Tears, Teachers, Tension and Transformation?: Minority Language Children Reflect on the Recognition of their First Languages in Irish Primary Schools

by

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I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctorate in Education is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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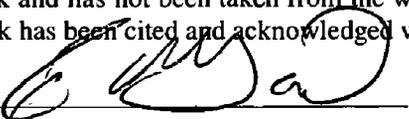
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the feelings, experiences and understandings of minority language children in the Irish primary education system with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in school. Data was collected with 13 Romanian and Polish speaking children during a four day Trilingual Literacy Camp rooted in Emancipatory Participatory Action Research. Data sources include dual language texts, which were used as child-developed codifications, focus group contributions and participant observations.

It is argued that these children are constructed as linguistic outsiders within their schools by pedagogues who prioritise the development of English language proficiency. Within this context, the children display a complex set of linguistic practices. They possess a strong belief in the transformative potential of learning English and make calculated investments in their immediate and long-term future through practices, which they feel will help them to learn English. In addition to this, however, they are also firmly committed to maintaining their own first languages, as exemplified through their continued use of these languages within their family and social arenas. The children also engage in low-level acts of resistance against the imposition of English as a dominant language through the continued use of their languages at strategic times in school.

These findings highlight an issue of real importance for policy makers and pedagogues in relation to the inequalities experienced by minority language children in Irish schools.

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ACRONYMS

ASTI:	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland
BERA:	British Educational Research Association
BICS:	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP:	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAQDAS:	Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis System.
CES:	Centre for European Schooling
CLCS:	Centre for Language and Communication Studies
CSO:	Central Statistics Office
CUP:	Common Underlying Proficiency
DEIS:	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Skills
DES:	Department of Education and Science
DfES:	Department for Education and Skills
DHC:	Department of Health and Children
EAL:	English as an Additional Language
EC:	European Commission
ELL:	English Language Learners
ELS:	English Language Support
ESL:	English as a Second Language
ESRI:	Economic and Social Research Institute
ICT:	Information and communication technologies
IILT:	Integrate Ireland Language and Training
INTO:	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
ISL:	Irish Sign Language

ISPCC:	Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
LEP:	Limited English Proficiency
DCU:	Dublin City University:
NCCA:	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCO:	National Children's Office
NCS:	National Children's Strategy
NDP:	National Development Plan
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE:	Physical Education
SCMP:	Schools' Cultural Mediation Project
SCP:	School Completion Programme
SEN:	Special Educational Needs
SESL:	Students with English as a Second Language
SUP:	Separate Underlying Proficiency
TESOL:	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
TLC:	Trilingual Literacy Camp
UN:	United Nations
UNCRC:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
USI:	Union of Students in Ireland
USS:	Union of Secondary Students
VEC:	Vocational Education Committee
YES:	Your Education System

INTRODUCTION

The linguistic patterns of many Irish primary school classrooms have altered quite dramatically over the last fifteen years. In addition to the multifarious potential contained within this linguistic, and concomitant ethnic, diversity, this change has presented a number of significant challenges for all aspects of the Irish primary school system. The Department of Education and Science (DES) has reacted to these challenges by providing a system of English language support, based on the allocation of English language support teachers and the development of support resource materials. The literature is clear about the importance of learning the majority language with regard to pedagogical success and social integration. The literature also highlights, however, that this focus becomes problematic when it is enacted without recognising the importance of those other languages spoken as first languages by these minority language children.

While it may appear that this is a relatively new phenomenon in the Irish education system, it is insightful that over decade has passed since McGovern, writing in the context of the support provided for Vietnamese refugee children in Irish schools, called for a policy based on the principles of equality and anti-racism (McGovern, 1995). Such a policy would involve language support for children from linguistic and cultural minority backgrounds. She cautioned, however, that this support should not be viewed in the assimilationist perspective but should support these children in accessing the whole school curriculum, while at the same time ensuring affirmation and status for their first languages. Thus, this important issue of recognition of first languages has been brought to our attention in the past.

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Another important aspect of McGovern's work was her argument that an approach based solely on language is doomed to failure. I fully agree with this assertion. Data from other jurisdictions illustrate quite clearly that simply developing a high level of proficiency in the majority language of the country does not equate to academic success for minority language students. This becomes particularly evident in the context of second generation children who are actually fluent in the majority language, have received all of their formal education through that language, and yet are not achieving at a similar level to their majority language peers from non-migrant backgrounds. Evidence of the perpetual schooling difficulties and resulting educational failure experienced by members of the Irish Traveller population, for instance, alerts to the non-linguistic barriers, which minority ethnic populations face with regard to educational achievement. School personnel are aware of this complex intersection also, as evidenced by a principal in Devine (2005, p. 57) who argued that, "language support is addressing language issues, not every other issue . . . it is a band-aid to satisfy a need".

There is limited empirical data on this topic in Ireland. No previous studies have focused specifically on the issue of recognition of first languages, or indeed, the linguistic patterns of Irish multilingual classrooms. This study draws on other available data, which highlight the issue of recognition as a component of wider research findings: Post-primary teachers' and principals' perceptions of English-language support in 11 schools in an urban centre (Nowlan, 2008); policy and practice of teaching English as an additional language in ten primary schools in Galway (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006); and teacher responses to immigration and increasing ethnic diversity in eight primary and post-primary schools (Devine, 2005).

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These research data are unambiguous about the absence of any positive focus on children's first languages. While Nowlan (2008) identifies one example of a school hiring a part-time bilingual teacher who taught both Romanian and Russian, she outlines that this type of initiative was absent in the vast majority of schools within her study. Devine (2005) asserts that at no point in any of the interviews conducted in her research did the teachers mention the multilingual capacities which many of the children had while Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006) failed to observe any similar activities in their study and argued for this as an area requiring further study in the Irish educational context.

This dissertation addresses this research gap by examining the issue of non-recognition of these first languages in Irish primary schools. Working through a Trilingual Literacy Camp (TLC), with the involvement of 13 Polish and Romanian speaking children, a lead researcher, two interpreters and a teaching assistant, data was gathered to answer the question, "what are the feelings, experiences and understandings of minority language children in the Irish primary education system with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in school?". Rooted in a radical equality theoretical framework and guided by a commitment to participatory action research, the dissertation enunciates the voices of these minority language children. In so doing, it establishes clear evidence of misrecognition of their first languages in the Irish primary education system. It is argued that this misrecognition both emerges from, and is rooted in, a wider societal discourse that situates multilingualism as problematic in contemporary Ireland. The data reveal that these minority language children are positioned as linguistic outsiders within their schools. There is also evidence that this focus on English language development permeates

their family education practices and social interactions. The children themselves are aware of the importance of developing proficiency in English, yet also resist this message of English dominance. In so doing, they display a sophisticated and complex understanding of personal linguistic diversity.

Terminology

It is important at this juncture to speak to the terminology employed within this dissertation. The literature is replete with a plurality of terms pertaining to the issue at the centre of this topic. Genesse *et al.* (2005), for instance, write about English Language Learning (ELL), Ruiz-deVelasco and Fix (2000) refer to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, Dublin City University (DCU) (2004) write of "international students", "members of ethnic minorities", "culturally diverse populations" and "SESL - students with English as a second language", while McGorman and Sugrue (2007) settle on the term "newcomer" despite understanding that it does not properly address those children, for example, born in Ireland of immigrant parents. In addition to ELL, Genesse *et al.* (2005) outline other potential possibilities to include "non-native English speaker", "language minority student", "English as a Second Language (ESL) student" or "bilingual student". DCU (2004, p. 111) further identify the use of "non-national", "non-Irish", "foreign", "immigrant", "international", "new Irish" and "ethnic minority".

Public discourse on this issue is similarly confused, with, for example, a recent press release from Fine Gael using eight different terms[1], seemingly interchangeably and

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[1] Fine Gael is a major Irish political party. The terms used were: Non-Irish nationals, international children, immigrants, foreign national, non-Irish national children who lack English language competence, children for whom English is not their first language, pupils who lack fluency in the language and pupils for whom English is a second language.

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without clarity as to their exact distinction (Kenny, 2007). I use the term "minority language child" in reference to a child who does not speak either English or Irish[2] as a first language in the Irish education system. The languages that these children speak, predominantly either Polish or Romanian, are referred to as their "first languages". The term "minority language" is used to denote the status position of the language within Irish society, as opposed to the dominant position of the "majority language", English. Other studies regard Irish as a minority language in the context of Ireland (O'Connell, 2003; Kelly-Holmes, 2001), and are correct to so do given the particular focus of their work. Yet this is not how the term is used in this dissertation. While I have been clear in my use of the language, the reader will encounter some terms such as those outlined by Genesse *et al.* (2005). Where these terms have been included in specific studies mentioned, I have decided to refrain from rephrasing. This has been done to maintain consistency with the original text and is rooted in a consideration of potential nuances contained within their usage, nuances which may be lost through such rephrasing.

Structure of the Dissertation

The first chapter of this dissertation, *Multilingualism and Children's Participation in Irish Schools and Society*, establishes the present international and national context within which this study was conducted, and by which it has been influenced. In the first instance, it examines the changing demographics in Ireland that have brought the issue of language policy and practice for minority language children to the fore. The chapter proceeds to examine what options have been established for those children and situates this within wider public discourse concerning multilingualism in Ireland.

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[2] Irish is the term used in this dissertation to refer to the Irish language.

It then moves to posit some possible alternatives to the present system. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the increased focus on the issue of the voice of the child in Irish social policy, and educational research in particular.

Chapter Two, *Recognition, Reproduction and Resistance: A Theoretical Framework*, presents the theoretical underpinnings of this dissertation. It begins with a discussion of Equality of Condition as expounded by Lynch and Baker (2005), Baker *et al.* (2004), Lynch and Lodge (2002) and Taylor (1994). In addition to this equality framework, the theoretical perspective is also guided by cultural theory work of Bourdieu (1990) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) on the role of education in legitimising linguistic domination. This perspective is further extended through the work of Giroux (1983) and Hollander and Einwohner (2004) on resistance. The chapter then advances to examine Cummins' framework for empowering minority students (Cummins 1986; 2000; 2001a and 2001b). The second section of this chapter outlines the main work on theorizing levels of children's participation, culminating in a discussion of Lundy's advanced conceptualization of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Lundy, 2007).

Chapter Three, *Minority Language Children in Education*, examines the literature around the experience of minority language children in education. It focuses on the children themselves with regard to academic success, experience of working as language brokers and the effects of language loss and also the role played by their parents and their teachers. Chapter Four, *A TLC Approach to Conducting Research with Children*, outlines the methodological approach at the centre of this research project. It analyses some of the possible options that were explored in the initial

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stages of this project and then discusses the formulation of the TLC upon which this dissertation is based.

Chapter Five, *TLC in Focus: Analysing the Methodological Approach*, analyses the methodology developed for this research project in the context of Lundy's (2007) work and the underpinnings of participatory action research. Chapter Six, *Głos, Voce, Voice*, presents the feelings, experiences and understandings of the children as expressed during the TLC. This is done through a structural framework inclusive of a focus on school, family and social activity. Chapter Seven, *Tears, Tension, Teachers and Transformation?*, moves to examine the research findings through the theoretical framework and empirical data outlined in Chapters One, Two and Three. The dissertation ends with series of recommendations for further research and to address the issue of non-recognition of first languages within the Irish primary education system.

CHAPTER ONE: MULTILINGUALISM AND CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN IRISH SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

Introduction

This chapter charts the social and linguistic context within which this research project and dissertation is framed. An overview of changing demographic patterns and attendant linguistic changes that have taken place in contemporary Ireland is initially presented. This is followed by an examination of public discourse on the issue of multilingualism in Ireland. The chapter then proceeds to assess the policy and pedagogy provision for minority language children in Irish schools. In the first instance, this section examines the model of English language support provision and this is followed by an analysis of policy documents and initiatives regarding minority languages in Ireland. Some concrete examples of pedagogical provision that in some way recognise the value of multilingualism in education are offered towards the end of this section. The chapter concludes with an overview of the increasing emphasis on the role of children and young people in educational research in Ireland. This is situated within a wider societal context of increased focus on the voice of the child, facilitated and driven through the UNCRC (United Nations (UN), 1989) and the National Children's Strategy (NCS) (Department of Health and Children (DHC), 2000).

Changing Demographics in Ireland

It is almost *de riguer* at present to preface any discussion on contemporary Ireland with a note to the changing demographics of the Irish population, paying particular attention to the issue of inward migration. This is, however, at the heart of the present study. As such, an initial treatment of the levels of inward migration nationally and

subsequent transferral of this change into the Irish school population is quite necessary. In that context then, this section will outline the changing ethnic and linguistic composition of the Irish population in general and will then proceed to consider how this has substantially altered the school-going population of the country.

National Demographics

This section examines the changing demographic profile of the Irish population in recent decades. While a broad picture is painted, where possible, particular reference is made to the migrants from Polish and Romanian backgrounds, as the sample for this study was drawn from both of those groups.

There is a long history of inward migration into Ireland. Historically, this often took the form of initial violent invasion followed by further arrival of associated people. Ireland has also become home to other groups of people fleeing to safety from their own homelands. In this regard Heugenots, fleeing civil and religious persecution in France, found refuge here in the 1600s. Ireland also accepted Hungarian refugees following the Hungarian uprising in November 1956, Chilean refugees in 1973-1974, Vietnamese refugees in 1979, members of the Baha'i community fleeing persecution in Iran in 1985 and refugees from Bosnia in 1992. Ireland has become home to a significantly large number of very diverse populations of immigrants since the early 1990s. This is predominantly as a result of overwhelmingly increased economic prosperity, European Union developments, namely expansion and freedom to travel, and the positioning of Ireland as one of the most globalised countries in the world[3]. Within this context, then, we can understand that minority language children, or their

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[3] According to the ATKearney Globalisation index (2006), Ireland was the fourth most globalised country in the world in 2006, a slight fall from the premier position in 2001 and 2002.

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families, have arrived in a number of different ways to Ireland. They have entered the country as refugees or asylum seekers, immigrant workers or the children of immigrant workers, unaccompanied minors or as children who have been trafficked, sometimes for the purpose of slavery. This change is revealed most clearly in the quantitative data contained within the 2006 Census (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2008). Figures from the Census 2006 reveal that there were 420,000 "non-Irish nationals" living in Ireland in April 2006. These immigrants identified 188 different countries of origin. Analysis of these figures highlight that 82 per cent of these migrants came from 10 countries. The United Kingdom was identified as the largest country of origin with over 112,000 people.

Of primary interest to the present study is the fact that 63,276 respondents to the census indicated Polish national origin. 14,262 of these respondents were aged 14 years and younger. While the population was generally quite well spread out, 17,823 or 28.17 per cent of that population lived in Dublin City and suburbs. There were 7,696 Romanians usually resident in Ireland in April 2006. There is no age profile available for Romanian nationals. Illustrating quite a different pattern of dispersal than the Polish nationals, 35 per cent of the Romanians lived in Dublin city and suburbs. 70 per cent of the males and 42 per cent of the females were working, mainly in the construction sector and hotels and restaurants respectively. 22 per cent of Polish males were working in construction while over 50 per cent of females worked in shops, restaurants and hotels.

Socio-economic Background/Educational Background.

The Census reveals that non-Irish nationals had distinctly higher overall levels of education than the Irish population. This has been explained, however, as a

demographic effect caused by the older age profile of the Irish population. When this demographic effect is controlled for and the analysis confined to those of age 15-44 years, these differences largely disappear. Deeper analysis revels a significant heterogeneity in these figures, with nearly three quarters of persons from the EU 15 (excluding Ireland and the UK) educated to third level, while the corresponding figure for persons from the rest of the world is just over 50 per cent. Furthermore, social class analysis of the census data provides evidence that only one-in-five from the accession states identified as belonging within the upper three classes (Professional, Managerial and Technical and Non-manual). Available data on the Polish population reveal that only nine per cent classified in the top three economic status groups. This focus on social class is important in that it informs much of the integration policy undertaken by the Irish government. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Changing Demographics in Irish Schools

There are no comprehensive national data available on the linguistic or ethnic profile of Irish schools. Some individual studies on the area have extrapolated relevant numbers from Census data (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006; Mc Daid, 2007; Quinn *et al.*, 2007; Nowlan, 2008). Other studies have also included more focused examination to the particular geographical area concerned in their work (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007; Mc Daid, 2008). Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006, p. 143) estimate that 15,600 non-English speaking children between the ages of 0 and 14 immigrated to Ireland between 1996 and 2003. These figures do not take children born in Ireland into account, and given that in 2004, 8,016 babies were born in the Coombe maternity hospital to women from 92 different countries (Donnellan, 2005), such children potentially account for a high proportion of minority language speakers

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in Irish schools. Mc Manus (2007) estimates that there are 20,000 minority language children in primary schools, with a further 12,000 such children in post-primary schools. McGorman and Sugrue (2007, p. 50) put these numbers at 20,000 and 8,000 respectively. At a local level, McGorman and Sugrue's (2007, p. 51) study of 25 schools in Dublin 15, identify ten schools with an English Language Support (ELS) population of below 20 per cent, nine schools in the 20 per cent to 30 per cent range and six schools where more than 30 per cent of the enrolment is comprised of ELS pupils, with two of these schools exceeding 50 per cent. Mc Daid's (2008) work on the Schools' Cultural Mediation Project (SCMP) in the Dublin 7 School Completion Programme (SCP) Area outlines a 32 per cent minority language population within the ten schools involved in the project. In two of these schools, that population exceeded 50 per cent. Similar to Mc Gorman and Sugrue, McDaid also indicates significant diversity in numbers between schools, with some schools recording a minority language speaking population of only 12 per cent. This diversity across schools is replicated on a national level with McGorman and Sugrue (2007, p. 50) illustrating, for example, that statistically, it would appear that over 10 per cent of all ELS pupils in the country are based in 24 primary schools in Dublin 15.

Linguistic Diversity in Ireland

These changing demographics have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of languages being spoken in Ireland (Cronin, 2004). Yet, it must be understood that multilingualism is nothing new in Ireland. Indeed, it is accurate to highlight that Ireland has a long historical experience of linguistic diversity (Cronin and Ó Cuilleanáin, 2003) with Irish, English, Shelta/Cant (Stewart Macalister, 1997), Irish Sign Language (ISL), Ulster-Scots, French, Latin, Spanish, Yola, Yiddish, among

other languages, all being used here at various times in the past. The development of one of our national languages, Irish, indicates the significant influences exercised by these languages on each other. We note, for example, the word 'maidin' (*morning*) from the Latin 'matutina', 'séipéal' (*church*) from the French 'chapelle' and 'cnaipe' (*button*) from the Norse 'knappr'. Historically, many facets of Irish life have been organised and coordinated through different languages. The Catholic Church, for example, used Latin in the Tridentine mass until after Vatican II. Multilingualism has been quite evident in Irish cultural life, with, for instance, Samuel Beckett's most famous work, *Waiting for Godot*, actually first written in French as *En Attendent Godot*.

It can be concluded, therefore, that multilingualism is not a new development in Ireland. What is new, however, is that many more languages are being spoken on a daily basis in Ireland than at any time heretofore. There are no definitive data on the number of languages being spoken in Ireland at present. The Valeur Report identified 158 languages placing Ireland third behind the United Kingdom (288) and Spain (198) in the number of additional language spoken in their survey of 21 European states[4] (Mc Pake and Tinsley, 2007). Research carried out by the Language Centre in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, which found that there were 167 languages being spoken in Ireland, confirms this increase (O' Brien, 2006). Hence, we can safely surmise that there are at least 170 languages spoken in Ireland at present.

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[4]Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the UK.

This linguistic diversity must also be understood in the international linguistic context within which English is increasingly understood as the language of modernity and modernisation, and as such, is the international language of the modern world (Crystal, 1997). May outlines the dominance of English in prestigious domains, most especially in academia, electronic transfer of information and popular culture (May, 2008, p. 203). Baker (2003, p. 105) accurately describes English as the language of "power, prestige and purse". This association can have significant impact on students who don't speak English. Canagarajah (1999, p. 173), for instance, concludes from his study of Sri Lankan Tamil students learning English that they realise that "English is a coveted linguistic capital in the contemporary world that can provide them with access to many economic and social rewards". Crystal argues that one of the reasons for learning English as an additional language is that it will put you in touch with more people than any other language. This must be understood in the context of figures that indicate only 350 million first language speakers of English as opposed to 800 million speakers of Mandarin Chinese as a first language yet, it is estimated that one quarter of the world's population is fluent or competent in English (Crystal (1997). English has not attained this global status due to natural progression or because of its intrinsic structural properties. Rather, this has been the subject of a concerted focus originating in conquest and migration through the British Empire. Furthermore, it was fortunately located during the electronic revolution which found it in the right place at the right time (Crystal, 1997), and this position has been compounded through the efforts of the British and American governments who promote English through their teaching agencies for their own interests (Phillipson, 1992 as cited in Holborow, 1999, p. 80). Phillipson (1992) describes this as English

linguistic imperialism. The British Council Annual Report from 1983-1984 articulates this as follows, the British:

> do not have the power we once had to impose our will . . . cultural diplomacy must see to it that people see the benefits of English . . . and the drawbacks of their own languages . . . then, consequently [they will] want [to learn] English . . . for their own benefit. (as cited in May, 2008, p. 201).

The adoption of the English language by nation-states has little influence on subsequent economic development. The poorest countries in Africa are those which have chosen English (or French) as an official language, whilst the majority of Asian 'tiger economies' have opted for a local language (May, 2008). Pennycook highlights the dominant role of English in a changing world where the power of international capitalism and 'free world' ideology parallels massive global inequalities. In many countries, English, and in particular a specific view of standardised English, has been the preserve of the elite who use it as a "gatekeeper to positions of prestige in society" (Pennycook, 1995 as cited in Holborow, 1999, p. 80). It is a major means by which social, political and economic inequalities are maintained within many countries, thus maintaining dominant power structures.

Multilingualism in Public Discourse

Public discourse in Ireland on the issue of migration-based multilingualism has centred overwhelmingly on the necessity for migrants to learn English. The importance of analysing this discourse is informed by Blackledge's work on highlighting the trajectory of discourse within Great Britain. On the basis of this work, Blackledge concludes that policy makers and politicians linked the use of languages other than English with civil disorder in the form of the race riots in

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England in 2001. He illustrates how a complex chain of discourse culminated in a change to existing law which enforced that spouses of British citizens must now demonstrate their proficiency in English (or Scottish Gaelic or Welsh) when applying for British citizenship (Blackledge, 2005).

Public discourse in Ireland on this issue has been articulated by elected representatives, media commentators, and pro- and anti-migrant activists and is located within policy pronouncements, legislative initiatives and wider media circles. The general tenor of this discourse has been that migrants who do not speak English must learn English in order to properly integrate into Irish society. Noticeably, the debate has lacked nuance and clarity, and has, for the most part been informed more by common sense than any theoretical or empirical basis.

Public policy on the issue has been articulated through the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008 (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR), 2008). Article 36(4)(c)ii outlines that one of the terms that may be prescribed by the Minister for Justice when considering whether to grant long term residency to an applicant is that the applicant "can demonstrate, in such manner as may be prescribed, a reasonable competence for communicating in the Irish or English language". The intention to further expand this caveat to claims for citizenship has been outlined in *Migration Nation*, issued by the Office of the Minister for Integration:

> The requirements for citizenship are set out in legislation. Currently there is no requirement for an applicant to show any knowledge of the Irish or English languages, despite having spent a number of years living in the country. A language requirement is proposed in the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill for those applying for a long-term residence permit. It would seem logical that a similar provision should apply to those seeking citizenship. (Ireland, 2008, p. 52).

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This approach emerges from an expressed concern that integration should not be hampered by lack of proficiency in English, with the intention of avoiding the creation of "parallel societies . . . and urban ghettoes" which have developed as a result of failed multicultural polices pursued in other jurisdictions. This conceptualisation of multilingualism as a *problem* (Ruiz, 1984) is further echoed by Fine Gael Senator, Fidelma Healy-Eames, who argued that all immigrants wanting to work in Ireland should have to pass an English language proficiency test. She proposed a preliminary English language proficiency test at points of entry to the country, with a subsequent more detailed test six months following (Brennan, 2008).

Arguing from a different perspective, immigrant support groups have also engaged in the debate over the importance of learning English. The Immigrant Council of Ireland, for instance, frequently criticise the Irish Government for failing to invest in proper English language classes, highlighting that "[l]imited language skills and lack of access to information are recognised as barriers to integration but these are barriers that can, and should, be overcome through effective policy and service provision" (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2007).

Public discourse on the issue of multilingualism in schools has similarly problematised it. According to Kevin Meyers, for instance, "[t]here is good reason to outlaw foreign languages being spoken in the playground because the playground is the primary vector for children to learn about the culture of the school and the society they are in" (Meyers, 2007). While this call did not seem to generate much attention at the time, it echoes similar historical movements elsewhere, such as the following poster:

> You may not speak Gujerati in this classroom.
> You may not speak Greek in this classroom.
> You may not speak Urdu in this classroom.
> You may not speak Chinese in this classroom.
> You may not speak Punjabi in this classroom.
> You may only speak English in this classroom.

which the head of Barnet Language Centre displayed in her classroom (as cited in Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, p. 346).

Contemporary articulation of this is to be found in Herbert-Hoover secondary school in Berlin where it is forbidden to speak any language other than German. The students, almost 90 per cent of whom come from immigrant backgrounds, must sign up to these rules before enrolment and the rules are enforced within class, at break times and during all school excursions. This discrimination on the basis of language use has been described by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) as "linguicism" or "linguistic racism".

This line of discourse serves to render illegitimate the linguistic identity of minority language children. This process found further articulation through comments made by Fine Gael spokesperson on Education, Brian Hayes TD, that immigrant children with poor English language skills should be segregated from their English-speaking peers until they acquire a proper level of proficiency. This proposal received some support, both from members of the public and from some important partners in the Irish education system, with the ASTI (Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland) giving their public backing to the temporary teaching of such immigrants on a separate basis. This call was also challenged, however, by other important partners with the INTO (Irish National Teachers' Organisation) referring to the proposal as

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"discriminatory, inequitable and deeply flawed" and placed it in the context of the inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who have language learning difficulties within mainstream settings (Carr, 2008).

The Importance of Learning the Majority Language

The impact that a lack of ability to converse in the dominant language of a country can have on employment, income and social networking prospects has been well documented. A study by the New Zealand Department of Labour (1999) found that English language acquisition was vital to the employment success of migrants. Drawing on Winkleman and Winkleman (1998), it was found that immigrants of Eastern European origin who could converse in English had an employment rate of 62.4 per cent while those who could not converse in English had an employment rate of only 26.6 per cent. In total, they found that of immigrants aged between 25 and 54 years, 74.1 per cent of those who could converse in English were in employment while only 39.1 per cent of those who could not converse in English were in employment (New Zealand Department of Labour, 1999, p. 52). With regard to income, Winkleman and Winkleman found that the gap between migrant males and otherwise similar New Zealand born males was 30 per cent while the gap was 23 per cent for females (New Zealand Department of Labour, 1999, p. 52). The qualitative data of Lidgard *et al.,* (1998), Ip *et al.,* (1998) and Ip *et al.,* (2007) illustrate the disadvantageous social implications for adult migrants who are not able to converse in the first language of a state. This is particularly acute for some older migrant populations. Ip *et al.,* (2007) conclude in their study of older Chinese migrants in Brisbane, Australia that restricted mobility, limited finances and language barriers led inexorably to restricted social and psychological lives. For some, these effects were

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compounded by self-imposed solitude, which resulted in loneliness, boredom, unhappiness, and, in exceptional cases, depression.

Thus, English language learning is of primary importance for minority language speakers, and in particular, for the purposes of this study, minority language children in Irish schools[5]. It is of high importance for migrant experience and wider social cohesion. Yet public discourse has neglected the benefits or *resources* (Ruiz, 1984) that multilingualism offers. Furthermore, the association of "non-English speaking" with "ghettoisation" reflects a simplistic analysis of a much more complex socio-economic and class based issue.

When we examine the Irish government's approach to this issue, inherent contradistinctions emerge. *Migration Nation* targets labour force participation as one of the major indicators of integration (Ireland, 2008, p. 25)[6]. Yet we understand from pronouncements by African migrants themselves that their ethnic background is their biggest obstacle when trying to secure employment, not their linguistic proficiency (Dunbar, 2008, p. 58). According to the CSO (2008, p. 38) "the percentage of Nigerians aged 15 and over at work in 2006 was the lowest of all groups featured . . . In comparison with the other nationalities profiled[7], a relatively high number were unemployed or looking for their first job (31%)". This figure can be contrasted with the experience of Polish and Lithuanian migrants, for instance, with employment rates of 84 per cent and 82 per cent respectively. A gendered analysis of the figures reveals

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[5] Chapter Three further explores the importance of learning a correct, standardized form of English.

[6] The full list of these indicators are as follows: Labour force participation, language acquisition, education continuance, military service, naturalisation rate, voting, home ownership and inter-marriage.

[7] Nationals from the UK, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, the US, Chinese, Germany, Philippines and France.

a labour force participation rate of 50 per cent among male Nigerians as opposed to 97 per cent among male Latvians.

Furthermore, historically one of the most marginalised and ghettoised communities in Ireland was, and indeed continues to be, the Irish Traveller community. Moreover, there is an awareness that their lack of integration into wider Irish society has very little to do with an inability to converse through English, proficiency in Cant/Shelta notwithstanding. Neither, in this context, should the many sections of the Irish settled population that has been marginalised by virtue of socio-economic inequality be neglected. While *Migration Nation* does indicate other elements of a positive integration scheme, dominant discourse identifies a lack of proficiency in English as the premier factor. When data from other jurisdictions are examined, we begin to understand that integration and economic participation and success are not simply based on majority language learning. Data from the United States, for instance, illustrates that Cuban-Americans have attained significant economic success without concomitant linguistic assimilation (García, 1995).

