcher.⁴ In contrast to this example of the Botswana researcher I adopted a 'least adult role' (explained in detail in the next chapter), in order to fully appreciate what the children wanted to tell me.

Like Strauss and Corbin (1998:12) I did not have a preconceived idea of what I wanted to find out, rather,

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

Thus I spoke with and listened to the children and collected data. Then I had the difficult task of making sense of this wealth of data in the analysis stage of the research process. Again, however, my research design follows the practice of Strauss and Corbin (1998:13) who see the inextricable link between researcher and the data:

Analysis is the interplay between researchers and data. It is both science and art. It is science in the sense of maintaining a certain degree of rigor [sic] and by grounding analysis in data. Creativity manifests itself in the ability of researchers to aptly name categories, ask stimulating questions, make comparisons, and extract an innovative, integrated, realistic scheme from masses of unorganised raw data. (1998:13)

In my research design I adopted a systematic approach to data analysis, because I used a data analysis package, N5, to rigorously ground the analysis in the data as

⁴ In Strauss and Corbin (1998:39) they describe a young Botswana researcher who had encountered difficulties when studying "older Americans" in a senior resident home. Because of her youth and cultural heritage she had to repeat her research and listen more closely, setting aside her own agenda.

chapters 6 and 7 demonstrate. But also I used N5 creatively because I created the categories or nodes (themes for coding) including first level and second level nodes for the English research. I analysed the Southern Germany data manually because it was a smaller sample.

I analysed the data and then theorised (Strauss and Corbin 1998) which I present in chapter 8. Thus the theory was not constructed and then proved or disproved during the research. Rather, using the Strauss and Corbin approach (1998:25) I constructed from the data a theory which draws 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 resulting construction of a theory all link together⁵ as I explain in more detail in chapter 9.

Throughout the above sections I have explained how my child-centred and ethnographic research design has been influenced by my philosophical perspective and by the work of other scholars. The following table illustrates how I organised my thinking about the research process in terms of the research questions and methodological process, and issues relating to these.

2 Research Questions

Having presented my philosophical perspective I now discuss how I began to consider methodological issues in a practical way. I found Mason's table (1996) (adapted below) helpful in organising my thoughts, see table 4.1 below. Mason suggests researchers think of their research project in terms of an "intellectual puzzle" and then choose appropriate research methods to investigate (Mason 1996:20). However Mason seems to adopt a 'miner' approach (Erriker 2001), as she encourages the researcher to consider whether their intellectual puzzle is "developmental, mechanical or causal" (Mason 1996:20). As I adopted a 'traveller' approach in my research design this did not seem appropriate. However I felt that her table did help me identify how the research questions, methods, practicalities and ethical issues are linked (Mason 1996:24). (In chapter 7, I show the integration between the aims, research questions, methodology and findings, see matrix table 7.2)

⁵ See matrix table 7.2 in chapter 7.

Table 4.1 Research questions, data sources and methods, justification, practicalities and ethical issues. (Format from Mason 1996:24)

Research questions	Data sources and methods	Justification	Practicalities (eg resources, access)	ethical issues
<p>Major questions:</p> <p>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 them?</p> <p>2. What are the possible influences- formal and hidden curriculum, TV, home etc?</p>	<p>*observation of formal curriculum (lessons)</p> <p>*observation of hidden curriculum (ethos)</p> <p>*discussion of issues with groups of children (taped)</p>	<p>*observations of lessons provides access to what is being taught. Pupil activities and assessment tasks give some indication of what has been learnt.</p> <p>*observing children as they move around the school, go out to play, have lunch, interact with each other and teachers etc provide data on the hidden curriculum (ethos).</p> <p>* Semi structured interviews with children offer further insights into what has been observed, internal validity. Children involved in the research design process, face validity.</p>	<p>*participant observation in the 4 schools</p> <p>*field notes, tape recorder.</p>	<p>*permission required from, children, teachers and children's parents</p> <p>*anonymity</p> <p>*ownership of tapes, confidentiality</p> <p>*using 'teaching time' for research. I did not 'correct' misconceptions/ racism during research, I presented findings (Interim report) to teachers and children and discussed racism at this point.</p>
<p>3. In what ways are the children's learning experiences and 'knowledges' in the 4 schools similar to or different from each other?</p>	<p>*comparison of field notes collected in each of the four schools</p> <p>*transcription of discussions</p>	<p>*A comparison of similarities and differences between data yielded from the 4 schools builds up a picture of types of experiences of multicultural education and multicultural awareness of children from different types of schools.</p> <p>*Children's perceptions classifiable (in terms of Kincheloe and Steinberg:1997 and my own categories).</p>	<p>*field notes and transcriptions comparable (analysis packages eg NUDIST N5)</p>	<p>*issues of comparing in terms of better or worse - implications for feedback to staff. Teacher's and children's feedback on the Interim report used as additional data.</p>
<p>4. What evidence is there of multicultural education in both England and Southern Germany?</p>	<p>*informal discussions with teachers</p> <p>*observation of the formal curriculum</p> <p>*observation of the hidden curriculum eg. ethos</p> <p>*Responses during Interim Report</p>	<p>*interviews, in England and Southern Germany, reveal teachers' current understanding of their own identity and their position on multicultural issues (this may change over time)</p> <p>*observation of lessons, in England and Germany, provides access to what is being taught with reference to multicultural issues.</p> <p>* observation of interaction between teachers and children, displays etc provides access to teachers' attitudes to multicultural issues</p>	<p>*field note book</p> <p>*quiet space for semi structured interview</p>	<p>*sensitivity required</p> <p>*confidentiality</p> <p>*anonymity</p> <p>influence of findings for individuals</p>

		* teachers' responses during Interim Report Feedback classified * analysis of whether there is a match between what teachers <u>say</u> they do and what they <u>actually</u> do. * analysis of the possible influence of the teacher's/School's presentation of the formal and hidden curriculum on the child's knowledge		
Additional research question 5. What is the link between teachers' perceptions of children and the possible development of children's multicultural awareness?	* observation of formal and hidden curriculum (lessons and ethos)	* observations of teachers and children provides evidence of how teachers perceive children by the way they treat them and speak with them. Also observation of children's behaviour towards teachers gives an indication of how the child perceives the teacher view of them	* fieldnotes	* teachers may not be aware of my observation of their behaviour towards children. But I have asked permission to observe lessons

After devising this table and collecting and analysing the data I added another question because I saw a link emerging between my methodology, (of child centred research and the status I tried to give children), and the results, (that one of the influences on children's cultural awareness is the school and that the teacher's view of children may have an influence on their perceptions of their own and other's identities). So I added the additional question 5.

Summary

In this chapter I described my research design with respect to my philosophical standpoint, explaining why I worked *with* children rather than *on* them because I have a particular view of young people. The research was ethnographic and child centred. I discussed various methodological issues such as the incorporation of feminist approaches, using grounded theory and maintaining field notes and log books. I also explained how I ensured validity and reliability in the research process and data analysis.

In the next chapter I explain how the philosophical and methodological approaches which informed my design were implemented in practice.

Chapter 5: Methodology, Data Collection in England and Germany

We are like dictionaries Miss, you can look things up in us. (Merrish, Pilot H school, high proportion minority ethnic)

The previous chapter contained my research design and the philosophical stance I adopted in relation to ontological and epistemological issues. In this chapter I discuss both the English and Southern Germany fieldwork using a similar scheme of presentation, namely, aims and methods adopted, implementation and evaluative comment. The five sections of this chapter are:

- 1. Research methods in England: ‘least adult role,’ semi-structured interviews, feedback to schools
- 2. Implementation of English research methods : how the pilot informed the main study
- 3. Commentary on English research methods: gaining trust, influence of my presence, ‘least adult role’ approach, interviews, validity and reliability.
- 4. Research undertaken in Southern Germany, context, research methods, implementation
- 5. Commentary on Southern Germany research methods: using a translator, interviews, validity and reliability

The table below summarises the methods adopted in both countries.

Table 5.0 Methods used in Southern Germany and England

Method used	S Germany	England
Qualitative research methodology	Yes	Yes
Observation of lessons	Yes	Yes
Interviews with children	Yes	Yes
Use of Bean Sheet with children	No	Yes
Interviews with teachers	Yes	Yes
Appraisal of school documentation	Yes	Yes

1 Research Methods in England:

My research was predominantly qualitative and I used an ethnographic approach to collect data for each case study. I took on the role of ‘traveller’ listening to the tales

an individual chose to tell me (Erriker 2001). Consequently I participated in the life of each of the four schools¹ over a period of time watching what happened, listening to what was said, asking questions and collecting whatever data were available to throw light on issues concerning multicultural education and multicultural awareness in both the formal and hidden curriculum (Hammersley and Atkinson 1989). Different levels of data were collected from the 4 main studies and 2 pilots in England as identified in table 5.0. above.

In England I used a format for the research, (first, second and third phase) for each of the four main study schools (which I itemised for staff in an introductory letter – see table 5.4).

First phase:

In the first few weeks I got to know the Year 5 children (9/10 year olds) in the classes from which I drew my sample. I use protective pseudonyms throughout for children and teachers (Robson 1993, David et al 2001). I adopted the non- hierarchical ‘least adult role’ (Mandell 1991) which I describe below.

Second phase:

In the remaining few weeks I identified a sample of about 28 children who then worked collaboratively with me in a focus group formulating a series of prompt questions for a ‘Bean Sheet’(adapted from O’Kane 2000) which I describe below. The children filled in this Bean Sheet, unaided, prior to the interviews (see tables 5.1 and 5.2). The following week they organised themselves into groups and talked about their opinions (prompted by their Bean Sheet answers) during a taped interview which was child-led rather than researcher -led. Pictures were also used to prompt children in both the focus groups and semi-structured interviews (see appendix). Finally I asked the children to complete a Background Information Sheet (see table 5.3) which supplied me with supplementary information.

Third phase:

After preliminary analysis I sent each school an Interim Report (see table 6.1 in chapter 6) which itemised initial findings. I re-visited each school (apart from X school which was unable to accommodate a visit from me), and engaged with staff and children separately concerning my preliminary findings.

¹ In section 2 I introduce the four schools used in the main studies and the two used in the pilots.

In the following sections I outline in more detail the procedures and issues concerning each phase of the research. I used protective pseudonyms (David et al 2001) and adhered to BERA (2004) ethical guidelines throughout the research.

1.1 First Phase: 'Least Adult Role'

In this section I explain how and why I adapted Mandell's (1991) 'least adult role'. In section 3 of this chapter I comment on the method's effectiveness.

For the first few weeks in each school I attempted to get to know the children. This fulfilled aim four, and research question four of the research project, (see matrix table 7.2), to gain an insight into the hidden and formal curriculum. During initial visits I had received a mixed reception and I felt that some teachers were unenthusiastic about the research (journal page 10). I had been acutely aware that some teachers were not particularly keen on my being in their classrooms, and I thought that perhaps if I offered to work as a classroom assistant my presence might be less threatening and intrusive. However having read about various data collection methods (Mandell 1991; Corsaro and Mollinari 2000), I decided that I did not want the children to see me as an authority figure (as a teacher or classroom assistant), because this might prejudice what they chose to tell me. I wanted to assume the role of traveller (as identified in the previous chapter, Erriker 2001), and listen to the stories children 'chose' to tell me rather than 'mining' for specific information. Therefore I decided not to assume a classroom assistant role but rather I adopted a 'least adult role' which I describe below.

I was much influenced by Mandell's work (1991) and the work of Corsaro and Mollinari (2000). Mandell in fact had followed Corsaro's earlier work, describing his guidelines as:

never attempting to initiate or terminate an episode...repair disrupted activities...settle disputes...co-ordinate or direct [an] activity. (Mandell 1991)

Mandell admits she did take on a more participatory role than Corsaro (Mandell 1991: 43) which I also did. I worked with the children in a collaborative way. The main difference between Mandell's, Corsaro's and my own work concerns the age of the children; the children I worked with were significantly older and I was able to explain to them what I was doing and why, whereas Corsaro and Mandell engaged more in

non verbal communication. Like Mandell I felt that being a mother myself, and also having worked as a primary teacher for 15 years, I had a good understanding of how to communicate with children and build up relationships with them. Mandell discussed “negotiating entry” into the children’s world (1991:44). This was something I, also, did not take for granted and although schools and parents are often seen as ‘gatekeepers’ (Celnick 2000) (indeed I did gain parental and school consent for my research). I also felt very strongly that I needed to ask the children themselves for their consent in talking with me. Thus I always began by asking the children if they were willing to talk to me and if they would allow me to make notes about what they said.

Mandell (1991) tried to almost ‘become like a child’, adopting children’s behaviour and negotiating access in a variety of ways including monitoring and copying (1991:44). However she experienced certain difficulties; her size restricted several activities (climbing on the roof of the play house 1991:50), and the teachers’ dependence on her to act as another responsible adult (1991:51). However having considered this method (and a refined version in Corsaro’s later writings 2000), I believed that when working with older children a complete adoption of Mandell’s version of the ‘least adult role’ would not elicit the richest data.

My research also differs from Mandell’s because in her work the children were not made aware of the researcher’s motives. I made my motives explicit to the children in the second phase thus enabling them to contribute more specifically to the research because they were aware of its goals. Also I felt that complete adoption of Mandell’s version of ‘least adult role’ would induce ridicule from older children who would be suspicious of an adult ‘pretending’ to be a 9 year old.

In the first phase of the research I adopted aspects of the ‘least adult role’ such as distancing myself from the teachers and aiming to become familiar with the children, negotiating access and gaining trust; but I made my role more transparent, when the children asked who I was and what I was doing I explained that I was conducting research. When I told them that their words may eventually (anonymously) be contained in an article or book they were thrilled and bemused that their knowledge should be valued in this way. In the second phase of the research I shared the aims of

the research with the sample children and involved them more directly in the research process. Indeed Corsaro witnessed both children's competence and desire to be involved in the research even though this had not been an explicit aim. He wrote:

in some cases we were instructed by the children on which priming events to record in our notes (eg by Stephania to record Luciano's writing of a letter to his sister), and in other instances had the notebook and pen taken from our hands as the children recorded the priming events themselves. (Corsaro and Mollinari 2000:198)

I, too, experienced children asking for their names to be recorded. I felt this was an important part of the first phase of the research because from the outset I was not dominating the children, but rather their views and requests were respected; I would argue this strengthened the internal validity of the research (Lewis and Lindsay 2000b).

Mayall (2000) worked with the same age children as those in my research (9-10 year olds) and I have used many aspects of her methodology. As mentioned in the previous chapter, she too considers children to be different rather than inferior to adults. She bridged the generational gap between adults and children by acknowledging to the children that although she had been a child once she no longer had this *knowledge* and also childhood is very different now to when she was a child (Mayall 2000:122). She also worked with children, withdrawing groups from the classroom and listening to them bouncing ideas off each other. Like Mayell (2000), and Mandell (1991), I became familiar 'with' the children (by sitting alongside them throughout the day). Then in the second phase, I worked with the children to identify suitable methods for data collection and implemented these methods with the children's collaboration. I am aware that it is difficult to present a dynamic picture of children's knowledge, but I aimed to capture the fact that ideas change and in my own experience children's ideas and knowledge develops rapidly, often as a result of stimulation and opportunities presented in school and in their home life. Thus I am providing a snapshot of their knowledge as they presented it to me during my visit. This type of collaborative research has been undertaken successfully in numerous previous research projects (O'Kane 2000, Scott 2000, Alderson 2000 and Waksler 1991). In my research I noticed children literally changed their minds as they listened to another participant's viewpoint which made them reassess their own opinion.

I made written field notes concerning informal discussions with year 5 (9/10 year old children). I sat with the children during lessons, playtimes, lunchtimes and on school visits. I observed a variety of lessons, talked with co ordinators of subjects such as RE (Religious Education), Music and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education). I collected copies of policies and schemes of work which outlined what would be taught to a particular age group. I also made observations about the hidden curriculum, for example, the interactions between staff, support staff and children, the ethos of school, the underlying messages behind lesson content and what happened at playtimes and lunchtimes.

1.2 Second Phase: 'Semi Structured Interviews', Bean Sheet, Pictures.

In the second phase the children and I worked together in a focus group to devise a method of data collection. I looked at my fieldnotes and selected children who I had got to know fairly well during the first phase, and I used a 'quota' sampling strategy (Seale and Filmer 1998:139) to narrow this group down. Working in consultation with the teachers, we identified a sample of children making sure there was a representative spread of children from different ethnic backgrounds, an equal distribution of girls and boys, a similar number of children from each of the year 5 classes and also we took care to select children from different ability groupings.

During the focus groups I tried to emphasise that I was interested in the children's own views, not what was said about 'culture' in books, on television or the Internet. One of the children in the pilot said:

We are like dictionaries, Miss, you can look things up in us. (Merrish Year 5 girl, top ability group, Asian heritage, H school pilot)

With the children's input a prompt 'Bean Schedule' sheet was devised to record 'knowledge' during the taped interviews (tables 5.1 and 5.2). I adapted PRA methods (*Participatory Rural Appraisal* O'Kane 2000). ² I was particularly interested in O' Kane's work because of her emphasis on PRA being seen not only as a set of techniques but "also a methodology or philosophy," the success of which:

² PRA was originally used among illiterate farmers in rural locations where the researcher measured their understanding of a concept by asking them to put some beans into a jar.

lies in the process rather than simply the techniques used....In PRA the role of the researcher is transparent. The researcher is seen as the facilitator of activities. (O’Kane 2000:137)

In my research I involved the children and was explicit about the aims of the research. Just as PRA methods used beans which were familiar to farmers so I used jelly bean sweets. I used the beans for the children to pictorially represent how much they felt they knew about a particular culture. This was helpful as it gave an indication of the child’s perception of their knowledge.

I analysed this data qualitatively as an indication of the child’s self perception. It was valuable because it concentrated the children’s minds and helped them to compare their knowledge of one culture with another. Thus it was useful as a reliable and valid guide for comparative conclusions (see tables 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5).

Over the course of the two pilot and four main studies the Bean Sheet was refined and amended as a result of discussions with the children. Most children took the Bean Sheet home, and made notes to inform their discussions during the group interview after the weekend. The final version of this sheet used in B school is shown in table 5.1 which can be compared with the first version which the children in the first pilot devised, shown in table 5:2, reflecting the children’s involvement.

Table 5:1 Semi-structured Interview: ‘Bean’ Sheet (Last version Nov 2001)

Name:		
School:		Class:
Date and time of interview:		
3 beans = a lot		2 beans = a reasonable amount
		1 bean = a little
		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 these different cultures as British?	NA	
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, TV?	NA	
S.Elton-Chalcraft University of Derby Nov 2001		

This can be compared with the first bean schedule, see below, which I used in the first pilot.

Table 5:2 Semi-structured interview: ‘Bean’ Sheet (first version Jan 2001)

Name:		
School:		Class:
Date and time of interview:		
3 beans = a lot		2 beans = a reasonable amount
		1 bean = a little
		0 beans = nothing
Question	Beans	Explanation for number of beans given
Tell me how much you think you know about British Chinese people who live in this country?		
Tell me how much you think you know about British Asians who live in this country?		
Tell me how much you think you know about British white people who live in this country?		
How much do you think you know about British African/Caribbean people who live in this country?		
How much do you think you know about any other cultures (not already mentioned) who live in this country?		
Would you describe the people from all these different cultures as British?	N/A	
What do you THINK about people who are of a different culture to	N/A	

you? How do you BEHAVE towards people who are of a different culture to you?		
How did you come to know about other cultures - from school, home, friends, TV?	N/A	
Sally Elton-Chalcraft University of Derby Jan 2001		

The Bean schedule changed as it was adapted and refined by subsequent groups. For example children in R school, the first main study, added:

Do you think of cultures as being separate? Does everyone have a culture?
Children in D school, the second main study, separated two questions and added the section about describing incidents.

What do you THINK about people who are of a different culture to you?
How do you and others BEHAVE towards people who are of a different culture to you? Can you describe any incidents about this?

The children decided on the groupings for the interview, (some groups had to be re organised owing to absence, extra literacy lessons and so on).
I also used pictures of people from a range of cultures and religions to aid the discussion and I discuss these at more length in section 2 and 3 (also see appendix).
The week after the interviews I gave out Background Information Sheets, table 5:3 which the children completed alone (I scribed for those who needed assistance). The aim of this was to see how the children identified themselves and also it provided a record of their age, gender, ability and so on which I could refer to during the analysis of the data.

Table 5:3 Background Information Sheet

Background Information Sheet (after interviews) Researcher Sally Elton-Chalcraft	
Name	
Pseudonym..... reason behind choice of pseudonym.....	
School	Class.....
Interview number and children in group.....	
Girl.....Boy.....	Age : Years.....Months.....
Maths Group.....English Group.....	
Heritage/Ethnicity.....	
Religion.....	
At home I live with.....	

- 1) What I liked about writing on the Bean Sheet at home.....
- 2) What I didn't like about writing on the Bean Sheet at home.....
- 3) What I liked about the taped interview.....
- 4) What I didn't like about the taped interview.....
- 5) Things I have thought about since my interview.....

The actual sheet was A4 size and had larger spaces for the children to write.

In a private discussion each child was able to clarify their responses to this sheet and also they chose their own pseudonym; this was interesting as many Asian children chose Western names, I discuss this later in chapter 8.

1.3 Third Phase : Feedback to Schools

In the last phase of the research I sent a copy of the Interim Report and a short questionnaire (see table 6.1 in the next chapter) to each school, and requested a visit to discuss the findings with staff and children. I conducted some preliminary analysis using the data from all four schools, (in the pilot I reported back immediately and felt this did not work particularly well as I discuss below).