Public Recognition of Multilingualism

Some service providers have moved to recognise the new multilingualism in Irish society. In recognition of increase linguistic diversity some public services are being provided through languages other than Irish or English. The 2006 census, for example, was prepared in 18 different languages; Irish, English and 16 foreign languages. English broadcast media advertisements for the census were signed off in Polish, Chinese and Lithuanian and specific advertisements were broadcast on Sunrise FM, a multi-cultural radio station broadcasting to the greater Dublin area in Polish,

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Russian, Yoruba, Chinese, Urdu and Swahili (CSO, 2007). In addition, The Health and Safety Authority and Bord Glas compiled *The Essential Health and Safety Guide to Horticulture* in five languages; English, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian (Health and Safety Authority / Bord Glas, 2004), while Tallaght Hospital in Dublin has translated detailed orthopaedic booklets into seven different languages for its patients (Tyrrell, 2006). However, these are often provided on an *ad hoc* basis, and there is no statutory obligation to do so.

The Schooling Context for Minority Language Children

Examining the Options

In light of the above discussion about the *ad hoc* recognition of multilingualism in Ireland, it is important to examine the possible options of recognition within Irish schools. Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006, p. 145) hold that there are four distinct approaches to teaching minority language children: a sink-or-swim approach; a withdrawal approach; a supported integration approach or a bilingual education approach. Baker (2003) has identified ten orientations to "education for bilingualism" (Baker, 2003, pp. 194-227). These approaches are directly, though not necessarily only, applicable to teaching minority language children. Baker categorises these in terms of "weak" and "strong" forms of education for bilingualism. He argues that such approaches range from submersion programmes which use majority language in the classroom with the aim of assimilation into society and a monolingual language outcome to mainstream bilingual programmes which use two majority languages in the classroom and aim to maintain language difference, promote bilingualism and biliteracy and are rooted in educational and societal aims of pluralism and enrichment

(Baker, 2003, p. 194). The present system in Ireland, in failing to recognise first languages may correctly be characterised as weak (Freeman, 2004).

Heritage language programmes are educational programmes that seek to maintain minority language speakers' first languages proficiency. Baker (2003, p. 240) summarises the Canadian Education Association (1991) findings on the advantages of heritage language education as follows:

1. Positive self-concept and pride in one's background.
2. Better integration of the child into school and society.
3. More tolerance of other people and different cultures.
4. Increased cognitive, social and emotional development.
5. Ease in learning of new languages.
6. Increased probability of employment.
7. Fostering stronger relationships between home and school.
8. Responding to the needs and wishes of the community.

There are no examples of dual language bilingual schools in Ireland at the moment. In light of these options, the next section of this chapter proceeds to analyse the present system of targeted support for minority language children in Irish schools.

English Language Support

The model of support for minority language children learning English as an additional language has been based on the provision of English language support teachers to schools on the basis of identified need. This model of provision is in keeping with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2006) findings that the most widely used approach to supporting minority language students was through immersion education supplemented with systematic language support. This support has developed over time and has been, at various stages, articulated through DES circulars. Schools have been further assisted through the provision of in-service

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training and materials developed, organised and operated through Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT), which will be discussed in the next section. Focusing on school based support, original provision of English language support teachers was based on DES (2005) guidelines, which stated that schools which have 14 or more non-national pupils with significant English language deficits were entitled to an additional temporary teacher for a period of up to two years. Schools with 28 or more such pupils were entitled to two temporary teachers. Schools eligible for these teachers also received a once-off grant of €634.87 to obtain necessary resources. Those schools with between three and 13 non-English speaking children received grant assistance for a period of up to two years, €6348.69 for schools with between three and eight such children and €9523.04 for schools with between nine and 13 such children. Schools with less than three such pupils were expected to provide for the educational provisions of those pupils from their existing resources. DES Circular 0053/2007 (DES, 2007) on *Meeting the needs of pupils for whom English is a second language* altered significantly the deployment of additional English language support teaching staff (Table 1).

Table 1

Allocation of English language support teachers according to DES Circular 0053/2007

Number of pupils	Posts	Number of pupils	Posts	Number of pupils	Posts
14 to 27	1	42 to 64	3	91 to 120	5
28 to 41	2	65 to 90	4	121 or more	6

This new system of provision dramatically increased the number of English language support teachers in Irish schools. In 2004, there were 600 teachers working in English language support, 400 in primary-level schools and 200 in second-level schools. By the end of January 2007, the number of such teachers working in primary schools had more than doubled to 880. By October 2008 this had further increased to 2,000 teachers at a cost of €120 million (Naughton, 2008). This has surpassed governmental commitments of an increase of 550 teachers for language support by 2009 as outlined in *Towards 2016, Ten Year Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015* (Ireland, 2006), *The National Development Plan 2007- 2013* (Ireland, 2007a) and the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007- 2016* (Ireland, 2007b). These allocation entitlements were further revised downwards by budgetary changes in announced on the 14th of October 2008 which reintroduced a cap of two English language support teachers per school.

In addition to altering the system of allocation of teaching staff, Circular 0053/2007 also made recommendations as to effective teaching strategies, advising that pupils should receive additional language support teaching in the classroom or in small withdrawal groups, in addition to the support they receive from the class teacher. This echoes recommendations made by the DES Inspectorate in recent Whole School Evaluation (WSE) reports (DES, 2008a, 2008b & 2008c). It also called for a defined whole-school policy in relation to the identification of pupils requiring support, assessment of pupils' levels of language proficiency, programme planning, recording and monitoring of pupils' progress and communication with parents as key features of effective language support provision.

This Circular also amended the previous two-year limit on English language support teaching subsequent to assessment based on IILT's *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks* (IILT, 2003). Accordingly, pupils with significant English language deficits can apply for English language support for an additional year. Importantly, the Circular also highlighted the central role of the class teacher in the provision of English language support. This Circular has been the most comprehensive articulation of government conceptualisation of the provision of English language support teaching to date.

The Role of IILT

While the DES pays the salaries of the English language support teachers in our schools, it, in effect, franchised out the training and support structures for these teachers to a company called Integrate Ireland Language and Training Ltd. This company originated in 1996 when the Refugee Agency commissioned the Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) in Trinity College to produce a report on meeting the langauge needs of refugees. From 1996 to 1998, the CLCS developed an English language course with the Bosnian Community Development Project, and in 1998, the DES supported the CLCS to establish the Refugee Language Support Unit (RLSU) on a two year pilot project basis. In 2001, the DES announced that it would continue to fund the RLSU and supported its establishment as a campus company of Trinity College. In September 2001, the Refugee Language Support Unit was renamed to Integrate Ireland language and Training. IILT has been in operation since and receives funding under the National Development Plan (NDP).

IILT provided in-service training for language support teachers under the following

terms of reference, as agreed with the DES in 2000 (IILT, 2004a, p.14):

1 To analyse the linguistic demands of the primary and post-primary
   curricula and identify the language needed by non-English-speaking, non-
   national pupils in order to participate fully in the educational process.
2 To develop materials to support the learning of English as a second
   language in schools.
3 To present materials, methodology and supplementary aids via an ongoing
   in-service training programme for language support teachers.

Initially IILT provided in-service seminars in both the Spring and the Autumn which

targeted teachers both new to English language support and those who had experience

in the sector. In addition to in-service training, IILT developed some materials for use

by English language support teachers, and indeed, mainstream teachers. The

European Language Portfolio (IILT, 2004b) provides both a useful support for the

individual child and a record of progress for the teacher. It has also developed a

system of *Language Proficiency Benchmarks* (IILT, 2003) against which children can

be continually assessed. Preparation of both of these sets of materials drew heavily

on the suggestions and recommendations of English language support teachers

already working in schools. IILT also developed the language proficiency assessment

outlined in Circular 0053/2007 (DES, 2008d).

This curriculum content is guided by the Primary School Curriculum (Ireland, 1999)

at primary level, and the various subject based curricula documents at second level

and also by the *European Language Portfolio* and *Language Proficiency Benchmarks*,

both of which are supplied by IILT. A decision was taken in June 2008 to cease

government funding of IILT and to move the training and development aspects of its

work under the auspices of the newly established Primary Professional Development Service (PPDS).[8]

The Significance of Irish Language Learning and Minority Language Children

Bunreacht na hÉireann[9] (Ireland, 1937) positions Irish as the national and first language of the state, with the English language recognised as the second official language. The encouragement of bilingual proficiency through teaching in two languages has been central to the development of the Irish education system (Coolahan, 1973). It appears that at both the level of policy and practice, Irish language learning for minority language children has been relegated to a position of secondary importance. There has been no systematic support made available to minority language children with regard to Irish language proficiency, as opposed to the system of English language support, discussed below. Furthermore, the Department of Education (DE) Circular 12/96 enshrines the right for "[p]upils from abroad, who have no understanding of English when enrolled" to be granted an exemption from learning Irish on that basis that they are required to learn only one language (DE, 1996). In effect, this means an entitlement to an exemption from Irish language learning for many minority language children. Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006) argue cogently that while this may be greeted with relief by some minority language students, it can have negative effects with regard to understanding many cultural and official aspects of everyday life in Ireland and can exclude such children from training as primary school teachers. They argue that this also runs contrary to the goal of intercultural education as promoted by the DES (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006, p. 144). Cohen (2000 as cited in Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006, p.

[8] The PPDS subsumed the work of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) and the School Development Planning Support (SDPS).
[9] The Irish Constitution.

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144) highlight that many minority language children perform as well as and even out-

perform majority language speaking children.

Minority Languages in School: Policy and Practice

Education policy with regard to first language learning is articulated through the

following documents:

1. English as an Additional Language in Irish Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), 2006a).
2. Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School: Guidelines for Schools (NCCA, 2006b).
3. Intercultural Education in the Primary School: Guidelines for Schools (NCCA, 2005a).
4. Primary School Curriculum (Ireland, 1999).

Some other educational documents are also relevant:

1. Report on the Feasibility of Modern Languages in the Primary School (NCCA, 2005b).
2. Review of Languages in Post-primary Education: Report of the First Phase of the Review (NCCA, 2005c)

In some ways, these policy documents appear quite enlightened in their approach to

minority language learners in the Irish educational system. This is best espoused by

the declaration that:

> "[t]he right to have one's own language is important in enabling people to develop a strong positive self-image. People also generally find it easier to develop complex thinking in their first language. For both ethical and educational reasons, then, it is important that the student's first language is valued and affirmed within the school context. It is also important to create an environment that supports the learning of a second language. (NCCA, 2006b, p. 45).

This declaration is insightful in that it highlights the importance of drawing on the

first language base of the minority language student. At primary level, for example, it

is recommended that the "teaching of English will build on the language and literacy

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skills which the child has attained in his/her home language to the greatest extent possible" (NCCA, 2006a, p. 5). This report also recognises that "whatever the child's home language, he/she will be able to transfer some of the skills learnt in acquiring it to learning English" (p10). At second-level it is argued that "[s]tudents' first languages continue to be important in their linguistic, social and cognitive development. Therefore it is important that the school would use every opportunity to respect the students' native languages and encourage continued development of these languages, where possible" (NCCA, 2006b, p.109).

Some good examples are offered at both levels of how to use and respect first languages, for example, by encouraging parents to continue conversing with their children in their first language at home, translating signs in school into different languages and encouraging the use of all languages in cultural events such as school concerts and graduations. It is also suggested that, if the teacher feels it to be appropriate, minority language students should be encouraged to take pride in using words from their own language (NCCA, 2005a, p.165; NCCA, 2006b, p.109). Teachers are also encouraged to gather key phrases in the student's first language for use in the classroom (NCCA, 2006b, p.32) and to provide multilingual resources where possible (NCCA, 2006b, p.45). It is also suggested that teachers draw on the child's knowledge of their own first language, and use it:

- To determine the meaning of words.
- To explore the similarities and differences in sounds between English and the home language.
- To explore, where possible, grammatical conventions in the home language that may be the same or different from English.
- To make comparisons between the script and letter sound relationships used for the home language and that of English (NCCA, 2006a, p.10).

While these suggestions are very worthwhile and should inform planning and pedagogy in schools, they do not make reference to the role of the school in developing the first languages of its minority language children. Even when first languages are to be used, it is suggested that this be done with new students and then phased out (NCCA, 2006b, p.44). In essence the work of language maintenance is to be left up to the parents:

> "[c]hildren who are literate in their home language should be encouraged to sustain the development of this literacy. It is important for the child to continue to develop his/her language and literacy skills in the home language. An increasing number of libraries provide books in a variety of languages and these may be used by parents to support the child's language and literacy skills in the home language. Families may have satellite access to radio and television programmes in their home language. (NCCA, 2006a, p.9).

The school has not been given any specific role in first language maintenance or development. Such activities are treated as peripheral to the core linguistic function of the school, which might accurately be described as the moulding of English language speakers. It seems that the potential for change in the area of language teaching at primary school level is quite limited. *The Report on the Feasibility of Modern Languages in the Primary School* recommended that the Primary School Curriculum be "fully implemented before a recommendation is made regarding the inclusion of Modern Languages in the Primary School Curriculum" (NCCA, 2005b p.88). The report singularly failed to consider the increased multilingualism that has become part of Irish society as a result of the new linguistic communities now living here, or indeed the positive opportunities that this development could have for language learning in primary schools.

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The situation at post-primary level is slightly more positive. Students now have the option of being assessed, though not always studying, in 22 languages other than Irish and English. Nine of these languages; Ancient Greek, Arabic, French, German, Hebrew Studies, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Russian, have established curricula, are taught in some schools and can be examined as part of the Leaving Certificate Examination. Students may also take an examination in thirteen other languages, which are referred to as non-curricular EU language subjects.[10] In order to sit these examinations, the student must be from a member state of the European Union, speak the language in which they opt to be examined as a mother tongue and be taking English in the Leaving Certificate Examination. Students can be examined in one non-curricular subject only.

The assessment for these non-curricular languages is based on the First Foreign Language final written paper of the European Baccalaureate. The decision to offer these examinations is guided by Article 149 of the Treaty of Nice, which states that "Community action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States" (State Examinations Commission, 2006, p.12).

While this situation is certainly more advanced than that at primary level, there remain some obvious problems such as the absence of curriculum documents and capacity within the system with regard to qualified language teachers. Other important recent recommendations include the need to develop an explicit policy on

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[10] These languages are: Latvian, Lithuanian, Romanian, Modern Greek, Finnish, Polish, Estonian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Swedish, Czech, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Portuguese, Danish and Dutch.

languages in education that takes account of the interaction between languages in education and language in society. This policy should include issues such as:

- Diversification of languages, in particular identifying the criteria for including or discontinuing particular languages in the curriculum.
- The promotion of plurilingualism.
- Testing of attainment of proficiency in languages. (NCCA, 2005c, p.65).

These recommendations signal further problems with language learning at second level.

There are some further examples of positive recognition of first languages of minority language children in schools: Centre for European Schooling (CES) and Community Language Schools.

First Language Instruction for Minority Language Children in a School Setting

The CES is based in St Seachnall's National School, and Dunshaughlin Community College, both in Dunsaughlin, Co. Meath. The Centre caters for the first language needs of the children of employees in the European Union Food and Veterinary Office in Grange, Co. Meath. Pupils eligible for support in the European Centre attend from 8:30 a.m. in the morning for language classes. During the day, pupils are integrated into mainstream classes for English, Mathematics, History, Science etc., and are removed from class during Irish language teaching every day to attend lessons in their mother tongue. The Centre currently provides tuition in French, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Italian, Czech, Hungarian and Swedish. These children also receive English language support during the day if required. In the initial stages of a pupil's time in the school, the language teachers may also provide a translation service for the pupils. This operates on an in-class basis with the support of the class

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teacher, and in effect, means that the class teacher continues to teach through English while the support teacher translates and helps the pupil to adjust to the class work. As the children move on through the primary education system into secondary school in Dunsaughlin Community College, the teachers may work in both the primary and secondary schools. The Centre is funded by the DES through the Meath Vocational Education Committee (VEC). The VEC has appointed a Co-ordinator to run the Centre in conjunction with the principals of the primary and post-primary schools.

A variation on this type of programme would be the provision of first language instruction before or after the school day only. In this case, minority language children would attend classes in their own first language before regular school commences or at the end of the school day. This approach would be viewed as an add-on to the regular school day.

Minority Languages in Community Language Schools

Kenner (2004, p. 3) describes how community language schools provide support for first language development and maintenance, in addition to other cultural activities such as music, art and dance in Great Britain. These schools are often established and run on a voluntary basis and may, in some instances, be understood as complementary schools in that they support and extend the education that the children receive in mainstream settings. A Polish community language school operates in Newpark Comprehensive School, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Dublin every Saturday and Sunday. The school caters for primary and post-primary Polish speaking children living anywhere in Ireland. In 2007, there were 305 students attending either on Saturday or Sunday, having increased from 80 students in the first year. While the

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children are generally living in the greater Dublin area, some children travel great distances to attend with one child making the round trip from County Limerick to attend during the first year of the school.

The children at the primary level focus initially on learning the Polish language, then they move on to include other subjects such as Science, Geography, History, Civics and Citizenship and Maths. Students at the post-primary level follow a similar programme but do so at a more advanced level. All of the subjects taught adhere to the Polish national curriculum. The school has six Polish teachers, all qualified from Polish third level institutions to Masters level. The school day lasts for three hours for the primary level students, while post-primary level students attend for six hours. A second such school of this type opened in Limerick in January 2007 and there are plans to open more schools in Waterford, Cavan and Cork.

Having examined the educational and linguistic context within which this dissertation is framed, this chapter concludes with a discussion on the issues of children's participation in Irish society. This is of particular importance given the child centred focus of the research, as outlined further in Chapter Four.

Children's Participation

The issue of children's participation in wider society has become very prominent over the last two decades. While this section specifically explores the manifestation of this issue in Irish educational research and policy, Chapter Three examines some of the theoretical perspectives on the issue, particularly the work of Lundy (2007). Prior to this discussion, however, it is important to understand the reasons for this amplified focus on the voice of the child. Sinclair (2004 p. 107) posits three main reasons for

this increased prominence; the growing influence of the consumer, the children's rights agenda and new paradigms within social science that increase our awareness of children as competent social actors. Sinclair and Franklin (2000, p. 1) advance a number of reasons why this has been a positive development, including that it upholds children's rights, improves services and decision-making and empowers and enhances self-esteem. In the Irish context, the children's rights agenda has been of particular importance in advancing this aspect of the democratisation of decision-making and has been articulated through the ratification of the UNCRC (UN, 1989) and national policy instruments, in particular the NCS (DHC, 2000). These developments are outlined below and are followed by a discussion about their success in the fields of children's participation in educational policy development and in research, and educational research in particular.

Children and Research in Ireland

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UNCRC has been the fastest and most widely ratified document in the history of international law (Marshall and Parvis, 2004, p. 12). It is the document in which most work on children's rights is now vested (Verhellen, 1996, p. 7). Nevertheless, both the document itself and the concepts that it contains are the subject of intense criticism. Purdy (1992) and Arneil (2002) criticise the underpinning liberal theory in which children's rights are rooted on the basis that they will not serve the best interests of children. Hill and Tisdall (1997) argue that the UNCRC is gender biased and ethnocentric, while Freeman (1997) asserts that the UNCRC allows for welfare rights to be trumped by cultural values and traditions in certain circumstances. Other, less theoretical, criticisms abound also. Children are often accused of knowing too

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much about their rights and not enough about their responsibilities. Emerging from this perspective, children, it is argued, abuse their rights, taking them as the basis for refusing to listen to the advice of others. One other argument often made against children's rights is that children are not competent enough or lack the capacity to have rights.

Ireland signed the UNCRC on September 30, 1990 and ratified it, without reservation, on September 21, 1992. In doing so, Ireland became a 'State Party' to the Convention and made a formal commitment to promote and protect the rights of children enshrined within the Convention.

The most important Article for our purposes is Article 12, a General Principle, which asserts the right of the child to have their voice heard in matters that affect them. This article reads as follows:

Article 12

1　　States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2　　For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, of through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

In some respects, Article 12 is a revolutionary inclusion in a human rights document. Thus the UNCRC is the "first convention to state that children have a right to 'have a say' in processes affecting their lives" (Freeman, 1996, p. 36). Yet, according to Davie and Galloway, the actual new power that it grants to children is a "modest one for children, namely, the right to have adults listen to their perspective and to have

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this perspective taken seriously" (Davie and Galloway, 1996, p. 14). In this way it does little more than adhere to the concept that guided the consent of the governed theory, for it now offers children a method of participation.

Contained within it is the potential to contribute to the development of what Wyness refers to as a "clearly defined social ontology" for children (Wyness, 2000, p. 91). This is based on recent developments, which see "children as active and competent members of society" (Wyness, 2000, p. 25). This new sociology of childhood rejects the notion of children as passive subjects of social structures, and rather it argues that children are, in the words of Prout and James, "active in shaping their social identities and those of others around them" (as cited in Wyness, 2000, p. 26). It challenges essentialist notions of childhood which inform the opinion that children are not mature enough to voice their opinions on matters that affect them, and promotes agency as the full social recognition of children (Wyness, 2000, p. 26).

Article 12 is a vital component of the Convention in and of itself. In addition to this, however, it has been given further importance within the context of the Convention in that it is identified, along with Article 2 (Non-discrimination), Article 3 (Best interests of the child) and Article 6 (The right to life, survival and development), as one of the four General Principles of the Convention. These principles have been given increased prominence because they are integral to the successful implementation of all of the other rights articulated within the UNCRC.

Article 43 establishes a Committee on the Rights of the Child to which States Parties must submit regular reports on the implementation of the Convention within their jurisdiction. Ireland submitted its first report on the June 17, 1996, which was

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examined by the Committee in Geneva on January 12 and 13, 1998. While the Committee commended measures taken by the Irish Government in areas such as welfare services, health and education provision, law reform and protection from sexual exploitation, it recommended that the Irish Government systematically promote and facilitate children's participation and respect for their views in decisions and policies affecting them. This was seen as being an integral aspect of the solution to the other issues highlighted.

Ireland and the UNCRC

Ireland's NCS (DHC, 2000) emerged from discussions following these recommendations. It acknowledges that children need the support of many people if they are to make the most of their childhood. In addition, however, it also recognizes their "agency" (Wyness, 2000 p. 26) in that they "actively shape their own lives and the lives of those around them" (DHC, 2000, p. 6). Accordingly, Goal 1 of the Strategy claims that children will have a voice in matters that affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity (DHC, 2000, p. 30). This is based on the understanding that children appreciate and rise to challenges which stretch their capabilities and enable them to feel valued and appreciated (DHC, 2000 p. 30). The National Children's Office (NCO) has been tasked with assisting the Minister for Children to oversee and implement the Strategy.

Partnership at a national level involves certain groups being recognised as social partners. There has been some movement to include children in this model of participation. Dáil na nÓg has been established as an annual national children's parliament for children aged from 12 to 18 years old. Children are selected to attend

this event through their local, county-based Comhairle na nÓg, which are organised by the County Development Boards. Delegates pre-select topics for discussion at Dáil na nÓg; for example in March 2005, delegates discussed drug and alcohol misuse and facilities for children. Proposals from Dáil na nÓg are then fed back into the partnership process through the involvement of groups like the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), which is a member of the voluntary and community pillar. Dáil na bPáistí has been created to facilitate the voice of children under the age of 12, and while it is similar to Dáil na nÓg, it is operated on a more fragmented basis with four regional sessions rather than a central parliament. The NCS itself was drafted as a result of the consultation with children (Pinkerton, 2004), and the selection process for Ireland's first Ombudsman for Children had quite significant involvement of children at practically every level (Butler Scally (2004).

The preliminary to the Education Act (Ireland, 1998) does state that one of the purposes of the Act is to ensure that education is conducted in a spirit of partnership between "schools, patrons, *students* (emphasis my own), teachers and other school staff, the community served by the school and the State". Article 27.1 of this Act also set out that schools are to "establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students of the activities of the school". Schools are to facilitate student involvement in the operation of the school through the procedures called for in Article 27.1, in accordance with their age and maturity and in association with their parents and teachers. These provisions apply to both primary and secondary schools. Students in second-level schools have been given further powers under this act to establish and run a Students' Council to promote the interests of the school and facilitate student involvement in the running of the school. The school authorities

must give all reasonable assistance to such a Council. The Board of Management of the school must draw up the rules for the establishment of the Student Council and can also establish guidelines for the election of members and the dissolution of the council (Article 27.5). The council must also consult with the board before making rules to govern its meetings and the conduct of its business (Article 27.6).

The NCO, which has overall responsibility for the implementation of the NCS, has established a Student Council Working Group which aims to promote the creation of effective student councils in all second level schools. The Working Group has 26 members, 11 of whom are young people between the ages of 13 and 17 who were nominated by Comhairle na nÓg and the Union of Secondary Students (USS). Research by this working group in 2004 revealed that out of 750 secondary schools, 590 principals stated that they have a working school council, though members of the working group expressed surprise at this level and questioned the quality of many of these councils (NCO, 2004).

Giving Children's Views Due Weight on Education Policy

Devine (2000; 2003b) highlights that children's voices have been absent from educational policy preparation in Ireland. Fundamental educational policy documents, such as *The Green Paper: Charting our Education Future* (DE, 1992), *The White Paper: Charting our Education Future* (DE, 1995), *The Education Act* (Ireland, 1998) and *The Education (Welfare) Act* (Ireland, 2000) have all silenced children. Devine (2000, p. 24) argues that there was no consultation with any children or young people during the extensive process of consultation leading up to the enactment and implementation of *The Education Act*. This absence has also

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characterised other, non-legislative based policy development. The National Education Convention (NEC) (1993), for instance, afforded the only group, which could be said to represent children's views, the NYCI, 15 minutes presentation time out of a total of 14.92 hours, or 1.68 per cent of the time available (Coolahan, 1994). In the context of curricular reform, while highlighting the involvement of all the partners and interests in primary education, children were once again omitted in the preparation of the Primary School Curriculum (Ireland, 1999). According to Devine (2003b, p. 39), "the revised primary curriculum (1999), devised on the basis of consultation ... makes welcome reference to the need to consider children as 'active agents' yet the process of consultation leading to its formulation did not at any stage include children".

Recent years, however, have seen an increased emphasis on the participation or consultation with children on educational policy issues. In their review of the senior cycle, the NCCA engaged in a number consultation events, which included a bilateral meeting with the USS. This meeting followed an internal consultative process within the USS, which formed the basis of the policies advance by the USS at the meeting. In addition to this, the NCCA also conducted school-based research, which included focus group discussions with students. The provision of an online survey also facilitated the participation of students in the process. The Task Force on Student Behaviour in Second-Level Schools established in 2005 firmly established children as one of the partners in education (Task Force on Student Behaviour, 2005, p. 4). The participation of students was facilitated through two specific activities; a meeting with representative from the USS followed up by a position paper from that group and a joint forum of teachers, students and parents to examine emerging proposals. Finally,

the Your Education System (YES) consultation process initiated in January 2004 held meetings on specific issues at which children were facilitated, for example, meetings on education disadvantage held in Dublin, Cork and Galway in late 2004 (NCO, 2004). The National Forum on Primary Education and Ending Disadvantage is a specific example of involving children in educational research (Gilligan, 2000; Zappone, 2000).

Summary

This chapter outlined the social and linguistic context within which this research project and dissertation is bounded. Having summarised the changing demographics and accompanied linguistic developments in contemporary Ireland, the chapter proceeded to examine how those changes, and, in particular, multilingualism, have been publicly articulated. This examination was followed by an assessment of the relevant educational policies, and provision, for minority language children in Irish schools. The chapter concluded with an exploration of the increasing emphasis on the role of children and young people in educational research in Ireland. Chapter Two proceeds from this point to outline the particular theoretical perspective that informs this dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: RECOGNITION, REPRODUCTION AND RESISTANCE: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical perspective which underpins this dissertation is informed by three dominant frameworks. In the first instance, it draws on a theoretical perspective of equality, particularly the issue of recognition as articulated through the concept of Equality of Condition. In so doing, it draws heavily on the work of Lynch and Baker (2005), Baker *et al.* (2004), Lynch and Lodge (2002) and Taylor (1994). In addition to this equality framework, the theoretical perspective is also guided by cultural theory work of Bourdieu (1990) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) on the role of education in legitimising linguistic domination. The work of Giroux (1983) and Hollander and Einwohner (2004) are drawn on to offer insight into issues of resistance in education. These approaches are then considered through the work of Cummins' framework for empowering minority students (Cummins, 1986; 2000; 2001a and 2001b), which is discussed in detail towards the end of the chapter.

This interdisciplinary equality lens is used to analyse the role of the school with regard to the non-recognition of the first languages of minority language children in Ireland. In attending to Giroux's explication that the role that schools play can only be understood within broader historical, social and economic conditions that characterise wider society (Giroux, 1983), the chapter opens with a discussion of the work of Ruiz (1984) and Lo Bianco (2001) in theorizing orientations towards multilingualism in wider society and Churchill's (1986) treatment of this in the education system.

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Language as Problem/Right/Resource?

Ruiz' (1984) theoretical work argues that societal approaches to multilingualism can be understood through three orientations: *language as a problem, language as a right* or *language as a resource*. For Ruiz, orientations are a complex of dispositions that determine what is conceivable about language in society (Ruiz, 1984, p. 16). Viewing language as a problem links the targeted languages with social problems, such as unemployment in wider society. Solving the language problem is viewed as a way of solving the societal problem. Schmidt argues that this orientation in the United States suggests that "speaking another language is a 'handicap,' a barrier that must be overcome" (Schmidt, 1997, p. 351). Furthermore, the *language as problem* orientation can also conceptualise multilingualism as a political problem and one which presents challenges to national unity (Galindo and Vigil, 2004).

The orientation to *language as a right* often emerges from within minority language communities themselves as a response to policies informed by the *language as problem* orientation, and is articulated through international human rights documents and national legislation (Ireland, 2003). While this orientation can provide a positive basis for language maintenance or language revival activities, Stubbs (1991) alerts us to the experience of minority language speakers in England where government reports:

> use a rhetoric of language entitlement and language rights, and of freedom and democracy. . . [which] makes the correct moral noises, but it has no legislative basis, and is therefore empty. There is talk of the entitlement, but not of the discrimination which many children face; and talk of equality of opportunity but not of equality of outcomes. (Stubbs, 1991 as cited in Baker, 2003, p. 373).

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Thus, while it has important potential, the *language as right* orientation fails to properly address issues of linguistic inequality.

In the third possible orientation, when language is understood as a *resource*, multilingualism is understood to provide valuable social opportunities for minority and majority language speakers alike. Lo Bianco (2001) expands on this orientation by articulating six separate dimensions to the concept: intellectual, cultural, economic, social, citizenship and rights. It has been summarised that a community or nation, which invests in all of its languages, is likely to see:

1. Enhanced intellectual and academic achievement of all children.
2. Enriched cultural activities in all arts fields.
3. Greatly increased possibilities for trade and investment.
4. Heightened capacity to compete in the knowledge economy.
5. Improved social services.
6. Greater engagement in public life and democratic practices.
7. Better strategies to combat prejudice, promote tolerance and mutual understanding.

Churchill (1986) provides a more detailed framework for analysing the treatment of minority languages by policy makers. Employing the metaphor of a ladder, he positions various countries at six stages of the ladder depending on the country's policy response in recognising minority group language problems and on their success in implementing educational policies to meet those problems (Corson, 1993, p. 74). The stages are as follows:

Stage 1 (Learning Deficit): sees the minority groups as simply lacking the majority language. The typical policy response is to provide supplementary teaching in the

majority tongue (e.g. ESL) with a rapid transition expected to the use of the majority language.

Stage 2 (Socially-Linked Learning Deficit): sees a minority group's deficit as being linked to family status. An additional policy response is to provide special measures to help minority peoples to adjust to the majority society, such as aids, tutors, psychologists, social workers, career advisers etc., in concert with majority language learning.

Stage 3 (Learning Deficit from Social/Cultural Differences): sees a minority group's deficit as being linked to disparities in esteem between the group's culture and the majority culture. Additional policy responses are to include multicultural teaching programmes for all children in order to sensitize teachers and others to minority needs and to revise textbooks and teaching practices to eliminate racial stereotyping.

Stage 4 (Learning Deficit from Mother Tongue Deprivation): sees the premature loss of the minority tongue as inhibiting transition to learning the majority tongue because of cognitive and affective deprivations. An additional policy response is to provide some transitional study of minority languages in schools, perhaps as a very early or occasional medium of instruction.

Stage 5 (Private Use Language Maintenance): sees the minority group's language threatened with extinction if it is not supported. The policy response is to provide the minority language as a medium of instruction, mainly in the early years of schooling.

Stage 6 (Language Equality): sees the minority and majority languages as having equal rights in society, with special support available for the less viable languages. Policy responses include recognising a minority language as an official language, providing separate educational institutions for language groups, offering opportunities for all children to learn both languages, and extending further support beyond educational systems (Corson, 1993, pp. 74-75).

This concept of recognising a minority language as an official language brings us to the next section of this chapter, the theoretical exploration of the importance of recognition of first languages.

Theorising Recognition: Equality of Condition

Recognition has been established as one of the five dimensions of equality which underpin the theoretical construct of Equality of Condition (Lynch and Baker, 2005; Baker *et al.*, 2004 and Lynch and Lodge, 2002). Equality of Condition has been described as being about "enabling and empowering people to exercise what might be called real choices among real options" (Baker *et al.*, 2004, p. 34). It is distinguished from the minimal concept of basic equality, which is premised on the view that all humans have equal worth and importance at some basic level and are therefore worthy of respect (Baker *et al.*, 2004, p. 22). However, basic equality entails only a minimalist approach to equality, and does not seek to tackle widespread inequalities in people's living conditions (Baker *et al.*, 2004, p. 23). Equality of Condition is also differentiated from the concept of liberal egalitarianism. There is a plurality of understandings of equality contained with liberal egalitarianism, yet at its basis, it is understood to be more advanced than basic equality, and to fall short of advocating

Equality of Condition. As a way of indicating the difference between liberal egalitarianism and Equality of Condition, Baker *et al.* (2004) examine both concepts of equality under the rubric of five dimensions of equality:

1. Respect and recognition.
2. Resources.
3. Love, care and solidarity.
4. Power.
5. Working and learning.

For the purpose of this dissertation, given the focus on misrecognition of first languages, an exploration of the differences with regard to the dimension of respect and recognition will suffice to elucidate the points of divergence.

Baker *et al.* (2004) argue that liberal egalitarianism supports an idea of universal citizenship, toleration of difference and a cleft between the public and private spheres of existence. Liberal egalitarians, in this regard, propose the idea of minimum entitlement in conjunction with the idea of equality of opportunity. Liberal egalitarianism is not committed to strictly equal respect and can be seen to differentiate clearly from Equality of Condition in this regard. Proponents of Equality of Condition argue that under liberal egalitarianism, it is possible to tolerate difference, while still retaining a position of superiority. The dominant view remains unquestioned. Taylor (1994) bases his critique of procedural liberalism on the point that it is unable to accommodate people of different cultural backgrounds. As an alternative, Taylor proposes a politics of recognition, which will promote the recognition and survival of minority cultures within majority culture societies. Such recognition must originate in respect for difference rather than emerge from an obligatory act of recognition. This approach necessitates a politics of equal respect – an approach rooted in a presumption of cultural equality. Such an understanding of

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cultural equality promotes the concept that all cultures have something important to impart to all human beings.

Furthermore, recognition is vital for the development of positive self-image. As humans, we internalise the messages we receive from those around us regarding our identity. When these messages render as illegitimate those aspects of our identity, which we view as foundational, these messages can work to injure our perception of our own worth. Thus, according to Taylor:

> the thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (Taylor, 1994, p. 25).

Hence, positive self-image is constructed through the receipt of positive messages about foundational aspects of our identity. Honneth explains that "[w]e owe our integrity, in a subliminal way, to the receipt of approval or recognition from other persons" (Honneth, 1992, p. 188). According to Taylor, the crucial feature of human life is that it is fundamentally dialogical in character; humans self-define through interaction with others who matter to us. This is an enduring process so that even after we outgrow some of these others or they disappear from our lives in that "the conversation with them continues within us as long as we live" (Taylor, 1994, p. 33). When one of the interlocutors within this conversation experiences the "subtle humiliation that accompanies public statements as to the failings of a given person" (Honneth, 1992, p. 189) the results can be quite deleterious. Honneth argues that

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"[t]he individual who experiences this type of social devaluation typically falls prey to a loss of self-esteem . . . [and may] no longer [be] in a position to conceive of himself as a being whose characteristic traits and abilities are worthy of esteem" (Honneth, 1992, p. 191). Thus, our image of who we are is constructed in dialogue with those around us. When that dialogue serves to paint a negative picture of certain aspects of our identity, we develop a negative self-image.

Fraser (2000) who is critical of recognition theory which fails to properly consider the problems of maldistribution in the context of social injustice, also critiques recognition theory which is conceptually rooted in the formation of individual identity. This critique notwithstanding, however, she does consider the injurious effects of misrecognition. Arguing for conceptualisation of recognition as a matter of status, she calls for an examination of institutionalised patterns of cultural value for their effects on the relative standing of social actors. She argues that when these patterns constitute some actors as inferior, excluded, wholly other, or simply invisible - in other words, as less than full partners in social interaction - then we can speak of misrecognition and status subordination (Fraser, 2000, p. 113). Fraser further contends that:

> To be misrecognised, accordingly, is not simply to be thought ill of, looked down upon or devalued in others' attitudes, beliefs or representations. It is rather to be denied the status of a full partner in social interaction, as a consequence of institutionalised patterns of cultural value that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect of esteem. (Fraser, 2000, pp. 113-114).

Highlighting that misrecognition or "inequality of recognition" runs deeply in many familiar settings, Lynch et al. (2004, p. 6) outline that "it is an everyday practice to

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describe some students as 'smart' or 'brainy' and others as 'slow', 'weak', 'stupid' or 'duds'" and contend that this is a "pervasive inequality of recognition in the educational system". To counteract such harmful consequences, Equality of Condition demands respect and celebration of difference, be that with regard to sexual orientation, ability or culture, or indeed language. It is "not just about the liberal idea that every individual is entitled to equal rights and the privileges of citizenship . . . It is also about appreciating or accepting differences rather than merely tolerating them" (Lynch and Baker, 2005, p. 133). It is important to note, however, that such advocates do not perceive all difference to be universally benign. Rather, they argue for an approach grounded in critical interculturalism, wherein mutually supportive and critical dialogue between members of different social groups is possible (see King and Kitchener, 1994; Freire, 1993 and Shor 1987, 1992).

Reproducing Inequalities in Schools

There is a large body of theoretical discourse and empirical literature from within Sociology and other education disciplines that address the issue of the reproduction of cultural inequalities in schools (Baker and Lynch, 2005; Lynch and Lodge, 2002; Bourdieu, 1990 and Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Lynch and Lodge (2002) reveal that assumptions of homogeneity tended to prevail among both teachers and students within the schools in their study. Concomitant domination and misrecognition of diversity with respect to race, gender, ability, sexuality and social class, for instance, are thus fundamental to the identity and lived experience of children in Irish schools. The suppression of different identities becomes problematic for the children involved in that these differences often become devalued and condemned (Baker and Lynch,

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2005, p. 143). The work of Bourdieu (1990) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) is central to understanding how differences are treated in school. Bourdieu (1990, p. 22) outlines how struggles for recognition are a fundamental dimension of social life and that what is at stake in these struggles is the accumulation of a particular form of capital. According to Giroux (1983, p. 87), Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction highlights that dominant groups orchestrate symbolic violence to mediate and reproduce class-divided societies. In the context of education, this is achieved through the transmission of a selection of meanings which objectively defines a group's or a class's culture as a symbolic system. This selection of meanings is not neutral, however, rather it is:

> arbitrary insofar as the structure and functions of that culture cannot be deduced from any universal principle, whether physical, biological or spiritual, not being linked by any sort of internal relation to 'the nature of things' or any 'human nature'. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 8).

For Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) pedagogic action is not limited to the confines of structured education in the form of schooling but to pedagogical action exerted by the educated members of any social group, as "diffuse education" and when carried out by family members, as "family education" or "institutionalized education" when carried out by the "system of agents explicitly mandated for this purpose", that is, teachers. Within the context of the education system, pedagogic agency is required to reproduce these selections of meanings deemed worthy of reproduction by the dominant classes. As pedagogic agents, teachers engage in pedagogic work based on pedagogic authority, which is given institutional legitimacy as school authority. The status authority conveyed upon the teacher by the school by virtue of the teacher's appointment tends "to rule out the question of the informative efficiency of the

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communication" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 108). Teachers can impose the

reception of the selection of meanings by virtue of this status authority. Such

pedagogical work is intended to:

> keep order through the reproduction of the power relations
> between the groups or classes, inasmuch as, by inculcation or
> exclusion, it tends to impose recognition of the legitimacy of
> the dominant culture on the members of the dominated
> groups or classes, and to make them internalize, to a variable
> extent, disciplines and censorships which best serve the
> material and symbolic interests of the dominant groups or
> classes when they take the form of self-discipline or self-
> censorship. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, pp. 40 - 41).

This pedagogical work produces a legitimacy of what it transmits "by designating

what it transmits – by mere fact of transmitting it legitimately – as worthy of

transmission, as opposed to what it does not transmit" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977,

p. 22). In so doing it also seeks to impose on the dominated groups "recognition of

the illegitimacy of their own cultural arbitrary" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 41).

In effect, pedagogic action inculcates a habitus, "a system of schemes of thought,

perceptions, appreciation and action" which Bourdieu and Passeron describe as:

> the product of internalization of the principles of a cultural
> arbitrary capable of perpetuating itself after the pedagogic action
> has ceased and thereby of perpetuating in practices the principles
> of the internalized arbitrary. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p.
> 31).

Hence, habitus may be understood as society written into the body, and being thus, is

embodied and turned into second nature (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 63). An individual's

habitus is manifested in relation to the field in which that person operates, a field

being understood to designate any social arena in which people compete for desirable

resources. The habitus of an individual may or may not be appropriate to that which

is expected within a certain field. According to Blackledge (2002, p. 70) when encountering a social world of which it is not the product "habitus is like a fish out of water, and the individual is unable to activate the required cultural capital". May (2008. p. 48) identifies Bourdieu's use of habitus principally to explore how the individual and collective habitus of dominant groups is constituted as cultural capital whereas the habitus of the subordinated groups is not, can be usefully employed in analysis of the experiences of minority ethnic groups, and by extension, minority language groups. He argues that dominant groups treat minority ethnic practices as regressive and premodern, what Lukes described as the product of 'ascriptive humiliation' (Lukes, 1996, quoted in May, 2008, p. 48). For the purposes of this dissertation, this can be understood as minority language children unable to activate the linguistic capital expected within an English language school system. In this context there is misrecognition of the "arbitrary nature of the legitimacy of the dominant language" (Blackledge, 2002, p. 68). This then:

> tends to reproduce, both in the dominant and in the dominated classes, misrecognition of the truth of the legitimate culture as the dominant cultural arbitrary, whose reproduction contributes towards reproducing the power relations. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 31).

In essence then, symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it. Bourdieu regards all pedagogic action to be "objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 5). May (2008, p. 48) describes the concomitant symbolic violence as the inevitably deleterious consequences of misrecognition. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) goes even further than Bourdieu in this regard, arguing that the linguistic and

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cultural resources of minority children, and their parents and communities, are invalidated insofar as most education models make them appear as handicaps or deficiencies. Anderson (1980) employs a similar concept when comparing people with disabilities to members of an under-privileged ethnic or religious group (as cited in Daly, 2001, p. 111)

Theories of Resistance

Not all children are simply passive receptors of this cultural arbitrary. Giroux (1983, p. 90) argues that Bourdieu's theoretical perspective remains "trapped in a notion of power and domination that is one-sided and over-determined" and which short-circuits the hope for individual and social transformation. He claims that it offers a one-sided treatment of ideology claiming that "[I]deology as a construct that links relations of meaning with relations of power in a dialectical fashion is lost in this perspective" (Giroux, 1983, p. 91). He argues that dominant ideologies are never simply transmitted in a void but are often met with resistance and that Bourdieu's work excludes both the active nature of domination as well as the active nature of resistance[11].

In seeking to move beyond the limitations he associates with Bourdieu's earlier work, Giroux outlined a theory of resistance in education. For Giroux, the concept of resistance ought to represent a new mode of discourse that rejects traditional explanations of school failure and oppositional behaviour. This new mode of discourse must be rooted in political analysis of oppositional behaviour as opposed to

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[11] Bourdieu's later work (Bourdieu, 1998) addresses this issue. See May (2008) for a useful application of habitus to the concept of ethnicity in this regard.

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functionalist discourse. Resistance, then, is conceptualized as being rooted in moral and political indignation:

> the notion of resistance points to the need to understand more thoroughly the complex ways in which people mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structures of domination and constraint. (Giroux, 1983, p. 108).

For Giroux, resistance illustrates that power is never unidirectional, being exercised by the dominant over the dominated. Acts of resistance are acts of power. Finally for Giroux, resistance is characterized by an attendant expression of hope and optimism, which is fundamental to transcendence. In addition to providing this rationale for the notion of resistance, Giroux also outlines some criteria against which an act may be considered an act of resistance. Central to this set of criteria is that the act must challenge domination and submission in an effort at "self-emancipation and social emancipation" (1983, p. 109). Oppositional acts which neglect this aspect are not deemed by Giroux as acts of resistance; rather as acts which accommodate and conform.

Hollander and Einwohner (2004) do however understand such acts as resistance. They ascribe two core elements to resistance: Action and Opposition. The active behaviour can be verbal, cognitive or physical (2004, p. 538). Such actions often embrace direct challenges to structures of power (opposition) (Rubin 1996, p. 245) or what Faith describes as deliberate rejection of values that sustain existing power relations (Faith, 1993, p. 8).

There is an ongoing debate about whether resistance must be recognizable as such, with Scott arguing that much resistance is invisible to those targets of resistance, being couched as "everyday" resistance (Scott, 1985). For Rubin, only visible collective acts that result in social change should be regarded as resistance (Rubin, 1996). Such acts must be visible to both culturally sensitive observers and the targets of resistance. Debate also ensues as to the role of intent when understanding resistance (Leblanc, 1999). It may not always be possible to ascertain intent on the part of the resister, perhaps because the resister may not fully be able to articulate their motivations, may lie to the interviewer or otherwise conceal their intention from others (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004, p. 538). Other theorists argue that resisters may not even be conscious of their actions as resistance (Hebdige, 1979).

Power, Recognition and Minority Language Students: Cummins' Framework for Preventing School Failure

Cummins (1986; 2000; 2001a and 2001b) brings together the cultural reproductive theories of Bourdieu, the centrality of recognition to student identity and student empowerment as articulated by Taylor (1994), Honneth (1992), Fraser (2000) and Baker et al. (2004)[12] and the transformative potential contained within the work on resistance to offer a framework for empowering minority students through preventing school failure.

This framework is underpinned by a commitment to transformative pedagogy based on the creation of collaborative rather than coercive relations of power. Cummins outlines that:

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[12] Cummins uses the term incorporation rather than recognition. This concept has been critiqued, for instance, by Vertovec (1996) in that it can fetishize cultural differences. It is clear, however, that Cummins understands incorporation as recognition and equates additive incorporation as positive recognition and subtractive incorporation as mis-recognition.

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> Collaborative relations of power operate on the assumption that power is not a fixed pre-determined quantity but rather can be *generated* in interpersonal and intergroup relations. In other words, participants in the relationship are *empowered* through their collaboration such that each is more affirmed in her or his identity and has a greater sense of efficacy to create change in his or her life or social ·situation. Thus power is created in the relationship and shared among participants. The power relationship is *additive* rather than *subtractive*. Power is *created with* others rather than being *imposed on* or *exercised over* others. (Cummins, 2001a, p. 16).

A central tenet of this theoretical framework is that students from 'dominated' societal groups are 'empowered' or 'disabled' as a direct result of their interactions with educators in the schools. Cummins explains that these "interactions are mediated by the implicit or explicit role definitions that educators assume in relation to four institutional characteristics of schools" (Cummins, 1986, p. 22). Given the focus on the feelings, understandings and experiences of minority language children with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in the Irish education system within this research project, this dissertation is most concerned with the extent to which minority students' languages and cultures are incorporated into the school program. Reference is made, however, to the other organisational aspects of schooling, in particular community participation and pedagogy, which emerge as of particular importance within this dissertation also.

For Cummins, human relationships are at the heart of schooling:

> interactions that take place between students and teachers and among students are more central to student success than any method for teaching literacy, science or math. When powerful relationships are established between teachers and students, these relationships can frequently transcend the economic and social disadvantages that afflict communities and schools alike in inner city and rural areas. (Cummins, 2001a, pp. 1-2).

Teachers' relationships with minority students express the manner in which they define their roles as educators in three specific arenas:

1. Image of their own identities as educators.
2. Image of the identity options they hold for their students.
3. Image of the society they hope their students will help to sculpt.

These role definitions refer to the mindset of assumptions, expectations and goals, which teachers bring with them to school. Linked with this is the understanding that interactions between educators and culturally diverse students are never neutral with respect to societal power relations. In varying degrees they either reinforce or challenge coercive relations of power in the wider society.

Linguistic Incorporation/Recognition

Within Cummins' framework, teachers empower their students by adding to their linguistic and cultural repertoire. This is achieved through incorporation of first language and culture within their pedagogy rather than pursuing a pedagogy that seeks to replace first languages and culture with that which is dominant in the society. Teachers who positively recognise the importance of children's first languages, and thus infuse their pedagogy with such understanding, convey a message to their minority language children that their language is important, and hence that what they bring with them to school is valued within the school setting. In this way they show respect for the student's language (Lucas *et al.*, 1990). These teachers advocate for such students to feel proud of their linguistic identity and help to empower them to sculpt a society that appreciates multilingualism as a resource and opportunity rather than treat it as a problem in need of solution. These collaborative micro-level interactions during which student identities are successfully negotiated within the

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classroom empower those same students. It follows from this analysis that students from subordinated groups will succeed academically to the extent that the patterns of interaction in the school challenge and reverse those that have prevailed in society at large (Cummins, 2000, pp. 48-49).

Linguistic Interdependence Principle

In order to substantiate the above framework from a pedagogical perspective a consideration of the interaction between first and second languages is necessary. Cummins (1981) has theorised this as the Linguistic Interdependence Principle. Cummins' articulation of the importance of incorporation of the first language of minority language students emerges from analysis of research data into the effectiveness of bilingual education as explored below.

Recognition of first languages is particularly important for those children who experience difficulties with school attendance. Indeed the Stanford Working Group (1993) and Thomas and Collier (1997) both argue that first language use is one of the most important indicators of educational success for minority language children. Genesse *et al.* (2005) point out that bilingual proficiency and biliteracy are positively related to academic achievement in both languages. They highlight that bilingual Hispanic students had higher educational expectations and achievement scores than their monolingual English-speaking Hispanic peers and conclude that educational programs for ELLs should seek to develop their full bilingual competencies. Moll and Diaz (1985) illustrate that Spanish speaking English language learners who read a story in English, discussed the story in Spanish and delivered their answers to set comprehension questions in English, demonstrated higher levels of comprehension

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than a control group which discussed the story in English. Research has shown that language recognition and use is of importance for those students who Suárez-Orozco (2001, p. 352) identify as tending to achieve below their native born peers. In this instance it is more important that socio-economic background. A more detailed examination of the data from two other pieces of research, Ramírez (1992) and Thomas and Collier (1997) provides further evidence of the important intersection between first and second languages.

The Ramírez Report (1992)

The Ramírez report was based on an eight-year project which studied 2,352 Latino elementary school children in nine school districts, involving 51 schools and 554 classrooms (Ramírez, 1992). The task of the project was to "assess the relative effectiveness of using only-English or the non-English home language of the limited-English-proficient (LEP) child as the language of instruction to help the child acquire English language and content skills" (Ramírez, 1992, p. 1).

The report compared the academic progress of children in three types of language programmes:

1   English immersion, involving almost exclusive use of English throughout elementary school.
2   Early-exit bilingual in which Spanish was used for about one-third of the time in kindergarten and first grade and which was rapidly phased out thereafter.
3   Late-exit bilingual programmes that used primarily Spanish instruction in kindergarten, with English used for about one-third of the time in grades 1 and 2, half of the time in grade 3, and about sixty per cent of the time thereafter.

This work identified that those students who had prolonged first language instruction were closing the academic gap between themselves and majority language speakers. It also found that while children from immersion (in L2) and quick transitional programs were not falling further behind their majority language classmates, they were not catching up with them, as was the case with those children in the prolonged programs. The report concludes that:

> In sum . . . students who were provided with a substantial and consistent primary language development program learned mathematics, English language, and reading skills as fast, or faster, than the norming population used in this study. As their growth in these academic skills is atypical of disadvantaged youth, it provides support for the efficacy of primary language development in facilitating the acquisition of English language skills. (Ramírez, 1992, pp. 38-39).

Furthermore it also states:

> These findings suggest that providing LEP [Limited English Proficiency] students with substantial amounts of instruction in their primary language does not impede their acquisition of English language skills, but that it is as effective as being provided with large amounts of English. Of equal importance is the finding that students who are provided with substantial amounts of primary language instruction are also able to learn and improve their skills in other content areas as fast as or faster than the norming population, in contrast to students who are transitioned quickly into EO [English Only] instruction. (Ramírez, 1992, p. 40)

Thomas and Collier (1997)

One of the other seminal pieces of research into the effectiveness of education for minority language children was conducted by Thomas and Collier (1997). In the course of their research, they analysed more than 700,000 student records compiled from five large school systems in the United States between 1982 and 1996. The

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study examined data about student characteristics, the instructional interventions they received, and the test results that they achieved years after participating in programs for language-minority students. Thomas and Collier investigated two central questions:

1. How long does it take ELL students to reach the 50th Normal Curve Equivalent, taking account of age on arrival in the United States and type of programme attended?
2. What is the influence of the school programme and instructional variables on the long-term academic achievement of ELL students?

Emphasis was also placed on student achievement across the curriculum rather than proficiency in English alone. The study defined a successful programme as one whose typical students reach long-term parity with national native-English speakers (50th percentile or 50th NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent) on nationally standardized tests) or whose local English learners reach the average achievement level of native-English speaking students in the local school system (Thomas and Collier, 1997, p. 7).

Their investigation identified the amount of formal schooling in the child's first language to be the strongest predictor of how rapidly they will catch up with their peers in the majority language. This finding was irrespective of whether the first language was Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Amharic, Korean, Russian or Vietnamese and was a stronger predictor of success than either the ability of their parents to speak English or socio-economic status. Based on their study, Thomas and Collier declare emphatically "[o]f all the student background variables, the most powerful predictor of academic success in L2 is formal schooling in L1. This is true whether L1 schooling is received only in home country or in both home country and the U.S." (Thomas and Collier, 1997, p. 39). This finding echoes that of the Stanford

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Working Group that "one of the best predictors of second language proficiency is proficiency in the mother tongue" (as cited in Lucas and Katz, 1994, p. 539).

To explain the success of this counter-intuitive approach to teaching minority language children, Cummins has advanced a theory of "interdependence". This theory holds that:

> To the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly". (Cummins, 1981, p. 20).

This articulation of the Interdependence Principle developed on the idea espoused by Toukoma and Skutnabb-Kangas which argued that:

> The basis for the possible attainment of the threshold level of L2 competence seems to be the level attainted in the mother tongue. If in an early stage of its development a minority child finds itself in a foreign-language learning environment without contemporaneously receiving requisite support in its mother tongue, the development of its skill in the mother tongue will slow down or even cease, leaving the child without a basis for learning the second language well enough to attain the threshold level in it. (Toukama and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977, p. 28).

Cummins clarifies the Interdependence Principle by highlighting the difference between two alternative conceptualisations of bilingual proficiency, which he refers to as the Separate Underlying Proficiency (SUP) and Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) models (Figure 1). The Separate Underlying Proficiency Model of Bilingual Education implies that the proficiency of the minority language child in their first language is separate from their proficiency in English, thus content and skills learned through L1 cannot be transferred to L2 or vice versa. The research evidence would

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argue that this is not the case, however, finding that content and skills can be transferred from one language to the other.

THE SEPARATE UNDERLYING PROFICIENCY (SUP) MODEL OF BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY

THE COMMON UNDERLYING PROFICIENCY (CUP) MODEL OF BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY
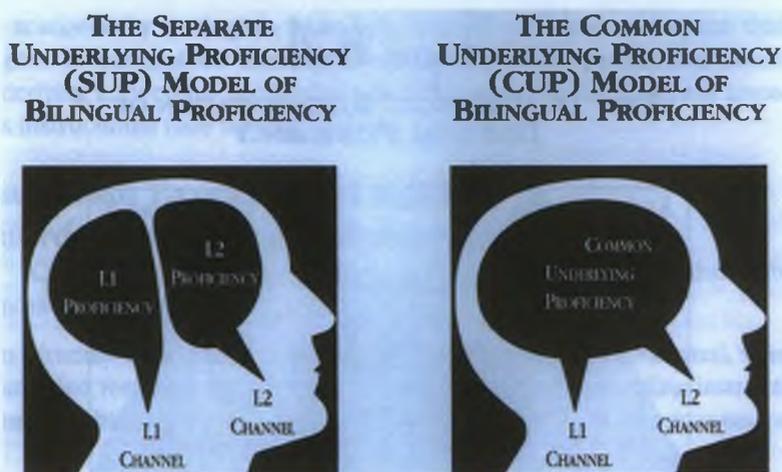
Figure 1. Models of Bilingual Proficiency.

That which is articulated through the L1 and L2 Channel can be understood as surface features of the language. These include the pronunciation or fluency of the user while the underlying proficiency refers to cognitive/academic abilities. Thus the Polish-speaking child who knows how to make a list or order items according to size does not have to learn to this again through English, though she or he will have to learn the vocabulary relating to the list of items. Necochea and Cline (2008) describe this as a validation of the home language, which builds on the strength of that language and regard it as key to the success of the project of English language learning within their Systematic Implementation Model (Necochea and Cline, 2000).

In addition to the important pedagogical factors, recognition is imperative in preventing the negative factors associated with language loss as outlined in Chapter

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Three. Data shows that second generation students who became fluent bilinguals reported better relations with their families, greater self-esteem and higher educational aspirations than those who became English monolinguals (Portes and Hao, 2002). In addition, better heritage language development means better communication with family members and with other members of the minority langauge community (Wong-Fillmore, 1991; Cho et al., 1997; Cho and Krashen, 1998). See also (Rumbaut 1994; Zhou, 1997; 2001; Tseng and Fuligni 2000; Harker 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suaréz-Orozco and Suaréz-Orozco 2001; Portes and Hao 2002).

Arguments Against the Recognition of First Languages.

Despite the theories and empirical evidence highlighted above, the policy and practice of using a minority language child's first language in school is still widely debated. A recent OECD report claims that empirical support for the Interdependence Principle is weak and argues that few people agree with the strict version of the hypothesis (OECD, 2006, p. 145). It also make the point that "it is unclear whether bilingual approaches are more effective than monolingual approaches in helping immigrant children attain proficiency in the language of instruction" and offer the following studies in support of this position; Greene (1997), Limbird and Stanat (2006), Rossell and Baker (1996), Slavin and Cheung (2003) and Willig (1985) (OECD, 2006, p. 147). An analysis of these studies questions the validity of the OECD assertion.

The Rossell and Baker study is central to the OECD argument. Following their review of methodologically acceptable research studies on the educational effectiveness of bilingual education, they conclude that traditional bilingual education

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"is never better than structured immersion" (Rossell and Baker, 1996, p. 1). In his

critique of these findings, Cummins highlights many flaws in the Rossell and Baker

study (Cummins, 2001a, pp. 269-274). He argues that Rossell and Baker assign

labels to different programs in an arbitrary manner, limit the framework of discourse

to exclude bilingual programs designed to promote bilingualism and biliteracy and

that they are blatantly inaccurate in their reporting of French immersion data.

Cummins also accuses Rossell and Baker of "doublethink" in their use of the

documented success of bilingual and trilingual programs to argue against bilingual

education, in that "*90% of these studies are interpreted by their authors as

supporting the effectiveness of bilingual and even trilingual education*" [italics in

original] (Cummins, 2001a, p. 269). He concludes that "[i]t seems clear that Rossell

and Baker could have argued a far more convincing case for the efficacy of dual

language programs than the case they attempt to construct for English-only structured

immersion" (Cummins, 2001a, p. 273).