It took a great deal of perseverance to fulfil this last task because several schools seemed to have difficulty in finding a suitable time to see me. Indeed, I never managed to re-visit X school to present the Interim Report but this was due in some part to the changeover of headteacher. However I believe this did not affect the results of the research. (I discuss issues raised by the discussion of the Interim Report in the analysis chapter of the four schools later in chapter 6).

I decided it was important to offer feedback because schools had invested time and commitment to the project. They had welcomed me into the school and allowed me to scrutinise their policies and practices regarding multicultural education. I also saw this as the role of the 'responsible researcher' (BERA 2004). I mentioned in the previous chapter my intention to not engage in 'smash and grab' research. I also tried not to disrupt the normal school routine so I timed my visits and interviews during sessions where the children would not miss crucial parts of their education. For example I waited until the teacher had finished his/her introduction to a lesson before inviting children to engage in the interview.³

³ As a former teacher I know how intrusive and threatening it can be to have another adult in the classroom (especially someone who specifically wants to look at something which is notoriously controversial such as issues of culture, 'race' and 'race relations' etc)

Therefore I was courteous, enthusiastic and complimentary about the school and I felt that this gained me the respect and openness of many staff. It has to be said that there was a range of enthusiasm for the project amongst staff. The inter- personal skills of the researcher should not be underestimated. On several occasions I found myself encouraging staff concerning their teaching style. I also had to be discreet when some members of staff were pressurising me to side with them against other staff (journal pg 68).

When working with the children in the Interim Report feedback session I found it difficult to maintain my 'least adult' role which I describe below. In my journal I wondered whether I ought to have had a fourth phase where I re connected with the children to find out if my research had had a longer term impact on them (journal pg 99). But this was outside the remit of my research aims.

2 Implementation of English Research Methods – From Pilots to Main Studies

In this second section I describe my activities in both the pilot and main studies.

2.1 Sampling Strategy

I used a part volunteer, part theoretical sampling strategy (Seale and Filmer 1998) to invite schools to take part in the research. I identified a range of schools in both rural, urban and city locations, "theoretical sampling" (Seale and Filmer 1998). I wrote to headteachers of 25 schools which had contact with the University Education Department. All 25 schools were known to the education department as they were used as QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) partnership schools. After telephone enquiries 6 agreed access, "volunteer sampling" (Seale and Filmer 1998), which were:

C school, in a large village location, with a predominantly white intake.

H school, in a city location, with a high proportion of minority ethnic intake.

D school, in a city location, with a high proportion of minority ethnic intake.

X school, in a town location, with a predominantly white intake.

B school, in a city location with a predominantly white intake.

R school, in a city location, with a high proportion of minority ethnic intake.

Headteachers of H and C schools expressed a desire to be the pilot study schools and R, D, X and B schools agreed to be involved as the four main studies. Three of the main studies were located in the city whilst the fourth was in a town setting. It is interesting that only 6 out of the 25 volunteered to participate. One school M, a

Church of England school with a catchment area in a predominantly Muslim community expressed an interest at first but then the headteacher withdrew support. I acknowledge that headteachers do take a risk in inviting researchers in to their schools, especially when the topic is racism, multicultural education and multicultural awareness and I am indebted to the staff of schools who were willing to give me access.

2.2 How Pilots Informed the Main Study

I began by working in pilot school C, a rural location, in an almost totally white village with a high proportion of children entitled to free school meals. I worked collaboratively with the children in the first and second phase but some of the interviews were researcher-led rather than child-led. The second pilot took place in school H school, a city primary school with a high proportion of minority ethnic children. Here I used the collaborative approach more consistently than I had been able to do in C school. In H school I was able to collect rich data from the informal discussions, observation of lessons, background information and discussions with staff. The data allowed me to compare, both within and between schools, the vast difference between children's knowledge of their own and other cultures.

After both pilots I drew up a list of issues in my journal and fieldnotes, which informed the research in the main study.

2.3 Issues Raised from Pilots Recorded in Journal:

- In the pilots I trialled the 'least adult role' (Mandell 1991) during the first phase of the research and this worked well because the children did not treat me as a teacher (asking me to check their work, expecting me to discipline them etc) and so I was able to receive more honest disclosures because I was a relative stranger who would work with them for a short while and then disappear. Thus I adopted this in the main study.
- In C school, the first pilot school, the second phase, the interviews, had not been successful because the children were waiting for me to ask the questions and the interview was researcher-led. So in the second pilot school, school H, I adopted a child-led rather than researcher-led approach in the interviews where I encouraged the children to decide when to move on to the next question. I tried to work with the children (O'Kane 2000, Scott 2000, Alderson 2000 and Waksler 1991) in a collaborative piece of research where my methods were transparent and the children were involved in the research design. My ontological position led me to consider the

child as 'different' rather than 'inferior' to adults (O'Kane 2000 and James 1995). I also appreciated the diversity between children (Quortrup 2000).

- I found from the pilot that the collaborative approach yielded much richer data because I was explicit about the research and owing to their sense of 'ownership' of the project, the children were more forthcoming in their accounts. They appreciated that it was their knowledge (Mayall 2000) I was interested in and thus there was no 'right' answer. As Merrish said "We are like dictionaries, Miss. You can look things up in us." (Field notes 11am day 4 pilot 2). I involved the children more in the design of the Bean Sheet (see table 5.2). I read it through with them beforehand and some children suggested that they take it home and make notes in preparation for the interview.
- In C school the children worked in pairs or on their own. In H school they worked in threes or fours. The groups which worked best were those of pairs or threes. In the single interviews (e.g. Thomas 1st pilot) there was no one to challenge his opinion - I tried not to play devil's advocate to avoid intimidation or contravention of my 'least adult role'. The groups of four made the transcription process very difficult. Children chose their own groups emphasising their status in the project. Thus in the main study I suggested the children chose groups of pairs or threes and I explained my reasons for this which they accepted.
- After the first pilot I labelled the pictures⁴ used in the interviews to ease transcription and also so that during the interview they could be referred to in a neutral way rather than, "the picture with the candlesticks". I added pictures from magazines in the second pilot, which were less explicitly religious pictures (the pictures were mainly from a bank of RE resources I own, jig saw puzzles and RE text books). Children in both H and C schools said they found the pictures useful.
- I discussed with the children in C and H school what preparation they felt they needed for the interview. They said they preferred reading through the questions with me in school during the focus groups, then they wanted time to think about their answers overnight, remembering that they were the 'dictionaries'. I wanted to know what they knew, NOT what their families/ friends told them (field notes H and C school). This worked well because it gave the children time to think and prepare. I adopted this in the main study.
- During the interview the children told me they preferred to choose which question they wanted to answer first (usually the culture to which they belonged "because I am

⁴ Pictures are in the appendix

one, and so I know more about it.” Umair year 5 boy who described himself as ‘white Muslim’, pilot 2 day 5 2pm.)

- In a preliminary analysis of the data I realised I needed to relate what the children said more specifically to the hidden and formal curriculum. Thus in the main studies I collected schemes of work and I asked the children specific questions to ensure I knew what they had learnt. Aaron said

You need to find out what the teachers have told us about Muslims,
Christians and so on ..but we won’t necessarily have learnt that.

(Aaron is of dual heritage, indigenous white and African Caribbean, pilot 2 11am day 4). Thus in the main study I decided to find out more about planning, teaching and learning in all subject areas especially music and cookery where there is often opportunity for multicultural education, so that I could see the difference between the ‘intended’ and the ‘actual’ curriculum.

- During the pilots I began to appreciate the impact of my presence as a white middle class, adult female. I felt this had more of an influence in the high proportion minority ethnic school where the majority of children were Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi or of African/Caribbean heritage. I was able to use my appearance to probe children’s conceptions of identity in pilot 2 as the following interchange demonstrates:

“You are white and a Christian, Miss” said Wassim (yr 5 Muslim boy pilot 2, 2pm day 4). When I asked if I might be a Muslim even though I was white they said “yes”. This experience ensured I was more attuned to the impact of my own presence in the main study (Delanty and Strydom 2003).

- I considered the first phase, familiarising myself with the children and school routines, to have been invaluable and several children said this gave them confidence in the interview because they were not “shy”. This phase was also useful as my observations of the formal and hidden curriculum informed my understanding about the likely origins of the children’s attitudes and knowledge. Therefore I ensured that there was sufficient time in the main studies for the first phase.
- In the pilots it had been useful to use items from current news as starting points, especially in the first phase. For example we talked about Chinese New Year and the Indian Earthquake in 2001. This made the research topical and relevant. Many children in the main studies referred to the events of September 11th 2001.
- I realised after the pilots that I needed to consider my use of terminology both within school and my writing up of the thesis.⁵ For example minority ethnic/ multi ethnic schools, African/ Caribbean British or Asian British to denote those of

⁵ I discuss use of terminology in chapter 1.

African/Caribbean or Asian heritage who live in this country, dual heritage rather than 'mixed race'.⁶ I realise that terminology is never static but nevertheless I needed to ensure that I was sensitive to current preferred terminology so that I did not inadvertently cause offence. Useful sources of reference have been *Managing Cultural Diversity: A Good Practice Guide for Schools* (Derby City Council 2000) and Dadzie (2000).

2.4 Main Studies

Having adapted my research design in the light of the pilots I then refined my methods accordingly and embarked on the research for the main studies. I followed a similar pattern in each of the four schools.

I gave a plan to teachers in each of the main study schools, in advance of the research, so that everyone was clear about what I proposed to do and when (see table 5:4 below). I spent about 6 weeks in each school: observing lessons, play times, lunch times, assemblies; working with focus groups and then I conducted taped semi-structured interviews with children (Bell 1999; Lewis and Lindsay 2000). There were brief informal discussions with class teachers and RE/ PSHE (Personal Social and health Education) co-ordinators.

Table 5:4 Timeframe for research sent out to teachers and headteachers before commencement of research.

Timetable for main studies:

I propose to spend 2/3 days for 5/6 weeks in each school in the main studies. The following is subject to negotiation with staff and children in each school, thus honouring my commitment to the project being a collaborative one - with the proviso of my responsibility to analyse and publish findings.

Weeks 1 and 2

- *Familiarising myself with school routines- curriculum organisation- setting, subjects, play times, lunchtimes, assemblies etc.
- * Observing lessons (throughout the whole 5 weeks so that all curriculum areas have been observed, ideally in each year 5 class)
- * Getting to know staff and children. Informal discussions with children recorded in written field notes- spending time with children in lessons, playtimes, lunchtimes etc
- *Identifying a sample of children from each year 5 class.
- * Collecting background information: a) Statistics-school size, catchment area, free school meals, ethnic make up, Special educational needs, Contact with outside agencies etc.b) curriculum (hidden and formal): policies, school brochures, Schemes of work etc.

⁶ 'Race' is not a popular term to use as I discussed in the literature chapter 2.

Week 3

- * Continue a) observing lessons and collecting data, b) familiarising myself with background information (especially schemes of work which will inform taped interviews) c) informal discussions recorded in field notes.
- * Work *with* identified sample children. One class sample then the other to look at prompt question sheet and *collaborate* with me about accessing data concerning *their* knowledge and attitudes about multicultural education and their multicultural awareness. Discuss PRA method (beans) and prompt sheet, pictures, taking the prompt sheet home to jot down notes, children decide with whom they would like to be interviewed.
- * Begin taped interviews with groups of sample children.

Week 4

- * Continue a), b) and c) above.
- * Discuss with sample children how they feel the research is going - record in field notes.
- * Continue taped interviews
- * Compare children's responses with taught curriculum.

Weeks 5/6

- * Continue a), b) and c) above as appropriate.
- * Discuss with staff key issues emerging from data collected so far (eg to what extent does planning relate to actual pedagogy and also what the children have actually learnt). Record in field notes.
- * Children complete Background Information Sheet
- * Thank everyone involved on the last day – give out presents!

Subsequent meeting

- * Some time in the future I will return to ask for comments on the Interim Report

Thus I made my research and approach transparent to the staff and children and ensured I did not subscribe to the 'smash and grab' syndrome. This transparency also ensured that my work was underpinned by ethical guidelines (BERA 2004).

Details concerning the taped semi structured interviews are itemised below:

Table 5:5 : Taped Interviews

- * R school, City -high proportion minority ethnic junior- 7 interviews (27 children from two year 5 classes, 9/10 year olds, mix of white British, British Asian, British African Caribbean, less/ middle and more able)
- * D school, City- high proportion minority ethnic primary school- 7 interviews (28 children from two year 5 classes, 9/10 year olds, mix of white British, British Asian, British African Caribbean, less/ middle and more able)
- * X school, Rural predominantly white - 7 interviews (26 children from two year 5 classes, 9/10 year olds, all white, mix of less/ middle and more able)
- * B school, City- predominantly white - 7 interviews (27 children from two year 5 classes, 9/10 year olds and one year 5/6 class, 9/10/11 year olds, mix of mainly British white, 1 British Asian, 1 British African Caribbean, less/ middle and more able)

In the next section I comment in more detail about issues raised in the research process.

3 Commentary on English Research Methods

In this section I discuss issues raised by the research methodology. I use the children's voices as much as possible. The children were very interested in working *with* me in the research process and I offer a few illustrations below (from my field notes). In the preceding sections I have described what I did in terms of research methods. It seems appropriate at this point to make mention of the children's reactions. Also in this section I show how my chosen methodology relates to my research questions and aims.

3.1 First Phase : Gaining Trust, Gaining Rich Data.

In this section I offer a few examples to demonstrate how the first phase enabled me to get to know the children and teachers and gain their trust which resulted in rich data. This relates to research questions one and two, a systematic appraisal of children's multicultural awareness. This section also relates to aim six of the research, to involve children in the research process as much as possible (see matrix table 7.2).

In D school the children were keen to talk with me. When I sat next to them in lesson times and also out on the playground they came to chat about what they did at the weekends their favourite subjects and the key features of their personalities.⁷ For example Melissa a Black girl of Caribbean heritage said:

Melissa: I enjoy English and Maths my best friend's Alison and my second is Sarah. I think this school is very good – where's this actually going?

Sally: Eventually into a book if my examiners are pleased with it!

Melissa: Will it be sold – in W.H Smiths or somewhere?

Jason: That's the first time she's been interested in books!"

On another occasion Melissa asked me if her teacher would be reading what I had written. I explained that I would be presenting a feedback report to teachers and children but that everyone would have a pseudonym and so teachers would not be able to identify particular children's comments (David et al 2001). Melissa seemed genuinely concerned about this, and as I spent more time at the school, I got the impression that Melissa did not always feel comfortable with her class teacher. I did

⁷ I use the word personality here in a non-psychological theory of child development (Jenkins 1993).

not feel it would be appropriate (especially in the first phase of the research), to ask Melissa directly if she had a personality clash with Mr Millan or if she felt he acted in a racist way towards her, but I felt her body language and a few implicit comments she made could be interpreted thus. It is this aspect of ethnographic research which has been attacked for being partisan (Hammersly 1998). I would argue however, 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 rich data. Mr Millan made a comment which I might not have heard if I had not happened to be standing next to him as a Muslim girl took off her veil while getting ready for PE. Also he might not have even made the comment had I not been there.

Mr Millan: It's good to see them get rid of their veils it's a real release for them

The serendipity of Social Science research must not be underestimated. I feel that the role one assumes as researcher has a profound effect on the comments that people make within one's hearing. For example I do not think Mr Millan would have made this comment in front of his headteacher. When I came for my visit day he was silent throughout the whole hour long meeting. I explained my methodology, invited questions and answered a few practical issues raised by the head and two other teachers. During the whole of this time Mr Millan was silent with head bowed. During a visit to the local museum I had been genuinely encouraging towards his organisation of the visit and his caring attitude towards the children. He smiled at me and was appreciative of my kind comments and then went on to explain how he felt he had been 'marginalised' by the head teacher Mrs Winter. Some of Mr Millan's comments need to be set, therefore, within this context of antagonism between him and the headteacher, Mrs Winter, and the reality of school politics (Ball 1987).

3.2 My Presence as a White, Middle-class, Female, Adult Researcher

In school R I witnessed two examples in the first phase of the research where I felt my presence as a white researcher influenced what the children said. Cherry, a white girl, introduced her friend Mevesh

Cherry: Mevesh's name is unusual because she comes from a different country.

Similarly Harvir said

Harvir: You'll never remember my name.

Thus the impression given was that I was white and would therefore not be familiar with Asian names. (I discuss names and pseudonyms later in chapter 6.) Therefore in the analysis of the data I took into account my presence when interpreting the data. This, I would argue, adds to the internal validity (Seale and Filmer 1998).

In X school I tried out a refined version of the least adult role and tried to get to know the boys more. I had felt that in R and D schools (the first two schools I visited), that I had had more of an affinity with the girls (as noted earlier in chapter 1). I felt that being the same gender gave me an immediate rapport with the girls which I felt was lacking with some of the boys.

Thus in X school I endeavoured to gain the trust of the boys, and I dressed in trousers rather than skirts and positioned myself in more male dominated spaces. I felt that this did work to a certain degree; I have many more notes of conversations with boys at X school than at D and R. It was interesting to note the style of questioning from the boys as the following example illustrates

Spike: Who are you?

Sally: I'm doing some research, I'm at the University of Derby.

Spike: You're too old to be at university – I thought you had to finish at 22.

Spike was assertive in all of his communications with me, and it is interesting to note his stereotypical view of university, that it is for those who finish school in their late teens early twenties and education finishes at 22. Thus there was no expectation of life long learning.

3.3 'Least Adult Role'

In the first section of this chapter I explained how and why I developed the 'least adult role' from Mandell's model (1991) to use in my own research. In this section I comment on the efficacy of this method in gaining rich, reliable and valid data.

My least adult role gradually became accepted in each school after phase one of the research and thus I was able to fulfil aim 6, (see chapter 1), of gathering rich data about the formal and hidden curriculum and also involving children in the research as much as possible (matrix table 7.2). For example in X school, children, at first, would come to report incidents to me but gradually they realised that this was futile as I

repeatedly advised them to go to a teacher. At the end of playtimes and lunchtimes I always lined up with the teacher's class which the children found amusing at first but then they became accustomed to it as the following comment illustrates (from X school where I had been working predominantly in Mrs Kelly's class):

Colin: Why are you lining up in that line?

Sally: Because I'm working with Mr Penny's group this afternoon.

Colin was not asking "Why are you lining up? You're an adult" but rather "why that line, Mr Penny's not mine, Mrs Kelly's."

I found that some children seemed to have a different relationship with me than they did with their teachers. Even though many children continued to call me "Miss," nevertheless I believe the 'least adult role' was successful; in my experience children habitually call adults "Miss" (even male adults sometimes!)

3.3.1 Ethos

When I undertook research in the last school, B school, I was able to make comparisons between the schools especially in terms of ethos which I recorded in my fieldnotes and journal. This became important as I considered the links between the way children were thought of and treated, and the children's attitudes towards those of a different culture. This relates to my research questions and aims concerning comparisons between the four schools and exploring forms of oppression (See matrix table 7.2).

In X school for example many teachers were authoritarian in their approach to classroom discipline and this contrasted with all the other schools. One of the supply teachers in X school literally screamed at the children and in my 'least adult role' I empathised with the children as I sat alongside them at a table and was, like them, subjected to her rantings. The interviews led me to the conclusion that many children were not afforded respect and dignity and thus these values could hardly be expected to be found in their attitudes towards people from other cultures. (I elaborate on this further in chapter 8).

In B school I recorded in my journal that one year 5 teacher had a good rapport with her children – Mrs Pink, with her arm supportively around Roger asked the children in a humble and caring way:

Roger has been in trouble 7 times at lunchtime today. Perhaps we could all help him. He has made a request, he wants someone to be his playtime partner.....keeping him out of

trouble...keeping him away from people....[*discussion of what to do when one gets angry*]

They [lunchtime partners] can cheer him up and help to calm him down. (Mrs Pink)

It was a very subjective feeling, but I noted in my journal that I felt comfortable in R, D and B schools, as compared with X school where I felt scared even though I knew I would not be reprimanded. Thus the least adult role, for example, sitting alongside the children and lining up with them, gave me some experience of life 'as a child' at each school. For me the institutional 'body language' (Dadzie 2000:39,40) of schools R,D and B was preferable to school X.

3.3.2 Non-authority Role- Ethical Issues, Gaining Permission

The final comment about the least adult role concerns the ethics of being an adult with a non- responsible role. Sometimes I was grappling with an ethical dilemma. For example I observed Melissa at D school pulling the leaves off a tree during playtime.

Sally: I'm not a teacher – I won't tell you not to do something. I'll just say I really don't like the trees leaves being pulled off. You do what you want but I don't like it.

Interestingly Melissa stopped. Perhaps my appeal was the stronger because I was specifically talking to her as a fellow human being rather than from the authoritative position of teacher.

In X school the boys were dominating the playground and on several occasions I saw children being hit by a flying football, in fact I was hit myself twice. 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, where younger children were playing unaware of the risks of flying balls. I mentioned this to the staff and was informed that the children were allowed to play football on the field. I decided not to pursue the issue. I believe my least adult role enabled me to gather appropriate and rich data thus validating the research.

Throughout each of the phases of the research 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 as although I had gained parental and school consent I believed in the collaborative nature of the research, as I discussed earlier and in the previous chapter (BERA 2004). Therefore 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. This was especially significant when three boys from X school refused to participate. I discuss this in more detail in chapter 7.

3.4 Interviews with Teachers

At the end of phase one and in phase two I conducted semi-structured interviews with RE subject leaders if there was one (Ribbens 1989). Given my particular interest in RE teaching I tried to specifically incorporate these practitioners into my study. I have recorded key information in table 5.6 below. This can be compared with table 5.7 which records similar information about the teachers interviewed in the Southern Germany fieldwork. In England I asked questions about the RE curriculum and multicultural education, but teachers then raised other issues.

Table 5.6 Table showing data about RE subject leaders

<u>Scho ol</u>	<u>Subject leader</u>	<u>How subject leader sees their role</u>	<u>Responsibility- RE / Multicultural Education</u>
R	Mrs Tejpreet	In charge of resources, not an expert, can be called on for support	Newly appointed, no formal background in RE, a practicing Muslim, enthusiastic. No scheme of work. Well resourced. I observed RE lessons.
D	Mr Modood	'Mediator' between the school and community. Supports planning for Study days.	Appointed some time ago, no scheme of work, no formal background in RE, a practising Muslim. RE seen as a Race Relations exercise. Study days every term- RE focus. Very committed to anti racism. I observed RE lessons
X	Vacant	Acting Head teacher said RE not a priority at moment.	Previous subject leader ill then left. Head refused a fundamentalist Christian to take over the role. No scheme of work. No RE observed. No RE lessons that half term.
B	Mrs Jones	Subject leader- organising RE in Foundation Stage and KS1 Then in KS2 next year. Writing schemes of work and supporting learning and teaching of RE throughout school.	Newly appointed, no formal background in RE but had written comprehensive schemes of work for Foundation stage and KS1 firmly anchored in Agreed syllabus. Intended to do same for KS2 next year. Very enthusiastic. I observed RE lesson

3.5 Phase 2

Having commented on the first phase and in particular the ‘least adult role’ I now discuss the focus groups (France, Bendelow and Williams 2000). This happened at the beginning of the second phase where I identified the sample ⁸ and I met with children to discuss how to go about the research, the use of the Bean Sheet and pictures and the interviews.

3.5.1 Focus Groups, the Bean Sheet.

In all four schools we had similar discussions which began with the children and myself exploring together the nature of the research process.

Merrish: We are like dictionaries Miss you can look things up in us

I used this comment from a Muslim girl of Asian heritage in H pilot school in all subsequent schools as it gave the children a clearer idea of what I was trying to do. Harvir from R school discussed the use of the Bean Sheet and other children were inspired by the image of the dictionary as the extracts below illustrate:

Harvir: So this [Bean Sheet used in previous school] is not really a set of questions you are asking us but rather it’s like an agenda with subjects you want us to talk about.

Chloe: You’re like an archaeologist trying to find things out

Terri: We’re like a computer with chips in our brains and you think of things you think you want to know.

By the end of the focus groups the children seemed to be fairly 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. It was interesting that during this discussion of research methods in R school the children were considering ethical issues. They raised the issue of racism and many children spoke favourably about being anti-racist. We had decided that if they really did feel ignorant about a particular culture there would be no shame in showing that on the Bean Sheet (i.e. recording ‘no beans’) but Terri was concerned about this:

Terri: If say we put no beans in for British Asians would the Asians, who may be in my interview group, feel we were being racist

Harvir: But if you don’t know you don’t know – I wouldn’t be offended [as a British Asian]

Terri: But sometimes people take it the wrong way

⁸ As I discussed earlier I selected children from a range of ethnicities, abilities and an equal balance of girls and boys.

Thus Terri was concerned that her highly held value of promoting anti-racism may well be at risk in an interview where she feared she might inadvertently offend someone of another culture.

The children in the pilot designed the first version of the Bean Sheet, table 5.2, which was modified by subsequent groups table 5.1. I wondered if in fact children who were not involved in the original design did not necessarily have the same degree of ownership of the process. However I decided that it was useful to show each group the version used in the previous school which they then adapted. Thus I felt there was some degree of ownership. Also I did not introduce the Bean Sheet until near the end of the focus group after the children had had an opportunity to express their own opinion. I also felt pleased that the Bean Sheet was used in all four main schools as it meant I had comparable data. Although this was not an over riding factor in the decision to use it. Finally we talked about what was meant by the word 'culture' and the children themselves suggested the list which was adopted (see table 5.1 and 5.2).

The children seemed happy to complete the Bean Sheet at home and everyone filled it in (to varying degrees) before the taped interviews. One group in B school said they would prefer to fill it in with me on the day before as they had been busy at home and parents had been unable to scribe or spell words for them. Thus a small group of children (who were described as less able by their class teacher) spent half an hour with me at the end of a lunch break where I scribed or spelt words. I was keen for them to write their own thoughts and they were keen too, and hid their work so that their partner would not copy and whispered their comments so that the children sitting near to them would not hear. Some children took the exercise very seriously and Liz, a white girl from X school copied out her work as she was unhappy with her handwriting on the original sheet. Several children had obviously asked for spellings and had then possibly been influenced by parents in what they had written. Lyn a white girl in X school had written about Rastafarians.

Lyn: My Mum is a big fan of Bob Marley and so she told me about
Rastafarianism. OOOPPPPS it's supposed to be me!

But as this comment demonstrates the children were open to admit the influence of various people when completing their sheet. In fact the children showed a high level of thinking as several children from each school commented that it would be difficult to write completely their own ideas as their knowledge had originated from books,

their parents and friends. This was the reason why in R school the additional question about “Influences” appeared on the Bean Sheet.

The children were all excited by the use of jelly beans and this proved to be an incentive. Joe, a white boy from D school was one among many who asked both in the focus group and continually throughout the interview

Joe: Can I eat the beans yet?

Toni had written little on his sheet and he informed me that his father had told him not to write much even. Toni had protested, and replied that what he wrote could not be wrong because it was his ideas that I wanted

Toni: But my dad said – I don’t want you writing any more – you are not a racist and neither am I.

This demonstrates the sensitivity of the whole area of multicultural and anti-racist education. Indeed on several occasions I found myself in a difficult position morally when faced with racist comments as I outlined in table 4 in the previous chapter (adapted from Mason 1996) where I discussed ethical issues. At the time of the interview, I did not comment on racist views expressed by the children. However at the end of the Interim Report meeting I encouraged a discussion with the children where it became clear that racist comments and behaviour are not acceptable.

I was disappointed that three boys from X school refused to participate especially as they were the three children I had particularly targeted in my attempt to get to know the boys more at X school. I never found out exactly why they refused. When I asked them they just said they “didn’t want to” and I did not feel it ethical to probe further. The secretary of the school who overheard my conversation with one of the boys commented “typical.” I had a theory that this may have been one occasion where they had been given express permission to say “no” to an adult. In most other areas of school life I got the impression that the children were given very little freedom and I noted in my journal that the adults seemed to dominate the children more at X school than at the other schools. (I develop this theme further in chapter 8).

3.5.2 Use of Bean Sheet in Interviews

In my journal I questioned whether we should have kept the ‘agenda items’ on the Bean Sheet as ‘British Asian’, ‘British Chinese’ etc rather than Muslim or Hindu community. In a discussion with the children I had explained to them that the latest

Census (Census 2001) had used these definitions of 'British Asian' etc. I felt that perhaps I had contravened my 'least adult role' in suggesting we use 'British Asian' etc rather than 'Muslim', 'Hindu' which had been a suggestion from the pilots. But then I realised that in fact I was drawing on knowledge from a more experienced adult. Thus in my least adult role I was not de valuing my experience, rather I would call upon my experience when necessary but not assume that my experience meant that I necessarily took a lead in the research process making executive decisions and so on. I tried not to assume a 'superior role' in the discussions. Nevertheless I was concerned about the use of the terms British Asian, British White etc as I recorded in my journal:

Thought about the bean schedule framing the children's ideas,..... [maybe] I should have just shown them the pictures...When asking the children 'Tell me how much you know about British Chinese?' they will possibly be telling me about their stereotype. But then, we all have stereotypes, what is their stereotype like? (Journal page 16)

In the focus groups the children had asked me what to call different cultures and I had suggested British Chinese, British Asian etc as having been used in the Census and so they were keen to use these accepted terms. Perhaps I should not have answered their question and waited for them to think of their own categories. But I did not, and so these terms have remained throughout the research. I would argue that I maintained a 'least adult role' because I did not impose these terms on the children, rather they appealed to my knowledge as an adult in helping them to frame their thoughts and suggest categories. However the term 'least adult' still contains the word 'adult' and so in this instance I was not becoming 'more adult', but just 'adult', rather than 'least adult'.

I also felt that I was veering more towards the role of 'miner' than 'traveller' by using the Bean Sheet (Erriker 2001, as noted earlier in chapter 4). However I did use the Bean Sheet as prompt questions rather than questions which demanded precise answers. Jackson (2004) defends the use of "well thought out" questions in his response to Erricker's criticism (Jackson 2004:72) of using pre prepared questions which "distort findings" and "corrupt knowledge" (2004). Jackson argues that a poem, as used by Erriker as a stimulus in his research, is just as influential as well thought out pre prepared questions:

Both methods are likely to draw out a particular range of responses related to the interviewer's or facilitator's purposes. (2004:72)

However I would argue that these are very different, the poem is merely a stimulus and so the child is dominant because they can respond in a variety of ways; whereas the intention of the researcher can be dominant in pre prepared questions.

I felt that the questions on the Bean Sheet were open ended enough to not distort findings. Thus I would concur with Erricker, rather than Jackson, in the desire for the child to have an opportunity to tell their own story rather than respond to pre prepared questions. But in my context I had to resort to prompt questions, which, I emphasise, were formulated in collaboration with the children, thus distancing myself from the use of pre prepared questions.

Another example of the researcher leading the direction of the research but not necessarily dictating the direction is outlined below.

In R school the children thought of recording their thoughts about their own identity. While discussing how they would describe their own and others' cultures they said it would be interesting to find out how they identified themselves. Harvir began the discussion

Harvir: Even though I'm a Sikh I wouldn't say I was an expert in Sikhism- but Sikhism is a part of me.

Terri: Religion is one part of you. I want to be friendly, be friendlier.

Sally: So we're thinking about what makes me me?

Toxic: I've got big feet, (0.3)⁹ I'm a half caste, (0.2) a Christian (0.4) and a nosey parker!

Chloe: We could start with 5 things about me – we need to do that first.

Thus the children worked with me to think about ways of collecting the data. However this group had devised this activity and were keen to use it but when they encouraged me to use it with another group in their school who had not been part of the discussion there was reluctance. For example in another focus group I mentioned the '5 things about me' and the children were not keen to do this. A shy girl said she felt embarrassed about this

Martha: I'm small and shy and I don't want to say that – it's not a good idea.

Thus the children were comfortable with completing the Bean Sheet and the confident children were also happy to note '5 things about me'. However less confident children were uncomfortable about engaging in the latter activity, and we discussed the fact

that the children in one school should all do similar things and so the '5 things about me' activity was abandoned.

This poses an interesting dilemma because if the children are to collaborate with the researcher then they should be involved in decision making too. Yet their lack of experience meant that sometimes I might have been in a better position to make decisions. When there was disagreement I had to bear in mind that these children had not been engaged in theoretical research methodology training, (which I had). However I did not intervene in a superior way and forbid the inclusion of the '5 things about me' activity. But rather I explained that in research it is preferable to have similar research methods, at least in one case study, and we questioned whether it would be good to do both the '5 things' and the Bean Sheet when several children had objected to the '5 things about me'. Thus again I was negotiating with the children, in a least adult role, and involving them in the decision making process. They decided that we should try it out and so one group undertook the '5 things about me'; but when undertaking the analysis they said I should decide whether to use it or not. (Actually I did not use this data in my analysis because only a handful of children from R school participated).

This example demonstrates my maintaining the least adult role because I did listen to this one group of children and they engaged with their methodology of '5 things about me' activity, but after the collection of data, I did not use this in a comparative way because other groups had not taken part in this activity. The children said this was my choice, so again I was not dominating the group but rather they gave me the 'permission' to either use or not use the data.

3.5.3 Pictures Used in the Semi Structured Interviews

It was difficult selecting pictures of 'different' cultures, one can easily fall into the trap of stereotypes. Also in a discussion of my research methods at a seminar presentation at the University of Derby in 2001, during the first stages of my research, a few research students had questioned my use of pictures of different sizes. The research students felt that I was promoting one culture over another because some pictures were bigger than others¹⁰. I raised this issue with the children and in R school

⁹ The numbers in brackets refer to the length of the pauses between words. So (0.3) equals 3 seconds.

¹⁰ The pictures I used can be found in the appendix.

all the children said they would not think a picture less important because it was smaller than another.

David: If you cut them out of magazines they're bound to be different sizes. I wouldn't think black people were less important because the picture of the black lady was smaller than the picture of the white family. Isn't the [black] lady reading a Harry Potter book?

This last comment showed that in fact children can pay close attention to detail and David had got up close to this smaller picture to work out the title of the book. Perhaps with younger children this may have been the case, but I believe that 9 and 10 year olds are sophisticated enough to not correlate size with importance. Thus I used the pictures of different sizes as part of my research.

Many children commented that the pictures had been helpful in reminding them of things they did know about a particular culture which they had forgotten.¹¹ However I felt that sometimes the pictures could have re enforced stereotypes. The Chinese New Year picture merely showed the outward celebration of New Year by members of the Chinese community in London, (see picture F in the appendix). I felt after the research that this could have been seen as tokenistic and did not aid consideration of the variety of religions as represented in the Chinese community, namely Buddhism (Theravada or Mahayana) different Christian traditions or Taoism (Cole and Morgan 2000; Fisher 2002). It is not that I necessarily expected the children to be familiar with these, or to appreciate that many British Chinese may be adherents of one or the other, but rather that my use of the pictures was nevertheless putting forward an image of a particular culture which may have been representative or not, of the majority of its members. For example the picture of a Sikh family showed the father wearing a turban yet many Sikhs do not wear a turban but would still identify themselves as Sikh (Cole 1994; Cole and Morgan 2000). But on balance I felt that the pictures did help the discussions because they prompted responses.

3.5.4 The Semi Structured Interviews

In this section I discuss the interviews and I critically comment on some issues raised by this part of the research.

¹¹ I had the pictures available on the table during the interview for the children to refer to if they wanted. They had already seen them in the focus groups where I had used them to aid discussion about different cultures.

I asked the children to organise themselves into groups for the interviews. This was the only occasion so far in the research where some of the children were taken out of their timetabled lessons because I was unable to fit all of the interviews into lunch hours. Also, I felt it unfair for the children to miss all of their break times and so we tended to begin the interview at the end of their lunchtime and then miss the first part of their afternoon lesson. Many of the children were nervous about the interview especially because they knew they were being tape recorded. I was concerned that we might lose the child-centred nature of the research which had worked so well in the first phase and the focus groups. I did not want to lose sight of my 'least adult role' during the interviews, but this proved difficult because many children were very quiet and nervous especially at the beginning. I thought carefully about this and made a journal entry about it. After the first interview in R. school (the first school of the four main studies) I noted in my journal (page 18):

Points to watch in interview

1. Put children at ease before starting tape
2. Make them feel confident about expressing their views- no comment can be wrong!
3. Work with them – push them to have ownership
4. Don't be afraid to ask sensitive questions- they can always say 'No' !
5. Probe! Ask searching questions.
6. Keep to time- they get tired.....let them choose which questions to answer.
7. Ensure they talk about difference within groups e.g. "Do all Asian women wear Saris?"

(Journal pg 18)

After implementation of these pointers in subsequent interviews I then noted in my journal that:

These pointers had ensured that the next interviews provided richer data. Children were more in control, talked more and at length. If I didn't talk the quiet ones filled the gaps!

(journal pg 19)

I noticed that after the first five minutes most children did forget about the tape recorder especially when I adhered to the "points to watch in interviews" above. I did ask searching questions. For example when Melissa, a Black girl of Jamaican

heritage, hinted at a time when she had bullied Zoe, a Muslim girl of Asian heritage. I asked if they would be willing to talk about this and they consented.

There were occasions however when I did not feel it appropriate to probe further. For example one supply teacher in X school was very authoritative with the children and shouted a great deal, as highlighted earlier in this discussion. I wanted to ask what the children felt about this kind of behaviour and if they preferred teachers who were less authoritative. I began to wonder whether children were more anti-racist if they were less dominated by authority figures in school and this became a subsidiary aim in the research (see matrix table 7.2). During the X1 interview with Lisette, this supply teacher was two rooms away and her shouting could still be heard. Ironically this was just at the point when the children were telling me about being 'nice' to each other. I felt it would not be professional to draw attention to this teacher as I would possibly be undermining her. Yet perhaps I should have asked "What do you feel about teachers who shout?" without making specific reference to the supply teacher. But one is always wiser after the event and I failed to ask the question at the time. In retrospect I would also have the difficulty of reconciling this with my commitment to follow ethical and professional practice.

Another example of my 'least adult role' during the interviews was when the children took the initiative in the interview to choose the order of the questions. Once they became used to this they happily flitted from one question to another and back again and digressed. I tried not to intervene but it did make transcription and coding of the data a lengthy process. However I found the NUDIST data analysis package helped enormously in this task (Stroh 2000a, 2000b; Richards, L 2000; Richards, T. 2000). Once all the interviews had been conducted I transcribed them and then coded the transcriptions (according to questions- e.g. answers relating to "Knowledge about British Asians" were coded at *KBA). Then I uploaded the interview onto the N5 data analysis package. The coding took a long time but aided the data analysis as I was able to compare and interrogate answers to the same question from children from different schools very easily. (I describe this process in more detail later in chapters 7 and 8).

3.5.5 The Physical Context of the Semi-structured Interviews.

It is important to comment on the physical context for the interviews. I realised that in the transcription and analysis there were other factors which would not be apparent in reading the raw data. For example the research at X school took place in the summer of 2001 which was very hot and X2 and X3 interviews took place in a classroom which resembled a conservatory. At one point I realised that the three white boys Jay, Zidane and Greg were literally ‘wilting’ in the heat and so we rushed through the final questions. The second half of R3 interview with Francesca, a Hindu girl of Asian heritage, Monica, a Muslim girl of Asian heritage and Emma of Malaysian heritage took place in the resources room which also happened to house the staff photocopier. I felt that the girls were not as open in the second half of the interview because they were probably aware that teachers may come in at any moment to photocopy during their lunchbreak. A similar point is made by France et al (2000:159) when they discuss “space”.

When one is working in schools it is often very difficult to find quiet and private spaces especially when one is relying on the goodwill of the staff, therefore although I did not think some of the situations we found ourselves in were ideal often there was no choice. In interview B6 we all actually found it amusing when Jeremy was stopped mid sentence by a teaching assistant (whose large workroom we had based ourselves in). He was unable to finish speaking because the teaching assistant came up to him and with a brief “‘scuse me” measured his head for the King’s crown for the nativity play. School life can be unpredictable like this and as a teacher I have been accustomed to being flexible. However interruptions can also be distracting. During one of X school focus groups I was called out. When I returned the atmosphere had been broken as the children had been left with the secretary and did not want to discuss issues with her so had resorted to chatting and on my return were not keen to resume our discussions. Thus a researcher must accept that ‘real life’ situations can affect the data and this must be borne in mind during the analysis stage (Ribbens 1989).

3.5.6 Background Information Sheet and Choice of Pseudonyms

As part of my research I accessed Ofsted reports from websites and other statistical data was given to me by school secretaries, to provide background information on each school.

I felt that the completing of the Background Information Sheet was the least successful part of the research in terms of my least adult role in some schools. In D school children came to see me in pairs or threes and they filled in the Background Information Sheet with me. But in schools R, X and B children came in a large group to fill these in, because this suited those schools. However it meant that I had large groups of children, nearly 30 in each of those 3 schools. I spent time scribing for children who found writing difficult but I had to contravene the least adult role in school B because some of the children were jumping on PE equipment, (we were based in the school hall) and I felt I had to give a directive as I did not want children to get injured. It was interesting that this occurred and I realised that I had been able to adopt a least adult role most of the time because there were other adults around in a supervisory capacity during phase one and two of the research. During the pupil interview stage only three children were present and no discipline was needed. But in a large potentially dangerous space, with a group of 30 children on my own I felt it necessary to abandon my 'least adult role' on occasion for ethical reasons.

The Background Information Sheet was successful however, in providing me with valuable data about the child's perspective on their identity as I demonstrate in the analysis, chapter 8. This sheet was also referred to when I used terminology to describe the children, for example Melissa referred to herself as Black and of Jamaican heritage and so I describe her thus.

The children liked being able to choose their own protective pseudonym (Robson 1993; David et al 2001) and also seemed to relish the fact that this was confidential between just myself 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 more ownership of the research and also I was interested to see what name they would choose. Many of the children had interesting reasons behind their choice of name and again I felt privileged at being party to these stories; this was another indication that my 'least adult role' must have meant they trusted me. Also the choice of pseudonym demonstrated the child's preference for a particular cultural identity, a point I discuss later in chapter 8.

3.6 Third Phase

In the third phase I encountered a similar problem concerning the management of large groups as I outlined above. Again in this phase of the research, where I

presented my Interim Report, I sometimes had to abandon my 'least adult role' as schools arranged for me to see the children in large groups. I was at least able to reduce the numbers by requesting I saw no more than 15 at a time, but again as with the Background Information Sheet, I had to act as classroom manager, ensuring children took turns in speaking and assuming a teacher role, rather than adopting my preferred least adult role. X school could not accommodate a visit from me which was unfortunate because I would have been very interested to compare the responses of the staff and children at X school with the other study schools. The headteacher told me on the phone, that the Interim Report was useful but that Multicultural issues were not a priority at the school at that moment in time.

Also as this was not the headteacher I had worked with during the first and second phase, he did not appreciate the importance of my desire to feed back preliminary results.

During my final visit I gave each school a letter of thanks with a box of chocolates for the staff and some jelly beans for the children as a token of my appreciation. Throughout the whole research and especially during my last visit I tried to demonstrate my gratitude as a responsible researcher (BERA 2004) by providing appropriate feedback and acknowledging the support I had received.