Cummins is not the only reviewer to question the validity of Rossell and Baker's

work. Greene, as referred to in the OECD study, carried out a meta-analysis of

Rossell and Baker (1996) and argues that "[i]t is clear that Rossell and Baker's review

of studies is useful as a pool for a meta-analysis, but the lack of rigor and consistency

in how they classify studies and summarize results prevent their conclusions from

being reliable" (Green, 1997, p. 112). Greene's work followed a similar design to

that of Willig (1985) which was a meta-analysis of an earlier piece of work by Baker,

this time in conjunction with de Kanter (Baker and de Kanter, 1983). Both Greene

(1997) and Willig (1985) concur that first language instruction helps students to learn

English, though Willig was highly critical of the weaknesses of research into

bilingual programmes (Willig, 1985, p. 297). The Limbird and Stanat (2006) report is written in German and is inaccessible to the current author. Slavin and Cheung (2003) has also been inaccessible to the author, though Slavin and Cheung (2005) report that children's "reading proficiency in their native language is a strong predictor of their ultimate English reading performance" (Slavin and Cheung, 2005, p. 249). Thus, it is incomprehensible that these studies might be offered to support the assertion that it is "unclear whether bilingual approaches are more effective than monolingual approaches in helping immigrant children attain proficiency in the language of instruction" (OECD, 2006, p. 147).

Emerging from the OECD (2006) study, Christensen and Stanat (2007) argue that immersion in the school language, with appropriate language support, is the optimal approach to reverse academic underachievement among first- and second-generation immigrant students. Cummins rebuts this assertion. He argues that in linking the use of a language other than the language of school in the home, understood as linguistic mismatch, Christensen and Stanat (2007) move from a language of *association* to a language of *causation*. In doing so, they ignore significant international data which illustrate convincingly that many groups of immigrant students, from all socio-economic backgrounds, succeed academically despite a home-school language switch. Yet arguments around linguistic mismatch remain fundamental to the debate on first language recognition.

Snow (1990) has summarised further arguments against the provision of first language learning into four categories:

1. The history argument.
2. The ghettoization argument.

3. The time-on-task argument.
4. The hopeless cause argument.

The history argument is based primarily on the success of European immigrants into the United States of America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These immigrants received no specialised bilingual programmes and, apparently, succeeded quite well. The history argument has been used by many opponents to bilingualism, including Ron Unz, chairperson of English for the Children and leader of the lobby for California Proposition 227 which, when passed in 1998, replaced bilingual education programs with one year immersion programmes. Unz holds that his mother is an example of the historical success, "I come from an immigrant background myself in that my mother, who was born in Los Angeles, grew up not speaking a word of English. When she was about four or five years old, she learned English very quickly and easily" (Unz, 2002).

The ghettoization argument is made against bilingual programmes, which separate minority language children from the rest of the school population, thus removing them from access to native English speakers. In addition the teacher of the bilingual class is often a native speaker of the child's first language and may not be modelling good English. This argument holds that such approaches to language learning actually inhibit the opportunity of the child to learn English and to integrate into mainstream English-speaking society.

The time-on-task argument is based on the premise that children perfect skills in and knowledge about a topic more quickly if they spend more time practising the skill or acquiring the knowledge. Again this approach favours maximum exposure to English

as the more effective way of learning the language. This position is articulated clearly by Imhoff (1990, p. 51) in that, "[b]ilingual-education advocates also tend to dismiss the idea that practice makes perfect, expressed in the educational terms as "time-on-task," and hold that instead that non-English-speaking students will learn English better if less time is spent teaching it.

Snow (1990) refers to the final category as the hopeless cause argument. This emerges from criticism of the failure of bilingual programmes to maintain first languages over two or three generations in the United States of America. Hence, the argument proceeds, if it has been proven that bilingual programmes do not help to maintain the first language, then why should society invest resources in bilingual education?

These arguments against bilingual education and first language use are easily refuted in light of the empirical data presented above. It is true that there are many examples of minority language children succeeding despite never having had access to learning through their first language. This argument, however, neglects the evidence of those children who have failed in the education system having found themselves alienated because of their language and culture, and unable to draw on previous experience to aid new learning. Furthermore, this argument also ignores the present societal context, which demands much higher levels of literacy for access to even the most basic of services and activities than heretofore. Thus, minority language children acquiring levels of Conversational Fluency (Cummins, 2000) which might have offered access to work or social services in previous societal contexts, will find themselves locked outside of employment of consigned to low paying work.

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The "time-on-task" argument has been overwhelmingly discredited by the findings of Thomas and Collier (1997) and Ramírez (1992) as outlined above, both of which identified that time spent learning a child's first language had the effect of promoting proficiency in the majority language. Cummins argues further:

> [i]n virtually every bilingual program that has ever been evaluated, whether intended for linguistic majority or minority students, spending instructional time teaching through the minority language entails no academic costs for students' academic development in the majority language. (Cummins, 2001a, pp. 175-176).

Both remaining arguments against first language use are actually arguments against the quality of the programmes rather than first language use *per se*. Critiquing the competence of the teacher, the mixture of the bilingual class and the history of bilingual programmes which have embedded failure refer more to the capacity building within the system and the structure of certain bilingual programmes rather than bilingual education itself. While these criticisms might be justifiable on an individual or even local or national level, they do not provide the sound empirical basis upon which to base national policy.

Collaborative Community Participation

Cummins argues that when teachers involve minority parents as partners in their children's education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to children with positive academic consequences (Cummins, 1986, p. 27). He bases this assertion on analysis of empirical data such as Tizard *et al.* (1982) who found that parental involvement had a pronounced effect on students' success in

school. The role of minority language parents in their children's education is explored in further detail in Chapter Three.

Cummins' framework is in complete congruence with Equality of Condition theory in that they understand that the failure to recognise first languages is a socio-cultural injustice. As Lynch (2005) argues "[a]ll the practices in education whereby differences arising from ethnicity, religion, ability, sexuality or other statuses are subordinated, ignored or denigrated are examples of socio-culturally generated inequalities (Lynch, 2005, p. 149). Resolution of such socio-cultural injustices involves socio-cultural and symbolic resolutions at institutional levels (Fraser, 2000 as cited in Lynch, 2005, p. 149). This framework, therefore, not only provides a powerful explanatory tool for understanding the issue of the present monolingual, English-only language support policy, but also highlights possibilities for change. It is for these reasons that it has been chosen as the theoretical framework for this dissertation.

Theorising Levels of Participation

This increased focus on children's participation and hearing the voice of the child as discussed in Chapter Two has led to an increased focus on the theory surrounding levels of children's participation. A helpful point of origin for this discussion is to be found in the work of Hart (1992), who provides a useful typology for thinking about children's participation in processes and projects. This typology is based on the model of a ladder as borrowed from Arnstein's (1969) work on adult participation. The Ladder of Participation provides eight levels of young people's participation in projects and provides a useful tool for analysing the involvement of children and

young people in matters that affect them.

The first three rungs on the ladder refer to involvement of children, which, while often presented as participation, do not actually amount to their participation in the project under discussion (manipulation, decoration and tokenism). Actual participation can only be claimed if the following requirements are met:

1. The children understand the intentions of the project.
2. They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why.
3. They have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative' role).
4. They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them.

The remaining five levels incorporate aspects of these requirements to varying degrees. These levels are:

1. Assigned but Informed.
2. Consulted and Informed.
3. Adult-Initiated, Shared Decisions with Children.
4. Child-Initiated and Directed.
5. Child-Initiatives, Shared Decisions with Adults.

Westhorp (1987) is critical of the hierarchical nature of Hart's work and identifies a six-stage continuum of youth involvement, making the point that a certain option will be more appropriate in some situations than others. In establishing a number of strategies and approaches, she ensures that a variety of different young people can participate. Treseder (1997) offers a similar model based on a degrees-of-participation approach. Shier (2001) returns to a hierarchical approach and proposes a model of five levels of participation. The model does, however, alter the focus somewhat from participation to empowerment. At each level, individuals and organisations have different degrees of commitment to the process of empowerment.

There are three stages of commitment at each level - openings, opportunities and obligations. Rocha (1997) extends this work even further and, while she does offer a ladder based model, the rungs are not based on levels of participation but rather on the potential for political action.

In this context Lundy (2007) presents an advanced conceptualisation of Article 12 of the UNCRC. She proposes that the successful implementation of Article 12 requires consideration of the implications of four separate issues: Space, Voice, Audience and Influence. This is important in the first instance to counteract a "cosy" (Roche, 1999, p. 489) understanding of the Article which limits enactment to the level of consultation and participation. It is also important in order to adhere to the interdependence, indivisibility and interconnectedness of all human rights and specifically the Articles outlined in the UNCRC. This conceptualisation is illustrated in Figure 2
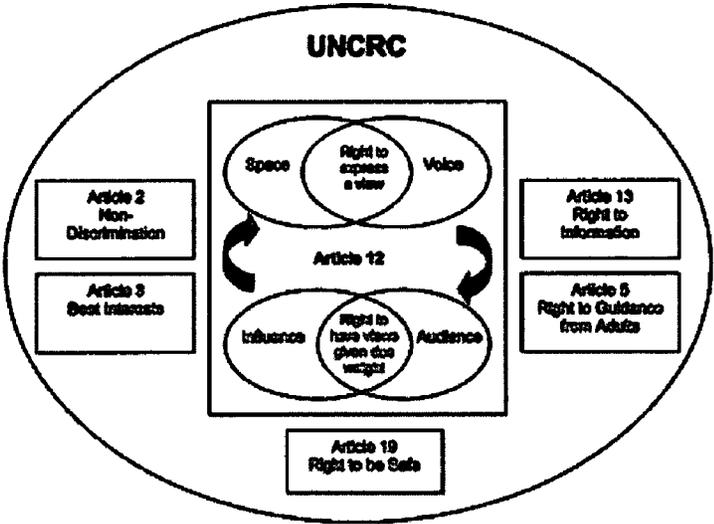
Figure 2. Lundy's Advanced Conceptualisation of Article 12. (Lundy, 2007, p. 932).

With regard to Space, Lundy calls for the creation of opportunity for involvement in decisions on matters which children and young people consider impact on them. This opportunity should be orchestrated in a safe space and should acknowledge that the right to participate is not a duty and that children and young people should understand this difference. Furthermore, the space must be inclusive of the views of a diverse range of children, including disadvantaged and marginalised children and young people.

Lundy conceptualises Voice as ensuring that children and young people, if so required, are afforded assistance to form a view. Lundy refers to the United Nations Special Summit on Children's Rights in 2002 in which children and young people identified a number of prerequisites to effective and meaningful participation, including access to child-friendly documentation and information and sufficient time to understand the issues. Lundy also illustrates that these participants also suggested that fun activities be employed to access the views of younger children. Lundy reminds that this accords with Article 13 of the UNCRC which states that children's right to freedom of expression includes and right to impart information 'either orally, in writing or in print. In the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice' (Lundy, 2007, p. 935; see also Fraser, 2003, p. 24).

In explaining what is understood by Audience, Lundy outlines that not alone do children and young people have a right to have their voice heard but that this must be given "due weight". This demands that children at least have a 'right of audience' - a guaranteed opportunity to communicate views to an identifiable individual or body with responsibility to listen.

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In the last aspect of the advanced conceptualisation of Article 12 Lundy focuses on the issue of the Influence afforded by adults to children's views. According to Lundy, applying the provision in the spirit and context in which it was drafted would require that it be generous and child-empowering rather than negative and opportunity-restricting. Lundy also points to the counterproductive aspects of tokenistic or decorative application of Article 12 and propounds that while it cannot be guaranteed that children and young people's views will be taken into account, one method is to ensure that they are told how their views were taken into account. In linking this Article with Article 5, which requires adults to provide children with guidance and direction in line with their evolving capacities, Lundy presents a cogent defence of her position.

According to Lundy, the "strongest argument for guaranteeing the implementation of this right derives from its capacity to harness the wisdom, authenticity and currency of children's lived experiences in order to effect change" (Lundy, 2007, p. 940). This adheres perfectly with participatory action research.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the interdisciplinary equality lens which underpins this dissertation. The lens if firmly rooted in the issue of recognition as articulated through the concept of Equality of Condition. It is deeply informed by the work of Lynch and Baker (2005), Baker *et al.* (2004) and Lynch and Lodge (2002) and Taylor (1994). The lens is further informed by the cultural theory work of Bourdieu (1990) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) on the role played by education in legitimising linguistic domination and the work of Giroux (1983) and Hollander and Einwohner

(2004) who provide guidance on the issue of resisting this domination. These approaches were then considered through the work of Cummins' framework for empowering minority students (Cummins, 1986; 2000; 2001a and 2001b), which paid particular attention to importance of recognition of first languages. The chapter concluded with an exploration of some of the key theoretical perspectives on the increased focus on children's participation in light of Article 12 of the UNCRC. Chapter Three proceeds to examine the key findings in the literature regarding the experiences of minority language children in education.

CHAPTER THREE: MINORITY LANGUAGE CHILDREN IN EDUCATION

Introduction

This chapter examines the relevant literature with regard to the experiences of minority language children in education. It does this both in the context of the children themselves, and also with regard to the role played by their teachers and their parents/caregivers.

Teachers

This section explores Irish and international literature on the issue of teachers and their role in working with minority language children. The role of teachers is central to the theoretical perspective underpinning this research project. It has been outlined that teachers actively transmit the cultural arbitrary of the school. The do have options to resist their role in perpetuating misrecognition of minority language children, and this emerges from positive role definitions with regard to their:

1. Image of their own identities as educators.
2. Image of the identity options they hold for their students.
3. Image of the society they hope their students will help to sculpt.

Darmody (2007) argues that the nature and quality of teacher-pupil interactions have strong implications for the future life-chances of minority ethnic pupils. She outlines that positive teacher-pupil interactions based on showing an interest in their students' lives, positive interaction, encouragement, having high expectations and being supportive, all contribute to encouraging school engagement and raising students' self-esteem and motivation and can greatly improve educational outcomes. Her

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analysis indicates no significant differences between international pupils and Irish nationals with regard to their relationships with teaching staff, with most of the pupils reporting that they had experienced positive relationships with their teachers

Teacher Preparation and Support

The role of teachers in implementing empirically solid pedagogical practices has been seen as fundamental to the success of minority language children (Snow and Biancarosa, 2003). Chisholm (1994) reports that most teachers lack the knowledge and skills to work successfully with minority language children including developing reflective practitioner skills, cultural competence to interact comfortably with students from diverse cultural backgrounds and an understanding of the interrelationship between language and cultural. The teachers in McGorman and Surgue (2007) identified the absence of adequate teacher preparation courses at either pre-service or in-service level. These findings are mirrored by the work of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) (2008). As outlined in Chapter One, IILT was tasked with the provision of training for English language support teachers by the Irish government. Ward (2004) indicated mixed responses among teachers to the IILT training but clarified that her sample was not substantial enough to provide any solid conclusions. The provision of English language support training through IILT was roundly criticised by the teachers in McGorman and Sugrue (2007).

Wallen and Kelly-Holmes' (2006) data from 10 schools in Galway city (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006) indicate a heterogenous population of English language support teachers in terms of training with qualifications ranging from fully qualified and recognised primary school teachers to non-qualified teachers with backgrounds in

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hotel management and the arts. While some of the teachers in the study did have TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) experience, this was predominantly gained in teaching English as a foreign language to adults overseas. DCU (2004) caution that even being qualified as an English teacher for majority language speakers or having a qualification in English as a Foreign Language does not automatically ensure that the teacher will possess the skills and competencies necessary to work as an English language support teacher. With regard to mainstream class teachers, Kitching (2006) identifies that over 86 per cent of the teachers in his study had not participated in any form of professional development in regard to teaching reading to ESL pupils. Devine (2005) highlights that primary school teachers tended to draw on their experience of teaching Irish, in their work teaching English to minority language children. Further problems emerge with regard to the availability of resource materials with Ward (2004) highlighting that English language support teachers felt it necessary to draw on materials prepared in the United Kingdom or Canada for further support. It would appear that Irish teachers have not received adequate support to work with minority language children in their classes and have difficulty accessing adequate resource materials upon which to base their teaching.

Teacher Expectations

Teacher expectations have been found to have a fundamental influence on the educational attainment of minority ethnic and minority language children (Sukhnandan and Lee, 1998). Ogbu (1992), for instance, highlights how members of the Japanese Buraku outcaste continue to perform poorly in school when compared with the dominant Ippan students, yet they achieve to the same level in schools in the

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United States of America. It is argued that this is because educators are unaware of their low social status in their home country, thus they tend to have the same high expectations of them as they do for other Japanese students. Stanosheck Youngs and Youngs (2001) identified the factors which help teachers to develop a more positive attitude towards minority language children to include professional development; if they work in the humanities, social sciences, or natural/physical sciences versus applied disciplines; have had at least some sort of ESL training; have lived outside, or taught outside the United States of America; have interacted with a culturally diverse population of ESL students; and are female.

Teacher Allocation

Teachers in Ireland generally come from a homogenous background. This is particularly acute in terms of social class and gender (Drudy and Lynch, 1993; Lynch, 1999). Devine (2005, p. 55) identified that all the teachers in her study were from the dominant ethnic community, being white and sedentary. The temporary nature of English language support posts in schools has been highlighted as problematic (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006; McGorman and Sugrue, 2007; ESRI, 2008; Nowlan, 2008). Nowlan's research, though conducted within second-levels schools identified a lack of continuity for students as teachers tended to drift in and out of the post. Devine and Kelly (2006) report that the allocation of an experienced full-time teacher to the position of English language support teacher with the school in their study is of huge benefit to the school.

Models of Support Teaching

According to the ESRI, the dominant model of English language support teaching is based on withdrawal from the mainstream classroom. Moore (1999) argues that this

is rooted in logistical reasons and this is substantiated by the findings of Wallen and

Kelly-Holmes (2006) and Nowlan (2008). It has been argued that this is in contrast to

best practice (Nowlan, 2008). Devine (2005) reports that the teachers in her study did

not identify this model of English language support as problematic. The ESRI (2008)

found withdrawal was based on a structured approach to improving English.

Difficulties with this approach include that it impairs progress in other subjects, that

the children are left coping on their own in the mainstream class for the remainder of

the school day, and potentially leads to the negative labelling of minority language

students. The ESRI indicates that within its three case-study primary schools, they

found examples of combined withdrawal and within-class support from specialist

teachers. It concluded that this model presented a more co-ordinated and holistic

approach to the provision of English language support, it allowed more scope to deal

with individual needs as they arose, but that it was likely to me more resource

intensive.

None of the English language support teachers in the Wallen and Kelly-Holmes

(2006) study regularly taught in a mainstream classroom in cooperation with the class

teacher. Two had tried to do so in the past but cited logistical reasons for

discontinuing to do so. Evidence of immersion classes within the Irish education

system was also found by the ESRI. It found that they were more common in schools

with higher percentages of minority language children, that they did facilitate more

intensive English language support, but that it did present implications for the social

integration of the minority language students. McGorman and Sugrue (2007) reported

examples of English language support teachers working in-class with mainstream

teachers, though this was predominantly in Junior Infant classes. They found that this

was principally focused on establishing the basics of positive behavioural patterns and social skills and the mainstream class teachers found the support very beneficial. They moved into a withdrawal system following the Christmas break.

Minority Language Parental Involvement

When teachers involve minority parents as partners in their children's education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to children with positive academic consequences (Cummins, 1986, p. 27).[13] McGorman and Sugrue found some evidence of a commitment to the maintenance of first languages on the part of parents but also revealed evidence of the difficulties associated with this. The teachers in McGorman and Sugrue (2007) highlighted that the inability to communicate with parents who have little or no proficiency in English seriously hampers their work. This reinforces the findings of Kitching (2006) that almost half of his sample regarded their communication with EAL pupils' homes as being of lesser quality than communication with Irish pupils' homes. Parents who appear to be uninvolved in their children's education are often criticised for not caring about their children. We know, however, from the work of O'Brien (1987, 2004) in Ireland that working class parents, for instance, do care about their children's education, but lack the particular form of dominant cultural capital that would otherwise allow them to act on that care through engaging more fully with schools. Wong Fillmore (1983) found similar issues with regard to parents of minority ethnic and minority language children in the United States and analogous findings emerge from McGorman and Sugrue (2007) in their work with parents.

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[13] While not specifically fundamental to the focus of this dissertation, it is important to note that there is a gendered element to this activity. According to O'Brien (2005, p. 224), "the literature on caring suggests that it is mothers and not fathers who traditionally do day-to-day, caring including educational support work".

Yet minority language parents are interested in their children's education (Azmitia *et al.*, 1994 (as cited in Nieto, 2004, p. 115); Kenner, 2004; Sohn and Wang, 2006; McGorman and Sugrue, 2007 and Archer and Francis, 2007). Azmitia *et al.* (1994) explain that even though everyday learning activities in the home and families' aspirations for children's futures were crucial resources that could provide school-home linkages, there was a general lack of awareness among school staff concerning these resources. In the context of that study, it also emerged that while the Mexican-American families' aspirations for their children were as high as those of European-American families, the former often had little comprehension of how to help their children attain those aspirations (Azmitia *et al.*, as cited in Nieto, 2004, p. 115).

Other problems with regard to the involvement of parents in their children's education include language barriers, work schedules, transportation, childcare, time constraints, discomfort levels with an unfamiliar and maybe intimidating system and even a perception that they are not wanted (Brilliant, 2001). Language barriers also emerged as an issue in McGorman and Sugrue (2007), with one of the parents, Anna, believing that the single biggest barrier to involvement is the lack of English language among newcomer parents (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007, p. 101). This finding about the linguistic barriers echoes findings in the international literature. Sohn and Wang (2006, p. 128), for example, point out in their study of Korean parents' involvement in schools that, "[I]rrespective of the participants' length of U.S. residency, the language barrier was the most frequently cited problem related to contacting teachers or participating in school activities". Any developments with regard to parental involvement which include an aspect of the home visits by a member of school staff, or school proxy, must also be aware of what Kouritzin (2006, p. 22) alerts us to as

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"the humiliation of being forced to speak a second language badly in their own home".

A further point for consideration emerges from Valdés work with ten Mexican immigrant families in the Southwest of the United States. Valdés argues that simply bringing parents to schools will not eradicate racist or classist responses that some educators and other members of the school community might have towards migrants (as cited in Nieto, 2004, p. 116). To this end, an awareness of the pernicious presence of racism and the inequality experienced by many minority ethnic and minority language parents within our schools and within wider society must remain to the fore. Instead of problematising parental involvement with first languages Necochea and Cline (2000, p. 323) advise that parents need to be included as integral members of a primary language support programme, allowing schools to capitalize on the strengths and knowledge base that various community members bring to the educational process.

Experiences of Minority Language Children

This segment of the chapter draws on the literature to illustrate some of the most significant education and social experiences for minority language children. The segment is broken into three distinct sections. The first examines the issue of educational success and achievement and introduces the complexity of understanding minority language children in a socio-economic and ethnic vacuum. The second section speaks to the issue of children working as language brokers, and the final

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section describes the social and personal effects of language loss suffered by minority language speakers when they fail to maintain proficiency in their first language.

Experiences, Feelings and Understandings of Minority Language and Minority Ethnic Children in Irish Schools

As outlined in Chapter One, recent years have seen a more concentrated effort to hear the voices of children with regard to educational experiences. Some of the most salient pieces of work in this regard include Devine's study on how childhood is structured in primary school (Devine, 2003a), O'Brien's work on transfer from primary to second level schooling (O'Brien, 2004) and the Keogh and Whyte's (2005) research report into the creation of student councils in second level school.

Some research has been conducted in Ireland which attempts to hear the voices of minority language, ethnic or culture children (Fanning *et al.*, 2001; Vekić, 2003; Devine, Kenny and McNeela, 2004; Ward, 2004; McGorman and Sugure, 2007). Though not all of these studies focused exclusively on educational issues, they provide a clear insight into how those children experienced education in Ireland. Some of the data from these research projects indicate benign aspects of schooling. The students in Vekić's study, for instance, reported that they were happy in school and prioritised the role that the staff and the teachers played in this. The majority of the students felt extremely positive about their teachers, rooted in what the students perceived as their *caring and understanding* nature. Vekić does enter the caveat that many of these children have had experience of overcrowded classrooms where the teacher cannot devote much time to individuals. In this context the students really appreciated the time spent by the teachers in helping them with their work.

Similarly, McGorman and Sugrue (2007) report that the children in their study, both minority and majority language speakers, are quite positive about changing patterns of migration in Irish schools. They do caution, however, that the linguistic and social capital of the students within their study might not be widely shared within other segments of immigrant communities and advise against unsubstantiated generalisation.

Challenges and Racism in Irish Schools

The issue of language difficulties emerged quite strongly in McGorman and Sugrue (2007) with one child reporting, for instance:

> When you come to school first, you don't have any English, and it's very hard. People come up to you and talk to you and they don't know why you can't understand them. They say to you 'what do you want' and you can't answer them.' (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007, p. 96).

Similar findings emerge in Vekić (2003), in addition to a further identification that a lack of English proficiency works as a barrier to preventing interaction with English speaking students.

While McGorman and Sugrue (2007) found only limited experience of racism, this emerged as a clear element in other studies with reports that "S...'s big brother shouts the n... word after me when I call to her house" (Fanning et al., 2001, p. 57), "[t]here's a girl in my class and she keeps saying I'm a black monkey" (Devine et al., 2004, p. 192) and:

> "[i]f you were a Palestinian and you came over here you'd get slagged. Nobody here likes them. People here are starting to

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hate Muslims. Like the Americans. It was on the news it was. I wouldn't like to be a Muslim. They say they're bastards" (Devine *et al.*, 2004, p. 192).

This discrimination and racism has also been extended into the linguistic sphere with, for instance, one child highlighting that "[o]ne day me and my baby sister were going to Spar together, and they started making fun of our language" and one other child reporting that "Sometimes I heard a boy in our class: 'I don't like these girls because they've a different language and a different colour'" (Devine and Kelly, 2006, p. 132).

Examples of very poor pedagogical practice emerge from within these studies. One parent interviewed in the Fanning *et al.*, (2001) study noted:

> "[t]here were three (asylum seeker) boys in Junior infants. The teacher was sitting with the Irish children reading letters. The three boys were in another corner playing with blocks because they couldn't understand. How will they come to understand if they don't do the same as other children? I thought school shouldn't be like this for my son, he should sit with other children" (Fanning *et al.*, 2001, p. 57).

In the same report, a 16 year's old male student with poor written English disclosed that he doesn't understand his homework and as a result "the teacher doesn't ask me for it, knowing I can't do it" (Fanning *et al.*, 2001, p. 57).

Language and Learning

Ward (2004) highlights instrumental motivation as the driving force for the majority of her research sample studying English, with 75 per cent of respondents indicating a desire to cope with everyday needs, 37 per cent to improve their communication skills

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and upgrade their qualifications, 32 per cent to prepare for further study in Ireland and 17 per cent to communicate with the local population. Ten per cent study English to prepare for future employment. Twenty-one per cent of the respondents in Ward (2004) indicate that they either could not or had major difficulty writing in their first language or another language. This figure was 18 per cent with regard to reading in their first or another language. Ward points out that because this data was collected via written questionnaire that this figure was most likely under-representative. All of the students in Vekić's work identify a lack of English as presenting difficulties with their work. These are highly motivated students and desire to pursue third-level education. This piece of work provides a very interesting insight into the experiences of children *vis-à-vis* models of support. Those students who were placed in classes established for teaching English indicated that they found it difficult to integrate with Irish-born students, while the other students indicated high levels of integration. One of the students in the segregated class indicates that he would prefer to mix with other children so that he could learn from them. A student who was placed in the segregated class was, not happy with his experience. He commented:

> It is ok. I think that I will not be able to sit my exams for I
> missed too much. I was away for a long time. It has gone worse.
> I think that the teachers here do not care. They do not understand
> us, or want to understand us. It is as if they think you are crazy
> or something. Like I see the way they speak to someone else and
> the way they speak to me, I ask myself am I crazy (Vekić, 2003
> p. 58).

Vekić surmises that the student felt that he was constantly treated in a manner different to the other students, he sensed he was being picked on and treated unfairly and that his teachers did not understand him and the problems he encountered in school.

Minority Language Children and Educational Success

Data from other jurisdictions illustrate that many minority language children have much less successful experiences of education than do majority language children (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix, 2000; Watt and Roessingh, 2001; Isquierdo, 2003; Snow and Biancarosa, 2003; Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2005; Genesse *et al.*, 2005; OECD, 2006; European Commission (EC), 2008; Cummins, 2008). According to the EC (2008, p. 4) there is clear and consistent evidence that many children of migrants have lower levels of educational attainment than their peers. This is further substantiated by the OECD (2006) examination of results from PISA 2003, which identifies that immigrant students often perform at significantly lower levels than their native peers in key school subjects, such as Mathematics, reading and Science, as well as in general problem-solving skills. Watt and Roessingh (2001), for instance, noted an overall dropout rate of 74 per cent for English as a Second Language (ESL) students, approximately 2.5 times that of the general high school population in their longitudinal study in Calgary, Canada. Isquierdo highlights that while Hispanics represent 11 per cent of the total population of the United States between the ages of 16 and 19, they account for 34 per cent of those students of that age cohort who have dropped out of school (Isquierdo, 2003, p. 1). This occurs despite evidence that immigrant students are motivated learners, and possess positive attitudes towards school (OECD, 2006). This report also illustrates that country of destination significantly impacts on experience with key differences in performance in countries such as France, Denmark, Germany and Austria, while immigrant students in Australia, New Zealand and Canada illustrate little difference between their performance and that of non-immigrant students.

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Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix (2000) illustrate the heterogeneity of immigrant populations in general and the further complexity within what might be understood as more homogenous immigrant groups. They further identify the problematics with generation position. They argue that dropout rates vary substantially for all generations across national origin groups in the United States of America. Children of Mexican origin have dropout rates of twice the national average for first, second and third generation students. This is contrasted with children of Asian origin who are more likely to complete school than any other immigrant group, or indeed native children. Further examination, however, reveals that dropout rates for Asian students increases significantly for third and subsequent generations (see also Ngo and Lee, 2007 for a further discussion of complicating the model minority image of Asian students). This runs contrary to the OECD (2006, p. 30) findings that first generation students are more likely to experience difficulty with school performance and associate this with experiencing challenges of immigration such as adjusting to a new culture and social situation, acclimatising to an unfamiliar school system or learning a new language. This heterogeneity was further exposed in the Irish education setting when Ward (2004) identified that unaccompanied minors experienced lack of motivation as a significant barrier to education. While this must be understood in the context of a particular set of circumstances, such as relocation and uncertainty about their future, it does provide a contradistinction with the findings of McGorman and Sugrue (2007) outlined earlier.

Minority language status and minority ethnic status are in many cases intricately intertwined. Recent data from United Kingdom illustrate striking differences in levels of attendance, expulsion and attainment in the formal education system between

ethnic minorities and non-ethnic minorities (DfES, 2005). Travellers of Irish

Heritage, Gypsy/Roma pupils, Black Caribbean, Black Other, White/Black Caribbean

and White/Black African pupils had higher rates of permanent exclusion. Black pupils

received fixed term exclusions at twice the rate of other pupils (DfES, 2005, pp. 19-

21). Traveller groups are more likely to have identified Special Education Needs

(SEN), followed by Black Caribbean, Black Other, White/Black Caribbean (DfES,

2005, p. 21). Black Caribbean boys are three times more likely to be diagnosed with

severe learning difficulty at primary school, while they are twice as likely to be

represented on school action plans aimed at tackling behavioural, emotional and

social difficulties (DfES, 2005, p. 24). These data also illustrate that while some

minority language and/or minority ethnic children were performing at higher than

average levels, for instance Indian and Chinese pupils, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi

and Pakistani pupils were all below the national average (DfES, 2005, p. 9).

Learning Problem/Language Problem

Academic failure among minority language students is often cast as being rooted in a

learning problem rather than a language problem. Baker points out that there is

evidence of overrepresentation of minority language children within SEN categories

(Baker, 2003). The teachers in McGorman and Sugrue (2007) argue that children

who performed badly on standardised tests after two years of English language

support in Irish schools were becoming candidates for learning support. Furthermore,

as both Nowlan (2008) and Devine (2005) highlight, teachers seemed confused about

the difference between English language support and learning support. Ortiz (2001)

reacts to this overrepresentation by offering a strategy for identifying SEN within

minority language students. This is based on ruling out issues such as negative school

climate and teaching methods which fail to use pedagogical principles known to be effective for teaching English to minority language students, thus highlighting that these factors can contribute to overrepresentation. There is evidence that this misplacement puts further stresses on the special education system as currently constituted within the Irish education system (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007).

English Language(s) for Success?

It must be understood that, not only do minority language children have to develop a proficiency in English in order to properly access the Irish school curriculum, it is a proficiency in a particular type of English language register. Cummins (2001a) refers to these as the three dimensions of language proficiency, namely; Conversational Fluency, Discrete Language Skills and Academic Language Proficiency. This builds on earlier work, which established the distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency or BICS and CALP (Cummins, 1980).

Conversational Fluency is the ability to carry on a conversation in familiar face to face situations and is characteristic of the level of proficiency attained by an English speaking child when they enter school aged five. In contradistinction, Academic Language Proficiency includes knowledge of the less frequent vocabulary of English, as well as the ability to interpret and produce increasingly complex written and oral language in decontextualised settings. Discrete Language Skills embody specific phonological, literacy and grammatical knowledge that students acquire as a result of both formal and informal practice and direct instruction. These skills are learned continually through schooling. Cummins argues that the relationship between these

dimensions is still confused and highlights that "many ELL . . . students who have acquired fluent conversational skills are still a long way from grade-level performance in academic language proficiency". (Cummins, 2001a, p. 66). Cummins asserts that it takes on average five to seven years for a minority language child to develop Academic Language Proficiency to the level of their majority language speaking peers.

It must be further considered that not only do minority language children have to learn the type of academic English necessary for successfully negotiating the education system but they must also negotiate their own language acquisition with regard to what Mac Ruairc (2004) describes as the prestige varieties of language. His study exposed how middle class linguistic capital is prized in Irish schools and highlighted the problems experienced by children from working class backgrounds who did not share this linguistic code. Despite attempts to amend their language use through correction, working class children demonstrate a commitment to their own language and continue to use it in school. Given that the children who participated in this research study all attend schools with DEIS status[14] it can be surmised that much of the peer language that they hear will be rooted in that non-prized vernacular (Cregan, 2007). The issue with learning a standardised version of English emerged for African-born English language speaking separated minors who identified this as a major issue in Ward (2004).

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[14] Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) is an initiative launched by the DES in May 2005 aimed at addressing the educational needs of children and young people experiencing socio-economic inequality. It targets children and young people from 3-18 years.

Children as Language Brokers

The literature suggests that many minority language children often act as interpreters or translators for their parents of other members of the minority family or community. Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006) identify evidence of this in the Irish education system. This is understood as language brokering (McQuillan and Tse, 1995) and has been named as "unwaged work" by Hall and Sham (2007, p. 25). This is multifaceted work. Orellana (2003) reflects that children state that this work "happens everywhere" including at home, on the street, in school, in the doctors surgery, shops and in restaurants, that they "translate all kinds of things" from words, letters, movies to bank statements, bills, legal documents and school report cards and that "it is harder than it seems".

Baker (2003) outlines six positive outcomes for children who act as language brokers. These include learning to act with authority and gaining trust; learning to take initiative; positive cognitive development in the form of metalinguistic awareness and character formation in that handling of dialogue may lead to increased maturity and self-esteem, which can also arise as a result of being expected to carry an adult role early on in life. Identified negative outcomes include hearing information more suitable for more mature members of the family; confusing messages about when it is suitable to act in an adult role and in a child role within the family; developing negative attitudes towards the first language when they identify the majority language as that of power; and if the children cannot interpret properly, then this can challenge positive self-esteem (Baker, 2003).

Language brokering can have significant effect on traditional intergenerational authority relationships within families (De Ment *et al.*, 2005, p. 260). McQuillan and Tse (1995) identify how children often took on parental roles by signing school notes without their parents seeing the note or bypassing parents with small school concerns for their younger siblings. This role reversal has been characterized as children acting as 'surrogate parents'. The evidence with regard to the effect of language brokering on child-parent relationships is contradictory. Umaña-Taylor (2003) for instance argues that it can lead to harmful role reversal in that parents can become dependent on their children. According to De Ment *et al.*, (2005), language brokers feel a strong commitment not to let their parents down. McQuillan and Tse (1995) asserted that most children feel proud about brokering and are happy to do so. It is also clear that language brokering can be problematic. Some children can resent having to spend their free time doing translation work for their parents while others reported feeling ashamed of their parents because of their lack of proficiency in English (McQuillan and Tse, 1995; Hall and Sham, 2007). De Ment and Buriel (1999 as cited in Morales and Hanson, 2005, p. 494) argue, however, that it can help language brokers and their families to develop a stronger bond. Morales and Hanson (2005, p. 495) conclude that "there is no clear-cut answer to the question of whether language brokering has a positive or negative effect on the child-parent relationship".

School personnel do understand this practice to be problematic and have highlighted the need for the provision of translation and interpretation services. McGorman and Sugrue (2007) recommended the provision of these services on the grounds that:

> translation and interpretation services are very necessary in
> practical terms, but are symbolically significant also as they

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provide evidence of the extent to which a system is prepared to honour its commitment to a policy of inclusion and diversity.

This adherence to a policy of inclusion was seen as fundamental to the SCMP, which provided translation, interpretation and cultural mediation services to 10 schools in the Dublin 7 SCP area in the school year 2007/2008 (Mc Daid, 2008), thus significantly reducing the need for schools to use minority language children as language brokers.

Language Loss

Research on the absence of first language recognition has tended to focus on the impact that this has in terms of language loss and language shift, and in particular, the impact that this has on identified communities. Where individual language loss has been researched, this research has tended to be "(a) linguistic in nature, and (b) concerned with describing the language loss process" (Kouritzin, 1999, p. 16). Kouritzin (1999, p. 18) further explains that this body of research "tends to address the questions: "what parts of speech are most subject to loss?" and "what are the identifying precursors to and features of language loss phonologically, morpho-syntactically, metalinguistically, or affectively?" Kouritzin outlines that aspects of language loss which have been studied include: productive skills, comprehension, circumlocution, retrieval difficulty, visual word recognition, letter writing, hesitation frequency, and length of aspiration and offers a wide range of studies in support of her argument including Kenny (1993), Maher (1991) and Segalowitz (1991). Of those studies that do investigate the impact of language loss (as a result of non-recognition in the formal education system), few have focused specifically on children. Kouritzin's study *Face(t)s of First Language Loss,* gathered data from 21 subjects,

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though only two were under the age of 18, Cameron (12) and Julian (9). Guardado's *Loss and Maintenance of First Language Skills: Case Studies of Hispanic Families in Vancouver* focuses specifically on the perspective of parents regarding the loss of their children's proficiency in Spanish (Guardado, 2002). Similarly Smith-Hefner's study of language and identity in the education of Boston-area Khmer examined neglected the perspectives of Khmer children (Smith-Hefner, 1990).

First Language and Family Relationships

Failure to recognise and provide support for first languages within the education system can have significant implications for relations within minority language families and communities. Minority language children who experience language loss can no longer communicate freely with members of their family and communities. In losing this social and cultural capital, there is the potential for rifts to develop and families to lose the intimacy that comes from shared beliefs and understandings (Wong Fillmore, 1991, p. 343). According to Wong-Fillmore:

> What is lost is no less than the means by which parents socialize their children: when parents are unable to talk to their children, they cannot easily convey to them their values, beliefs, understandings, or wisdom about how to cope with their experiences. They cannot teach them about the meaning of work, or about personal responsibility, or what it means to be a moral or ethical person in a world with too many choices and too few guideposts to follow ... Talk is a crucial link between parents and children: it is how parents impart their cultures to their children and enable them to become the kind of men and women they want them to be. When parents lose the means for socializing and influencing their children, rifts develop and families lose the intimacy that comes from shared beliefs and understandings. (Wong-Fillmore, 1991, p. 343 as cited in Kouritzin, 1999, p. 16).

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These findings have been replicated in other research. Tseng and Fuligni (2000) found that adolescents that spoke the home language with their parents had emotionally closer relations with their parents than those who spoke English with their parents. These adolescents also indicated that they had less conflict with their parents than those who spoke English. Problems with parent-adolescent relationships can be a precursor to problematic behaviour. In this context then, it is important to understand the advice of Mouw and Xie (1999) who, while recognising the importance of developing second language proficiency in English for academic success asserted that we must remain aware of the social and interpersonal dangers of rapid linguistic assimilation in order to ensure effective communication between parents and children.

This can also result in significant distress for the child, captured eloquently by the poet John Montague in relation to the replacing of his native Irish with the English language:

> [T]o stray sadly home
> And find
> the turf-cured width
> of your parent's hearth
> growing slowly alien:
>
> ... To grow
> a second tongue, as
> harsh a humiliation
> as twice to be born.

Language, Identity and Self-image

As Giles *et al.,* (1977) point out, language is generally regarded as one of the salient dimensions of ethnicity, and as such, is one of the most important articulations of ethnic identity both at an individual and at a group level (Giles *et al.,* 1977 as cited in

Cavallaro, 2005, p. 567). According to Cavallaro, this leads Lambert (1980) to posit

that communicating in a language other than that of one's own group can lead to a

sense of not belonging to the same culture as one's own ethnic-heritage group. In

essence then, a person's sense of ethnic identity may be threatened or lessened in

some way (Cavallaro, 2005, p. 568). Failure to learn or maintain proficiency in their

first language can have significant long-term effects for minority language children.

As Churchill (2003) points out:

> The identity implications of limited amounts of heritage
> language exposure, offered on a voluntary basis to a fraction of
> students from non-English-speaking families, are twofold: (a) for
> those who participate, support is given to maintenance of ethnic
> identity, a factor which can serve to reinforce their self-esteem
> and give balance to their identity formation as Canadians; (b) for
> those who do not participate in heritage language programs, the
> main aspects of identity formation are based upon the uncertain
> power relationships in classrooms where the non-English-
> speakers are almost always in a less powerful situation – some
> groups being more vulnerable and others. Even though most non-
> English speakers acquire a reasonable knowledge of English over
> a period of years, learning English is only a part of the process of
> forming their identity. For students whose background lowers
> their power standing – on the basis of race, social class or other
> social markers that reduce their status – learning English will
> occur in a context that tends to reinforce social differences. The
> identity internalized is Canadian. But the civic identity may be
> formed with a second class status that lowers key aspects of
> citizenship identity such as access to rights and sense of
> belonging. (Churchill, 2003, p. 36).

Anzaldúa eloquently captures the intricate connection between language and identity

when she declares "[s]o, if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language.

Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity – I am my language" (Anzaldúa,

1987, p. 59).

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Jalava offers further insight into the shame associated with linguistic and cultural difference in his account of his experience of education in Sweden following his family's emigration from Finland. Jalava was not offered any opportunity to maintain his language or culture within his new school, indeed he was punished for writing in Finnish, yet he struggled to use his language:

> [w]hen others wrote in Swedish, I wrote in Finnish. But that was something that just couldn't be done. The teacher grabbed my pencil and angrily shook his finger at me. In spite of everything, I continued to fall back on my mother tongue. From the time I had learned to spell, it had given me pleasure to put together sentences on paper. (Jalava, 1988, p. 162).

The Finnish immigrant could not sustain the struggle, however, and finally capitulated:

> [w]hen the idea had eaten itself deeply into my soul that it was despicable to be a Finn, I began to feel ashamed of my origins. Since going back was out of the question – and the thought of going back was what had sustained me – there was nothing else for me but to surrender. To survive, I had to change my stripes. Thus: to hell with Finland and the Finns! All of a sudden I was overwhelmed by a desire to shed my skin and smash my face. That which could not be accepted had to be denied, hidden, crushed and thrown away . . . so down with the Finnish language! I spat on myself, gradually committed internal suicide. (Jalava, 1988, p. 164).

Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke (2000, p. 3) point out that the way that children feel about themselves is not inherited, rather that it is learned, and they further argue that a number of researchers have shown that positive self-esteem depends upon whether children feel that others accept them and see them as competent and worthwhile. Furthermore, they quote Purkey (1970) as correlating high-esteem with high academic

performance and advocate that "[p]ositive action to promote self-esteem should form an integral part of work with children and ought to be incorporated into the everyday curriculum" (Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2000, p. 3). This positive action would be rooted in an approach which makes children aware that they all have an ethnic/racial, linguistic, gendered, cultural and diverse identity or identities. According to Cummins (1997, p. 108), the message is not just about bilingualism and language learning as linguistic and educational phenomena; more fundamentally it is a message about what kinds of identity are acceptable in the classroom and society. For pupils from subordinated groups, the price of admission into the teaching-learning relationship, and access to opportunity within the wider society, is frequently renunciation of self, or to paraphrase Blackledge (2006, p. 67) "a heavy [linguistic] entrance fee".

As outlined by Cummins:

> the historical patterns of underachievement among marginalized groups [can be attributed] to the devaluation of identity that has typically been played out in interactions between educators and students . . . This devaluation of linguistic, cultural and academic identity reflected the pattern of coercive relations of power that characterized intergroup relations in the broader society. Under these conditions, students quickly became convinced that academic effort was futile and many resisted further devaluation of their identities by mentally withdrawing from participation in the life of the school. (Cummins, 2001b, p. 246).

Yet, holding out hope for transformation, he insists that "schools do not have to be like this" (Cummins, 2000, p. 249).

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Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the experiences of minority language children in school. In particular it has focused on the experiences associated with language loss, lack of proficiency in the dominant language in school and working as language brokers in schools. The chapter contextualised these experiences by exploring the roles played by parents and teachers in the school life of these children. Having thus established the theoretical and empirical basis for this dissertation over the last three chapters, the following chapter outlines the methodological approach by which the study is guided.

CHAPTER FOUR: A TLC APPROACH TO CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology employed to ascertain the feelings, experiences and understandings of minority language children with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in Irish primary schools. The first section of this chapter charts the context of this particular issue in the Irish education system, and then maps the development of the specific research question that it seeks to address. This is followed by an in-depth discussion of the utilisation of an Emancipatory Participatory Action Research approach for the study. Many problematics inherent in using traditional research methodologies with children, and minority language children in particular were uncovered. To this end a creative solution was required and then developed which centred on the establishment of a TLC for speakers of Polish or Romanian as a first language. The section of this chapter dealing with research design elucidates this process and considers issues of fundamental importance such as the structure of the Camp, data collection techniques, recruitment of research participants, validity and reliability and ethical considerations. The chapter also speaks to issues of dissemination of research findings.

Context for the Research Question

The linguistic support system provided for minority language children in the Irish education system has been previously described as a monolingual English-only system (Mc Daid, 2007). Minority language children who have significant problems with English are provided with *English language support lessons* as outlined in DES

Circular 0053/2007 (DES, 2007). The DES has provided only peripheral recognition of the importance for minority language children of maintaining a connection with their own culture and language through the Intercultural Guidelines (NCCA, 2005a) and the aforementioned Circular. This marginal treatment of the issue has allowed space to develop where teachers misrecognise the personal, social and pedagogical value of promoting a multilingual whole school (Kosmalska, 2009, forthcoming). Set in an international context, such attitudes are not unusual (Lee and Oxelson, 2006, Wong-Fillmore, 2000, Krashen, 1999) and indeed might be understood as a common sense approach to teaching the majority language.

The research question addressed in this study emerged from an interrogation of the literature, in conjunction with a synchronous reflection on my own experience as an English language support teacher in a primary school in Dublin. Ongoing observations throughout that practice illuminated many issues associated with first language recognition for students learning English as an additional language. A key insight into the importance of this topic was gained during a lesson when a student from Lithuania was encouraged to divulge a word in Lithuanian that she did not know in English. The student looked shocked and embarrassed as she discovered that a previously known word was now forgotten. Her discomfort was magnified when she realised the impact that such knowledge would have on her grandmother who happened to be visiting her family at the same time. Half jokingly she admitted to me, "my grandmother would kill me". In addition to this critical insight, further work with students through the development of dual language texts highlighted the positive impact that first language recognition can have for students who were struggling in other areas of their schooling.

Research Design

Doing Research with Minority Language Research Participants

Much has been written about the problematics of conducting research with, or providing services for minority language speakers. They are often excluded on the basis of language barrier (Marshall and While, 1994; Frayne *et al.*, 1996; Tsai *et al.*, 2004; McGorman and Sugrue, 2007). Frayne *et al.* (1996), for instance, highlight that medical studies, which excluded non-English speakers, point to a lack of pre-existing instruments in the target language, the need to translate responses into English, the expense of instrument translation and the recruitment of bilingual staff as the basis for their non-inclusion. Bilingual staff may not always be available, and, even when they are, differing socio-cultural, factors including socio-economic status and personal history of immigration, can preclude reciprocal participation (Tsai *et al.*, 2004). Prospective research participants themselves have been found to identify their own low levels of English language proficiency as rendering them of little use to research projects (Henley 1979 as cited in Marshall and While, 1994, p. 567; Munet-Vilaró, 1988). In the Irish context, McGorman and Sugrue (2007) excluded those students without the language fluency to participate in their heterogenous focus groups. When they do participate through their second language, the research literature indicates that such a process can result in impoverished accounts and that the participants identify themselves as being less confident, happy and intelligent (Murray and Wynne, 2001). Given this lacuna in the literature and the methodological problems, it is not surprising that there is an increased call for research that gives minority language populations a voice (Murray and Wynne, 2001). This study responds to that call in the context of minority language children.

Doing Research with Minority Language Children

It was decided that the data for this research project would be gathered through the use of a qualitative approach. Emerging from Greene and Hogan (2005), it was understood that this approach more suitably captures the full richness of the feelings, understandings and experiences of minority language children which lie at the heart of the research question. Much time was spent on trying to identify a suitable methodological approach. An initial exploration examined the possibility of collecting data by way of a life history study, via semi-structured English interviews following Kouritzin (1999). It was soon realised that this was in tension with the central tenet of the project, namely the recognition of the first languages of the research participants. Other options were subsequently investigated, including focus groups in English but allowing for use of first language, focus groups through the first language and semi-structured interviews with the aid of an interpreter. All of these approaches had both unique and common limitations, which would severely curtail their suitable application in this design. These limitations included, as outlined above, being in tension with the central tenet of the project, not allowing time for the development of rapport, possibly reinforcing the power differential between the researcher and the research participants, not adhering to the principles of participatory action research, difficulty in establishing trust between the lead researcher and the research participants, and being too much like a snapshot or smash and grab study (Greene and Hill, 2005, p. 17). These problematics were too strong to allow any of these methodologies to be used as the sole method of data collection.

It became clear that an ethnographic approach would have alleviated many of these limitations as it would have involved spending much more time with the children in

the relevant school setting (Christensen, 2004), facilitating what Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as "prolonged engagement". Furthermore, an ethnographic study would have facilitated a combination of participant observation with key informant interviews, informal group discussions and creative exercises (Greene and Hill, 2006, p. 15), thus, allowing time to build up trust, establish rapport, addressing issues of power difference and incorporation of interpreters and first language use. Limitations on time and financial resources precluded this as a viable option. It was decided, however, to extract some suitable elements of an ethnographic study and facilitate their integration into a creative process in the form of a TLC. This would include the use of interpreters on the research team, an important issue that will be elaborated on further within the research design section of this chapter.

Design of the Research Tools

In light of the difficulties outlined above it was decided to design a four day TLC with children who spoke Romanian and Polish as a first language. This creation addresses Burgess' call for the development of innovative research practices to properly gain access to children's perspectives (Burgess, 2000). The research design emerges from a participatory action research paradigm. An operational definition of participatory action research for this study includes that it is a piece of self-reflexive research which facilitates an understanding of the participants' linguistic and educational experiences. This understanding forms the basis for addressing issues of social injustice that may emerge with regard to those experiences. As such, it can be understood as a:

> form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants . . .
> in social situations in order to improve the rationality and
> justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b)
> their understandings of these practices, and (c) the situations
> (and institutions) in which these practices are carried out
> (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 162).

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Participatory action research is rooted in Freirian pedagogy (Freire, 1993). It is emancipatory in focus as it challenges schooling policies and practices that lower the trajectory of students' reasonable hopes and aspirations and leads to disenchantment of learning itself (Kemmis, 2006). Thus, the research process should be experienced as transformative, based on principles of social justice, non-hierarchical relationships, and reciprocal learning between research participants and researchers (Fals-Borda, 2001). The literature informs us of the vital role of the recognition of first languages in the educational achievement, personal well-being and social relationships for minority language students (Kouritzin, 1999; Cummins, 1986; 2001a; Wong-Fillmore, 1991, 2000). This research project seeks to uncover some of the problematics associated with this lack of recognition in the schooling experience of minority language children in Ireland. To this end, it must maintain a critical edge and be prepared to bring unwelcome and uncomfortable news to schooling (Kemmis, 2006). In so doing it must avoid the failings of other research projects which mistakenly self-classify within the action research paradigm. Problematics with these projects include simply reinforcing orthodox research paradigms, propagating government policies and programmes and focusing on improving pedagogical techniques, rather than educating students for a better society (Carr and Kemmis, 2005; Kemmis, 2006).

The rationale for the creation of a TLC was threefold; to provide an interactive, dialogical space within which the research participants could work towards the creation of a dual language identity text with the tentative title of *Me, My School and My Languages*; to enable the children to participate in a series of ongoing conversations and focus group interviews addressing the central question of the

research project, and to facilitate participant observation of the research participants interaction with each other. In addition to this, however, through the incorporation and adaptation of Ada and Campoy's pedagogical tool into the research design and, in particular, their emphasis on the creative transformative phase (Ada and Campoy, 2004), as outlined below, it was intended that the Camp would challenge the status quo, raise the consciousness of the research participants and possibly unearth unwelcome news for schooling.

Working with Interpreters

One of the innovative aspects of the Camp was the inclusion of interpreters in the research process. It has been argued that interpretation and translation in research was previously practiced almost exclusively by anthropologists (Birbili, 2000; Bradby, 2002). Contemporary social research is now much more concerned with collecting data in one language and presenting findings in another, very often through the inclusion of interpreters in the research process. This is not unproblematic. Indeed Birbili (2000) alerts to three factors which can potentially impact on the quality of translation in this context: the competence, the autobiography and what Temple (1997) calls 'the material circumstances' of the translator, that is the position the translator holds in relation to the researcher (Birbili, 2000). Furthermore, the vast majority of research within which interpreters or translators are used fails to identify the role of the interpreters or translators, and are presented as if the research participants were fluent English speakers or that the language used in the research was irrelevant (Temple 1997; Edwards, 1998; Temple and Young, 2004). Within this tradition, it is argued that this treatment of the language issue stems from an epistemological perspective in which the researchers view themselves as objective

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collectors of data, the validity of which must be guaranteed through the elimination of bias.

According to Temple and Young (2004, p. 163) "[t]he question is, therefore, whether and how translation within the research process potentially introduces bias and how to ensure agreement on the translation of source data". They proceed to provide the example of Edwards (1998) who discusses techniques such as back translation used to ensure agreement of a 'correct' version of a text. This epistemological stance gives no indication of who the interpreter/translator was, what was their relationship to the researcher or the research participant. In this method of research and research writing, "[b]oth the translator and the act of translation are considered irrelevant to such representation and to the reader's engagement with that representation" (Temple and Young, 2004, p. 164).

However, both Temple and Edwards (2002) and Temple and Young (2004) argue that research work rooted in social constructionist, interpretive or non-positivist epistemology must recognise the role played by the translator. This is important because "[i]f there is no one meaning to be gleaned from experiences of the social world, then there can be no one translation" (Temple and Edwards, 2002, p.4). This is not, however, to be seen as a cover for sloppy translation or interpretation, rather it is a recognition that the translator/interpreter must convey the entire meaning of the answer provided by the respondent. In some instances, this will necessitate the inclusion of words not directly spoken by the respondent but which will make the meaning clearer and give a more accurate account of what the research participant communicated in response to the questions asked. According to Temple and Edwards

(2006, p. 40), "Simon (1996) shows that the translator is involved in discussing concepts rather than just words, and that context is all important in deciding equivalence or difference in meaning".

It is important that this process must be understood and enunciated through the research. As other human beings involved in the interview process, it is obvious that interpreters, just as with the researchers themselves, bring their own passions and prejudices to the interviews. According to Temple and Edwards (2002, p. 11) the research thus becomes subject to 'triple subjectivity' (the interactions between research participant, researcher and interpreter), and this needs to be made explicit.

In the present study, I have followed Edwards (1993) in understanding the interpreters as "key informants" because they provided a "source of introduction to, information and discussion on the social world under investigation" (Temple and Edwards, 2002, p. 6). In so doing, the interpreters/translators were interviewed about aspects of their own lives, and in particular their own thoughts about the issues being addressed by the research project. This was done very specifically to bring accountability to the interpreters/translators and to make them visible in the process.

Pilot Project

Given the nature and flexibility of this particular piece of work (Robson, 2002, p. 383), it was unfeasible to orchestrate a replicable pilot project. The importance of a pilot project has been highlighted as throwing up some of the inevitable problems of converting the design into reality (Robson, 2002, p. 383). In the absence of being able to build in an aspect of piloting within the TLC I drew on pedagogical and

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research experience of similar activities. The development of dual language texts has been used previously as a pedagogical tool (Chow and Cummins, 2003). I had used dual language texts as a pedagogical tool in a previous capacity as an English language support teacher. In one case, the identity text was written as a tri-lingual text incorporating one Romanian speaker's proficiency in Portuguese as a third language. In this respect then, I had experience of the successful development of these texts. With regard to the use of interpreters during focus group facilitation, I had worked with an interpreter in focus groups with children in institutions in Belarus for data collection for my MPhil thesis (Mc Daid, 2002). In the context of project management, I drew on the experience of project management from children's consultation events within the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC), children's summer camps with the SCP and local and national student seminars with the Students' Union in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

Research Personnel

Lead Researcher

I worked as the lead researcher. In so doing, I took charge of overall organisation of the TLC, facilitated the four days and had responsibility for data collection throughout.

Teacher Assistant

One teacher assistant, Cecelia, was present for the duration of the workshops. This assistant was a third year B.Ed. student who had been taking an elective class with me

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in my capacity as a college lecturer, entitled *Teaching and Learning in Ethnically and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms*. She was asked to participate in the research because of her high level of interest in the topic of first language recognition, strong academic and teaching background and an overall commitment to issues of social justice. I held a meeting with Cecelia prior to the TLC to establish her role during the project and discussed issues such as the structure of the Camp, the difference between the Camp and class teaching, levels of error correction, attitudes to behaviour, working with interpreters and working with myself as the lead researcher.

Translators and Interpreters

The translators translated all written material required for the project. This included the letters of introduction and consent, the storyboard and character plan, invitations to cinema event and the certificates of completion. The interpreters were present for the duration of the Camp. I held a meeting with the interpreters prior to the Camp to establish their role during the project and discussed issues such as the structure of Camp, understanding the research focus of Camp including the role of the children, working with me, and the teaching assistant.

It was decided that the same two people, Justyna and Oana, would work as translators and interpreters for Polish and Romanian respectively. These workers were chosen on the basis of their association with the SCMP (Mc Daid, 2008), a community based project, which provides translation and interpretation services to 10 schools in the Dublin 7 SCP Cluster. In another capacity, I am chair of the advisory group to the Project and made my decisions on the basis of conversations with the coordinator and administrator of the SCMP and on advice from some of the schools in which they had

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worked. I held an in-depth interview with both workers prior to selecting them to work on the project.

Murray and Wynne (2001) suggest that the following issues for consideration when selecting an interpreter have been alluded to in the literature: familiarity with qualitative research in general and the topic of interest in particular; proficiency in both the language of the researcher and participant; having the ability to express the same feelings and intonations as the interviewer through verbal and non-verbal means; a degree of commonality between the interpreter and participants along age, gender, religion and class grounds. They proceed to argue that such decisions should be situated choices, contingent upon the specific research purposes of the interview and participants' own personal preferences. In so far as possible, I attended to these issues when selecting both interpreters.