Having provided an overview of research in British schools I now discuss how I undertook research in Southern Germany which provides a further perspective on children's multicultural awareness in another European country.

4 Research Undertaken in Southern Germany, Context and Methods

As I outlined in table 5.0 at the beginning of this chapter I adopted the same research methods in Southern Germany apart from the Bean Sheet. My research was qualitative (Mason 1996) I interviewed teachers, a small group of children and I observed lessons, but I did not assume a 'least adult role' or use the Bean Sheet because of ethical and linguistic considerations. There was insufficient time to establish appropriate relationships with the children in the Southern Germany fieldwork, and the timeframe was shorter. Also my German language was not proficient enough to engage with the children in the same way as I had done in the English research. However the methodological approaches used in Southern Germany provided rich data leading to an insight into another European context. This helped

explain and extend my knowledge particularly about multicultural education, attitudes and influences.

In presenting this part of the research I use the same format, firstly describing the research aims and methods, in particular I explain how the Southern Germany research related to the British research. Secondly I outline what I actually did, and thirdly I analytically comment on the research.

4.1 Research Aims and Methods

I used an opportunistic sampling strategy within a volunteer sample (Seale 1998:139) using a translator as 'gatekeeper' (Celnick 2000). I collected data which offers another perspective on multicultural education as experienced by a sample of children and teachers in a range of schools in Baden-Württemberg, Southern Germany.

As explained above, in England I collected data in four primary schools about the formal and hidden curriculum, which thereby indicated opportunities for Year 5 children to learn about their own and other cultures. In Southern Germany I similarly gathered data to identify opportunities Klasse 4 (9/10 year old)¹² children had to learn about their own and other cultures. In both countries I collected information about world and local events which had influenced children's' and teachers' attitudes to multicultural education (for example September 11th 2001 plus other events¹³).

In both countries I observed lessons and interviewed teachers and children about their attitudes towards multicultural education (see table 5.0). From these different sources I built up a picture of children's different experiences of multicultural education in both countries.

4.1.1 Context

In Southern Germany I conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with headteachers, Grundschule (primary) and Gymnasium (grammar) teachers and two Evangelische Schuldekan (RE advisors). An interview with Herr R and Frau R, both

¹² This was the corresponding age to the British sample.

¹³ Other significant events which children and adults in both the English and Southern German research referred to included, September 11th 2001 and Bin Laden, Afghanistan War and Islamophobia, and the Baden-Württemberg female Muslim teacher who was banned from teaching because she refused to remove her veil to teach (Filter 2001)

Muslims studying Muslim Religion, was undertaken in England (see table 5.6).¹⁴ Interviews were mainly undertaken in German with the help of a translator, Frau I.¹⁵

4.2 Implementation of Research Methods, From Pilots to Main Study

The translator helped me identify Grundschule in the area and she telephoned to arrange visits. We spoke with headteachers and where possible Klasse 4 teachers and teachers of RE. I also visited a Religious Education Resource Centre.

In the table below I briefly describe each interviewee's background. This table relates to the actual interviews I conducted. I felt it would be clearer to present this material in tabular form as there was 1 pilot interview with 2 people Frau F and Herr S followed by 14 interviews with other teachers. The statistics in the 'institution' section relate to what I was told by the interviewee or headteacher about the ethnic make up of pupils. In the next section I describe some of the issues arising from this data.

Table 5.7 Interviews undertaken during German fieldwork 2001, and 2007

Name	Institution Intake	Role	Responsibilities with respect to RE / Multicultural education	Interview/ lesson observation
<u>PILOT</u> Fr F	W Grund and Hauptschule 74% white German 20% Turks 10% white Russian	Klasse 4 +K teacher	She is a devout Catholic and teaches K religion to Klasse 3 (She described many children in Grundschule as of dual heritage)	Interview with Frau F
<u>PILOT</u> Herr S	W Grund and Hauptschule 74% white German 20% Turks 10% white Russian	Headteacher of Grund and Hauptschule	Not Religion teacher. (Interested in Arizona project (discipline programme):-'every child has the right to learn undisturbed, every teacher has the right to teach undisturbed, everyone must respect each other's rights'.)	interview with Head
<u>MAIN</u>	<u>STUDY</u>			
Fr N	T Grundschule 90% white German Mainly professional	Klasse 4 teacher	Not a Religion teacher but teaches about other cultures in cross curricular themes	interview
Herr B	E Grundschule 60% don't speak German at home	Headteacher of Grundschule	Not a Religion teacher. He described groupings: 12 E, 23 K and 50 O Religion - taught by Turkish consulate. Herr B didn't know what they were taught.	Interview
Fr B	I Gesamtschule (Grundschule and mixed upper school) 18 different nationalities	Headteacher of Grundschule	Teaches the Ohne Religion group - Calls it Ethiks. Fr B used to be an Olympic swimmer.	Interview Obs of Etk lesson

¹⁴ Two teacher training students Herr R and Frau R visited my institution several years after the research and I was able to discuss with them changes which had occurred in Germany since my original research in 2001.

¹⁵ Frau I is a retired Gymnasium teacher who acted as 'gatekeeper' in helping me identify suitable interviewees in schools and for accompanying me and assisting with translation during many interviews.

Fr H	I Gesamtschule (Grundschule and mixed upper school)	Just comes in to school to teach E religion	Teaches E religion part time to various classes on Tues and Thurs	Interview Obs of two E lessons
Herr O	I Gesamtschule (Grundschule and mixed upper school)	Just comes in to teach K religion	Teaches K religion part time to various classes	Just lesson obs
Fr X	M school- Päd active ¹⁶	Trained teacher but Päd Activ worker too	Supervises children at a 'before and after school club'. Wide range of children. Scheme paid for by district funds.	Informal interview
Fr XX	M school- Päd Activ	Italian Teacher	Employed by Italian consulate to support Italian heritage children in area.	Informal interview
Fr Z	L school- Päd activ	Trained teacher but Päd Activ worker	Supervises children before and after school. Catchment area 50% Turkish but very few seemed to attend Päd Activ	Informal interview
Herr M	S Gymnasium Town	E teacher also Advisor for E religion in area	Teaches E religion throughout school 3 days a week. 2 days works for E church training & monitoring E religion in area	Interview
Herr X	S Gymnasium Town	Etk teacher also Latin	Teaches Etk links it with Greek philosophy and Independent Thought	Interview
Fr J	Advisor's Centre for E religion	Advisor for E religion also Gymnasium teacher	Teaches in local Gymnasium 3 days a week advises on E religion 2 days training and monitoring E religion for church. She took us to joint E and K Resource Centre	Interview + visit to resource centre
Fr I	S Gymnasium	Retired English teacher S Gymnasium	Volunteered to be my interpreter/translator/assistant / driver and help me gain access to various schools	Various informal interviews
Herr R and Frau R	N University but interviewed in 2007 in England	Both students of Prof L – on 10 day study leave in England	Part of the first cohort of Muslim students training to be teachers of Islam. Probably will be teachers of Islam Religion in Real Schule.	Informal interviews

E = Evangelische (Protestant)

K = Katholische (Catholic)

O = Ohne Religion (Without Religion)

Etk = Ethiks (Ethics)

Pseudonyms are used for Schools and Teacher's names,

T Grundschule = T primary school, Fr N = Frau N.

In the Grundschule I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers and head teachers using the questions "Fragen Deutschen Grundschule (German First schools Questions)" see table 5:8 below, to initiate discussion. I devised these questions after I had read information about syllabuses used in the Grundschule (Baden -Württemberg (1994a). In practice the same thing happened as in England, the adults used questions as starting points and then spoke about their thoughts at length. I felt that the semi-structured interview method worked well in both Southern Germany and England. I

¹⁶ Päd Activ is a school club to which parents can send their children before and after school. Some workers were trained teachers others were qualified helpers. This is similar to 'extended schools' in the UK (see <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools/>)

did not tape record the interviews but made notes during the discussions and wrote up a fuller version of the interview when back in my apartment.¹⁷ I also checked my notes against my translator's memory to ensure triangulation validity (Bernard 2000).

Table 5:8 Prompt Questions for German First schools

Fragen Deutschen Grundschulen (German first schools Questions)	September/Oktober 2001
Forscherin (Researcher) : Sally Elton-Chalcraft	University of Derby, England
<p>1) Wie würden Sie die kulturelle und ethnische Zusammensetzung der Kinder beschreiben (How would you describe the cultural and ethnic make up)</p> <p>a) in Ihre Klasse? (in your class)</p> <p>b) in Ihrer Schule? (in your school)</p>	
<p>2) Könnten Sie die Themenschwerpunkte beschreiben, die Sie unterrichten in (Could you describe the themes /topics you teach in)</p> <p>a) Heimat- und Sachunterricht? (Homeland and topic lessons)</p> <p>b) Religion? (lessons about Religion)</p> <p>c) Musik? (music lessons)</p>	
<p>3) Könnten Sie beschreiben, wie Sie auf Kinder mit unterschiedlichen Fähigkeiten eingehen? (Could you describe your teaching styles and how you group children) (Arbeitsgruppen nach Themen oder Leistung, Frontalunterricht, ausschließlich oder gelegentlich, differenzieren nach Ergebnis usw.) (Groups according to ability or theme, teacher led lessons, differentiation according to the topic etc)</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Vielen Dank (Many thanks)</p>	

The pilot with Frau F and Herr S informed the rest of the interviews because of the 'participation' of my translator. In both England and Southern Germany discussions I tried to adopt a 'neutral' position so that the adults and children felt free to express their own opinion. However my translator was not aware of this and sometimes made comments which may have had an influence on the direction of the conversation. For example in the pilot in W school, a Grund und Haupt Schule (a high school with a primary school attached), the headteacher, Herr S, and Frau F were talking to me about the Turks who sometimes did not attend school because of their festivals such as Id. I asked what Id was because I wanted to know what Herr S and Frau F knew

¹⁷ I did not tape record interviews with teachers in England either.

about Id. Unfortunately Frau I, my translator, responded immediately before they had a chance to answer:

Oh surely you must know what Id is? It's a Muslim festival where they celebrate the end of Ramadan.

I had tried to adopt the role of 'traveller' (Erriker 2001) as I discussed in the British methodology, but the translator was adopting the role of 'miner' considering that the aim of my research was to find out particular things. Thus I was not able to discover what Herr S and Frau F knew about Id and also what their opinion of the festival was because Frau I dominated the conversation. Therefore after this pilot I had to tactfully instruct the translator as to her role. I explained that I wanted to find out what the teachers knew about Id and Ramadan and thus I was assuming a position of ignorance to illicit answers. Perhaps I should have explained this more carefully at the outset and talked to her about the 'traveller'/ 'miner' metaphor before the interviews. Also I should have ensured that she was aware of some ethical issues in research as the following example illustrates. The translator also intervened in another interview with Herr B the headteacher at E school. When he was talking about the Turks at his school she interjected

Oh yes it's difficult to integrate them [the Turks]. Frau B from I school [we had visited previously] was saying that yesterday – she finds it very difficult because they just won't join in.

Again I had to tactfully explain to the translator that it is unwise to discuss the content of one interview with another person because it might influence them and more importantly it is not ethical to disclose the person's name and school (BERA 2004).

As a result of the pilot stage I tried to ensure that in the rest of the interviews my translator's presence and voice did not unduly influence the main study respondents.

Methodologically as I have stated at the beginning of this section, I did not use the Bean Sheet with the children but I spoke to groups of children from Klasse 4 (9 year olds) while they worked in lessons and in small groups at the end of the lessons.

5 Commentary on Research Methods for Southern Germany Fieldwork

In this section I comment analytically on the research methods used in Southern Germany.

5.1 Using a Translator/ Companion.

Using a translator in this part of the research was advantageous but also had its limitations as I described above. However once she was clear about her role, the main study interviews produced rich data. In fact I was able to gain far richer data because of the gatekeeper role played by my translator. For example we arrived early at one school where the translator had made an appointment for me to interview staff. One teacher was ill and so we found ourselves supply teaching for an hour with a group of twenty-eight 9 year old children until another teacher could take over. Because the translator had less experience of working with younger children she asked me for ideas. I decided to sing English songs with the children. Interestingly the translator was surprised that I sat on the floor with the children in a circle around me. She observed that

In Germany the teacher always sits on a chair and the children are usually at desks. (Frau I)
Thus I was able to glean some information about the style of teaching adopted because of this serendipitous situation.

Also I would certainly not have known about or gained access to the Päd Active programme or after school provision if the translator had not been with me. She thought this might be something I would be interested in and indeed I was able to speak with Frau XX an Italian teacher who told me about the sessions she took with children of Italian heritage.

They can learn about Italian culture and language as well as learning German. (Frau XX)

Again it was useful having a German companion because the translator was able to direct me to Lehr plans (syllabuses) used by the Grundschule and she very quickly explained the education system. The following extracts from a letter she wrote illustrate this

Teachers are not expected to show religious or political preferences in their teaching. They are expected to be 'neutral', 'objective' in their behaviour, looks and teaching. Example - the Muslim teacher who was not allowed with a scarf on her head, because this signals her religious outlook!.....

Hints:.....Look at Bildungsplane for Grundschule Baden-Württemberg and perhaps Hauptschule. Particularly relevant for you [is the] Religion suggestion for project combining several subjects: Mosleme leben bei uns (Muslims living with us) – Islam." (Frau I 2001)

Thus the translator gave me an ‘insider’ insight into the German system which informed my understanding for the research.

5.2 Semi Structured Interviews

In Southern Germany I created the “Fragen Deutschen Grundschule (German First schools Questions)” as a series of questions to prompt further discussion. The translator helped me to translate the questions and indeed told me of the existence of Heimat and Sachunterricht (Homeland and topic lessons) which I would not otherwise have asked about in my interviews.

I did not tape record these interviews because I only met the adults once and perhaps the sight of a tape recorder would have inhibited them. In the British research the children had got to know me and while initially wary of the tape recorder they soon forgot its presence. Whereas in Southern Germany I think the adults would have been wary of committing their opinions to the tape recorder but they were happy for me to take notes. Also in some interviews we flitted between German and English and it would have been difficult to transcribe. Thus I felt note taking suited the purposes in this instance, despite Silverman’s argument that tape recording does “eliminate many problems relating to validity” (Silverman 2004:286).

I felt the semi-structured sheet “Fragen Deutschen Grundschule (German First schools Questions)” table 5.8, worked well because it gave the adults an opportunity to voice their own viewpoints. A good example of this was Frau B from I Gesamtschule (mixed primary and upper school). I began the interview by thanking Frau B for giving her time to talk with me, and that I valued this. She then began a long lecture some of which related to the questions. I rarely interrupted, usually only for clarification and thus this method of leaving the adult to talk gave me rich data which I am sure would not have surfaced if I had adopted a structured interview (Robson:235). It was also advantageous that the translator spoke little during this interview. After the experience of the pilots she understood my desire to listen rather than comment. Thus Frau B seemed to see my presence as an opportunity to communicate her dearly held opinions about education and the treatment of non indigenous Germans. I felt that my research methods allowed her to communicate this and my data was the richer for it.

5.3 Visit to Resource Centre and German Documentation

I felt the visit to the Resource Centre also afforded rich data because I was able to see what kinds of materials were available to Evangelische and Katholische teachers for their Religion lessons. The Resource Centre was dominated by books, articles, journals, leaflets and a few posters. I asked if they had any artefacts from Christian denominations or major world religions and was told:

Frau J: These things are too expensive – we prefer to buy books.

Thus I was able to conclude that much of the RE and multicultural education related to worksheets and books rather than artefacts.

Because my translator had worked as a teacher she was able to access syllabuses and documentation for me to examine, for example Baden -Württemberg (1994a, 1994b). As stated earlier this informed the choice of questions I devised for the semi-structured interviews with the teachers and the informal discussions I conducted with the children.

Summary

In this chapter I discussed the methodologies used in both the English and Southern Germany fieldwork. I have described and commented on research methods used in England including the ‘least adult role’, the time spent in each school, getting acquainted with children and staff, and the day to day activities. Also discussed was the use of other methodological techniques, namely the Bean Sheet and the Background Information Sheet, focus groups, semi structured interviews and school documentation. I argued that the time spent in each school ensured I gained rich data because the children were able to get to know and trust me. I explained how in both fieldwork settings the pilot informed the main study and I highlighted the similarities in the methodological approach in both research settings. The research in Southern Germany demonstrates I was also able to obtain rich data. The results of the English fieldwork are presented in the next two chapters.

Chapter 6: Analysis of the Character and Ethos of Four English Schools

We don't do RE if it's sunny – we do PE outside. (Stuart :X school predominantly white)

In the previous two chapters I described the methodology I adopted in both England and Southern Germany. In this and the following chapter I present an analytical discussion of the English fieldwork results. The Southern Germany findings are discussed in chapter 8. The sections of this chapter provide discussion of the character of each of the four English schools, coded R, D, X and B¹ :

1. School D (high proportion minority ethnic)
2. School R (high proportion minority ethnic)
3. School X (predominantly white)
4. School B (predominantly white)
5. Ofsted reports and Religious Education subject leadership
6. Interim report feedback to schools

From the raw data of my fieldnotes five themes emerged as being significant (Strauss and Corbin 1998)². The discussion here is built around these key themes namely:

- Relationships between staff and children
- Lunchtimes and playtimes
- Assemblies
- Curriculum issues
- Sketches of children (based on background information sheets plus observations)

1 D School – High Proportion Minority Ethnic, City Location.

School D is set amidst well-established red brick terraced housing inhabited predominantly by British Asians. The school building is Victorian with some modern extensions. It has a large playground surrounded by small grassy areas and also has a very pleasant seated area amongst trees.

¹ I use protective pseudonyms for all schools, staff and children throughout the thesis (BERA 2004; David et al 2001).

² These themes related closely to my aims and research questions. A matrix providing a synergy of aims, research questions, methodology and findings is presented in chapter 7 (matrix table 7.2).

During my initial visit the headteacher Mrs Winter, white, was very keen to participate in the research. However the two Year 5 staff seemed less keen, Mr Millan and Mrs Moser, both white, sat virtually silently throughout our first discussion. The EMTAG (ethnic minority and traveller achievement grant) teacher Mr B, of Asian heritage, spoke at length about his role³. Mrs Winter was able to provide me with a sheet outlining the number of children in receipt of free school meals, those with English as an additional language, children's ethnic origin and the gender make up of the present Year 5 cohort. The figures were compiled in the summer when the children were still in year 4. This data illustrates the high proportion of Pakistani (42%) and Indian children (27%) compared with white (16%), African-Caribbean (3%) and others (11%). However it must be remembered that these statistics relate to parental designation of a particular heritage. The majority of the Pakistani heritage children were Muslim and the Indian heritage children were mostly Sikh.

The school is a large primary with 475 on roll increasing to 520 in the Summer⁴ with the joining of new reception children. The Year 5 cohort of 74 children had 18 children (24%) in receipt of free school meals. Fifty three children (72%) spoke English as an additional language and the most common first language spoken was Gujarati. There were 39 girls (53%) and 35 boys (47%).

The opening welcome page in D school's prospectus for parents was written in English, Punjabi and Arabic, and Mrs Winter stressed the vital role played by parents and the school in their child's education,

The more we work towards a partnership of learning, the more your children will enjoy school and be successful in school. (D school prospectus page 4)

1.1 Relationships between Staff and Children - D school

In this section I select a few incidents which I believe characterise the relationships between different staff and children in D school. I have presented some evidence about Mr Millan in the previous chapters when I discussed my methodology. I add some further insights here.

³ See http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/whats_new/ for information about these grants.

⁴ In the year 2001

When I first arrived in Mr Millan's class in school D, he was keen to tell me about the make up of the group and how the school had changed over the 23 years he had been there. Mr Millan described D school's intake when he first began teaching there, as

50% African Caribbean 30% white 20% Asian mainly Sikh. Now it's mostly Muslim and Sikh with very few African Caribbean. Now it's mainly mixed race.

Mr Millan said that the top group in D school would probably be the middle group in other schools. He said the whites are

mainly from one parent families – that's why they are here. (D fieldnotes page 1)

I interpreted this to mean Mr Millan was suggesting that the white children at D school were, on the whole, less intelligent than white children in other schools. One might also deduce that Mr Millan thought that the whole cohort of children both white and minority ethnic were less intelligent than a cohort in a typical white school. Throughout my time at D school Mr Millan made various comments about the children's ability and ethnicity which all pointed to his constant need to 'rank' children in some way, sometimes negatively.

One day one child from Mr Millan's class returned after an extended visit to Pakistan. Mr Millan greeted the child with the comment

You are looking well. Lost some weight? Usually do when you go away. Were you poorly?

While well meaning, I believe Mr Millan was inadvertently sending out implicit messages that when British Asian children return to the country of their heritage, the expectation is that they will not fare as well in this culture. Thus there is some inherent belief in the privilege of English as opposed to Pakistani lifestyle. The expectation is that in this country you thrive, whereas in Pakistan you are "poorly" lose weight and do not thrive (D fieldnotes page 6). Yet this perception may well have been endorsed by the children themselves because on the journey to and from the local museum,⁵ several British Asian children of Pakistani heritage were talking about life in Pakistan and how their teachers were cruel and threw chalk and board rubbers at them. However another child, Mujtaba, admitted that his family owned a huge house in Pakistan and yet in this country they lived in a small terraced home (D fieldnotes).

Mr Millan was subject leader for Physical Education (PE) and was very strict during these lessons. He commented that the more able worked on the right hand side, the

⁵ An out of school visit which I attended during my research visit.

less able on the left. Both Tazia and Zoe changed for PE and Mr Millan remarked that Tazia was one of the best athletes and how good it was to,

get rid of the veils- it's a real release for them.

Thus he sees these girls in terms of athletes who were being held back by their religion, which, for him, was not as important as sport.