Recruitment of Research Participants

Research participants were recruited from four primary schools in Dublin within which I knew there were children who spoke either Romanian or Polish as first languages as these were the target sample for the project. Initial contact was made with a key member of the staff of the schools. I knew these members of staff through my work in one of the schools in the locality. The members of staff included the English language support teacher in two of the schools, the principal in one of the schools and the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher in the fourth. Initial contact was made via telephone conversation or face-to-face meetings. This was followed with a letter to the principals of the schools outlining the project and the assistance required from the school (Appendix A). The principal/relevant member of

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staff was asked to identify pupils who fitted the criteria for participation, as outlined in the next section, and these children were invited to a meeting with me, facilitated by a member of school staff. I spoke with the prospective participants and presented them with a child friendly letter, written in both their first language and English, in which they could find the relevant details. The letter was also used to explain the project to the pupils (Appendix B). A different letter, providing more detailed explanation of the project, was made available to the pupils to bring home to their parents/guardians. (Appendix C). A consent section was attached to the bottom of both letters. The relevant member of staff agreed to collect the consent forms from the pupils who wished to attend and also to communicate with the parents / guardians if the need arose. The teachers spoke with three parents to clarify issues about the project.

Research Sample

The target sample for this project was first language speakers of Romanian and Polish between the ages of 9 and 12 years (3rd - 6th class level). The focus of the project was not on the individual languages, rather on the experiences feelings and understandings of minority language speakers within Irish primary schools. The two primary factors involved in choosing the linguistic background for the research sample were access to research participants and access to a suitable interpreter. I was attentive to gender balance, linguistic balance and levels of English language proficiency. The research sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Research Sample

First language	Number of participants	Male	Female
Polish	5	0	5
Romanian	8	5	3
N=	13	5	8

Structure of the TLC

Introduction

The research participants attended four different schools in Dublin's north inner city. All participants had met the lead researcher on at least two previous occasions in their own school, though they had not met the interpreters or the research assistant, or indeed many of the other research participants. Therefore, it was decided to use a series of introductions and ice-breakers at the outset so that everyone could get to know each other and would begin to feel comfortable around each other. As the students gathered in the Physical Education (PE) hall of the school, popular music was played from a local radio station while a number of basketballs, hoops and other props were made available to the children. All students had been asked to come to the school for 9 a.m., but it was planned not to commence any structured activities on the first morning until 9:30 a.m. This was to allow some time for students who were late and also free some time to speak with any parents/guardians/family members who might wish to speak with either myself or other members of the research team.

From 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. the group, including Justyna, Oana, Cecelia and I engaged in a number of introductory and icebreaker games. A bilingual alliteration name game was used first so that each person could identify themselves using at least two languages. This had the double effect of facilitating introductions and also of accustoming the children to the use of first languages during the week. A Fencing Game, Domes and Valleys, Zip, Zap, Whoosh! were also used as icebreakers. The morning session concluded with the creation of a One Word Story, where the students sitting in the round developed a short story as it travelled around the group. Each participant was asked to retell the story in their first language or in English and to add a single word to it. The interpreters assisted participants where necessary and this had the effect of establishing, and normalising, their roles within the group for the week. The activity concluded with volunteers retelling the story in English, Polish and Romanian while Cecelia retold the story in Irish illustrating further linguistic diversity within the group. Following a short break from the initial activities in the morning the group reconvened in a classroom that had been chosen as a work-station for the Camp. The specific classroom was chosen as the layout could be altered to suit the purpose of the Camp, proximity to the toilets, PE hall, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) suite and the second classroom, which had been chosen as the site for the focus groups. It was at this stage that we began the development of a dual language identity text that comprised the main body of work during the TLC.

The Writing Process

I decided to employ the use of the writing process in the creation of the dual language texts (Graves, 1994). Although other commentators have critiqued the use of the

writing process with minority language students (Delpit, 1988; de la Luz Reyes, 1991), most of this critique centres on the failure of the writing process to properly equip minority language students with the discrete language skills required to develop a high level of proficiency in English. While this critique is not without foundation, it does not particularly apply in the context of this piece of work, as it is a once off exercise not aimed at increasing proficiency in English but rather to enable minority language children to present their opinions on issues that are of importance to them. The group was introduced to the central concepts of the writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The research participants were shown some examples of completed dual language texts from the Dual Language Showcase[15] website and a sample which I completed when working as an English language support teacher with Romanian speaking children. The prewriting stage was going to be of central importance to the success of the project and the following section outlines how this was conducted.

Prewriting

I introduced the participants to the main suggested topic about which they would write: *Me, My Languages and My School*. I tentatively outlined to the participants my view on how the workshop might be run and highlighted what assistance was to be made available to them:

1. Explain writing in the first language and then English.
2. Examine some sample dual language texts from the Dual Language Showcase and a student-produced sample that other students who had worked with me had previously completed.
3. That all participants will engage in all aspects of the workshop.
4. Availability of resources.

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[15] http://thornwood.peelschools.org/Dual/

5. Explain the writing process.

Following Ada and Campoy (2004), it is argued that dialogue allows us to build on what students bring with them to the classroom and, in doing so, to share their personal experiences, feelings and concerns. Dialogue gives students access to higher-order thinking skills and allows more students to participate in thinking about and exploring a topic. In this way, students can experience themselves as creative, thinking beings who have something worthwhile to say regardless of their present repertoire of reading and writing skills. It is also argued that dialogue is the basic entry into self-expression, in a sense by helping the creative juices to flow. Furthermore, dialogue turns the act of reading or viewing from a passive, receptive intake of information to a creative process of active engagement through questioning the text. In setting up the concept of dialogue at the start of the week, it was envisaged that it would infuse the project throughout and would aid to challenge the power difference between the research team and the research participants (Baker *et al.*, 2004)

Ada and Campoy (2004) advocate a creative dialogue in exploring an initial text, the four guiding principles of which are:

Descriptive phase

This is essentially when a reader becomes aware of the content of a piece of text. It includes identifying characters, setting, plot and themes.

Personal interpretive phase

Moves beyond the assimilation of the material to provoke a personal response such as surprise, wonder or confirmation, and is developed through the interaction between the text and the personal experiences of the reader and their knowledge of the topic.

Critical/multicultural/anti-bias phase

At this stage the reader engages in a process of critical reflection based on the text. During this phase of critical reflection, the reader must become aware of the subtle biases or the ethnocentric views that often permeate a text. In effect, the reader analyses how people from different cultures might relate to the text, and what hidden biases it sustains.

Creative/transformative phase

It is at this stage that the reader will apply insights and power gained during the reflexive process to actions that will shape the future.

Ada and Campoy (2004) alert us to the claim that a reader's response to a text will not occur directly in this linear fashion, and while this is accurate, it is useful to think about facilitating a dialogue in relation to a text through these stages, ensuring that on completion of the dialogue that the students will have a solid basis upon which to base actions which will shape the future. The dialogue at the start of these workshops was facilitated keeping the aforementioned suggestions in mind.

I chose to use a piece of video footage entitled *The Crepes of Wrath* which is the

eleventh episode of the first series of the Simpsons[16] as the text for the this phase.

While the whole episode is not devoted to language issues, there are very clear

examples of the difficulty and frustration of trying to speak in another language.

There is also a central scene in the episode when Bart suddenly begins to speak in

French after two months:

> I'm so stupid. Anybody could have learned this dumb language
> by now. Here I've listened to nothing but French for the past
> deux mois et je ne sais pas un mot. Mais! Je parle français
> maintenant. Incroyable!

While other forms of texts, such as Shaun Tan's *The Arrival,* (Tan, 2007) were

considered, *The Crepes of Wrath* was chosen for a number of reasons. This text gives

a very accessible route into issues of non-recognition of Bart's first language and

struggles with second language learning. It is expected that the ease with which Bart

slides into second language usage (following his discovery of French fluency, he

proceeds to have a detailed conversation *en Français* with a French policeman) will

be in stark contrast with the experiences of the English language learners in the

research sample. Furthermore, I knew from teaching experience that the Simpsons is

as popular with many minority language children as it is with English speaking

children in Irish schools. The cartoon lasts for 21:05 minutes and was shown in its

entirety to the research participants.

Following the cartoon, I facilitated a whole group discussion guided through the four

aforementioned phases by carefully formulated questions (Appendix D). Smaller

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[16] The Simpsons is an American animated sitcom created by Matt Groening. The programme is centred around the experiences of the Simpson family in a fictional town called Springfield. It is the longest running American sitcom and the longest running American animated programme.

writing groups were then established. These groups were established through

consultation with the children and generally tended to reflect already established

friendship groups (Table 3).

Table 3

Children's Writing Groups by First Language and Book Title[17]

Pseudonym	First language	Dual language text
Celina	Polish	Przygoda Kuzko W Irlandii:
Irenka	Polish	Kuzko's Adventure in Ireland
Klaudia	Polish	Nowa Szkoła: New School
Sylwia	Polish	
Zofia	Polish	
Stefania	Romanian	Adela Învață Engleză:
Adrianna	Romanian	Adlea Learns English
Elisabeta	Romanian	
Adrian	Romanian	Rusul Ivan: Ivan the Russian
Gheorghe	Romanian	
Stefan	Romanian	
Henric	Romanian	Băiteul Cel Nou: The New
Petru	Romanian	Boy

It was expected that all participants would have familiarity with narrative prose,

having heard or read some examples of this genre of writing. In addition, some of the

students would be quite familiar with the structure of narrative prose, with some

having had experience of writing in this genre either in Ireland, or in Romania or

Poland. It was anticipated, however, that some of the children would be less familiar

with the structural aspects of narrative prose and would require specific input with

respect to this. This input was given to the larger group, as it would help all members

of the group to access prior knowledge. To this end, I devised a mini-lesson on the

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[17] All children's names used are pseudonyms. I have also used pseudonyms for the teachers mentioned
in the study.

central elements of narrative creation: Plot, Character, Setting and Trigger/Problem and Ending. These elements were explored in the context of *The Crepes of Wrath*. The students were free to decide how they would construct their plot, character, setting and trigger/problem and ending, within the context of recognition of their first languages in Irish schools.

Having engaged in a dialogue within the workshop, culminating in the creative transformative phase, I proceeded to ask the participants to brainstorm about the issues associated with the title *Me, My Languages and My School*. The children were informed that this was a very broad title and that they could address the issue in any way within their writing groups. This exercise was done in the first language of the participants, within their groups, and explored what topics the piece of writing might address. These ideas were written down on a flip chart. The participants were then asked to further develop these steps and were guided by the following questions:

1. How do you feel about learning English?
2. Where and when do you use your own first language?
3. Do you use other languages apart from English in school?
4. Has a teacher ever talked about your languages with you?
5. What do English language speaking children think about your languages?
6. Are your languages important to your family?
7. Would you like to learn and use your own languages in school?

These questions were used to facilitate further thinking. It was explained that the piece of writing would not have to answer these questions, rather that they were simply offered to help conceptualisations in the initial stages.

The next stage in the process was the structure of the narrative prose. In their writing groups, the students were encouraged to think about the elements of their narrative.

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They were asked to place particular importance on their central character, as it is through this that the students would most deeply invest themselves in the project. The research participants were facilitated in this by the provision of a translated character map (Appendix E). Illustration of this character became of vital importance and much time was spent by most of the groups on this activity.

Drafting

During the drafting phase, the participants concentrated on committing ideas about the topic to paper in their own first language. In the first instance, the students were provided with a translated story map (Appendix F), which they used to craft out a first vision of their narrative. It was made clear to the participants that this stage was to be used for organising thoughts. The emphasis at this stage was on the content of the piece of writing and the mechanics of writing and composition were not focused on. Once these ideas were written down, the participants were encouraged to organise them into paragraphs. The drafting section culminated with an initial draft of the piece of writing.

Revising

During the revising stage, the participants refined their piece of writing. Cecelia and I offered the following guiding points for this phase:

1. Is the main idea of the piece clear?
2. Does the introduction catch the attention of the reader?
3. Does the conclusion summarise the piece?
4. Are all of the main points well developed?
5. Do you want some help with sentence and paragraph construction?
6. Can you use a wider variety of verbs (use of thesaurus)?

In offering these questions, we were attentive to the needs and levels of each individual group and were also clear that they were only guiding suggestions and that the decision of the authors with regard to their applicability to their own individual piece of writing would be final.

Following this discussion, the authors returned to their piece of writing and rewrote any aspect of their piece they considered necessary.

Editing

This stage afforded the authors an opportunity to address any grammatical, spelling and other discrete language skills errors in their piece. Given the particular English language learning context of the participants in this workshop, the research team did not place significant emphasis on this stage. In the first instance, the degree to which errors were corrected was negotiated with the participants. The interpreters were available to read over their work and offer helpful suggestions if the participants desired. The participants also had the opportunity to use ICT resources such as spell check and online thesaurus websites to help during this phase. The participants were aware that this piece of writing would be presented in public and might also be available on the Internet with their consent. In this case, this piece of writing would be a showcase of their individual talents. Many of the participants took advantage of this opportunity to slightly alter the presentation and language of their work.

Publishing

The final phase of this process began with giving the participants the opportunity to illustrate their piece of work should they so wish. This phase included the layout of

the text, the use of illustrations such as personal photographs, drawings or art from other sources, such as scanned images. The participants typed and scanned their work in MS Word format. Where necessary, the interpreters adjusted the keyboards to incorporate aspects of Romanian or Polish script. Each individual piece of writing was printed and bound. The participants were given a copy of this final text (Appendix G).

Public Display

The opportunity for the students to display their own work was a central element in this project. It is important that the students can publicly highlight the level at which they can work within their own first language (Cummins *et al.*, 2005). To this end, it was decided to hold a launch of the printed texts in conjunction with a cinema night during which the children's work would be presented in video format. Cecelia visited the students as a follow-up to the project and recorded them reading their stories in either their first language or English. I then used Microsoft Photostory to create a Window's Media Player file of each of the five stories. These moved from page to page while children over-read their stories. The videos lasted for between 3:30 and 7:00 minutes. This cinema night was held in Aula Maxima of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and the children were given popcorn and drinks to create the feeling of a "film premiere". Translated letters of invitation were prepared for the children, which they could distribute to their family, friends and teachers (Appendix H). The interpreters and teaching assistant were also invited to attend the evening. The book had been printed and bound by a printing company and was officially launched following the film premiere. The children were presented with certificates of completion at the end of the event (Appendix I).

Data Collection

The following multiple methods were employed to collect data during the Camp:

1. Observation during the Camp.
2. Ongoing "conversations" during the workshop.
3. Structured focus group interviews during the week.
4. Debriefing with teaching assistant and interpreters.
5. Drafts and final dual language book, including text and illustrations.

Observations During the Camp

Observation has been described as a research methodology which draws on the direct evidence of the eye to witness events first hand (Denscombe, 2003, p. 192). Denscombe argues that observation is characterised by the following four characteristics; it is based on direct observation; it is field work oriented, in that data is collected in real life situations; the situation being observed would have occurred whether or not the observation was taking place; and personal factors might influence the researcher's perceptions of events. While it is accurate to assert that the project upon which this dissertation was based was contrived, that does not invalidate the use of observation for the collection of specific types of data. In this instance, observations were used to gather data on the interactional setting (Morrison, 1993 as cited in Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 397). Important insights into the use of first language within the group, the interaction between the research participants and the interpreters, and the overall commitment to the writing process were garnered through the use of participant observation by the current author. Research participants were made aware that I would collect data through observations at various stages over the four days. They were also made aware that this would be ongoing throughout the day, such as before and after the project and during the breaks and would not be limited to the writing activities. This type of observation is understood as participant as observer (Denscombe, 2003, p. 203). Field notes were taken on the observations

and were typed up each evening. As the project advanced, I employed more focused observations based on issues that arose previously or on information supplied by the other members of the research team, either spontaneously during the day, or during the debriefing session at the end of each evening.

Focus Groups

A focus group has been described as an "open-ended group discussion guided by the researcher" (Robson, 2002). This elaborated form of interview methodology is employed to facilitate focused interaction between the research participants. Such an approach has the advantage of facilitating the collection of qualitative data from more than one research participant at a time, group dynamics can help in focusing on the most important topics and empower participants to speak out, and in their own words (Robson, 2002, pp. 285-286; Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 377). In addition, with regard to data collection with child research participants, this form of interview can be less intimidating by creating a safe peer environment; peer support can help to redress the power imbalance between adults and children that can exist in one to one interviews; some children might be more willing to present their feelings and understandings when they hear other children doing likewise. In addition, focus groups have the advantage of setting children up as experts who can share their experiences with a group of peers (Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 374-375).

Focus groups require skilful facilitation and management by the researcher (Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 377). The moderator must strike a balance between actively generating interest in the research topic, while also being careful not to reinforce existing expectations or confirm a prior hypothesis (Sim, 1998, p. 347 as cited in Robson,

2002, p. 287). The moderator must pay attention to issues such as some participants dominating the group and others being silenced. They must also be aware of some participants offering insights that are perceived to be 'acceptable' within the group, the potential for conflict to arise within the group and encourage less articulate participants, or in this case, those students less confident in their linguistic ability. (Denscombe, 2003, p. 168; Robson, 2002, p. 285). A further issue for the moderator of these focus groups was the ability to work with the interpreters. I employed guidelines from the SCMP in addition to previous experience of conducting focus group research with interpreters to address these issues.

The samples for the focus groups, were established on homogenous linguistic and gender lines with two Romanian based groups and one Polish based group (Table 4). The first Romanian group comprised of five boys, the second of three girls. The Polish group comprised of five girls. In the first instance, this was borne out of practicalities with regard to the process of interpretation. While Kennedy *et al.*, (2001) argue that both single and mixed gender children's focus groups have been used without any significant differences in responses, I was fearful about possible male dominance within the groups and chose to structure them accordingly. The focus groups were guided by a list of prepared questions (Appendix J)

Dual Language Texts as Data

The dual language texts were used as student created codifications, which provided the basis for ongoing dialogue with the research participants about issues of interest to them. Through observation or communication with the other members of the research team, I engaged in conversation with the children about aspects of their work, which I

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thought relevant to the project. In this way, their interpretation of their own work

provided data for further interpretation (Veale, 2005, p. 265).

Table 4

Membership of Focus Groups

Pseudonym	First language	Focus Group
Celina	Polish	Pol A
Irenka	Polish	Pol A
Klaudia	Polish	Pol A
Sylwia	Polish	Pol A
Zofia	Polish	Pol A
Stefania	Romanian	Rom B
Adrianna	Romanian	Rom B
Elisabeta	Romanian	Rom B
Adrian	Romanian	Rom A
Gheorghe	Romanian	Rom A
Stefan	Romanian	Rom A
Henric	Romanian	Rom A
Petru	Romanian	Rom A

Data Analysis

Each of the focus group interviews were audio-taped using a digital recorder. These

were saved as Window's Media Player Files and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

The data was transferred to an MP3 player, the portability of which facilitated me

immersing myself in the data thus becoming thoroughly familiar with its content.

Ongoing notes were written providing an overview of the data, highlighting emerging

patterns and contradictions. The transcribed data and the audio recordings in addition

to the completed dual language texts were entered into NVivo (version 9). NVivo is a

specialist software tool developed as a computer aided qualitative data analysis

system (CAQDAS), which offers efficiency and transparency in the qualitative

analysis. Data is stored in 'nodes', which are repositories for categories and themes.

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Case nodes and tree nodes were used in the analysis of the data in this research project (Appendix K). Case nodes are *single files, which store each research participant's* individual contribution. Tree nodes are repositories for broad, thematic, participant driven coding. They allow for the creation of child nodes, to which the parent node can be coded-on. Tree nodes can also have relationships with other nodes and, as such, may be gathered into categories of themes. Each tree node was given a clear descriptor within the project. Broad coding context was employed throughout. When each of the data sources had been coded to nodes, 'memos' were attached to each of the tree nodes. These memos contained summary statements of the feelings, experiences and understandings of the research participants with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in their schools. These summary statements were then tested against the data to establish their veracity.

Credibility and Transferability

Issues of credibility and transferability were addressed through the framework suggested by Graue and Walsh (1998). This framework advocates concentration on four interrelated dimensions: technical and methodological validity, interpretive validity, textual narrative validity, and praxis oriented validity (Graue and Walsh, 1998, p. 246).

Technical and methodological validity

With regard to credibility and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, pp. 301-316), I maintained a "robust data record" (Graue and Walsh, 1998, p. 144). These records provide for subsequent "referential adequacy" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 313) and also provide an audit trail (Mischler, 1990) which will enable the research to be

followed from start to finish. The use of NVivo further facilitates this audit trail by tracking each stage of coding which facilitates a clear demonstration of the rigorous approach taken in conducting the analysis.

Interpretive validity

Given the nature of the research being conducted, interpretive validity is an especially important aspect of maintaining the overall validity of the study. The starting and end point in this regard is therefore taken from Erikson (1985) who emphasises the importance of only making assertions within the boundaries set by the data. In addition to this, member-checking was used during the Camp to penetrate emerging issues. Follow up selective member checking was used in a number of cases through visits with the children in their school settings. Member checking involves returning to the participant and asking them about the accuracy of what the researcher has written, if there are any omissions and if the themes extracted from the research are veracious.

Textual/Narrative Validity

Care was taken to ensure validity with regard to the textual/narrative validity of the research. This is especially important in that, as outlined below, I intend to use the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Pyramid Model of Educational Research Writing (BERA, 2000) to disseminate this research to ensure the report is accessible to as wide a range of parties as possible. Close attention was paid to ensuring that each presentation of the writing was as valid as possible. It was felt that it was particularly useful, in so far as possible, to provide a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the purpose, process, methods and outcomes of the project. This facilitates

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transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), transparency and leaves the process open to

the scrutiny of readers.

Praxis Oriented Validity

As outlined in the theoretical framework, this dissertation is rooted in an advocacy

approach to research in that it contains an action agenda for reform that may change

the lives of minority language children, their families and communities (Creswell,

2003, pp. 10-11). It is hoped that this research will influence policy makers with

regard to the importance of recognising the first languages of minority language

children in the Irish education system.

Reliability/Dependability

In adhering to the understanding of Patton (2002), that the reliability of a piece of

qualitative research emerges from the validity of the study, the dependability (Lincoln

and Guba, 1985, pp. 316-318) of the data collected will stem from the validity

measures built into the research project as outlined above.

Dissemination

In keeping with the advocacy approach proposed in this dissertation, it is intended to disseminate the findings as broadly as possible. In this regard, use will be made of a revised version of the Pyramid Model of Educational Research Writing (BERA, 2000). It has been argued that one of the main problems with educational research is that findings are presented "in a form or medium which is largely inaccessible to a non-academic audience and lack interpretation for a policy-making or practitioner audience" (Hillage *et al.*, 1998, p. xi). Research presented in such a form is antithetical to advocacy research. The BERA Pyramid Model provides a framework for ensuring that the research findings from this piece of research reach as wide an audience as possible, and in so doing, maximises its advocacy potential (Figure 3).

At the basis of the pyramid is the full report. This provides an in-depth account of all of the processes involved in the research. The information is provided in a manner that facilitates replication by another researcher or an audit of the research by an academic peer. The next level of the pyramid is an academic article aimed at other researchers. This emerges from the full report and, in keeping with publishing guidelines of academic journals aimed at ensuring the quality and validity of material published, the article will only be published after peer scrutiny. A professional report may be compiled if the research is aimed at policymakers and practitioners, while a news report will be used to publicly inform policymakers and practitioners of the existence of the professional report.

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News report

Professional report

Academic paper accredited by referees

Full report of the research giving sufficient detail for replication
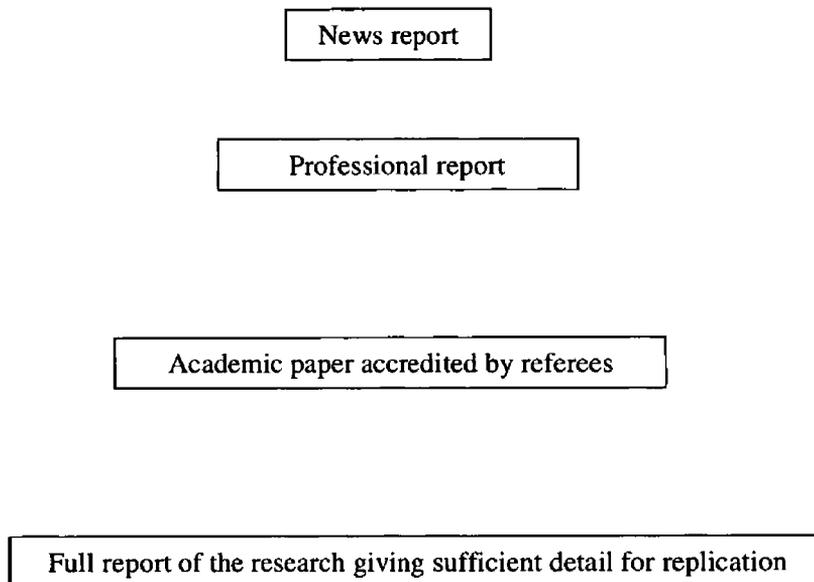
Figure 3. BERA Pyramid Model of Educational Research Writing

Ethics

This research project followed the ethical guidelines as laid out by the Research

Ethics Committee of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Specific application of these

guidelines to this project include:

- Consent attained from a parent or legal guardian of any child participant. This consent was in the form of a "written consent form" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 64), which was made available in the first language of the parent or guardian.

- The child participant must volunteer for the research and must do so on the basis of informed consent. Informed consent consisted of the child signing a "written consent form" in the witness of one other child.

- The child participants were made aware that they could withdraw at any stage during the research and that their research data will be destroyed on their request subsequent to their withdrawal.

- The researcher had a list of available external support services such as ISPCC and other children's Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) and community groups which might be of benefit to the child should they be needed.

- The researcher committed not to give advice or support beyond his area of competence.

- The issue of anonymity was discussed with the children. They were informed that pseudonyms will be used and direct identifying information will be removed from any reports of the research, however, the children were told that given the small research sample size, that the child may still be identifiable

Organisation of the Project: Practical Considerations

The organisation of the TLC was an extremely enjoyable and rewarding experience. This satisfaction notwithstanding, however, the project also required a significant investment particularly in terms of time and financial resources. It also depended quite critically on successful deployment of my own social capital (which in many cases circumnavigated possible barriers), and also my organisational and project management skills.

Time

With regard to time, while the camp itself ran for only four days, organisation and planning commenced seven months previously. This time was spent attending to both the practical organisational aspect of the Camp and conceptualising and structuring the data collection tools.

In the first instance, considerable time was spent in identifying possible children to participate in the research and in their subsequent recruitment to the process. While this process was quite time consuming, I benefited significantly from having established good relationships with some key personnel in my previous capacity as a

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teacher in the area. This certainly expedited the process. While all of these pedagogues might not have fully appreciated the particular emphasis on the recognition of first languages, they were fully convinced of the merit of the project and were very interested to understand what the children had to say about their educational experiences so far in Ireland. They were all committed to providing a positive educational experience for all of their minority language children and identified participation in the project in this regard.

A substantial amount of time was spent both in initial meetings with the children and in follow up meetings where necessary to outline further details. Ensuring that these children knew exactly what they were getting involved in was extremely important to the success of the project. In addition to the personal meetings, the translation of documentation was very helpful in this regard and it was clear that both the children and parents deeply appreciated the communication through their own first language. Preparation of this documentation required both the initial writing in English and subsequent translation into both Romanian and Polish. This became problematic at times when a translation was returned via e-mail, which the settings on my personal computer then rendered illegible. This was particularly acute with certain characters in Polish. Oana and Justyna were very helpful however, in offering solutions. I feel that the commitment to the project displayed by the children, as outlined below, highlight the importance of this investment of time.

The main issues of practical concern related to securing an appropriate venue and the day-to-day running of the camp. With regard to the venue, I was quite fortunate in securing the use of the school that I had previously worked in. Good personal contact

with the principal and staff, teaching and ancillary, facilitated granting of permission and ease of access to the venue for the duration of the project. This social capital was also beneficial in sourcing classrooms within which I could work. This is not something that could be taken for granted by simply having permission to access the school. Positive personal relations with the school caretaker were also of fundamental importance throughout the week, and in particular on the first morning when a circuit fault caused an electrical cut in the intended work space.

While the working days of the camp ran from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., my own working day was much longer. I was present in the school from 7:30 a.m. each morning and spent an average of five hours working every evening after the working day concluded. Some of this time was spent in the school ensuring that equipment was working, preparing the room for the following day, debriefing with Cecelia, Oana and Justyna, writing up observation notes and uploading data recordings. Time outside of the school was spent on separate organisational aspects such as collection of refreshments or new pedagogical supplies.

I found the organisational requirements during the working day to be quite demanding, both mentally and physically, and this was compounded by my dual roles as project coordinator and lead researcher. This emerged as real issues at certain times during the week and was particularly acute on the first morning of the Camp when the electrical problem arose and again on the last afternoon when we were really pressured to complete the project on time and I still had intended to conduct two short focus groups with some children. While I did draw on my own expertise, garnered from multitasking associated with teaching practicum, to overcome these issues, it

would not have been possible to properly run the Camp on my own. In this context, then, the work of the Cecelia and both Oana and Justyna was vital to the successful completion of the Camp. I had chosen these three members of my team on the basis of advice from key informants, as well as interview meetings with each of them. Cecelia was tasked with the managerial role in my absence and, when required, she completed this task excellently. She established a very positive rapport with the children from early on the morning of the first day and this infused the interaction between the children and her for the remainder of the week. My main focus in selecting Oana and Justyna was their competency as interpreters and translators but I was also acutely aware how important the development of positive relations between them and the children would be to the success of the project. This proved to be vital as observations from the week revealed that they each worked really well, both with their own language groups, and with children from the other language group. As such, it was not uncommon to see Oana helping the Polish girls or Justyna helping the Romanian boys or girls. This certainly led to the project running more smoothly.

The provision of food was also integral to the project. I purchased fruit drinks, crisps, some chocolate, fruit and ingredients for sandwiches in bulk at the start of the week. These were kept in the fridge in the school staffroom, which, conveniently, opens out onto the PE hall, the space we used for break-time games and activities. Following other events such as SCP Summer Camps, I had planned that some members of the research team would prepare the lunches while others would be available to the children during the breaks. As it transpired, the majority of the children joined in with food preparation and this developed into a positive social experience. The

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children felt free to play or rest and come to take their food whenever they wished during the break. They seemed to respect this degree of freedom. One issue which did emerge with regard to the food, was a preference expressed by one of the children for Polish bread as opposed to the traditional white Irish bread I had provided. I had not envisaged this arising as an issue. The solution to the problem emerged from within the group when a number of children volunteered to bring some Polish bread with them to the Camp and one girl brought some in on the following morning.