Mrs Moser, the other Year 5 teacher, is a member of the Senior Management Team. Her attitude towards one girl was summed up in the following incident. She was in mid flow in a literacy lesson when Melissa (African Caribbean girl) came in late and was reprimanded by Mrs Moser. Melissa whispered to a friend and was instantly asked to sit at the front. She accidentally knocked into a bin (she was cramped) and was asked if she wanted to stay in at lunchtime (D fieldnotes page 6). Melissa was described by both Mr Millan and Mrs Moser as a 'troublemaker' and their expectations for her to act as such reinforced their assumptions. Mr Millan described her as

a right pain. The children have to take it in turns to have her on their table.

Connolly (1998) has noted such behaviour, as I discussed earlier in chapter 4, where African Caribbean children were stereotyped (Wright 1998; Blair 1998; Sewell 2000). 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 did not seem to be value free.

1.2 Lunchtimes and Playtimes – D school

In this section I highlight some playtime and lunchtime incidents which I considered significant. D school's headteacher, Mrs Winter, was very committed to promoting different cultures. She had many minority ethnic staff and Mr B (of Asian heritage) was in charge of EMTAG (Ethnic minority and Traveller's achievement grant) (DfES 2007). The school had opted out of Local Authority (LA) school lunches and the catering team made their own food. They were thus able to include cultural dishes and one of the days I visited the school a "Vaisaki special" Dhal dish was on the menu. The children I sat with at lunch were articulate and lunchtime was a social event: the atmosphere was happy, relaxed and the children chatted to each other and to the staff. There were, unusually for schools, vases of flowers on the tables. Thus the atmosphere being created was one of an enjoyable social event rather than an activity

to be finished as painlessly and quickly as possible (which was the ethos of lunchtime at X school, which I discuss later in this chapter).

One lunchtime I sat next to Ahmed who told me all about Allah and the Devil. He explained that,

if you kill a spider you get punished.... if you go to heaven you get what you want , for example playstations! Whereas if you go to hell you get burnt and come alive again get burnt and come alive again.

Ahmed realised that non adherence to Muslim rules was sometimes permissible. For example Ahmed said he had,

an injection [grommet] in my ears and am not allowed to wash or go swimming but I know that Allah wouldn't punish me for that because I couldn't help it!

When I began to describe this incident to Mrs Moser and another teacher in the staffroom they knew exactly who I was talking about and said knowingly that his father was "even worse." I felt this implied that fervent proselytising, especially for Islam, was not to be viewed in a positive light.

At break times Mr Millan played music tapes for the children to listen to. Playtimes were well organised with numerous resources available for the children, for example, skipping ropes, stilts and hoops. They could also hire small play equipment, for example bats and balls. This organised play ensured that the children were usually well engaged so that they did not become bored. In my teaching experience boredom is often a contributory factor in bullying and racist behaviour.

1.3 Assemblies - D school

My observations of assemblies often provided me with rich data because head teachers seem to use them to communicate their philosophies. Much teaching and learning about culture, lifestyle choices and other citizenship issues often takes place during assembly time. Thus they are a good indicator of the ethos of the school. This was certainly the case in D school. Mrs Winter was keen to stress that a healthy mind and healthy body are to be prized and she spoke about this in an assembly where she promoted the Fruit Scheme⁶. She said

Of all the things that you might own the one thing that is totally yours is your body. It remains yours and changes with you. You need to help it to be healthy.

⁶ The Fruit Scheme, introduced and funded by the government in 2002, ensured that every child in infant classes was provided with one piece of fresh fruit each day with a view to encouraging children to develop more healthy eating habits (School Food Trust 2007).

This was a very inclusive assembly. The school had a dispensation granted by the local SACRE⁷, thus lifting the requirement for the acts of collective worship to be “mainly or wholly of a broadly Christian nature” which is the legal requirement set out in the DfEE circular 1/94.⁸ There was no prayer in this assembly (D fieldnotes page 4).

Mr B (EMTAG co-ordinator) began an assembly with a Sikh greeting which he expected the numerous Sikh children to greet him with. They did not and rather perturbed he asked if they were ashamed of saying the Sikh greeting. After this Mr B discussed the festivities surrounding May Day. Mr B was responsible for conducting assemblies about various festivals, e.g. Id-Ul-Fitr, Christmas, Vaisaki. He talked about Maypole dancing and young girls getting up early to wash their faces in the dew. I felt that this account did not touch on the inner meaning of festivals, (as outlined in Evans-Lowndes and Owen-Cole (1992)). Also I felt that the Sikh children had been embarrassed by Mr B’s Sikh greeting and even more so by his admonishment. His assembly, I felt, merely re-enforced stereotypical thinking rather than challenging it. I do not know of many indigenous English people who wash their faces in the morning dew and join in Maypole dancing. However this teacher had been appointed to address issues of diversity and he obviously was attempting to talk about different cultures in his assemblies.

1.4 Curriculum Issues – D school

One of the subjects I looked at in all four schools in both England and Southern Germany, was Religious Education (RE) because I felt that this would give me a good idea of the status given to discussing cultural and religious issues. It was a subject which was covered in different ways in all four schools and perceived differently by different children too.

According to D school’s RE policy, RE

is not taught separately but rather as an integral part of topic work. (D

School Policies Handbook pg 14)

⁷ Standing Advisory Council for RE, highlighted earlier in chapter 1.

⁸ The current legal requirement for all state schools in England and Wales at the time of writing (Teece 2001) is that assemblies should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” (DFEE circular 1/94 cited in Teece 2001:115).

However all children make a study, during Study days⁹, of four festivals –Divali, Christmas, Eid and Vaisakhi together with another festival/event which teachers can chose, from a comprehensive list. The aim is to encourage

understanding and tolerance of each other's customs and beliefs. (Handbook pg 14)

During my lesson observations children from a variety of ability groups talked about a visit to a sea-side town, which was a predominantly white town and so contrasted with the multicultural city with which the children were familiar. Many children in D school told me about Religious Education and most spoke positively. Many of them described the study days, which had cultures, festivals and religion as a focus. This level of awareness of religions and cultures contrasts with that found at other schools, which I discuss later in this chapter.

Mr Millan taught an RE lesson on the fourth week of my visit and he wrote the words “Belief” and “Conviction” on the board. He explained that

what someone believes in is accepted as true, for example, Wayne might believe Man United are the best but he never was a good judge! (Mr Millan)

Mr Millan often used sporting examples which sometimes excluded the girls, especially if they related to football which might be thought of as a male dominated sport. In the RE lesson Mr Millan gave out a photocopy sheet which asked the children to rank several statements in order of importance (Gent and Gent 1997:115). Several children wrote “People should believe in God” in the top 3. Next came “Old people should be cared for by their families” followed by “Drinking and driving is wrong.” Many children did not rank at all or ranked lowly, “Men and Women should have the same opportunities.” Mr Millan noticed this too and commented that in this school:

boys and girls are treated fairly but in some lives that might not be the same. Some girls are not allowed to go swimming – isn't that right Zoe and Kate? [two Muslim girls].

These two girls wore the hijab (scarf), and I think Mr Millan was intimating that in Muslim culture there is still inequality. But again I felt that Mr Millan's comments while well-intentioned were in fact racist as the suggestion is that Muslim culture is inferior to Western culture because of the subjugation of women within some Muslim

⁹ At D school RE was taught mainly through Study days which happened once or twice a term. All classes abandoned their usual timetabled lessons for the day and children were sometimes mixed in year groups to work with teachers on a theme related to RE- usually a festival.

communities. Mr Millan failed to put forward the opposite viewpoint of the importance Islam places on the role of the woman as mother. He judged Islam from his own Western standpoint and this attitude he implicitly expressed to the children.

The RE co-ordinator Mr Modood, of Asian heritage, talked about RE in the school. He made it clear that the children were not celebrating the festivals which they worked on in study days but rather learnt about the festivals from different cultures. He described his role in terms of

public relations rather than study skills manager.

This is certainly in contrast with most RE co-ordinators who see themselves as curriculum leaders. I would argue that Mr Modood saw himself as a mediator between the faith communities, of which he himself is a member, and the school, which was made up of predominantly white staff and governors. I noticed that the staffroom was frequented mostly by white staff and the minority ethnic staff were rarely seen there. Mr Modood stressed the importance of his role as 'mediator' between the school and the community especially concerning:

misunderstandings between the public and the school.

He cited a case where some parents of Muslim children opposed their children attending the local church for a school event. Mr Modood interceded by contacting these parents. That year the children were engaged in a musical event to be performed at the church and very few parents objected whereas the previous year Mr Modood told me:

nine parents still said no but that was more about a problem with the teacher.

He was unwilling to elaborate on this situation. Mrs Moser had been in the classroom during my interview with Mr Modood so perhaps he felt it necessary to be confidential (France et al 2000).

Mr Modood explained that in the past they used to study Vaisakhi, Divali, Id and Christmas but this year Shabbat and Easter had been introduced to give teachers more flexibility as some had wanted to explore another religion. Mr Modood explained that when he started at D school, 10 years ago, there was a fear of causing offence. He said staff felt:

if we do an assembly about Sikhism and we make a mistake we'll probably annoy somebody.

(D school fieldnotes page 24)

He stressed that the children were learning about the religion:

we are not trying to convert.

At one point in the interview Mrs Moser interjected,

we have too many study days.

Mr Modood replied that they are part of the normal educational planning with the total adding up to no more than the Juniors spending 30 minutes class time each week and infants 25 minutes. He discussed the close liaison he had with members of an organisation in the city which provided cultural workshops and visits to local places of worship in the city. After Mr Modood had left her classroom, Mrs Moser said

There are more study days than we used to have and it got boring.

She liked the introduction of Judaisim. She felt confident about teaching on the study days and she liked the fact that there was

no recording – the work was mostly for display and so there was not so much pressure. (D fieldnotes page 25)

I was concerned about this issue of assessment from a pedagogical perspective, as it seemed to me that such an attitude towards RE would lower its status in comparison with other subjects and I discuss this later in chapter 8.

1.5 Sketches of Children – D school

Within each school a number of children stood out as particularly interesting in terms of their engagement with issues relevant to my research. I draw on evidence from a variety of sources to present these sketches here, namely fieldnotes, background information sheets and observations recorded in my journal. I show the degree to which the ethos and character of the school may have influenced the children's multicultural awareness. This is not a simple matter of causal relations, it could not be said in an unqualified sense that a high proportion minority ethnic school necessarily produces children who are anti-racist (Brown 1998; Dadzie 2000). Rather many other factors need to be taken into account (Connolly 1998).

Zena, of Asian heritage, described herself as Muslim and wore the Shalwar and Kameez (tunic and trousers), and the hijab (headscarf). This contrasts with R school where Muslim girls did not wear traditional clothes. Zena was a very conscientious girl whose work, contributions in class and in discussions with me all demonstrated a hardworking girl who found school very enjoyable but she was sometimes slow to grasp mathematical concepts yet her English was good. She sometimes gave the

impression of being anxious or unsure of herself but when talking about Islam she was very confident and knowledgeable. She said on the background information sheet that she felt scared

I kept muddling it [the questions] up- I was scared I didn't get anything wrong.

She spoke confidently in the interview and placed three beans in the pot to denote she knew a lot about British Asians, British white people and British African Caribbean. She put two beans in for British Chinese. Zena was respectful towards those of a different culture to herself but I think this was probably due to her deep respect for her own culture rather than an attitude she had learnt from school.

Gurdeep of Asian heritage, described himself as Sikh, he was one of the few British Asian children to choose a Sikh pseudonym which he said was the first name which came to mind. He wore the turban and he was a very serious, quiet and extremely polite boy. His written work was of a low ability and so I scribed for him on the background information sheet. He said he spoke to his family after the interview

I told my Dad that all religions are the same, but they [his Dad and 12 year old brother] said nothing.....[they] didn't listen to me.

Gurdeep was very proud of his religion and knew a lot about it. On the bean sheet he categorised Sikhism under "any other cultures you know about" and he put 3 beans in the pot, whereas he put 1 bean in for British Chinese and British Asian (which he interpreted as Muslim) and no beans for British white or British African Caribbean. I conclude that Gurdeep had not learnt much about religions other than his own, despite having been taught RE for 6 years through intensive study days.

Melissa of African Caribbean heritage, described herself as Jamaican and Christian. Melissa was extremely interested in the research and was also very articulate and was always keen to share her thoughts and experiences. I considered her to be a sensitive and intelligent child full of confidence and enthusiasm which sometimes bubbled over into aggression which she later regretted. I felt that my positive perception of Melissa conflicted with that of her teachers, as stated earlier. She put three beans in the pot for British Chinese and British African Caribbean and two for British Asian and British white. When writing on the background information she told me

other traditions aren't important to me, but my own [is important]. Others are not stupid it's just mine is important to me.

Her interview D1 provided some rich data; in particular the discussion of Melissa bullying Zoe (an intelligent and articulate Muslim girl who wore the hijab, of Asian

heritage). Melissa was proud of her own culture and knew a reasonable amount about other cultures which I believe she had discovered through peer interaction.

Marshall is a British African Caribbean who described his religion as Jamaican. He was a very articulate boy who was confident in all discussions with me. He described many cultures on his bean sheet in terms of the sport they played.

Asians quite like cricket. White people usually like football. I know a lot about black people because I am one myself, we also like to play football.

He put three beans in for British Asian, British white and British African Caribbean but two for British Asian. Yet on his background information sheet he wrote

[I] didn't like writing about Asians because I know nothing and I feel stupid when I don't know anything.

This also points to his lack of knowledge and understanding of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh religion despite the intensive study days. Like Gurdeep, the RE curriculum did not seem to have made a significant impact on Marshall which I believe was a missed opportunity.

The children's knowledge and understanding can also be viewed in terms of their own assessment of it. Their personalities pervaded their thoughts, actions and attitudes – like adults, children too, are complex beings. Connolly (1998) says racism cannot be divorced from gender identities. I would go further to say multicultural awareness is bound up in the child's personality, their ability, their self perception and their social class.

2 R School - High Proportion Minority Ethnic, City Location

R Junior school is located in the midst of a 1960's housing estate in a less affluent part of the city. The school building was built in 1970's and it is well maintained and spacious. It has a relatively small playground for the number of children in the school, but there is a large adjacent field on which the children were allowed to play on dry days. There is a seated area close to the school which has a few benches arranged around a couple of small trees.

During my first visit Mrs Gardon, the white Head teacher, was very keen to participate in the research, and Mrs Singh and Mr Denton seemed equally positive. Mrs Gardon spoke with pride about her school's recent successes in Ofsted inspections and benchmarking exercises but also added that she did not want the

school to become complacent especially regarding the achievement or support of minority ethnic children. Mrs Gardon admitted that

there are pockets where we could improve.

Mrs Gardon described the area in which the school was located:

It's challenging, we have aggressive parents and the Indian heritage parents are learning how to be fighters, they are caught up in the mêlée.

Mrs Gardon was obviously committed to multicultural education and had been involved in a project several years earlier to promote multicultural awareness but the project had since ceased.

There has been good practice but then it fell apart. I worked with people from the university but they all left to take up other posts and it fell apart.

Mrs Gardon mentioned another school in the city where there was a high proportion of minority ethnic children but in that school

there is no support for the Indian children. There is very little training and the teachers are unaware of the rich culture. I fear that these communities will lose their heritage. Some of the Indian women are being isolated.

She talked about initiatives in her own school, which she felt did address the needs of the community. However she explained that the EMTAG and RE co-ordinator had been on long term sick leave and a new RE co coordinator had taken over the role.

The headteacher informed me that there were 285 children on roll. I was given a sheet which itemised the ethnic background of the children, there were 21% Indian, 11% African Caribbean, 2% Pakistani and Bangladeshi and 66% white. The most common language spoken other than English was Punjabi. The majority of the minority ethnic children were Sikh with a few Muslim and a couple of Hindu children. I was also given copies of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Support Rationales (DfES 2007) for the last few years and relevant policies such as RE and also Discipline policy and procedure which included definitions of racial harassment. Cultural and RE events were given high profile and the Governor's report (2000) noted the celebration of "Major Religious Festivals" which are "built into the school calendar."

Also the school hosted "Religious Education workshops" and had "local church links" and a "weekly Christian lunchtime club open to all pupils". Concerts in school included Indian Dance and steel pans. The school prospectus's aims (page 1) articulated a conviction to develop and maintain home/school partnership and links with the community. R school had been recognised as "An Investor in People."

I noticed various differences between R and D school. For example R school's prospectus clearly outlined the recommended school dress, in the uniform policy section. 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. The school prospectus was written in English. I found this surprising given the obvious commitment Mrs Gardon had to a multicultural ethos. I think Mrs Gardon was unaware of the Western nature of the uniform but there certainly did not seem to be a deliberate ban on wearing the hijab. However this may also have reflected the religious and cultural background of the pupils and their families who may not have wanted to wear non Western dress.

2.1 Relationships between Staff and Children – R school

Mr Denton, a white teacher with responsibility for Science, arranged his classroom in a traditional way with pairs of children sitting at desks facing the board. I sat next to a white girl called Charlene on my first visit, and she spoke to me about her name which she said was unusual. Her friend Arvinder, of Asian heritage, said her name was unusual too. Thus both girls had a view of 'normal names' for example white Western names such as Susan, Alice and Rachel. Charlene scored a low mark in her spelling test and was reprimanded by Mr Denton, and I felt guilty that I had distracted her. Mr Denton seemed very keen for the children to do well academically, and was very disappointed when they did not.

I noticed that Mr Denton had a very good relationship with numerous children and joked with them. I felt that he had 'favourites' and gave these children more time to work out answers than other children. For example, Rosanne, a white girl, was often singled out by Mr Denton as being "annoying." During a history lesson he said

Rosanne you are beginning to irritate me. Look at me! If you only have silly things to say be quiet.

During a music lesson in Mr Denton's class, children on the right hand side of the class dominated the discussion about tempo and style of music after listening to some excerpts from a Compact Disc. Terri especially became very animated and called out

several times. However Rosanne called out an answer and was reprimanded by Mr Denton:

You are really beginning to annoy me Rosanne Smith.

I think Mr Denton must have realised what I was thinking as he looked at me and stated

The people over here, although over excited, have something to say which is relevant.

I was not convinced. This provided more evidence pointing to the crucial role of the teacher in promoting children's self esteem. The teacher's expectations also play a part in children's achievement (Brown 1998; Arthur et al 2006). Rosanne remained silent for the rest of the lesson. Terri continued to exuberantly shout out answers and was praised by Mr Denton.

Mrs Singh a teacher of Asian heritage, in the classroom opposite to Mr Denton, had a calm and friendly manner with the children. In contrast to Mr Denton, Mrs Singh organised the tables in her classroom for interactive groupwork. While being very supportive of Mrs Singh, Mrs Gardon nevertheless gave me the impression that Mrs Singh was under great pressure. She said

She commutes from M town [40 miles away]. She moved in the middle of term and also had a week off for a traditional arranged marriage. She lives with his family. This all happened the week before Ofsted! Also she had a car crash- I think it was, in part, due to the pressure she was under.

When talking about Mr Devon however, Mrs Gardon was full of praise

Oh he'll go far. He's well known to the Science advisors and will probably not be at this school long. He's young but up and rising.

I felt that Mrs Gardon had different expectations for these two teachers which, I felt, were related to ethnic and also gender issues.

2.2 Lunchtimes and Playtimes – R school

I was surrounded by curious children most playtimes. The children played well despite the small size of the playground. Both boys and girls talked to me about which Upper School they wanted to attend. They had 'ranked' the schools according to reputation and one child's family had moved house in order to be in the catchment area of a school deemed to be 'good'. A 'bad' school was summed up as one where bullies were unchallenged and the GCSE results were not very good.

Another topic of conversation at playtime revolved around the plans for an extension to the playground. R school had a school council which Lucy (Asian heritage) described:

We talk about what needs changing. I used to be on it before – I can't remember when. We have to talk about what would make things better.

R school children were, therefore, involved in making decisions about their environment and to a certain degree about other matters too. It is interesting to note that R, D and B school all had school councils (School Councils 2007) and I felt that in these schools there was both a) a more equal relationship between children and staff and b) there was less bullying, aggression amongst the children at playtimes and lunchtimes. X school were in the process of setting up a school council. This relates to aim 5 of the research (see matrix table 7.2)

Lunchtime was a 'civilised' affair at R school with orderly lines and children sitting in the well lit and ventilated hall to eat packed lunches or school dinners. I was not aware of halal food being on offer for school dinners. Conversation was allowed at R school and some of the Sikh children were keen to tell me about their home life and how they celebrated festivals like Vaisakhi. Such festivals were sometimes mentioned in assemblies as I describe in the next section.

2.3 Assemblies – R school

Mrs Tejpreet, the newly appointed RE subject leader, told me that on the whole the assemblies were based around Christian festivals but that other festivals from Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism were mentioned. R school was not exempt from the requirement to make assemblies "wholly broadly or mainly Christian" (DfES 1994; Teece 2001) as D school had been.

In one assembly, Mr Minden, the deputy head teacher warned the children about the cramped nature of the playground and he asked for the children to take care. He told a story about name calling and advised the children to think about the victim's response. Thus if the recipient feels hurt by the name calling then even if it was not meant cruelly it was still wrong, during this assembly there was no prayer. Children were being asked not to misbehave but, unlike at D school, no strategies were actually being put in place to engage them usefully to prevent trouble occurring. Throughout

my visit a few children talked to me about bullying but I did not notice any incidents on the playground.

Another assembly was based around the Muslim festival of Id Mubarak. Mrs Gardon talked about Mrs Tejpreet who celebrated this festival because she was Muslim and in fact her parents had been on the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca (Fisher 2002). Some children were dressed in the Muslim cap and white robe during the assembly. Mrs Gardon concluded the assembly by saying:

We celebrate all religions. We should wish Muslim children "Happy Id"
when they return to school.