Financial Investment

The TLC demanded a financial investment of over €2,500. This comprised of paying two interpreters for being present over four days, in addition to the translation work they conducted prior to, and following, the Camp. I also paid the teaching assistant for her work over the four days. Each of the children received a One-4-All gift voucher to both thank them for their contribution and to recognise their work over the four days. I made a contribution to the school for allowing me access to its premises and to cover costs such as heating, printing and light. Further costs were incurred through the provision of the refreshments over the four days. There were other costs associated with the Showcase event held in St. Patrick's college, including the cost of printing the books and more refreshments on the evening.

Summary

This chapter established that existing methodological approaches and tools were deemed too problematic to be useful to this study. The main problems identified were twofold. Firstly there emerged tension with the focus on first language recognition within the research process. Secondly, there were also tensions with the

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underpinnings of participatory action research through reinforcing power differentials and not allowing issues of importance to the children to emerge. It was deemed desirable, therefore, to adopt a research methodology that would attend to these problematics. This has been described as a TLC. This allowed the full recognition of the first languages of the children involved in the research project, while also attending to the central tenets of participatory action research. The TLC was facilitated by a research team inclusive of myself as the lead researcher, two interpreters, Justyna and Oana, and a teaching assistant, Cecelia, and was held over four days in a school in Dublin's north inner city during the Easter holidays, 2008. It focused on the development of a dual language identity text responding to the title of *Me, My School and My Languages*, the mediation of language-specific focus groups and ongoing participant observations. Chapter Five proceeds to analyse this methodological approach.

CHAPTER FIVE: TLC IN FOCUS: ANALYSING THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Introduction

This chapter critically analyses the methodology that was employed to address the central research question of this project. Analysis presented within this chapter is structured around Lundy's advanced conceptualisation of Article 12 of the UNCRC extending to Space, Voice, Audience and Influence (Lundy, 2007) and the structure is infused with appreciation of the central tenets of participatory action research where appropriate.

Working from an Emancipatory Framework with Minority Language Children: Critique of Methodology

Space

A central tenet of participatory action research with children is that the topic for consideration must emerge from within the participants own concerns. As identified in Chapter Four, the question for this particular research project emerged from a concern initially voiced by a minority language student that I worked with. Having learned from her the importance of using her own language and fears associated with losing it, I explored the issue with other children in my school who shared similar concerns. The TLC successfully opened up the space within which this topic could be discussed. This happened both in response to structured questions with the focus groups and also within the children's own writings. Data from the focus groups, for instance, reveal a commitment to using and maintaining their own languages through resistant strategies in school, conversational use within friendships groups, continued use within the home, and literacy and non-literacy practices employed outside of

school. In some cases, this was revealed as being of fundamental importance, particularly as a basis of communication with family members, and most particularly with grandparents. It was also seen as important in the context of returning to their home countries, with Gheorghe asking, "because if I go back to Romania what do I do? I speak English to them?". The children also explored this importance through the identity texts, when, for instance, Adam was able to speak with Magda because she was a Polish speaker, thus easing his sense of isolation.

In addition to the focus of the TLC on first languages it was also important that it would allow opportunity for other issues of importance to the children to emerge as key topics. One of these issues, as outlined in Chapter Six was the focus on learning English. Again, this emerged within the focus groups and was clearly important throughout their own pieces of writing. This occurred despite the students having been given guidance through the form of a title for the story, *Me, My Languages and My School* and pointed questions within the initial dialogue.[18] The general thrust of their stories was bound up with the problematics of not being able to speak in English. Reasons for this will be analysed in Chapter Seven. It is important at this juncture, however, to observe that the TLC opened the space for the children to highlight this issue, while also maintaining focus on the central research question.

Another concern in conducting research with children speaks to the right of the child to withdraw their participation from the process. This right was explained to the children through the initial meetings, the written correspondence and at the start of the TLC. It never arose as an issue within the TLC. Rather, levels of participation were

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[18] Thinking about your languages and school, what message would you like to give about your languages and school to your teachers, family, friends, etc.

incredibly high, with one child absenting herself from two days of the Camp, but this was due to some unforeseen time-off for her father, which he decided to use by travelling with his children outside of Dublin. One other child absented herself for one day to attend a medical appointment. The children really enjoyed the process. This is evidenced from a number of sources. Adrian, for instance, asked if he could do one more week of the project, while Stefan said that he enjoyed the week because "I liked the games, I liked all the work we do and I like the teachers". Klaudia told me that she liked it because she got to meet lots of new girls and it was a lot of fun. This element of fun was thought to be of particular importance, and opportune and appropriate humour was central to my contribution to the Camp. The choice of *The Crepes of Wrath* can be seen in this light. This is a strategy that I found to be particularly useful in my teaching and other work with children. It helps to establish a rapport with children and I feel that it certainly contributed both to the levels and quality of participation in the Camp. Further evidence of the high level of participation in, and enjoyment of, the TLC is to be found in the fact that two of the children involved, who had never met before, contacted each other on the first evening of the Camp to discuss the development of their central character.

I outlined above that we were quite pressed for time on the last afternoon of the project. I decided to explore this briefly with the children to get their ideas on how best to proceed. One of the options we explored was the possibility of those children who had yet to print their books might wait for some time after the 2 o'clock conclusion. All of the children were quite happy to do this, with Gheorghe contributing that he would like to stay until 5 o'clock if we could. It was clear from this discussion that the children really identified the difference between this Camp and

school. This substantiates Gheorghe's contribution in the focus group where he said that he would like to do a similar project in school "if we did just this type of project in school I would like it but if we did Maths and some other subjects I wouldn't like it".

Voice

The children were encouraged to express their views freely at all stages during the TLC. This pertained both to the working time within the Camp and also to the break times. It did occur that some of the children expressed requests that ran contrary to other guiding principles of the Camp. One example of this was a complaint by Adrian that he was not allowed to use his phone within the Camp. This could have potentially disrupted the establishment of safe space for other children. This issue, along with any others that arose, was dealt with through respectful dialogue to which all of the participants responded extremely positively.

This issue of voice was also attended to, both through the structure and focus of the Camp and also through the availability of interpreters to the children, understood as "practical assistance" by Lundy (2007, p. 936). Both Oana and Justyna proved to be an invaluable resource in helping all of the children at various stages during the Camp, though, obviously, this was particularly acute for those children who had quite low proficiency in English. Analysis of the focus group transcripts using NVivo illustrate that Zofia, for instance, responded a total of seventy three times. She made only two of these responses in English and both of these times were when she responded "yes" to a specific question asked. One of these questions was a general question asked of the group and interpreted, and one was directly to her which she

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answered before Justyna had an opportunity to interpret. Some of Zofia's responses in Polish were quite detailed, for instance:

> Before I came to Ireland I visited this country twice for Christmas but when I came here I felt sad because I didn't have any friends in school and my English was bad as well.

The presence of Justyna, in this case, clearly allowed Zofia the opportunity to articulate her feelings, experiences and understandings when she so desired. Evidence of the contribution of the interpreters does not simply come from this end of the "practical assistance" spectrum. Analysis of other contributions revealed the importance of their assistance to other children. Sylwia, for instance, wanted to tell me that she had "three dogs, a hamster and a guinea pig" in Poland and while she generally spoke in English to me, this information would have been lost to me without the interpreter. Furthermore, not being able to explain herself might have left Sylwia feeling frustrated with the interaction and possibly even the project.

When I examined Celina's contribution, a complex picture of interpreter usage emerged. Although she had a high level of proficiency in English she used Justyna to tell me that "unfortunately I am allergic to fur so I can't keep animals", even though she could tell me in English that "I read English books that my mother bought in a charity shop and books for 5th class and I can read this book....". One possible explanation for such linguistic behaviour was that the Celina felt more at ease as the week proceeded, and as such, was more inclined to verbalise her thoughts in English. A more complicated picture than this emerges, however, in that she continued to interchange between both Polish and English during the second focus group. For instance, she told me through Justyna that "I have been in school since September"

and again "I like my school but the only thing that I find difficult and hard is that I do not have my friends from Poland in school here", yet told me in English that "[m]y mum and my mum's friend, we find this school first". This similar ease of movement between speaking English directly to me and alternatively through the interpreter when required was observed in analysis of Adrianna's focus group contribution. This can be clearly seen in the following excerpt when she answers my first question in Romanian, through Oana, and my supplementary question directly to me in English:

Rory:
How about you? What do you like about Ireland?

Adrianna:
The people. [in Romanian]

Rory:
Very good, why do you like the people in Ireland?

Adrianna:
Because they are very nice. [in English]

In conclusion then, the children became accustomed to working through the interpreter very quickly. This was possibly aided by the focus on normalisation of first language use early on the first day of the camp through the ice-breaking games. The children responded well to this. Gheorghe claimed that it felt really nice to speak Romanian during the week and Adrian said that it felt normal. Zofia revealed how "it was very good because I didn't have to think too much and I could say everything that I wanted to say". In addition, it was also aided by the personalities of both interpreters and their positive and respectful engagement with the children. It was clear that the children were extremely happy with the interpreters. According to Gheorghe, he enjoyed the week and felt happy because "I work with Oana", while

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Zofia suggested that if I was to organise the week again that it would be better if every child could have their own interpreter.

Yet the literature informs us of the challenges of working with interpreters. These include what Temple and Edwards (2002, p. 11) refer to as triple subjectivity – the interactions between research participant, researcher and interpreter attending to the passions and prejudices which the interpreter brings with them to the process. My dissertation is based on analysis of sentence meaning rather than in-depth word analysis. In this context, then, it was decided that the linguistic expertise within the group would attend to this issue of interviewer passion and prejudice. As outlined earlier, the focus groups comprised of a number of children from the same linguistic backgrounds, some of whom were very proficient in English. I entrusted each of these children to protect the meaning of the message conveyed to me through the interpreter, rather than employ other possible methods, such as back translation (Edwards, 1998). This occurred, for example, on one occasion when Oana explained to me that a Spanish webstite that Elisabeta mentioned, www.partito.com, was a website with music and games. Elisabeta corrected her to indicate that there was just music on that website.

Another issue outlined in Chapter Four was that I understood the interpreters as key informants within this research project. This became quite evident both through their interpretation work, and also through their engagement with the children during the writing process. With regards to the interpretation, Justyna, for instance, highlighted

that "nasza-klasa"[19] was similar to MSN Messenger[20] and she also clarified the emphasis of the Polish website mentioned by Irenka outlining that it helped people to maintain contact with school friends. Further evidence of the unique contribution of the interpreters emerged during the creation of the dual language texts when Justyna alerted me to what she regarded as basic writing errors made by Irenka. When these were brought to my attention, I explored them with Irenka but she told me that these were mistakes that she also made when she lived in Poland. Disregarding the language learning element to this account, it is clear that I would never have accessed this discussion with Irenka in the absence of the information provided by Justyna. Cultural barriers also presented themselves to the interpreters. The clearest example of this was when Oana had difficulty understanding what Gheorghe meant when he said used the term "knacker"[21]. Oana explained to me, "I don't know what this is". However, in following the conversation, I was able to identify the use of this word and thus kept the conversation flowing within the focus group.

Audience

Lundy (2007, p. 936) argues that implicit within the notion of due weight is the fact that children have a right to have their views listened to (not just heard) by those involved in the decision-making processes. Integral to the process of the TLC was the opportunity for the children to display their own work. This was structured around a cinema night, which preceded the launch of the children's collected work in a single book. I considered that this might have been a possible opportunity for bringing the children's work to the attention of policy makers, however, resisted this for two

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[19] http://www.nasza-klasa.pl.
[20] Instant messaging service. Available at http://webmessenger.msn.com.
[21] This is a pejorative term used to indicate membership of the Travelling Community or, more recently, a person from a working class background with a possible violent habitus. The term accurately describes the work of a slaughter of horses unfit for work.

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reasons. In the first instance, this was still part of the project and was bound by a commitment to safe space. Introducing other adults not known to the children would have contravened this commitment. In addition, it was a night for the children to showcase their work to *their* invited guests and the presence of other invited individuals may have diluted this focus somewhat. The second reason why this was resisted was that as a part of the TLC, the analysis of the children's work had not been completed, and as such, a coherent picture of the findings could not have been presented. I do understand that the concept of audience is vital, however, and have committed, within the boundaries imposed by doctoral work to employ the BERA Pyramid Model of dissemination as outlined in Chapter Four (BERA, 2000).

On reflection, however, I feel that this model needs to be reworked somewhat in light of participatory action research with children. In its present format the Pyramid Model does not include any specific element which encourages the dissemination of findings back to the participants in the research process. This is particularly problematic when the research participants are primary school children in that they will not generally be drawn to news media as understood in the present model. To this end it is proposed to alter the existing model to include a fifth level, titled participant friendly report, between the professional report and the news report (Figure 4). In this present study, the participant friendly report can be understood as a child friendly report, that is, a report written in the child's first language using child friendly language, which will be given to each of the participants. In attending to the issue of further dissemination to children, efforts will be made to disseminate the research findings via child friendly news media such as Den TV news, though success at this effort cannot be guaranteed.
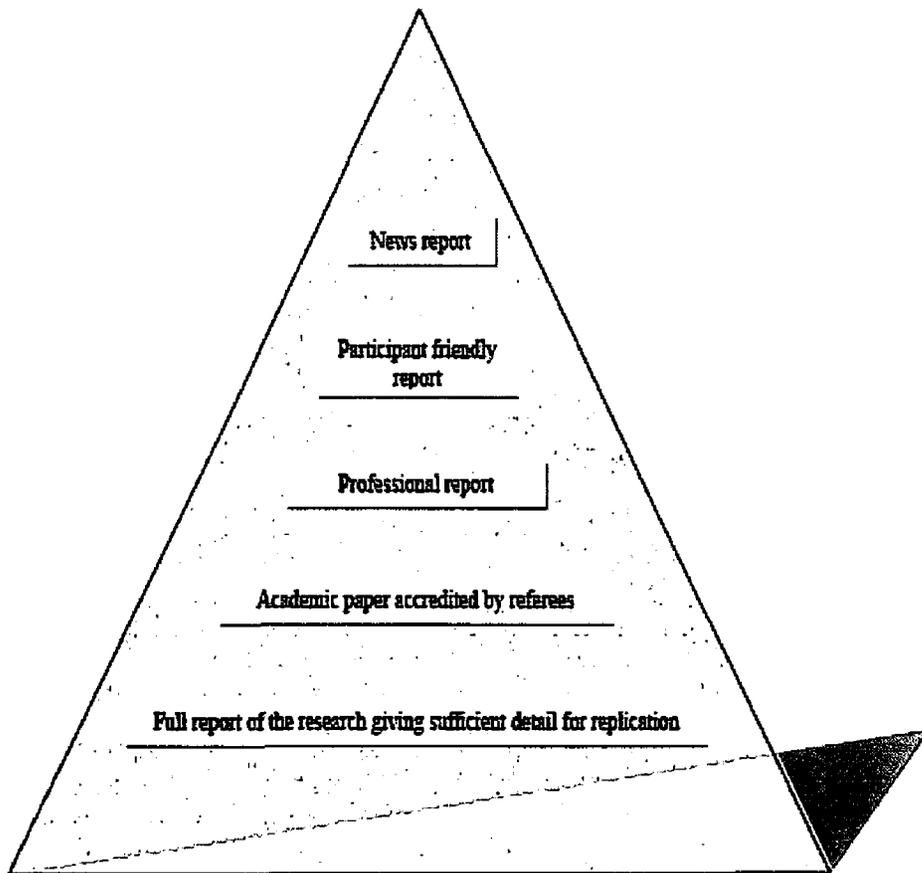
Figure 4: Revised Version of BERA Pyramid Model of Educational Research

Influence

Ensuring that the findings from this particular piece of research actually have

influence over policy or pedagogy is extremely difficult to commit to. Such a

commitment would be symptomatic of a rational approach to public policy making.

This approach is characterised by the objectives, and courses of action for achieving

the objectives, being identified, consequences predicted, possible outcomes evaluated,

and the alternative, which maximises the attainment of the stated objective chosen

(Stone, 2002). Policymaking is a much more organic affair, with the politics seeming

"messy, foolish, erratic and inexplicable" (Stone, 2002, p. 7). Neither does such a rational approach appreciate the presence of gatekeepers who considerably influence policy development, or the cultural mechanisms understood as broader influences or movements that influence which demands are regarded as valid and which are not. It is important at this juncture to recall the significant cultural mechanisms lined up against the recognition of first languages within the Irish education system. The three most salient of these being emerging global English language hegemony, national public discourse and common sense or intuitive understandings which fuel the time on task argument.

In light of these difficulties, my commitment, and one, which was stated to the children, is that through using the dissemination framework outlined above, I will make their feelings, understandings and experiences, known to as wide an audience as possible and to certain targeted groups that might effect positive change in this area.

Dialogue and Data Collection

This section examines the use of the data collections tools used throughout the TLC. By way of clarification, it is important to point out that the focus groups stood alone to a great extent in this process, while the other forms of collection, namely the dual language texts, observations and the ongoing conversations worked in synchronicity. This will be explained in further detail below. Initially however, this section analyses the use of focus groups with the TLC.

Focus Groups

Facilitation

It is understood that successful focus group moderation requires skilful facilitation. The added dimension within these particular focus groups of working with an interpreter brought that necessity into sharper focus. In this regard, it was important to negotiate time, in that I had to allow opportunity for the interpreter to interpret my question. It was also important to be aware of the physical limitations of consecutive interpretation, in that I had to break longer questions into shorter sections. A second difficulty to be negotiated arose out of the difference in proficiency levels within the group. Some of the children could clearly understand all of the questions when I asked them. At various stages, a child started to respond before either Oana or Justyna had an opportunity to interpret for another child that needed the interpretation. To this end, I had to strike a balance between allowing the conversation to flow, and fully including all of the children and making them understand that their contribution through their first language was just as important as any through English. In some cases, I addressed the contribution of the child through English through non-verbal communication indicating that I understood what they were saying and that I wanted them to continue but perhaps to wait until the interpreter had finished. As each focus group advanced in time, I sometimes allowed the contributor to continue while the interpreter concluded for those who required it. In cases where I did not attend to this issue carefully, the interpreters were clear to ask me for time so that they could translate for a particular student. Justyna did this on a number of occasions during both Polish focus groups.

Gender Composition and Voice

I had decided to structure the focus groups along homogenous linguistic and gender lines, and this necessitated inclusion of a relatively wide age base. The linguistic issue was guided by the practicalities of working through two languages, rather than three, which might possibly have stymied conversation flow and would certainly have necessitated a doubling of interpretation time. The groups were structured along gender lines as outlined in Chapter Four, to ensure that both the boys and girls within the groups had a full chance to make their own contributions. In the main, I adhered to this structure. Time constraints on the final day, however, necessitated that I combine both Romanian focus groups into one that consisted of three boys and two girls (two of the other boys were working completing their identity text while one of the girls was absent). This was a short focus group, generally attending to reflection on the week in the context of levels of enjoyment, satisfaction with opportunity to engage and suggestions for improvements for future similar projects. It became very clear that this group was dominated by contributions from the boys. Analysis of the transcript of this focus group through the use of NVivo indicates that Adrianna contributed 2.50 per cent of the speech and Elisabeta only 1.54 per cent. Stefan on the other hand contributed 15.44 per cent, Adrian 15.10 per cent and Gheorghe 19.01 per cent. The remaining 46.41 per cent of the speech was my contribution, both through English and the interpreter. Moreover, most of Elisabeta and Adrianna's contribution herein related to a specific set of questions directed to them by myself.

These gendered figures can be contrasted with the female only focus group one consisting of Elisabeta, Adrianna and Stefania. Analysis of that transcript illustrates that Elisabeta contributed 12.27 per cent of the speech and Adrianna 10.89 per cent.

This illustrates that in the context of these focus groups, at least, my gender specific design was upheld in that the homogeneous gender groups facilitated greater articulation of each of the children's concerns and issues relevant to them.

Dual Language Texts

As outlined in Chapter Four, I decided to use the dual language texts as a form of student created codifications, which I used to further explore issues of importance to them with regard to their languages in school. This was facilitated by way of a series of ongoing conversations throughout the TLC about various issues of interest, which the children were writing about or drawing. Of particular interest here, for instance, was the depiction of Adam, the central character in *Nowa Szkoła: New School*, in a wheelchair. The conversation around this illustration unearthed the authors' association that not being able to speak English is like experiencing some form of disability. Other clear examples of data collected in this way are outlined in the following chapter. These include the knowledge of the schools' disciplinary role, some of the children feeling defined by their linguistic deficiency in English, feelings of isolation and overcoming this through development of same language friendships and English based friendships, and problems of physical conflict based on language differences.

The dual language texts provided a really important aspect to the data collection within this project. Not only was the project structured around them, but they really allowed an opportunity for the children to express those issues of language learning which were really important to them. They facilitated what Lather (1986, p. 268) refers to as respondents being "actively involved in the construction and validation of

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meaning". I am sure that this would not have emerged so strongly had I approached this through other means such as sole focus group use. In addition to serving an instrumental purpose for the research project, they also provided an opportunity for the children to showcase their full writing ability, an opportunity denied to them in the context of English-only writing projects. This became very clear with the satisfaction displayed by the children with their copies of the compiled book presented to them at the end of the week. This was further evident with the levels of pride displayed both the children themselves and their parents and friends on the showcase evening in St. Patrick's as outlined above. In this way they served to move this project into a true participatory action research space.

Parental Participation

There were varying levels of parental participation with the project. All of the children returned a form signed by either a parent of guardian. This was a prerequisite for participation. This was my sole level of contact with some of the parents. Two parents, however, spoke with me through an interpreter on the telephone prior to the Camp to find out more details. Some of the parents brought their children to the camp each day, but in the main, the children walked in friendship or sibling groups. Some parents did attend the presentation evening. Their contribution to this evening reflected their satisfaction with the project. One parent stood up at the end of the presentation of the certificates of completion and called for attention. She spoke in English to thank me on behalf of the other parents in the room for offering their children such a good opportunity to tell their stories about school in Ireland.. She indicated that it meant a lot to the parents that someone had thought about including their opinions in this type of work, how proud they were of the work

their children had produced and wished me good luck with the rest of the project. Other parents and family members conveyed similar messages to me in person on the evening.

Power

This project consisted in bringing 13 children together, many of whom were previously unknown to each other, to a school for four days during their Easter holidays, to engage in what might be regarded as similar to school work. Given this complexity, I had considered that the project might not have run so smoothly. I need not have worried, however, because, while some low level behavioural issues emerged, these were noticeable for their infrequency and generally had to do with a lack of resources, such as access to laptops or sports equipment, than any other issue. In the room, the children were free to move around and observations indicate that much of the time spent doing this was to talk with other children about their project, though they were also engaged in off-task talk at times.

I think that the level of autonomy and collaboration with the children greatly reduced any problems in this regard. The timing of the breaks was negotiated with the children. I presented the outline for the week to them at the start of the Camp and they were content with the structure. At various stages during the week, however, some children indicated that they were tired or needed a break and after quick discussion we broke, according to their wishes. In general, they were satisfied to only take the same amount of break time, though on occasion, some of the children expressed a preference to keep playing basketball or football, or continue talking among themselves rather than return to the room. This was generally done in a light-

hearted manner and it was clear that they understood the need to spend time working on their dual language texts if they wanted to complete them. I had planned on the last day to provide hot lunch in the form of pizza, chips and other take away food. I had to approach the children on the Thursday evening to get their orders and also to ask if it would be OK to change the timing of the break as the chip shop was unable to prepare the food in time for the original break. The children had no problem with this change. I think that this level of respect afforded to their own opinions and feelings helped to rebalance any power issues present during the Camp and the children responded well to this. Nevertheless, I must be clear that power differentials did exist within the TLC.

As alluded to above, I tried to ensure a more equitable organisational pattern to the TLC, and in so doing, to respect the views of the children on a number of organisational and structural matters. I feel that this approach encouraged fuller engagement with the project on the part of the children. I was also aware, however, of the need to balance this approach with my responsibilities as facilitator of the Camp. These responsibilities included, ensuring the safe running of the Camp for all of the participants involved, adhering to commitments given to the principal and caretaker of the school regarding the use of ICT equipment and school areas such as the toilets, protection of the facilities offered by the school and assurances given to parents. While it is clear from the above discussion that in many cases issues of tension were satisfactorily addressed through respectful dialogue, I did have to establish certain rules, which I asked that all of the children would not transgress. The issue of Adrian and his mobile phone was one example of this. One other area of contention centred on the unavailability of one of the school yards for use during the

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break time. I was conscious that I was using the school during an out of school time, and previous experience with running other such Camps in the school revealed the possibility of other children attempting to disrupt their operation. This was something that I wanted to avoid if at all possible and felt that I had to be strict on this point. I tried to explain this to the children who really wanted to go outside, but I failed to convince them of the merit of my argument. They remained unhappy about this during the week and it re-emerged as an issue at various times.

Limitations

The sample for this project was quite limited, both in terms of first language, ethnicity and gender. With respect to first language and ethnicity, it is probable that minority language children from lower status minority ethnic backgrounds, perhaps from Africa or members of the Roma population, would have had much different experiences to share regarding their first language use in school. Evidence for this differential treatment emerged within this project when Stefan spoke of the Filipino children being allowed to speak their own language in class while he was not allowed to speak Romanian.

This project failed to gather data on the social class background of the children involved. This was problematic in that it limited the levels of analysis. Attempts to gather an aspect of this data was built into the first focus group with questions pertaining to parental activity in the home country, such as employment and literacy practices. It emerged very quickly that these questions were not going to reveal the desired information. Many of the children's parents were unemployed in their home country and that was the reason for emigrating to Ireland. What little data that did

emerge did not lend itself to credible analytic purpose. One possible option for future work in this area might be a supplementary questionnaire or interview with the children's parents to gather this additional data. This does open up the possibility, however, of reducing the focus on the authenticity of reporting the children's experiences and should be approached with caution in this respect.

Certain gendered perspectives and experiences did emerge from the data, as can be seen from the reactions of some of the girls during the first days in school, or the boys' domination of the focus groups. In this regard, the inclusion of both boys and girls was important. Due to organisational barriers, it was not possible to engage any Polish-speaking boys to participate in the TLC. One can deduce from the difference within the Romanian children that certain differences may have emerged, though in absence of their inclusion, this remains an act of supposition.

While the genesis of this project emerged from a conversation with a Lithuanian-speaking child in one of my English language support classes, the organisation of the project itself was not guided by any child involvement. Neither was their any involvement of adult minority language speakers apart from the interpreters.

This research project only examines the feelings, experiences and understandings of first generation minority language children. This is important because the literature shows clear differences between the language maintenance of first, second and third generation immigrants (Buriel and Cardoza, 1993). This limitation has been imposed because, as outlined above, high levels of inward migration is a relatively new

phenomenon in Ireland and there would be great difficulty finding a core number of suitable second generation children for this project in its present guise.

While member checking did occur with some of the children involved, this did not happen with all of the children and took place without the presence of an interpreter. This was due to organisational and time constraints. Those children with whom the checking did take place substantiated the work and findings, yet it is clear that all of the children should have had an opportunity to express their reaction to the findings as presented to them.

Finally, the thesis which emerges from the data will be based solely on the views expressed by the minority language children interviewed. Other important voices in this area, such as parents and other members of minority language communities are omitted, as are the voices of professionals working in the area, such as teachers and principals. It is therefore true that this piece of research will provide findings that are very specific to one group. It is argued, however, that the group represented in the research is the most important group in that it is they who are experiencing this non-recognition first hand. Furthermore, these children do not have any other vehicle through which to voice the impact of these experiences and thus this limitation is legitimate.

Summary

Using Lundy's (2007) advanced conceptualisation of Article 12 of the UNCRC, this chapter critically analysed the methodology that was used to address the central

research question of this dissertation. It further investigated the adherence of the research project to participatory action research, including a discussion on the issue of power within the TLC. The chapter concluded with a delineation of the main limitations of the methodology. Chapter Six, which follows, presents the children's voices as they emerged within the TLC.

CHAPTER SIX: GŁOS, VOCE, VOICE

Introduction

This research project originated out of a desire to understand and describe the feelings, understandings and experiences of minority language children in Irish primary schools with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages. As discussed in previous chapters, a new methodology rooted in emancipatory action research with 13 Polish and Romanian speaking children was created to help to address this question. This methodology has been characterised as a TLC. At a very early stage in the Camp, it emerged that while the research participants were concerned with issues of non-recognition and misrecognition of their linguistic proficiencies, they were also strongly concerned with the issue of English language learning. It is clear that neither of these issues can be divorced from the other, and indeed, the concluding chapter will outline how such attentiveness to English language learning can, in many cases, be located in the effects of misrecognition of linguistic proficiency in a first language other than English. This caveat notwithstanding, and attending to the theoretical underpinnings of emancipatory research, the findings discussed in this chapter attend to the importance that the research participants attributed to English language learning during the TLC.

In order to keep faith with the original purpose of this research project, while also articulating a clear message from the research participants with regard to learning English, this chapter treats the data under a plurality of themes. Each one attends, where relevant, to minority language recognition and/or English language acquisition. In keeping with the data, these two lenses are, at times, set in opposition to each other, which helps illustrate the contradictions experienced by the children in relation to

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their linguistic identities. This chapter weaves together data from the focus groups, the observations and dialogue based on the dual language texts. Where data from the dual language texts is used, it has always been checked for accuracy of analytic interpretation with the children. For readability purposes, the chapter uses English interpretations of the children's words whether the words were originally spoken in either Romanian, Polish or English.

Leaving Home and Arriving in Ireland

Each of the 13 children are now living in Ireland with their families. Many of the children came with their parents and other members of their families. Some of them had relatives living in Ireland or their parents were friendly with people who had already immigrated here. The research participants had mixed feelings about coming to live here. Many of them felt happy because of reunification with separated parents and other family members. Other children identified that it was strange and highlighted areas of personal loss, of both social contact and enjoyable practices, as a result of the move. Celina, for instance, felt:

> sort of weird because I was used to Poland, I used to live in Poland but I also was very happy because I met my father after a few months time. The first time I didn't see him for a long, long time.