The assembly was very informative and very respectful. At the end Mrs Gardon read the Muslim call to prayer and invited children to

Bow your head and if you agree with this you can say Amen.

I felt that Mrs Gardon had attempted to be inclusive in the assembly acknowledging the Muslim festival and respecting some of her Muslim pupils' absence to celebrate it at home. She was well meaning in her stance towards the prayer but 'Amen' is characteristically a Christian term and so it was as if the assembly was tokenly 'Christian.' However she said that there would be no song today as she felt it was inappropriate. I surmised it would have been taken from *Come and Praise* (Coombes and Taylor 1988) which is a Christian hymn book used in many primary schools, and the children from R school sang songs from this during hymn practice assemblies which took place once a week.

I attended one of the hymn practice assemblies and despite a lack of leadership from the two teachers at the front the children sang loudly and in tune. The teachers had to take it in turns to 'lead' hymn practice whether they had musical talent or not. All five hymns were either explicitly or implicitly Christian and thus may not have been relevant to Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and agnostic or atheist children.

Some of the less able children were taken out of assemblies for extra work with the special needs teacher. Consequently they were denied the input about Id Mubarak which was, I felt, unfortunate. One white boy in the less able group, showed some awareness of differences between Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, but there was confusion between them.

We've done about Sikhs but I don't think they're [Muslims and Sikhs] the same. The Muslims pray in a gurdwara.¹⁰

¹⁰ Muslims pray in a Mosque and Sikhs in a Gurdwara (Fisher 2002).

Another white boy, Ben, said

Sikhs have got quite a lot of gods.¹¹

A white girl, Sarah, said

[Muslims] go to mosque, they need to have a special wash...I knew that before, we had an assembly about it before.”

Another assembly revolved around the celebration of children’s work. Mrs Gardon looked carefully at several folders of work about The Romans. The children were praised for the care they had taken and I felt that all the work was genuinely being admired thus raising the children’s self esteem. This public acknowledgement of ‘good’ work is common practice in primary schools. As a former teacher I agree with this practice and am not cynical, like Connolly (1998:72), who asserts that teachers send a child to another with their work, or else it is acknowledged in assembly, with the purpose of “affirming the teacher’s competence”. I would argue that this may be the motive for some insecure teachers, but for the majority of teachers a celebration of the child’s work is meant to boost the child’s (rather than the teacher’s) self esteem.

2.4 Curriculum Issues – R school

In school R the children had mixed feelings towards RE. Gurdeep said

I hate RE it’s boring with Mr Denton. (R fieldnotes page 2)

Other children joined in this discussion and Lucy (Asian heritage) said that they had discussed Islam. Manpreet said

the last time we did RE it was about pulse rate.

Lucy (Asian heritage) corrected her

No that was Science.

Manpreet defended her ignorance

I didn’t know that because I went to India.

I had a discussion with Mrs Tejpreet, of Asian heritage, who was the RE co ordinator. She had recently taken over this role yet her skills had been recognised by the city RE advisor who asked her to contribute to the updating of the local Agreed Syllabus for RE. Mrs Tejpreet had begun to devise and introduce a comprehensive scheme of work based on the local Agreed Syllabus for RE and also particular units from QCA material. She had also written the recently ratified an RE policy for R school. The

¹¹ Possible confusion with Hindus, many of whom consider the one supreme Brahman to have many manifestations (not separate Gods in their own right which is also a misunderstanding of a Hindu conception of God). Most Sikhs believe in one ‘God’ (Fisher 2002).

policy outlined time allocation, resources, a variety of activities, planning and assessment procedures. Mrs Tejpreet explained that she did not see herself as an expert and the teachers were fully responsible for planning their individual lessons but she was in charge of the resources and could be called upon for support. She mentioned that the music curriculum included music from a variety of cultures.

As part of my classroom observations, I observed Mrs Singh's class during an art lesson. She asked the children to design book covers and it was interesting to note that she described an image of a 'cool kid' as a boy who

wears his cap back to front and has trainers.

I thought this was a very white Western image. The children talked about the recent earthquake which had happened in India. The children from R school were raising money for the victims. But some of the children had negative views towards Indians, Chris, a white boy, told me

They [Indians] ain't got proper clothes like us- trousers, shoes, socks.

A white educational co worker Mrs Smart, worked with the two Year 5 classes regularly. One of her duties was to take a small number of children to the hall where they engaged in activities from Mosely's book *Circle Time* (1996). Although I found these sessions positive on the whole (because they built up children's self esteem) I had concerns about the effects of these 'unburdening' sessions. The children were asked very personal questions and when I took part (in my 'least adult role' I participated in the group sessions), I felt uncomfortable sharing information. Mrs Smart emphasised that one should not feel pressurised into sharing, but I felt that to not participate would have been difficult. Also Mrs Smart, while well meaning and obviously having the children's best interests at heart, nevertheless assumed an authoritative role in these sessions pointing out what was 'right' and 'wrong' behaviour. For example:

Mrs Smart: If you were an animal what animal would you be?

Sam: I would be a lizard so I could spy on everyone, and, and, spy on everyone and [I'd be] camouflaged so everyone's looking for you.

James: I'd be a chimpanzee getting up to mischief

I felt awkward listening to the children's answers because they were unaware of how a psycho analytical interpretation (Flanagan 1996), of this might affect a teacher's

understanding of pupil identity. Also I felt it to be an intrusive approach. However I accept that this was a good team building strategy because the children were encouraged to be positive towards one another. Mrs Smart had told me that the reason this activity had been started was to encourage Rachel, of dual heritage white and African Caribbean background, to get along with the other children. Unfortunately Rachel was away the day I attended. During another session Rachel was present and she tried very hard to be sensitive to her partner's needs. I felt that on the whole the teacher's approach to Rachel in R school was more positive than Mr Millan's strategies with Melissa in D school (a girl of Caribbean heritage who had, like Rachel been described as presenting challenging behaviour). I discuss this issue in more detail in the next chapter.

Mrs Card, a white peripatetic teacher, came in to school to teach steel pans to groups of children. R school had a set of steel pans which had been donated by the upper school who had bought some new ones. She described the history of steel pans and spoke positively about Caribbean culture. Both the children and I thoroughly enjoyed the session. I considered this session to be multicultural education at its best; however I was not sure if every child was offered the opportunity to play.

One of the most interesting lessons I observed relating to culture was a literacy lesson taken by Mrs Singh. The text was about a traditional Asian family with a Grandpa Chatterjee who wears a dhoti¹². This family were visited by Grandpa Leicester who wears Western clothes and who is highly respected by the family who are slightly afraid of him. At the end of the story Grandpa Leicester works with Grandpa Chatterjee to make lunch and he joins him in wearing a dhoti. I realise the focus of the lesson was literacy but I felt that Mrs Singh could have used the story to explore some cultural issues. For example, were the family afraid of Grandpa Leicester because he wore a suit, was rich, did not like mess, or because he had an authoritative character? Was his Western style of dress part of this authority? What did the children think about his wearing of the dhoti at the end?

I felt Mrs Singh, especially as she was Asian herself, could have talked about her own experiences of Western versus Asian culture. But perhaps she felt this was

¹² A dhoti is a length of cloth traditionally worn by males wrapped around the loins (Fisher 2002).

inappropriate or she did not want to talk about personal matters. When I talked to Mrs Singh briefly during the lesson she said that the children at R school would have been familiar with the Asian words in the story like dhoti. However during her teacher training she had been on a placement in a rural school where

the RE advisor had had to come in to school to take certain aspects of the curriculum because the staff didn't know anything.

Indeed the children in R school had a positive attitude towards this story and when I asked them about some of the issues Deepak, of Asian heritage, and Graham, a white child, were aware of the relativity of 'normal'. During a discussion about some of the names in the story being 'funny' Graham said

It's different to our stories because it's got funny names...but it might not be funny to them. But people who's not in their illition [tradition] ...but it's funny for us.....anyone can come in this country, some people from China can come over here.

There is some degree of acknowledgement of and tolerance towards other people's cultures in Graham's comments which were also present in many of the interviews, which I discuss in the following chapter.) In the plenary Mrs Singh asked the children to think of the words which had been unfamiliar to them and asked them to think of terms from other cultures which are now common place in British culture, for example 'pizza' from Italy. I felt that this went some way to develop children's multicultural awareness however the task set was from a Western perspective as the criteria of how unfamiliar the words were was judged against a white British perspective. For example the word dhoti would not have been unfamiliar to a British Asian. Mrs Singh set a homework task for the children to write down 10 words from another culture and identify the country of origin. When this homework came in a few days later the majority of children referred to foods for example

Burgers – USA
Pitta bread- Greece
Hot dogs- America
Curry- India
Kebab- Greece
Sugar – Jamaica
Tea –China

Both Mrs Singh and I agreed that this was not very informative and that the children had stereotyped cultures. She said that because she had used pizza as an example the children latched on to this. This is an example of a well meaning activity which in fact

reinforced stereotypes. I found it ironic that this homework was set by a minority ethnic teacher who seemed to have been conditioned into Western perspectives.

I later observed an RE lesson taken by Mrs Singh about Judaism. I was impressed with her recap of the children's previous learning and her willingness to talk about her own faith.

Is there a rule which says we must follow a particular religion?I'm a Sikh
but I don't have to believe in just Sikhism.

In this session Mrs Singh was promoting a climate of openness and the children were thus encouraged to learn 'about' and 'from' religion (the two key attainment targets set out in the locally agreed syllabus for RE) (Derbyshire County Council 1999), as discussed earlier in chapter 1. They discussed similarities and differences between the belief systems previously studied. However when Mrs Singh began the work on Judaism I felt the material became divorced from the children's own experiences. She stated the aims clearly,

This term we will be looking at Judaism and each week we will build up a
fact file. Open your books, put today's date and copy from the board.

She then wrote on the board:

"The Jewish religion began about 4,000 years ago in the Middle East but has
spread to all corners of the world. It centres on the belief in one powerful God
and obeying the Torah. The Torah is the first 5 books of the Tenakh,
handwritten on a scroll and contains instructions and rules for Jewish life."

Mrs Singh asked what might have helped the religion spread, and when no one answered she said that people moved and they took it with them. Despite these dry facts (which Mrs Singh told me she downloaded from the internet) the lesson was brought alive by the showing of a miniature Torah scroll. Mrs Singh drew out the similarities between the Sikh Guru Granth Sahib and the Torah scroll.

Mrs Singh: You won't be able to understand it. I think it's [written from] right to left.
That's how we do. It's also like the Guru Granth Sahib because it gets
covered.

Throughout the lesson Mrs Singh mentioned Jewish artefacts and the children discussed similarities between other religions for example the use of symbols. She also referred to other learning, for example the star of David had been mentioned in a previous assembly about Anne Frank. Throughout this lesson Mrs Singh encouraged discussion; however, the task was not particularly challenging because the children

were asked to copy chunks of material from the board next to the correct picture on their worksheet.

Another lesson I observed in this school which raised some interesting issues was a swimming lesson. The city leisure centre had a variety of changing room facilities which had been introduced in response to requests from the community (in particular the minority ethnic community) which I thought was a good idea. For example there were changing rooms for:

Female child with male parent

Female child with female parent

Male child with female parent

Male child with male parent.

It was noticeable however that most children of Asian heritage, especially the girls, were in the lower groups for swimming and many of these children told me their mothers never swam, or did not drive so they never went to the swimming pool with them. Some of the girls of Asian heritage were very modest in the changing rooms and I would conclude that the cultural concept of female modesty in Asian culture (Badawi 1997) was in evidence here. Although none of the children explicitly mentioned this at the time I believe that this concept of modesty was noticed by the other children.

Another interesting issue concerned Rachel, of white and African Caribbean background. A white boy, Jason, on seeing Rachel emerge from the girl's changing room remarked loudly to his friends:

Rachel looks like she's been electrocuted – look at her hair!

Rachel had removed the band from her thick black hair. She looked upset and said

everyone picks on me it's annoying me.

Interestingly another African Caribbean girl, Annie, with similar hair waited until she was in the privacy of her seat on the bus before removing her band. I wondered if this was intentional. The teasing of Rachel continued on the bus,

Bill: Rachel you look like a lion.

Rachel: Gosh I hate my hair, it's annoying, everybody calls me names.

Rachel seemed to be ashamed of her appearance and directed her anger at her hair rather than at the insensitivity of the children who were calling her names. Similarly

Annie seemed embarrassed about her hair, preferring to comb it in private, away from the glance of the teasing children. The teacher in charge seemed unaware of the teasing and did not intervene. I found it hard not to say anything but remained silent because I wanted to maintain my 'least adult' role. This was an example of an ethical dilemma a researcher has to manage.

Another interesting lesson I observed in this school was led by Mr Denton, about the Aztecs. The discussion centred around 'fact' and 'opinion'. Mr Denton told the class that the Aztecs sacrificed humans tearing out their hearts. Everyone gasped,

All: How cruel.

But Mr Denton went on to explain that that had been the response of his teachers when he was at school but that now he wanted the children to consider why the Aztecs did this and he explained

They thought that the sun would not rise if they didn't sacrifice.

The children came to the conclusion that in the European's opinion this act was barbaric but to the Aztecs it was acceptable. Raymond called out

The Aztecs did it because it's their religion

The children who had been interviewed by me smiled at me and called out,

Rachel, Harvir, Terri, Toxic and other children: their culture!

I thought Terri's comment was very interesting,

We're on the Aztec's side because we're doing about the Aztecs. But really we should be on the European's side.

Also Terri's comment was very perceptive because she was aware that facts are interpreted from different perspectives. But also she considered her own perspective and engaged with the debate with reference to her own identity. Thus she was involving herself in the debate rather than taking on the role of neutral observer and in this way, I would argue, she fully understood the notion of opinion.

Mr Denton discussed the fact that we no longer hold erroneous views because we are more informed:

Now we have computers and TV we know pretty much what others are like.

Mr Denton and Toxic¹³ discussed the origin of skin colour deducing that the nearer to the equator the darker the skin but that people with dark skins who come to live near the North pole do not suddenly become white.

¹³ Children chose their own pseudonyms (David et al 2001).

The discussion moved to the domination of one culture over another and the enforcement of Christianity on the dwindling Aztec population. Mr Denton stated

History isn't just fact. It's usually one group of people telling others what to do.....What's good for one group you can bet is not good for another.

I spoke to individual children about this asking what they thought about one culture, i.e. the Spaniards imposing their religion and culture onto another group i.e. the Aztecs. Toxic of dual heritage, white and African Caribbean said,

The Spanish made the Aztecs be Christian.....the Aztecs were living happily with their own religion. The Spanish made them believe in Christianity because nearly the whole of Europe believed in Christianity, so they thought they'd make the whole world believe in Christianity. The Spanish believed in the one and only God called God. They wanted to try to stop them breaking one of the commandments – don't kill. I think that was a good idea.....South Americans turned into strong Christians.

I asked Toxic why the Aztecs did not refuse to turn to Christianity, he said

Because they wanted to live on. They were down to 2 million, so they probably just went along with it.

Toxic had told me in the taped interview that he was a strong Christian, and so I asked him if his own Christian belief had made a difference to the way he looked at the story. He replied

Not really because the Aztecs had their own religion and they were happy with it. If I was [had been] an Aztec I would have p...disagreed, protested. I wouldn't mind if I got killed I'd protest to keep my religion. I wouldn't let anyone do that [force me to convert].

Thus, despite being a strong adherent of Christianity, Toxic was able to put himself in the shoes of the Aztecs and empathise with their loyalty to their religion – even though this in fact was contrary to Christianity to which Toxic was personally loyal.

I asked Terri about this issue, she said,

I don't think anybody should be persuaded to change their beliefs, even sacrifice, if they believe in it....But I wouldn't have liked to have lived in those times

I wondered whether Mr Denton's 'politically correct' presentation of Aztecs as being the 'injured' party had influenced the children's interpretations. Certainly Terri had questioned this. But many of the Asian heritage children felt sympathetic towards the Aztecs as Manpreet said

You really should follow your own religion.....You should pray to your own God, He's given you everything..... Now[adays] we've got one God. Say I'm a Sikh and you're a Christian, we would all have one God. Christians have Jesus and Sikhs have Guru Nanak. I'm not quite sure [about Hindus] they have

Rama and Sita- I'm not Hindu.

The children had a clear sense of justice, most said they did not think it was fair to force the Aztecs to abandon their culture and religion.

2.5 Sketches of children – R school

Terri, a white girl, was in the top sets for both literacy and maths. She was confident and well liked by the teachers. Mrs Smart the educational co worker told me how remarkably confident Terri was, given that her father had left home, and her sister was anorexic. Terri wrote on her background information sheet,

I liked being able to write my own opinion on paper, I didn't like it when I didn't know what to put. I liked it because it was a new experience and I got to eat jelly beans. I didn't like it when I couldn't say my own opinion. When people said things and then we moved on so I couldn't say my opinion.

Terri was, I believe, a good example of an anti-racist child who had an innate sense of 'equality'. The teachers respected and liked Terri. In turn Terri demonstrated a respectful attitude.

Harvir, on the background information sheet, described the birthplaces of her mum and dad and said

I have brown skin

She was in the top sets for maths and literacy and was a confident and articulate girl. She also wrote on the sheet,

I didn't like it because I felt like I didn't know much. I felt like I was thick!! I liked the interview because I could share my feelings with Ms Elton-Chalcraft about other cultures.

Like Terri, Harvir was a very respectful girl and the ethos of the school may have played a part in re enforcing this attitude.

Rachel, a girl of dual heritage, white and African Caribbean, described herself as 'half caste' on the background information sheet. Rachel was in the middle sets for literacy and maths. Sometimes Rachel was very happy and at other times she went quiet or became aggressive. The teachers were positive towards her and Mrs Smart the co education worker had spent a lot of time working with her building her confidence. Thus Rachel was supported by the teachers and was encouraged to be positive and not aggressive in pro active ways. This is in contrast with Melissa in D school who seemed to have been 'written off' by some of the teachers rather than supported, despite the fact that the ethos of D school was equally caring.

Toxic, a boy of dual heritage white and African Caribbean described himself as ‘half caste’. He was in the top sets for maths and literacy. A confident and articulate boy he wrote on his background information sheet,

I liked to be picked and it kept me occupied. It made me feel I was wanted even more than I am now. I liked to be famous and be in a published book.

Like most children in R school Toxic had high self esteem and he was also anti-racist.

Francesca described her ethnicity and religion as respectively

“Light brown, from Gujerat” and “Gujerati”

In the taped interview she told me she was Hindu. Francesca was a quiet girl but often described situations to me where she was teased. I got the impression she thought of herself as different – being one of the few Hindus at R school. Her teachers sometimes were exasperated by her. Mr Denton said:

she has an obsession with being picked on.

Francesca was in the top sets for Maths and literacy. Thus despite Francesca’s ability being similar to Terri and Harvir, she was not confident and had low self esteem. I felt that because some of the teachers were not positive towards her she was not able to access the caring ethos of R school.

3 X school – Predominantly White, Outskirts of a Town

X school has modern buildings set amidst an extensive playground and playing field area. During my initial visit I met the acting Headteacher Mr Penny (formerly a year 5/6 teacher), and two Year 5/6 teachers Mrs Kelly and Ms Howard. When I commenced my research 6 months later a new acting Headteacher had been appointed to X school by the LA on a temporary basis, a Mr Hans (a headteacher from another school in the county). Ms Howard had left and Mr Penny had returned to his post of Year 5/6 teacher.¹⁴

Most staff seemed to be highly committed and very professional but the implications of the original headteacher's long term sick leave had had a detrimental effect. Mr Hans informed me that although the state of children's multicultural awareness and the delivery of Religious Education were causes for concern they were not priorities for him at that time as he felt it more important to put other systems in place which had been neglected. Mr Hans said

PSHE and RE are important but are not a priority. I have a different brief from the LEA for the next 6 months.

As part of the teaching strategy Mr Hans was keen on Circle time

We did this a lot in my previous school, I have lots of information about it and it needs to be set up here. We had an INSET on PSHE from a person who has now left the school. Without someone at the helm it's not necessarily going anywhere.

He also recognised that assemblies needed to be more explicitly Christian and also include stories from other faiths too.

At the moment they all 'do their own thing' and that's something that Ofsted pick up on.

Mr Hans told me of a recent input of Personal, Social and Health Education (Oliver 2000) In-Service training for the staff, which had brought about a "sea change". He was also hopeful that my research would be two way and I would disseminate to staff techniques to encourage multicultural awareness. He felt that this predominantly white school had

a different set of problems to a multicultural school which was at an advantage in the first place because of the cultural exchange between pupils.

¹⁴ When I wanted to return to X school to present the Interim report a new headteacher, Mr Chalk, had been instated but he was unable to offer me a time slot to visit the school and discuss the interim report with the children and staff. Thus I had to send written reports to X school staff asking for teachers to comment. Unfortunately I received no replies.

At the end of my research in X school I brought into school a variety of PSHE and RE policies from other schools in which I had worked. I also gave staff booklists and information about multicultural resources to support the future development of multicultural education at X school.

I was only able to access limited data about this particular school population because of access problems.¹⁵ There were 249 children on roll in this junior school, 113 girls and 133 boys. From observation I estimated 97% of the school were white and 1% of dual heritage, Pakistani and white, 2% dual heritage African Caribbean and white.

There had been an arson attack on Mrs Kelly's classroom in between my initial visit and when I started the research which, I was told, had been started by a former pupil. All of the children's work had been destroyed in the fire. Mrs Hart, the educational co worker, told me it had really upset Mrs Kelly. Mrs Kelly was a caring teacher but nevertheless, like the majority of the teachers at X school, she used 'shouting' and firm reprimands to maintain discipline.

3.1 Relationships between Staff and Children – X school

Whilst observing an art lesson four boys talked to me about some of the teachers they liked, one of whom had brought in his baby for them to see. I felt they were talking in a fairly relaxed way but when their teacher Mr Penny came to look at their art work they were very reticent. He said:

So long as you like what you're doing... Hardly anyone claims to be any good...like Maths it's good to enjoy it even if you're not good at it.

Thus implying that their work was not of a very good standard, and also demonstrating his low expectation of their work (Brown 1998; Arthur et al 2006).

A Year 3 teacher, described the socio economic background of the children at X school in the following way:

Some of the kids are from Manchester. Their families didn't pay their rates and so they moved them all here. X town is a real mix. For example once I did a sex education lesson with Year 5 and some of the kids knew everything. Whereas others- I felt really mean telling them, it would have been better if they'd have been left.

¹⁵ The X school secretary would not give me any information without the headteacher's approval, yet even though I gained this, she nevertheless denied me access to some information.

I deduced therefore that this teacher was of the opinion that the ‘rough’ children ‘from Manchester’ knew about reproduction and had thus lost their innocence.

When observing a literacy lesson Mrs Lawton repeatedly shouted at the children to be quiet.

How long do I have to wait! Caroline the longer I have to count up and down in 5's.... Lucas you can stop being so clever and counting backwards.

There are some very, very rude children in this class who don't know when they're allowed to talk.

I noticed that even when other children were also inattentive, Lucas was always singled out. During another literacy lesson Mrs Lawton did praise some of the children for their performance of “Gran can you rap!” However some of the compliments were backhanded –

Colin you've got a merit – your first one- you actually finished! Which is more than you did Ruby. Colin actually finished which is a bit of a change!

Similarly while observing Registration one morning Mr Penny spoke severely to Toni about being late. Toni displayed subdued and submissive body language as Mr Penny said:

Make sure you get here on time.

Mr Penny asked children to line up to go to Mrs Kelly's class for a video, he sternly rebuked those who were not in line. The children stood very still as Mr Penny passed. I felt the children were obedient through fear of Mr Penny who was a tall, well built white man.

On another occasion Mandy told me about a residential visit to the Isle of Wight which had been organised for upper Key Stage 2 children but which had been cancelled, she said

There were loads of naughty children so it was cancelled.

Thus the ethos at X school was one of authoritative teacher and subservient child (Jenkins 1993; James 1995). I did not observe a caring ethos which characterised D and R school. However I visited X school at a time of transition between different headteachers and perhaps teachers felt discipline had to be maintained in an authoritative way with their challenging pupils.

3.2 Lunchtimes and Playtimes- X school

During the first breaktime at X school I noticed the children were anxious to be allowed on to the field. Initially they played on the playground and then, when a teacher came out and blew a whistle, this signalled permission to go on to the field. The field was dominated by boys playing football. The girls were predominantly situated on the playground (with the non-football playing boys). During one playtime a football rolled to me, I kicked it and was ignored. It was as if 'non-football players' did not exist. During my six weeks at X school I became aware of the 'in set' of footballers who constituted the 'gang'. Two boys talked to me about the 'gang' of which they were not members.

The 'gang' tease us.

I asked why they were not members of the gang and if any girls were in the gang.

If they don't let us in, which they often don't, I don't think they'd let girls in.

The assumption was that this gang was made up of only the fittest and most skilful male footballers. Also some of the 'gang' were more tolerant than other members

I scored a goal once – Mark M lets me play but Dean doesn't. Dean hates me.

If they are playing with Mark's football then Mark lets me play.

One lunchtime the 'gang' had not got a football and I noticed other forms of play which included playfighting, competitive running games and pushing games. I have noticed, from my previous experience, that in some schools 'contact' or 'domination' games are strictly forbidden because these types of play often result in injuries. Also many teachers feel they are very masculine and large areas are dominated by boys playing these sorts of games resulting in female and/or quiet activities being marginalised.

The children also told me about an 'Anti-bullying' strategy where children wore anti-bullying mentor badges which signified them as children who could be approached when an incident occurred. Some of the children were, however, cynical about this scheme as one of the anti-bullying mentors was himself, in their view, a bully. However one of the Year 6 bully mentors said,

There was a bully who wrote [to apply to be a bully mentor], and got chosen,

and he's not a bully anymore. It's snapped his brain out of bullying. (John)

Another distinctive feature I noticed in X school was that the children were more 'street-wise'; that is, many were more advanced in certain respects, including dress

and attitudes towards those of the opposite sex. During one lunchtime many of the children came up to me and said, “I fancy her/him.” I noticed also that very few of the children wore school sweatshirts, most wore jeans/shorts/ skirts and T shirts. A few of the girls and boys wore ‘designer’ or ‘fashion’ clothes. Lisette commented

There is a school uniform but no-one wears it.

Cassie told me some of the rules about dress

You’re not allowed jewellery in school. You can have plain sleepers [in your ears] if necessary. No shoulders or midriff bear.

Interestingly this type of rule had not been necessary in any of the other schools I visited as children did not seem inclined to wear such clothes.

During a lunchtime I sat with two boys. The dining area was small, dark and not well ventilated. The dinner supervisors were strict about noise. I deduced that even a limited amount of noise in this small area might have been too loud, but this meant that lunchtimes were not the social occasions that they were in R and D schools.

3.3 Assemblies - X school

The first assembly I attended in X school was also the first for Mr Hans. All the staff left the assembly (which, Mr Hans told me afterwards, he had not expected). The children were slow to settle and Mr Hans appealed to the children

Show to me the courtesy I show to you.

He told some traditional stories of ‘the sun and the wind’ and ‘the man and the donkey’ but left the children to work out the meanings. Throughout my time at X school I noticed several teachers (mostly supply) using raised voices with the children. In contrast Mr Hans’ style was more quietly powerful and I could see why he liked the sun and wind story¹⁶. However the children seemed more used to being shouted at and as the assembly progressed I felt it necessary to withdraw and let Mr Hans establish his relationship with the children without another adult observing him. Before I left he said a prayer,

Hands together eyes closed, Dear Lord, help us to be sensible.

A few days later Mr Hans was very anxious to tell me how uncomfortable he had felt about the assembly and remarked that in future all staff would attend these events.

¹⁶ The sun and wind story points out that the calm but powerful sun can make a person take off their coat whereas the wild and raging wind achieves the opposite – the person buttons up their coat even tighter. I have used this story to discuss RE heroes (Elton-Chalcraft 2004).

Sport played an important role in many assemblies at X school. For example one assembly began with a hymn practice, of Christian hymns, followed by a lengthy discussion of the rugby tournament which X school did not win. David sitting by me shouted:

Because St C's [school] cheat

The theme of sport was continued by Mrs Kelly who talked to the children about picking teams for rounders and she concluded by reminding the children,

When you're going out you're still part of this team.

The children joined together in saying "the Lord's prayer". They left the hall quietly: the quietist line was sent out first.

The sporting theme was in evidence in another assembly taken by Mr Penny where the school was divided up and there was a competition to see which side could sing the loudest. Mr Penny talked about 'sportsmanship'. He corrected himself once using sportspersonship but reverted to sportsmanship for the rest of the assembly.

This time of year it's good to get outside....If you're not good at sport it doesn't matter. You can be good even if you are hopeless- it's how you play that matters- your attitude. Some adults give a bad example. It's up to the schools to put the balance right.

Mr Penny told a story about some famous sportsmen (both men) and concluded by saying that

Whoever wins it's important to give your opponent a clap. Next time if you lose give them a clap. If you win give the losers a clap. Now give me a clap!

Mr Penny finished the assembly with a short prayer about making the best of all opportunities followed by the Lord's prayer.

A few days after this assembly, children in Mr Norris's class were discussing SATs during a literacy lesson and Mr Norris emphasised that these national tests were not the only indicators of success he said,

You might be a good sportsman, I mean sportsperson

One child had obviously been listening to the assembly

That's what we did in assembly, the biggest cheaters always get found out!

On another occasion Mr Norris tried to make the point that children have other interests outside school but in so doing actually undermined a particular child's confidence.

Evie you play an instrument out of school don't you? She's too shy to admit it.

However Evie retorted

I did say it but you didn't hear me.

In other words the teacher expectation that Evie would be too shy to declare her talent made her invisible to Mr Norris.

3.4 Curriculum Issues – X school

When observing a Games lesson I stood with the children as they waited for their turn to bat at rounders. One white boy, James, told me that ,

often we have boys against girls, or sometimes in houses.

This practice of boys against girls has been abandoned in most schools with new thinking about equal opportunities issues where grouping by gender is discouraged (Moyles 1995). Alison had noted

I'm a bit nervous about races because it's against boys.

The children were very interested in my notes and were keen to tell me about themselves as they waited in the queue. I noticed that the children rarely communicated with adults about their own lives. Communication seemed to revolve mainly around the task set or discipline issues.

Most days the children did games in the afternoon and I observed many of these lessons. I thought it odd that other curriculum subjects, such as RE, Music and Geography did not seem to be taught during my 6 week visit. However the visit was towards the end of the summer term and it was very warm, so I suspected that staff decided to abandon these subjects in favour of games sessions outside. When I asked staff they said that RE had been timetabled the previous half term. Mrs Kelly admitted that

No one is specifically in charge of RE. There was someone who was ill and then went to another school.

Similarly Mr Hans confided that

There is no RE co ordinator – well there was a fundamentalist but I felt that would be inappropriate.

When I asked the children they could not remember doing any RE since the Autumn term, or in some cases the previous year. Two girls informed me

Mandy: Instead of music we do circle time.

Sarah: There is orchestra on Friday afternoons.

This obviously only involved the children who played an instrument. Ben noted

We don't do Geography no more. We do have hymn practice.

When another child showed her timetable they added

Simon: We do RE sometimes.

James: We did God and stuff, the Jews, different religions, the Jewish religion. But we did it so long ago I've forgotten. We haven't got new RE books they got burnt in the fire. We looked at certain beliefs- one was the Buddha.

Stuart: We don't do RE if it's sunny - we do PE outside. In RE we watch a video of Islam, Buddha, allsorts. We watch the video and write down what we've watched.

Martha: What's Buddha?

Stuart: He wasn't a king, he was.... - a prince at one time, he meditated people. We go into Mrs Kelly's room. We do RE with the opposite teacher and swap RE and PE.¹⁷

Thus Mrs Kelly took most of the RE lessons while Mr Penny took the PE, except if it was sunny when everyone went outside for games.

I asked another group of children about the provision of RE in the school

Mike: RE we don't really do it much now.

Kevin: God is dead now. It's really crazy but we don't do it much now, not sure why, it just stopped suddenly. We did loads nearly every day.

Mike: When did we do loads?

Kevin: Until this year started, we did about religions, Buddha and stuff.

Louise: We learn about other religions, celebrations and how they live. We've not done it for a while, we've not watched any videos.

In discussion with another group Lara commented

Lara: RE stands for Religious Exercises. It's really boring. We watch videos and write stuff off sheets filling in the missing word about Pharaohs like Buddha.

Kim: Not Pharaohs – that's history. We did symbols in religions, like the cross and the circle with dots in ying yang. I don't know ...I think it means peace. I know a lot about what we dream about.

Silas: She's not human they probed her – she's an alien.

Thus to acknowledge any interest in dreams or religious symbols was, for Silas, unusual and 'not normal.' I felt that this summed up the parochial climate at X school where there seemed to be an ethos of the acceptable 'normal' (characterized I would argue by white Western privilege and bourgeoisie attitudes); and the unacceptable, 'unusual' (characterised by the spiritual, minority ethnic, alternative lifestyle).

During a quiet reading session Mrs Kelly had a tape on by the group the Eurythmics which the children said was unusual during lesson times but was often used during art lessons. The atmosphere was relaxed and the children obviously enjoyed the reading

¹⁷ I made detailed notes during lesson observations which I wrote up more fully each evening.

session, they were sitting comfortably engaged in their books. On the wall were wax pastel pictures of Aboriginal 'Dreamtime'. The children told me Mrs Kelly gave out some postcards with Aboriginal dreamtime scenes which they used as inspiration to draw their own. They could not remember having a discussion about these Aboriginal pictures and no one could tell me about the spiritual context of 'dreamtime' but this may have been because they had forgotten.

During a history lesson the children watched a 30 year old video and were asked to identify the differences between then and now. Many children noticed health and safety issues at an old factory which they commented would not be permissible nowadays. One girl noticed the absence of women throughout the whole programme. Thus the children were aware of gender issues but no one mentioned ethnicity. The teachers did not comment that minority ethnic communities were not represented in the documentary which I felt was a missed opportunity.

Mr Norris, a supply teacher for the term, discussed imperial and metric measurements in a maths lesson. He said

We think of America as being dead modern but in fact uses this ancient imperial measurement of 12 inches make a foot, a dozen and so on....Whereas we use metric which is easier. It's to do with where we live....We invented miles but because we're near Europe, Italy and France, we use metric. Americans aren't European. They don't use kilograms, they use tonnes - which is old fashioned.

Mr Norris was challenging the stereotype of the superiority of Western, American culture. However the children did not engage in this discussion: Mr Norris just gave, what I felt to be his 'polemic'.

In a discussion with a group from Mr Norris's class Simon said

We did Islamic patterns in Maths with Mr Norris.

Thus Mr Norris seemed aware of different cultures and endeavoured to present diversity in his teaching. Mr Norris's literacy lesson involved the children discussing vivisection and also the advantages of using animals to find cures for serious illnesses. He commented

You don't need make up and perfume but if your parents were dying would you use a treatment tested on animals?

I felt the children were not being presented with both sides of the argument but nevertheless Mr Norris did address such controversial issues.

At the end of this phase of the research I collected together X school policies and other information from the PSHE INSETs which Mr Hans gave me. I felt that these pointed to good practice in principle but in some classrooms these did not seem, to me, to be implemented in practice. Each policy itemised the responsibilities for the co-ordinator, how the subject related to other subjects, planning, resources, equal opportunities, assessment and effectiveness indicators. The Music and History policies did make mention of other cultures, for example in the Music equal opportunities section,

Music is taught to all children regardless of their ability, gender, race or cultural background. Stereotypical views are challenged and we encourage pupils to appreciate and view positively differences in others. The programme of study includes themes and subjects based on the music of non-Western cultures.

Significantly there was no RE policy. In Year 5 RE was timetabled for 25 mins on a Friday afternoon between games and assembly. I did not observe any RE lesson. I did observe numerous Games lessons however.

3.5 Sketches of Children – X school

Toni described himself as Italian. On his first meeting with me he said

I'm not from this country – I come from Italy.

I found Toni to be humorous, intelligent, articulate and he voiced well thought through opinions in the semi structured interview. However whenever I witnessed Toni in the presence of Mr Penny he always had his head bowed and was often being reprimanded for some misdemeanour or other. I felt the authoritarian ethos of the school did not seem to have influenced Toni's egalitarian and anti-racist attitude.

Lisette, a white girl, was polite and articulate, and related well to the other two girls in her group- Violet and Tanith (also white). All three girls were discrete and made no comment about the supply teacher whose shouting could be heard during the semi structured interview. She described her heritage/ethnicity as "English, British" and her religion "Christianity" however she did not attend church regularly. Interestingly only Lisette and Saz said they were Christian (Violet said she "sort of believed in God"). All the other children in X school wrote in the "Religion" section "none".

Saz was a white boy who had stayed in the Infants class for an extra year and so was actually a year older than his classmates. The teaching assistant ascribed to work with Saz explained that this was because of his learning difficulties and his demanding behaviour. During the semi structured interview Saz was articulate and had strong opinions. He also said he was Christian although he did not say he attended church regularly. He presented anti-racist attitudes.

Finally I present analysis of the data collected from the fourth and final school, B school.

4 B school- Predominantly White, City Location

B school, the fourth and final school in the English study, is located in the middle of a 1930's housing estate in a less affluent part of the city. The local community is predominantly white. The school building is Victorian, well maintained and spacious. There was a relatively small playground for the junior children. A nearby field was available for use by the school for sport's activities but not for playing on at breaktime and lunchtime.

During my first visit Mrs Kite, the head teacher, was enthusiastic about taking part in the research. She was personally interested in Cultural Diversity and drew my attention to the local LA manual *Managing Cultural Diversity* (Derby City Council 2000). She had attended a course run by the LA advisor for RE and Citizenship based on this manual. She told me that a few years earlier

The juniors failed their Ofsted. It was a difficult time. I was asked to be head of the Juniors and the infants- the schools amalgamated. It was a difficult time. But now we are moving forward. There was anxiety but we're getting there.

A new RE co ordinator had been appointed recently who was very enthusiastic. During a discussion with me she showed me a scheme of work she had produced and notes for teachers to support the teaching and learning. This RE co ordinator was a reception teacher and the notes were very comprehensive for the Foundation stage and the Infants, and firmly anchored in the local agreed syllabus. However the Junior RE programme just had a series of questions taken from the QCA material, which is non statutory e.g. "Where did the Christian Bible come from?" "Why is Muhammed important to Muslims?" (QCA 2000).

Another teacher had had experience working on a citizenship programme which had run in the city 11 years ago and she was also keen to discuss multicultural awareness issues with me. She and her partner had been involved in the Racism part of the programme.

My partner is still involved now. (Mrs Jones)

However this teacher had not communicated her experiences with other members of staff and lamented the fact that

Not many people are interested in this type of stuff.

As I walked around the school I noticed various multicultural displays. Year 1's display about the festival Divali had "Happy Divali" written in English, Punjabi, Bengali and Hindi. There were Mendhi patterns which children had completed in sewing lessons. A book display in the hall included *Amazing Grace* (Hoffman and Binch 1994) in English and Urdu. There was also the Big book *A is for Africa* (Onyefulu 1999). Both these books present positive views of African culture.

I was told that there were 294 children in the infants and juniors, of which 195 were in the Juniors. There were 61 Year 5 children organised into three classes, one class of Year 5 children taken by Mrs Pink, one Year 5 class taken by Mrs Reade and a mixed Year 5 and 6 class taken by Mrs Port. I was told that of the 294 children 143 received free school meals. This suggests a high proportion of children were from low socio economic backgrounds. I would estimate that 5% of children came from a minority ethnic background, British Asian, and dual heritage African/ Caribbean and white.

4.1 Relationships between Staff and Children – B School

Mrs Pink had negotiated some classroom rules with her class of 26 Year 5 children. The school was trialling an 'assertive discipline' strategy (Canter 1992) which involved the children being rewarded for 'good' behaviour. A 'good' act/mark etc was rewarded by a child colouring in a 'wizard' picture on a display board. The display board told children

When our Wizard is filled in our treat will be – extra time in the computer suite. Wizard thinks these should be our classroom rules:

- 1) Follow all rules to get the best marks and most fun.
- 2) Always put your hand up to answer a question
- 3) Be friendly and considerate to each other
- 4) Always listen to what adults are saying .

5) Respect school[']s and other people[']s property.

A School Council had been set up and two children were chosen to represent each class. I chatted to Louise, Matthew and Ryan, all British white, about this. Louise told me that the children in Mrs Pink's class negotiated issues with her.

Some of us wanted to put up a display and Mrs Pink said –'It's your classroom you can do what you want'. So we [representatives on the school council] put up a display about the school council. (Louise)

Another example of B school's caring ethos is demonstrated by the following incident. Mrs Reade abandoned a history lesson one afternoon in order to discuss behaviour problems during a circle time. She began by saying

Mrs Reade: I'm spending a lot of time sorting out problems – children falling out with each other and not telling an adult. You can rely on each other. What if Sally was upset by Simon- then Belinda could be told. What is Belinda's role? You can share things with a friend. What are the barriers which stop you from telling an adult?

Kurt: Name calling! If you tell an adult people call you a tell tale.

Mrs Reade: There was once a girl who was bullied, but once adults knew the problem it was sorted. The worry goes away. The bully only has power while you keep it a secret. You always need to tell someone – an adult or a friend. A problem shared is a problem halved.

Thus the children were finding solutions to their problems with support from the teacher who did not act in an authoritative way (as some staff in X school had) but rather negotiated and worked alongside children to address issues of 'power'.

There was a climate of encouragement and rewards for good work and behaviour rather than derision and punishment for bad behaviour and work. During a literacy lesson Mrs Pink gave out stickers to those who tried hard and gave good answers.

After one disastrous lunchtime for Nick Mrs Pink tried to turn around the situation and put her arm around Nick as the children watched and said

Nick is finding playtimes difficult. He wants someone to be his playtime partner.

Kay and Liam offered. To which Mrs Pink replied,

Thank you children. This will help keep you out of trouble. Keeping you away from people .

The children commented that when you get angry it's hard

So Nick's playtime partners can cheer him up and try to calm him down.

This was a very special moment between Mrs Pink and her class. Everyone showed genuine care for Nick; and Nick's smile of relief, appreciation and feeling of belonging was in marked contrast to the look of aggression he displayed during playtime.

During my visit to B school, a new boy started in Mrs Reade's class. He was French speaking, had lived in France and was of African heritage. Mrs Reade seemed very perturbed by this. She saw Jonathon as a 'problem' because of the language barrier rather than being a resource, he had spent time in the Congo before moving to Paris.

Mrs Reade: It's a learning curve for us. He's fluent in French. My French isn't very good.

I've got him sitting next to Charles – he's a good influence. There's a boy in

Mrs Pink's class who's not a good influence. The other children wanted to

come and see him. I said 'no, just our class at the moment'. He comes right

out in French and asks for things – he's very confident. I'm absolutely tired

from translating. The Head speaks good French.

I found that Jonathon was seen as a novelty, possibly because he spoke French but also because he was Black. When I asked Mark if the boy was new he answered

What the coloured one? Yes he's new.

During a literacy lesson, like the children, I felt happy and relaxed while Mrs Pink and the children discussed some spellings. The atmosphere was in marked contrast to some classrooms in X school, particularly Mrs Lawton's, where there was an authoritative air of retribution and constant shouting at children for misdemeanours with little praise. Mrs Pink noticed how happy I looked as she commented

Yes we have a good relationship with the children. But it wasn't always so.

The school was in special measures. I think it was due to an ineffective head

who went off on sick leave and was always having days out. Mrs Kite has

turned it around. The staff are the same, it's just she's a strong head. 3 years

ago I had 9 behavioural problem children – I was on the verge of a nervous

breakdown.

I observed a School Council session where the children were given the opportunity to discuss such issues as, the small size of furniture in Mrs Pink's class, and bullying and playtime partners.

Bart's mother worked as a helper in school and as she passed by he gave her a hug and a kiss with no embarrassment. This same child acted very differently in Mr

Benn's literacy class for less able children. As soon as the lesson began Bart and Louise were spoken to

Mr Benn: Louise get your book and do it [the work] unless you want a cross by your name. Bart your name goes on the board

Bart: But Mr Benn I wasn't even talking

During a spelling test Bart asked to go to the toilet and Mr Benn refused. Bart's body language was completely different to what I had observed in lessons with Mrs Pink where he had been relaxed and happy. Here he sulked and buried his head in his hands and said

But I have a letter.

Bart left anyway. Mr Benn gave me a look which meant, "See what I have to deal with." I felt that Mr Benn did not get the best out of the children and did not contribute to the caring ethos of the school.

4.2 Lunchtimes and Playtimes- B school

The children were well aware of the different zones in the playground, namely the talking zone, the bat and ball zone, the skipping zone. The children were not allowed to run as the area was too small. I could see the frustration in the faces of some of the children who obviously needed an outlet for their energy. If a child 'misbehaved' on the playground they were sent to another teacher's class after break and were not allowed to work with their own group.

The children had to line up in 'the assembly line' every time they moved around the school, from the classroom to the dining hall; from outside play to the classroom; from one room to another. This line was organised by the teacher who split up noisy, lively or potentially badly behaved individuals thus ensuring misbehaviour was kept to a minimum, it seemed to work. I chatted (quietly) as I went with the children to dinner. Again there was a positive atmosphere and the children sat in groups at tables of either sandwiches or school dinners, talking was allowed and the seating area was large, well ventilated and bright. During a wet playtime break the dinner supervisor left Mrs Pink's class playing a hand game and the children gained a wizard point for behaving well in her absence.

4.3 Assemblies- B school

One assembly I observed began with a Christian song "We are climbing Jacob's ladder" and all the infants and some of the lower juniors did the actions

accompanying the lyrics. Friday assembly was totally given over to awards and certificates. Each teacher described why they had chosen a particular child to be “Star of the Week”:

Mary for her work in gymnastics

John for consistent hard work and for being well- mannered.

Mrs Reade chose

The whole of class 16 for helping Jonathon settle in.

I felt that this singled Jonathon out as being ‘more difficult’ to settle in than, for example, a white child who was fluent in English. Thus Jonathon was seen as a ‘problem’ that class 16 (and presumably Mrs Reade herself) ‘settled in’ very well under the difficult circumstances. I am sure it was intended to be an honour for the whole class, but it created a negative perception of the minority ethnic child. Also Johnathon was the only person in the class not to receive the award.

4.4 Curriculum Issues- B school

Mrs Reade invited children to answer the register in different languages thus promoting a variety of cultures. Mrs Pink named her Literacy groups after characters but I noticed that these were all white males, James (and the Giant Peach), BFG (big friendly giant), Charlie (and the chocolate Factory) and Danny (Champion of the World).

When discussing different subjects not many children mentioned RE. Eventually Michelle said

Oh and RE. We looked at the Bible and picked stories out.

I was able to observe one RE lesson with Mrs Pink’s class but the tone was set by her opening comment to the lesson,

The quicker we can get the RE done the quicker we can get to the ICT suite.

The children had been looking at the Christian Bible and knew about the different types of literature in it as Alison explained

Stories, advice wisdom, poetry, prayer.

The children had RE books which also doubled up as topic books (at the back). There were also enough Children’s Bibles for the children to share one between two. The children thought carefully about some of the stories when discussing the martyrdom of Steven¹⁸, Bart and Louise asked

¹⁸ In Acts of the Apostles- the Christian Bible.

What does it mean – he died for his faith? What does faith mean?

The children discussed this together and deduced that Steven had died for what he believed in. Bart said

They shouldn't be harmed for believing in Jesus. It should be like it is nowadays. But they are probably harmed in Australia, Germany and Africa.

The children were asked at the end of the lesson for a summary of their story. I felt that the children had attempted to engage with the stories and so there was some evidence of learning 'about' religion. However there was no clear learning 'from' religion (QCA 2004). Mrs Pink did not discuss the authority of the Bible for some Christians, comparing this with authority sources in the children's lives. Neither did she discuss the meaning of the stories for Christian believers, or how the stories had affected the children's attitudes towards a particular issue. The discussion revolved around the content, for example, Mrs Pink commented:

the 10 Laws are not stories but Instructions. The prayer of Jesus – what do we call it? Do we still say it now? It's been altered slightly, well, not altered but rather it's just a different translation.

Here Mrs Pink was identifying herself and the children with Christianity by using "we". Thus Christianity was the norm and other religious beliefs were what 'the other' people do. In a later discussion with the children this was confirmed

Indians, Muslims, like go to the mosque like we go to church. (John)

Jeremy in Mrs Port's class explained the RE he was doing

I'm in a mixed class so I do different RE. RE is all different religions like Hinduism. It's religion when people celebrate Divali – like we celebrate Christmas. They celebrate Divali and the English people celebrate Christmas. Divali – it's a time of light. They mostly read the story of Rama and Sita.

Sam gave a comprehensive account of the Rama and Sita story. He concluded by saying:

I don't know if it's true. They like that story, like we believe in Jesus and God.

Claire said that

We talked about the Bible and Mrs Reade said that it's the best selling book because it tells you, all around the world, what things happened in the Old Testament. In Religious Education you learn about Jesus and other religions. There are different kinds of texts in Jesus times, [texts] in all old words. Muslims they believe in Adam and Eve.

During a science lesson the children in Mrs Reade's group were discussing absorption of sound. Mrs Reade grew frustrated at not being able to translate the lesson to Jonathon. There was no attempt to demonstrate and allow him to 'play' with the materials. Rather Mrs Reade wanted to 'instruct' Jonathon so that he would have the same 'knowledge' as the rest of the class.

I observed a Geography lesson in Mrs Port's class about France. The children 'thought showered' what they knew already, some of which was stereotypical:

French accents

Disneyland

They drive on the opposite side of the road

The Eiffel Tower

They eat frogs legs

The capital is Paris

They eat croissants

They eat snails, scorpions and worms.

There was no mention of asking Jonathon to visit the class and talk about France (possibly with a parent), which seemed to me to be a missed opportunity. The children looked in books and were set the task of making an information sheet about France.

4.5 Sketches of Children – B school

Bart a white boy, was one of the youngest Year 5 children in the research, and he displayed immature attitudes at times (fieldnotes B school). He held strong opinions especially about Bin Laden whom he "hated". Bart was often in trouble with Mr Benn who was very strict with him. He did however show a different side to his nature when he was with Mrs Pink or when he came across his mother (a helper in the school). In answer to the question about affiliation to a religion, on the background information sheet, Bart wrote "none". In answer to "what didn't you like talking about?" Bart wrote

talking about Religions.

Daljit described herself as British Asian, Sikh (Indian) and she was the youngest girl in the research, yet, I would argue, she was one of the more able children. Her literacy on the background information sheet was much more complex and advanced compared with Bart's. Daljit wrote:

I liked to think about other people in different countries and their religion. And it was fun writing about other religions and their believes [beliefs].

Max was another young boy in the research and was one of the children who expressed racist views, yet on his background information sheet he wrote

Got to say anything I want but not nasty

He also said he believed

in God and Jesus.

Joseph was a child who spent much of his time on his own and was often shunned by the other children. He spoke in a slow and deliberate manner and was keen to talk with me. Whenever I came onto the playground he would rush over and begin a conversation about what he had been doing at home or in school. He was in the lower ability groups for Maths and English.

I believe the caring ethos of B school was influential for Max and Bart. Both boys displayed an understanding of anti-racism. Yet they also displayed negative views and I think this may have been owing to their age, their ability and the negative relationship they both had with Mr Benn. None of the children, apart from Daljit, had a comprehensive knowledge of the variety of religions represented in the UK and their RE was limited.

5 Ofsted Reports and RE Subject Leadership

Some of the Ofsted reports I looked at were over 4 years old and so did not offer an up to date picture of the school. Also some were written before Curriculum 2000 (DfES 1999) with its emphasis on 'diversity'. However, Ofsted reports are often referred to by parents and other interested parties, such as governors, local councillors, teacher training institutions etc and so I was interested in what they had to say, if anything, about children's multicultural awareness. I will discuss the two reports about X and B school first and then discuss D and R schools' reports next. Finally I discuss subject leadership of RE in each of the four schools.

5.1 Predominantly White Schools

The comments from inspectors in the two Ofsted reports in X and B schools, emphasised the lack of time given to RE and the need for a greater range of books (ie reflecting a more multicultural society rather than a monocultural one). Neither report mentioned the lack of reference to different cultures in, for example, music and

geography, thus I deduced that the inspectors believed development of children's multicultural awareness to be solely within the domain of RE. Also both reports seem to confuse PSHE with RE. In one report the assumption was that British white culture IS British culture and other cultures were termed 'non-Western'. Thus there is no acknowledgement of Britain being a multi cultural society.

The inspector's comments about RE referred predominantly to the teaching and learning of Christian concepts. The reports suggested that teacher's poor subject knowledge had a knock on effect to the children. Multicultural awareness was explicitly set as a target to be addressed in X school. However this was not tackled immediately because other targets were prioritised.

5.2 High Proportion Minority Ethnic schools

In contrast, the inspectors of D and R schools both felt that on the whole the multicultural awareness of the pupils was seen as a strength and RE was deemed to be 'good'. In one report there was praise for work with children who speak English as an additional language, however the report seems to see these children as a 'problem', they have "communication problems" and teachers were praised for maintaining a careful eye on the "integration and progress" of these children. This had the underlying, monocultural (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997) assumption that such pupils are to 'overcome' the hindrance of their first language and be integrated into (white) British schools. Mrs Winter, headteacher of D school was very aware of this perception and in a conversation with me about SATS (testing for 7 and 11 year olds), (QCA 2006), she said that the minority ethnic children's ability to speak and sometimes write in two or more languages was never celebrated but rather their deficiency in English was highlighted. Thus Mrs Winter despaired of the culture of assesment:

SATS concentrates on what they can't do rather than looking at what they can do.

There was praise for the positive acknowledgement of the rich cultural diversity of the school community in both reports.

I interviewed and also observed RE subject leaders, where there was one. I recorded key information in the table 5.6 in the previous chapter. As table 5.6 demonstrated (and also as I highlighted in the Curriculum sections for each school in this chapter), the most effective RE subject leader was Mrs Jones in B school because she had written schemes of work in RE for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. However her

influence had not filtered through to Key Stage 2. Because she was a Reception teacher, she had concentrated on the Foundation stage and KS1 RE since her appointment the previous term. It would have been interesting to see whether a more rigorous RE curriculum resulted in less racism and more positive attitudes towards other cultures once Mrs Jones' scheme of work had been implemented in KS2. Interestingly there were more racist comments in B school than any other school, but I think that this was not necessarily due to poor RE subject leadership, but because the children were younger (Brown 1998), and also this fieldwork was undertaken just after the September 11th 2001 events, when Islamophobia was rife.

6 Interim Report Feedback to the Four Schools

As stated earlier, in chapter 5, I fed back to each school some preliminary findings. I sent an Interim Report with a short questionnaire to all four schools and arranged a meeting with both staff and children to be held a couple of weeks later to discuss the Report. I was able to meet with staff and children in R, D and B school but unfortunately X school's new Headteacher Mr Chalk, was unable to offer me time to discuss the report and none of the staff returned the questionnaire. I summarise the main points from the Interim Report below then comment on reactions to it from R, D and B schools.

6.1 Summary of Interim Report sent to Schools

All schools were sent the same report. I outlined the context of the research and its aims, I explained what I did and why, and then I briefly described preliminary results which I quote below.

Table 6:1 Extract from Interim Report

<p>I have found that children's multicultural awareness develops more richly in high proportion minority ethnic schools by means of osmosis, this is a similar finding to Sally Tomlinson's (1990). There was on the whole more knowledge of other cultures amongst the children from high proportion minority ethnic schools - they were able to distinguish between the main British Asian religious traditions of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslim. Whereas the predominantly white children were, on the whole, less able to demonstrate this. The less able in both types of schools knew relatively less about other cultures than the more able in each school. There was little discussion of different Christian denominations - in particular typically Black Christian churches such as Pentecostal and Seventh Day Adventist were not mentioned. Some children mentioned that British African/Caribbean people were often Christians. The bright children's attitudes towards other cultures were similar in both schools and, together with</p>
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the less able in high proportion minority ethnic schools, this group of children were on the whole very positive towards those of a different culture. However the less able from the predominantly white schools made some negative comments when asked what they thought about people from other cultures -“they are ugly and I don’t like them”.

This would lead me to conclude that more able/ middle class children from both types of schools together with lower ability/ low socio economic children from the high proportion minority ethnic schools have, on the whole, a positive and ‘politically correct’ attitude towards those of another culture. This can be contrasted with the lower ability/low socio economic children in the predominantly white schools who on the whole have, to varying degrees, a less positive attitude (which sometimes manifests itself in arguably racist attitudes).

I would argue here that the possible influences (TV, school, friends, home) have some bearing on the children’s viewpoints. Thus in high proportion minority ethnic schools- because of the osmosis effect of being in a pluralist setting- there is a more knowledge of and positive attitude towards different cultures.

Use of research. I hope that the research has fulfilled its objectives in being of benefit to the host schools and also will have wider influence in informing other schools, Initial Teacher Training Institutions, policy decisions etc.

On the final page I asked teachers to respond to the report and comment on the accuracy of Ofsted reports and also my own assessment of children’s multicultural awareness. I only received one completed questionnaire – from Mrs Kite in B school which I will discuss later in this chapter.

6.2 Reactions to the Interim Report

I summarised the main findings of the Interim report in a verbal feedback to the children in each school. In D school I met with all the children who had taken part in the research. I was impressed with how articulate many children were. The following are a selection of comments made throughout the meeting:

Melissa: the majority of teachers at D school are white.

Marshall: We don’t do studies of Black culture- well only about Africa. But not much about Black.

Gurdeep: Not understanding leads to racism.

Karen: White people are more racist since September 11th. People judge people by their colour and not by the way they are. There’s a lot of stereotyping.

Harry: There’s a lot of generalisation between Asians and the Taliban. I don’t think they should bomb the place.

Marshall told me about an incident which had happened to a group of children from D school:

As they walked through the city, to swimming, a man with a pushchair, a

white man, shouted racist comments at the children.

The children told me that on their return to school Mrs Winter had been pro-active phoning the local LA, the police, local newspapers and the Multicultural advisory Service. All this culminated in a poster campaign "Rule out Racism" which promoted co operation and tolerance. This was a nationwide initiative which I describe later.

Later on I met with Mrs Winter and Mrs Moser, but unfortunately Mr Millan was unable to join us. It was a brief meeting squeezed between two other events that afternoon. Mrs Winter re iterated Marshall's comments

It was a nightmare, fortunately many of the children didn't notice.

Both Mrs Winter and Mrs Moser agreed that many of the minority ethnic children had been subjected to racist abuse outside school.

Mrs Moser: We went on a visit to C [a rural village in the county] and the locals said 'what's that funny smell'. It was awful. Also people expect our children to be badly behaved – these posh [white] women.....But then they're surprised when they're good!

Mrs Winter: There's a lot of racism between the communities- the Indians think they're better than the Muslims.

The children at R school also spoke eloquently. Tammy, a white pupil, and Toxic said

Tammy: A school with both [white and minority ethnic children] will know more.

They could be friends so they'll know more.

Toxic: In this school you're more likely to get a friend of a different race. You may have been racist before, but then you're not.

Terri a white girl, made several comments throughout the meeting:

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. We know people personally. At school we get taught..... I'm not surprised you found that the less able are more racist. They don't have as much knowledge.....Children know more and are less racist than adults... Also it isn't always white against Black sometimes Black people are nasty to whites.

Karin (Asian heritage) and Toxic made interesting comments:

Karin: They [white people] think we can't speak English.

Toxic: It's more likely to be non religious people who are racist because Jesus wasn't racist.

There was a long discussion about September 11th and many children of Asian heritage felt that all minority ethnic people had been viewed thereafter with suspicion by white people.

Mrs Gardon (headteacher of R school) had allocated time at a staff meeting for me to present my Interim Report. This was a positive experience because many staff openly said they wanted to do more about celebrating children's cultures but the time constraints of the National Curriculum (QCA 2000) prevented them from doing so. Many staff said they were aware of the dominant culture being white Western, and recalled stories from Black or Asian people. The deputy, Mr Mann, remembered Mohammed Ali's comments

He was talking to his mother about the fact that all the angels in pictures he saw were all white. 'Where are the Black angels Mum?' to which his mother replied 'why they're taking the picture!'

He was also aware of minority ethnic people's desire to 'fit in'. Mrs Gardon mentioned all the projects at R school such as 'Poets in School'¹⁹ including Black writers and their commitment to the 'Rule out Racism' Campaign²⁰. However there was an acknowledgement of hostility from some white parents which staff had to deal with.

At B school I found the children's meeting much harder, which I attributed to the fact that the children were much younger than those at D and R school. (Due to the order of the research D and R school's Year 5 were actually in Year 6 when I came to deliver the Interim report.) Also many children were less clear about words like racism, stereotype, prejudice, and with which children in R and D school had been more familiar. B school children were also excited about me being pregnant and were more interested in talking about that.

Some children noted that minority ethnic people should be allowed into this country.

Max : We should learn about the cultures of people who come to live here.

Sophie: To know about other cultures is important so we all get on.

When we were discussing the fact that less able children are more racist many children were keen to tell me that

Kurt's been excluded for fighting!

Thus in their minds Kurt was associated with 'less able' and 'racism'.

¹⁹ Black poets visit schools to challenge the stereotype of Black people being 'good at sport and music only.' See also 100 Great Black Britons (2006).

²⁰ 'Rule out racism' challenges racism in schools and in the community- particularly at football matches see http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/football/eng_div_1/4207221.stm

In B school I was able to meet Mrs Kite, Mrs Pink and Mrs Reade for a discussion of the Interim Report but Mrs Port was not able to join us. All three women were positive about the research and admitted that the community was racist and this was spilling over into school. Mrs Kite and Mrs Pink commented:

Mrs Kite: Although we do Islam, from the QCA material in RE and in PSHE we look at culture and we visit the Open Centre²¹ [multicultural education centre], nevertheless this is a racist area. People are racist towards other cultures, not African or Caribbean but against Asians.....There's more talk in minority ethnic schools. Here anyone who's different gets picked on. There's a lot of ignorance. Kurt claims he gets called a 'black bastard'. But on the whole the kids play well. In the community there's lots of racism. When we want to make visits to mosques they say 'no'.

Since September 11th it's even more important to do it. In the end the Open Centre [representatives] came here. And through cajoling they [the children] all participated.

Mrs Pink: There's been Islamophobia. There was family resistance for one boy who did attend, but wouldn't have the mendhi patterns, because his family didn't want him to have the paint.

Mrs Kite: There's inbred racism out there. People use terms without knowing what they mean. It's offensive. We've been told to record all racist incidents but they are few and far between. 'Your mum's a prostitute' is far more common and just as hurtful.

Mrs Kite was the only person to complete and return the questionnaire. She wrote

Children do hold beliefs and values learnt from parents, but do not necessarily understand them. They do not necessarily relate these to pupils who are friends.

Mrs Kite was not surprised by the findings but wrote

it has opened my eyes to how children see others – particularly their friends-
do they recognise similarities/differences?

She felt that the research would inform her own and other schools' professional practice in capturing perceptions in the imminent aftermath of September 11th, particularly the strength of negative feeling towards Islam and minority ethnic children.

²¹ The Open Centre was a local resource centre offering local schools opportunities to visit a variety of religious buildings, for example Gurdwara, mosque and Pentecostal church. Also workshops were available.

Summary

In this chapter I have described the ethos and character of each of the four schools in the English research. I have highlighted how the caring ethos in D, R and B schools may have re-enforced children's anti-racist and positive attitudes and behaviour. Significantly I demonstrated how the authoritarian ethos of X school did not necessarily stifle children's anti-racist and egalitarian attitudes. I compared the break times of each school, for example the 'civilised' social ethos of the dining room at D school contrasted with the 'adult-dominated' ethos of X school. I concluded that such experiences provide a 'hidden curriculum' in which school's values are overtly manifest. I also demonstrated that curriculum lessons contributed to cultural understanding in D and R schools to a certain extent, but in B school learning was limited, and in X school almost non-existent. From Ofsted reports I examine how, in some cases, the school inspectors did not seem to have an 'inclusive' attitude and were predominantly 'monocultural' in their own perceptions. Finally I showed how R, D and B schools were all positive in their responses to my feedback in the Interim Report but I received no response from X school.

The analysis of the results thus far provide a rich context for viewing the data I present in the next chapter, that is the results from interviews conducted in the four English schools.