Almost all of the children shared this experience of having been separated from one or both of their parents at some stage in the recent past. For example, Elisabeta and Adrian's dad had worked in Ireland for two years before returning to Romania to bring his family back to Ireland with him. Petru had lived with his grandparents for

three years in Romania while his parents and younger brother had moved to Ireland.

The strangeness associated with the move was explained by Gheorghe when he articulated how he felt like he "was in a dream" when he arrived in Ireland. He expanded by saying:

> I didn't like it at first because I didn't like the buildings and I didn't like anything but I used to live with my grandparents, I used to play a lot of football and go into the forest and there were dogs running after us and they were trying to catch us and we were playing with the dogs.

According to Gheorghe "It felt like a dream because when I used to wake up in the morning and I saw everything was different and my bed was different, I still thought I was in a dream". Stefan also claimed that it was like a dream for him while Adrianna described feeling that she was in a different world when the plane landed. Some of the children noted feeling sad at leaving other members of their family such as grandparents or brothers behind. Other children also mentioned no longer having access to hobbies that they previously enjoyed, such as playing on their bikes, keeping pets, walking near forests and lakes, and fishing.

School in Ireland

First Experiences

The research participants recounted some quite fraught first experiences of school in Ireland. These generally pertained to feelings of isolation and loneliness and an inability to communicate verbally with peers and teachers, and their concomitant identification on the basis of linguistic difference understood as deficiency. The girls,

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in particular, declared how they had felt so upset on the first or second day in school that they cried either in school or when they went home in the evening. Klaudia revealed, "when I came to school everybody was laughing at me, like I could not speak English and I was crying when I came home". Elisabeta had a similar experience and remembers that she "was ashamed and everybody was looking at me and when they introduced me everybody was looking at me". Stefania also cried while Zofia felt "sad, I started crying. I had no English, I couldn't do my work". Irenka reported feeling lonely when she first came to her school because she could not talk with anyone in her class. She made this point quite forcefully within her dual language text, *Przygoda Kuzko W Irlandii: Kuzko's Adventure in Ireland*, through Kuzko's experience on the first day of school:

> Kuzko had to go to school. At the start he felt upset when everyone was laughing at him. It was very hard for him to speak to other people and to understand him. At first Kuzko had no friends, other children were laughing at him because he didn't speak or understand English.

This was an accurate description of her feelings on her first day and she described feeling very akin to the pictorial representation of Kuzko's experience (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Kuzko Feeling Isolated in School.

The children highlighted the issue of language difficulties as the main reason for these feelings of isolation and loneliness. Within their schools, the children felt defined by their linguistic deficiencies in English. This emerges, for example, through the treatment of the character of Adela in *Adela Învață Englez : Adlea Learns English* who "started school in September and she didn't speak English". It was further revealed by the authors of *Baiteul Cel Nou: The New Boy* who highlighted these feelings as follows:

> On the second day everyone was laughing at him because he didn't know English. He resisted fighting but after five minutes then he started fighting because people were annoying him and laughing at him because he didn't know English.

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The data reveal that the most successful strategy for overcoming these feelings was developing friendship with other children in the school. According to Elisabeta "I was very nervous the first day but the second day was better . . . because I started to meet people". Despite the linguistic barriers, many of the children stated that they knew when other children or the staff were being nice to them, though they did reveal that meeting someone who spoke the same language as them made them feel much happier in school. Indeed, one of the main people that Elisabeta had in mind in the quotation above was another Romanian child.

Teaching Staff and Children's School Experiences

The children generally felt quite happy about their teachers. As identified earlier, many of the children were very upset during their initial stages in the school. Adrianna, Elisabeta and Sylwia all mentioned that they knew when a teacher was being nice to them, even if they couldn't understand what was being said, and all three identified this as being important in helping them to feel good about being in a new school. Henric, who now has a high level of English language proficiency, noted how the principal in his school had helped other children without good English to "get on" well.

The children knew the types of difficulties experienced by teachers in trying to work with children with low levels of proficiency in English. They knew, for instance, that it was difficult for the teacher to give them homework when they didn't understand the language in which it was given, and, moreover, within which, it was expected to be completed. Adrian was happy with this situation. He was clear that he would not have been able to do the homework that the rest of the class were doing and did not

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want to. Stefan felt a little left out by this. He understood also that it was not possible to do the same homework as children with high levels of English language proficiency in the class but he did feel good though when he was given some work to do at home by his English language support teacher.

All of the participants had attended English language support at some stage during their schooling in Ireland. In the main, the children enjoyed spending time with their English language support teacher. The research participants particularly highlighted the role of the English language support teacher in making them feel happy in school and in helping them to learn English. Elisabeta identified that she did really interesting work with her English language support teacher and that she made her feel "special", while Adrianna said that her English language support teacher had really helped her with her English.

Some of the children highlighted that withdrawal from their class to go to English language support also gave them a break from the class work. This was particularly welcome if it came during a subject that they did not particularly like, for instance as Klaudia outlined, "sometimes when they have Geography or History and we hate it and they take us". She had not like these subjects in Poland before she came to Ireland and was happy when she got the opportunity to avoid them in school in Ireland. Henric liked going "because you lose time", while Stefan appreciated some of the methodologies employed by the teacher, "because we play games nearly every Friday, we play games, five minutes ask some questions and then we play some games...". Adrian likes going "because I want to learn English". Elisabeta finds that going to English language support class gives her a break from her normal work. She

used to find this hard work but it is getting easier because "I speak English now". Some of the children found withdrawal to be problematic, with Zofia, for example, arguing, "then other kids are drawing something or doing some art, then I can't do that so I am not happy about that".

The children identified the important role of teachers in helping to make sure that they are "looked after" in school. Stefan said the he liked when teachers asked them how they were getting on and if everything was OK. He also said that it helped him not to feel so lonely when teachers would listen to what he tried to tell them. Adrian also mentioned that some teachers had been "really nice" to him in that they had taken the time to try to speak with him, and even though this was through English, he knew that they were being nice to him and it felt good.

The children commented on the disciplinary roles and procedures within their schools. They were unhappy with some of the rules, such as not being allowed to bring sweets to school, or being prevented from using their mobile phones, even at lunchtime. Some of the boys, in particular, had an expectation of punishment when they were caught transgressing the school rules. Awareness of the regulatory systems is presented in *Baiteul Cel Nou: The New Boy*, when the boys get red and yellow cards for fighting on the yard. Responses from some of the children indicated that they were happy that when a boy did something wrong that he would be punished. Gheorghe said that it was good that the boys "got into trouble" for what they did to Ivan in *Rusul Ivan: Ivan The Russian*. He said that sometimes boys don't get into trouble when they should. He told me about a time in school when he had a problem with an older boy who was pushing him on the yard and the teacher in charge did

nothing even after he told her about it. He had told her in English and, while he knew that his English was not particularly good at the time, he felt she was still able to understand most of what he said. He did feel quite frustrated that he could not properly explain it all to that teacher in English and that perhaps if his English was better the teacher might have addressed the situation.

Students' Perceptions of Teacher Attitudes Towards First Language Use

The data show that the majority of teachers and other school staff were most concerned with ensuring that the children developed proficiency in English. They provided very little opportunity for the children to use or maintain their first languages, though this was more prevalent for some linguistic groups and within some schools more than others. The children reacted in a variety of ways these messages. Some accepted the prioritisation of English and minimised the use of their own languages, both in and out of school. Some accepted the English dominance within school but maintained their use of their first language outside of school, while others reacted to the misrecognition of their first language through low level acts of resistance within the school. In the cases where teachers recognised the importance of the children's first languages and employed pedagogical strategies infused with this recognition, the children reacted quite positively. Nevertheless, there are also examples of children not fully grasping the significance and value of this work.

There were very clear examples of teachers expressly forbidding the children to use their first languages in school. Irenka, for instance, related how Celina's teacher repeatedly tells her to speak in English to Celina, not in Polish, "Her teacher, she always tells me to talk to her in English, not in Polish, but we still talk in Polish".

Klaudia declared that her teachers "don't even know that I speak Polish". She has decided not to speak Polish in front of them as she "thought that they would be angry that I speak Polish". Stefan and Gheorghe have also been told not to speak Romanian in school. According to Stefan, "when the teacher cannot hear me and I want to say something to Gheorghe I say it in Romanian". If his teacher hears him using Romanian "he shouts at me". Stefan was very unhappy about this, and doubly so because he claimed that some Filipino boys in his class "get away" with speaking their language and the teacher does not say anything to them. Gheorghe has also been told not to speak Romanian on the yard. He has been told this on a couple of occasions, and once in particular because some other children were asking him to tell them swear words in Romanian. According to Gheorghe, "I speak in the yard but they don't know". He described how "if sir is in the yard and I see him coming I speak in English" and when he goes away "I speak in Romanian again".

Adrianna revealed how:

> We are not allowed to speak Romanian in class and there was a girl at the beginning when we first got here and we didn't speak any English, there was a girl who was here for many years and she translated for us. When we don't have the book or the English dictionary, and then the teacher made me sit beside a Romanian girl to talk English with her.

This also happened to Adrianna when she arrived in her school. As she recalled "when I first got here the teacher told the other kids not to speak to me in Romanian because I had to learn English very quickly". Adrianna has also been directed not to speak Romanian on the yard at lunchtime. Furthermore, her teacher instructed her

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mother not to speak Romanian with Adrianna at home. According to Adrianna, "the first week I got here my teacher told my mum to speak English with me at home". Her mother did this initially but she soon began to speak in Romanian again. Adrianna recalled how when she first heard her mother speaking to her in English "I laughed because I didn't understand anything". Her mother still tries to speak English with her on occasion and they sometimes play educational games through English, but this does not happen too often.

There is some evidence of instrumental use of the first languages of the children. Many of their teachers have encouraged them to use dictionaries in their work. According to Zofia:

> Yes I do use a Polish dictionary and my teacher she makes copies of different assignments from her own book and then I am given these sheets and I need to fill in the sentences using the words so I need to look these words up in the dictionary and then just fill them in.

She finds it easier to do her work like that. Adrianna, Adrian and Stefan also use dictionaries in their work while Klaudia recalls how she always "used a dictionary in 4th class, last year". Some of the teachers showed an interest in aspects of what the children had learned in their previous education systems. Irenka's teacher, for instance, inquired what she had learned about in history when she was in school in Poland. Adrianna has been asked about aspects of life in Romania, but again this never focused on language, rather it was centred on other issues like the weather or food or pedagogical issues such as what age they started writing with a pen in

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Romania. None of the children could recall a teacher asking them any specific questions about their own first language.

The data reveal some examples of low-level recognition such as in the translation of specific phrases or greetings for use within the school. According to Irenka her teacher "might say, 'hello', and all of us from other countries have to say it in our language". Other examples of this are presented by Sylwia who remembered having to translate the word 'Easter' for the principal and also by Adrianna who had to translate how to say 'Happy Christmas' in Romanian for a teacher of another class in her school. Further issues with translation are treated in the following section. While this illustrates some degree of appreciation of the linguistic differences of the children, it is a superficial and surface-level engagement with the issue of linguistic diversity.

Translation and Interpretation in School

Many of the pupils have had to translate and/or interpret at some stage during their schooling in Ireland. They have had to do it for different groups of the school community including staff, other children and members of their own family. While the children generally felt pleased about this work, there are clear examples of the feelings of shame associated with having to translate for their parents.

With regard to school staff and other children, Klaudia's principal requested that she translate some information for a new Polish girl in the school. Both Stefan and Gheorghe have also translated information for other Romanian-speaking boys who do not understand what the teacher has said. Irenka does most of the Polish translation in

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her school, for instance, she recounted how she had to "translate for them because the two twins, they are always doing Mathematics and they are counting in Polish, not in English". When Irenka is absent, Celina takes over this role, though she has far less developed proficiency in English.

There is also evidence that some of the students have had to translate for their parents in the school. Irenka, for instance, has had to translate because "when I was in 1st class I was just new and my teacher wanted to talk to my parents, I knew a bit more English than them so I was translating for them". Gheorghe has had to translate for his mother in his school because "she doesn't really speak any English, but she knows some English". He does not like doing this work for his mother because "she has four years here and she don't speak English". He believed that his mother speaks "like a baby" when she tries to speak English and feels "ashamed to do that" for her. He does think, however, that his mother is pleased with him for doing this work, claiming "she is happy and proud because we know English, she is happy about that".

Positive Recognition of First Languages in School

There was clear evidence of good practice with regard to the recognition of first languages in one particular school. Elisabeta and Adrian recalled how their English language support teacher had frequently encouraged them to use Romanian in her class. On one occasion when her teacher wasn't in, "Miss O'Reilly [English language support teacher] made me write a story in Romanian because I didn't know any English". This made her feel "good. I liked that". The same language support teacher often asks Adrian about words in Romanian. He provided the example of her asking him what the word for "market" is in Romanian and then using that word to

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help him understand the word in English. She also encouraged Petru to use Romanian if the does not know something in English, "Miss O'Reilly told us if you don't know how to write in English to write in Romanian so we could translate it" though Petru has never needed to do this. This English language support teacher has also provided the children in her school with access to dual language books. Adrian's mainstream class teacher in the same school has also provided him with some Romanian books.

Children's Reactions to Language Messages

Despite this variety of attitudes displayed by their teachers towards their first languages, the children continue to use their first languages in various ways during the school day. Stefan and Gheorghe understand how they can use their Romanian to assist them with their class work. Gheorghe explained how he uses his Romanian to help his learning in school; "If I have to write something I write it in English but I think and I tell it to myself in Romanian". According to Stefan "if me and Gheorghe don't understand something maybe Gheorghe does and tells it to me, he says it to me in Romanian or translate me if I don't know how to say something". This is a strategy employed by Irenka also in relation to Celina, outlining that "we still talk in Polish . . . [because] it is our language so . . .".

Depending on who they play with, they will use either English or their first language on the yard during lunchtime. Elisabeta speaks Romanian on the yard and she reported that, "I sometimes speak English with my Irish friends". According to Stefan, "I speak English most of the time, because I have Irish friends but sometimes with Gheorghe I talk to him in Romanian". Gheorghe similarly reported, "in the yard I speak it [Romanian] but in class no". Klaudia was limited to using her Polish

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outside of the classroom, "I only use it on breaks". Irenka speaks Polish "and English with my other friends". Stefan would like to have more structured access to first language learning within his school and he claimed that he would feel proud if other children would learn to speak Romanian with the help of a Romanian teacher. Adrian was very clear, however, that he did not want to be taught any Romanian in school in Ireland, arguing, "I don't like Romanian, I don't like to speak Romanian".

The children continue to use their language going to and from school. According to Zofia, "when I go to school I walk with Sylwia and Klaudia so we speak Polish, at school it is English and then when I am back home it is Polish". Irenka follows a similar pattern, "before school Polish with my parents and English with my sister, in school English, and after school the same as the morning". Some of the research participants indicated that it was important to maintain their own first language for when they returned to their country of origin. This might be on a visit or as a permanent return. In the context of a holiday, Gheorghe forcefully made the point that maintaining his Romanian is important to him "because if I go back to Romania what do I do? I speak English to them?". Irenka was also insightful on this issue, but with regard to a permanent return to Poland. She attends a Polish school every Saturday to maintain her language proficiency, as it will help her to fit back in more easily into school in Poland. It also has the added benefit that "because when I go back to Poland I will have tests like when I am not in the Polish school, but when I am in the Polish school I don't even have to do the tests when I go back to Poland".

Learning English

The research participants articulated the importance of learning English for them and were very clear about the difficulties posed by not being able to speak the majority language in Ireland. One of the most striking aspects of the data was the positioning of Adam, the central character in *Nowa Szkoła: New School*, in a wheelchair (Figure 6). The authors of this story were very clear that not being able to speak English in Irish schools is like having something wrong and there is a very strong relationship in their own minds between this and having some level of disability. They used the concept of Adam in a wheelchair to display this. These issues were both pedagogical and social.

Figure 6. Adam from *Nowa Szkoła: New School*

There is a powerful sense among the children that the development of English language proficiency will significantly improve their lives in Ireland. According to Sylwia, "I feel better now than last year because I can speak more English and I can understand what they are speaking to me, not like last year". This perspective is endorsed by Zofia who noted:

> At the moment is not that good because I don't speak good English. I presume that once I learn more and my English gets better it is going to be even better.

Klaudia also highlighted how learning English made her happier in school. According to Sylwia, "if you don't learn English you won't speak with other children and teachers and you won't understand when they are talking to you". She elaborated that this was not just important for school but also for "in the shops and in the town." Klaudia highlighted the global dimension to English outlining "because in every country they have got English". As Zofia said, "I need [English] in school first of all but it would be easier to find a job because when you have foreign people coming to the country it is important to speak English". Petru outlined that being able to speak English "helps us to communicate with other people" and Henric argued that this was not just for schoolwork but also for going to the shops and other actions outside of school. Adrianna was very aware of the international element of the English language when she posited, "if you visit a foreign country you don't know that language but you can very well talk to people in English". Similarly, one of the main reasons that Adrian wanted to learn English was "because I can go to other countries and . . . use English."

Adrianna feels that speaking more and more English is a good approach to learning English and claimed that "it was good because it helped me to learn quicker". While she did reveal that it would have been nice if people talked with her in Romanian when she first came to school and also that she might like to have a Romanian teacher to teach through Romanian for a few minutes during the day, she was very clear that she would prefer to concentrate on learning English in school in Ireland. Similarly, Elisabeta was happy enough that English is more important in school and that she can still use her Romanian fully outside of school.

The commitment to developing English proficiency also emerges from the continued learning of English outside of the school. It emerged in *Nowa Szkoła: New School* that Adam studied English with Magda, above and beyond the work that he was doing in school. When this was explored with the children, they identified that this was important to them also and they indicated that they sometimes practice with their friends outside of school. Klaudia, however, was very clear that sometimes it is very tiring and all you want to do is enjoy yourself. Henric identified how he now helps other children to speak better English.

Children's Attitudes Towards Other Languages

There were mixed feelings among the children towards Irish. Some of them were happy enough to learn it, expressing that it is "easy" or it is "OK". This was sometimes related to the teaching methodologies employed by the teacher, thus according to Zofia, "I like it when we sing songs or we just do some poems". With respect to those children who didn't like doing Irish, both Klaudia and Elisabeta stated that they just didn't like the language, as Klaudia outlined, "I don't like Irish, I think it

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is a stupid language, sorry, but I do. I can say that it is stupid. When my mum asks me some words in Irish I said to her that I can say it but I don't want to." Both of these children find it a particularly difficult language to learn. Other children expressed that they might like to learn Irish but that it was very difficult for them to learn two new languages at once. This is not something that majority language children in the school have to work at. According to Gheorghe, "I wish they would let me learn English first to get used to it and then Irish because to learn them both at the same time I don't really like it". Gheorghe sometimes gets confused between English and Irish. He mentioned that "I used to know how to say sausage in English, I also knew how to say it in Irish and if I go to a shop and say please give me "ispíni"[22] then they look funny at me". This made him wonder the value of actually learning the language, "I don't like learning Irish because I don't use it and people don't speak Irish here or in any other country so...". He was adamant that he should learn English firstly and then perhaps learn Irish, "If I know very good English maybe I could learn Irish". When Stefan was asked about Irish he declared, "I don't like it, I hate it." He elaborated on this by saying:

> As soon as I got here I started learning a bit of English, then I had to start learning Irish as well and the teacher was shouting at me and giving out because I don't know Irish. And I also got homework for Irish and for English and I couldn't do them both and my parents couldn't help me because they weren't home so I find it very hard.

Learning Irish made school more difficult for Stefan, "[a]t first they find it difficult because they don't speak the language. Now it is getting a bit harder because I have

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[22] "Ispíni" is the Irish word for sausages.

to learn Irish as well". Moreover, it was significant that many of the other children did not have a proper chance to learn Irish, as they were withdrawn for English language support class during Irish lessons.

The attitude of the research participants to other languages was just as varied. With regard to French, for instance, Irenka sometimes reads French books from her class library. Henric was described by his brother, Petru, as being "crazy about French" and gave the example of how he said "bonjour" to the policeman at passport clearance in France. Henric enjoys reading French books at home. Some of the Romanian children, in particular, had learned some French in school in Romania. Neither Elisabeta nor Adrianna enjoyed learning French, with Elisabeta saying "I didn't like it so I didn't learn anything actually". She did not like it because it was an "ugly language". Both children prefer learning English "because it is nicer".

Some of the children mentioned that they had watched some Russian television programmes while living in their country of origin. Gheorghe used to continue to watch them in Ireland until he broke the satellite connection for the television. Klaudia's best friend in her class is from Russia and they often play games to find similarities with each other's language. She gave the example "Like we got a fox in Polish is "lis" and in Russian it is "лиса" (pronounced "lisa"). She had also done this with a Slovakian child in her class and could also tell the word for "fox" in Slovakian, "líška". It emerged that Elisabeta still views websites from Spain as she likes the music on the websites, while Henric revealed that he also likes to speak some Spanish, though he only knew a little bit of it like 'gracias'.

Linguistic Diversity and Other Children

There is clear evidence from the data that many majority language children in the schools are quite interested in other languages. Adrianna, for instance, revealed that sometimes when she talks in Romanian, other children ask her to teach them some new words in Romanian. One of her friends knows how to say words like 'hair' and 'eyes' in Romanian. Elisabeta has had a similar experience and recounts how a child in her class can say "hello" and ask "how are you?" in Romanian also. Sometimes the interest in different languages emerged from more mischievous grounds with them wanting to learn "bad words" which they will then use at break-times in school. The research participants were happy when other children were interested in their language with Stefan declaring that he would like other children to learn Romanian as it would make him proud of his language.

Other children's attitudes were not always positive, however. Adrian identified that some boys outside of school make fun of the languages they speak and sometimes use this as an excuse to try to fight with minority language children. Gheorghe agreed with this and reported an attempt to do this with him, though he managed to run away from the other children whom he described as "knackers". In explaining why Ivan got beaten up, Stefan did suggest that one of the reasons why the boys thought Ivan was full of himself was that he would not play with them (Figure 7). Stefan explained that he might not have wanted to play with them because he didn't understand the language they were speaking. In general, the children don't have problems with the children in their own classes, rather it is with other (mostly older) children that these problems arise.

Figure 7. Ivan Getting Beaten Up in *Rusul Ivan: Ivan The Russian*.

In general, the children explained that they try not to get too upset when other children react negatively to their use of their own first languages. They displayed a variety of strategies for dealing with these reactions. Adrianna outlined that some of the other children laugh at them for speaking Romanian although she has decided to laugh with them rather than let it annoy her. Gheorghe had the same reaction when some of the children jeered him by saying "blah, blah, blah" when he was talking, in reference to not being able to understand his language. He was not upset by this though and took it as a joke and even joined in with the jeering. A different picture emerges, however, when it comes to children who speak the same first language as the research participants. In particular, Adrianna recalled being very upset with another Romanian child who would only speak with her in English. Apparently a

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teacher had told the child not to speak with Adrianna in Romanian. It only emerged much later that this was the reason why the child refused to speak with her in Romanian. Adrianna said, "I was upset with her at first but then I apologised when I knew what the situation was". Klaudia reported that some of her majority language friends have told her not to speak Polish because they don't like to hear it. This upsets her and makes her feel "stupid because I have to talk in English and I can't talk in my own language". She reacted to this by telling them that it would be very hard for them if they were told not to speak in English. Adrianna would not like a Romanian teacher to teach her Romanian in school with the other Irish children because "not with other Irish kids because they would laugh at me".

Knowing how to speak English is important in being able to form friendships with other children. Absence of English was identified as one of the main barriers to making friends by both Irenka and Celina. The connection between communication and friendship emerges here strongly in many of the dual language texts (Figure 8). In *Adela Învață Englez: Adlea Learns English*, when Adela learns "a little English" after a few months, she had more friends. Adrianna explained this as "it is easier to make friends when you can talk to them" and "you have more friends this way" (speaking English).

Figure 8. Adela's Two New Friends, Anna and Roxana in *Adela Învață Englez: Adlea Learns English.*

Language and Literacy Practices and Popular Culture

Discussions about how the children spend their free time unearthed some very interesting insights into their attitudes to their own first language and to English. ICT plays a major role in the lives of all of the research participants. Gheorghe indicated that one of his main reasons for liking Ireland is that there is more technology available here than in Romania. Indeed, on the first evening of the TLC, Adrianna and Stefania spoke online to discuss the character for their dual language text, reflecting the centrality of technology in their social lives.

They use mobile phones frequently, texting friends through their first language and English. As previously outlined, some of the children were very critical at not being allowed to use their phones during the school lunch breaks though others understand

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the rules around phone use in school and were content that their teachers will look after their phones during the day and return them at "home time". This central role of technology in their experiences emerges in one of the dual language texts with the authors of *Nowa Szkoła: New School* writing how Adam identified Magda as a Polish speaker after he heard her "talking in Polish on the mobile phone".

With regard to the use of computers, Zofia reflected on getting a laptop declaring "It is so wonderful . . . My parents got a laptop for me for Christmas and then I got on the Internet and the Internet is connected to my brother's laptop computer, when I am at school he is at home so he uses it and when I am back from school he goes to work so [I use it]". Most of the research participants have access to computers and the Internet in their own homes. Those who do not have such easy access, such as Stefan, take advantage of other opportunities to use the Internet, "I don't have [a computer] at home because I stay in a flat but when I visit my cousins there I play on the computer, on the Internet . . . and scary games".

They use the Internet for entertainment, educational purposes and to stay in contact with friends and family. Irenka, for instance, regularly checks "gadugadu"[23] which is a Polish based school networking site. In addition she also uses "nasza-klasa" which is the Polish equivalent of MSN messenger everyday to stay in contact with her friends in Poland. This is important for her and makes her feel happy, as she has not seen some of the friends for nearly two years. Klaudia has a webcam installed on her computer and uses this to stay in contact with her friends in Poland, while Zofia also

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[23] http://www.gadugadu.pl.

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uses "gadugadu" to remain in touch with her friends. Celina uses Skype[24] to stay in contact with her aunt and grandfather while Petru maintained contact with some of his Romanian friends via the Internet even though the friends had now moved to Spain or Italy.

The data revealed that some of the children use both English and their own first languages online. Adrian is proficient in Yahoo! Messenger[25] and BEBO[26] and uses them in English to stay in contact with his friends in Ireland. He does not stay in contact with his friends in Romania. Gheorghe, Elisabeta, Adrianna and Isablella, in particular, speak in Romanian to their Romanian friends. Stefania speaks in English to other friends and generally tends to look at English language websites, because she thinks they are better and more of them are of interest to her. She regularly checks educational sites about animals as she has aspirations to train as a veterinarian in college. Elisabeta, who had lived in Portugal for a period with her family, uses the Internet to maintain her interest in Spanish and Portuguese culture and music.

A lot of the children have satellite television in their homes, which gives them access to television programmes from their home country or in their first language. There is a difference in the levels of first language programmes that the children watch. Some watch predominantly in their first languages, while others watch a solid mixture of both. Some others are happier to watch English programmes, even when they have access to satellite television. Stefan does not have access to television where he lives so he watches television mostly when he goes to his cousins' house. He prefers to

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[24] Software that allows the user to make telephone calls over the internet. Available at http://www.skype.com
[25] Instant messaging and chat room service. Available at http://messenger.yahoo.com
[26] Online social networking site. Available at http://www.bebo.com

watch television in Romanian because, as he said, "I feel good and it is easier for me to follow the programmes". Both Petru and Henric watch a mix of Romanian and English programmes. They prefer to watch Romanian programmes such as *Crazy People from NATO* because of the content rather than the language, as they outlined. They made the point that there are "loads of funny programmes" and "there is more fun stuff" on Romanian channels. Many of the programmes that both of these children watch from Romania are in English and have Romanian subtitles. They often turn off the subtitles and just listen to them in English. Stefania does not watch much television, preferring to spend her free time reading. She only watches television for what she regards as very enjoyable programmes such as *Zoë 101*. Elisabeta also watches Romanian television channels but again the programmes are in English, "the English programmes I just remove the subtitles, I can do that and watch them in English". Adrianna watches a lot of Irish based television programmes like *The Den* and also American based channels such as *Nikelodeon*. She used to watch Romanian based programmes but her mother removed the satellite dish as she wants her to learn more English, "we used to but not anymore, we don't have them anymore. My mum wants me to learn English quicker so I don't watch Romanian television anymore". She does not feel upset about this however, thinking that it will help her English. Klaudia watches Polish television when possible and identifies her favourite programmes as being in the Polish language, such as *H2O Mermaids* about three girls who change into mermaids. Zofia argues that she watches Polish television because "I can understand much more".

These data illustrate that the children have a very sophisticated appreciation of their own linguistic diversity and the choices that are available to them within popular

culture. They exercise this choice to expand their knowledge of second and subsequent languages, and/or to maintain personal connection both with their own first language and through that language.

Language Practices and Family Interactions

The research participants generally revealed that while they predominantly speak their first language with their parents, siblings, grandparents and extended family, they also speak English in these familial contexts. The use of English is generally based on a concern that the child would learn English, or that a younger sibling is more proficient in English than in the first language of the family and thus it is easier for the child to communicate with their siblings through English.

Most of the children predominantly use their first languages when speaking with their parents. However, all of the children offered examples of their parents using English with them, or asking about English at some stage. Zofia, for instance, speaks almost exclusively in Polish with her parents, but even in this case, however, the parents do show an interest in their child learning English. As Zofia reported, her mother asks her about English words in her homework so Zofia tells her what they mean. Most of the other children offered examples of their parents using English with them also. Celina, for instance, generally speaks Polish at home but sometimes her mother asks her to speak in English to help her English proficiency "because my English is not very good and I learn, learn, learn". Stefan sometimes speaks English with his mother because she speaks both English and Romanian while he only speaks Romanian with his father. Gheorghe speaks Romanian with his mother but sometimes speaks English

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with his father. This is problematic for Gheorghe on occasions, especially when his father tries to correct his use of English. According to Gheorghe:

> My dad sometimes thinks he knows English better than I do but I don't like that . . . It is not true what he says and he keeps insisting that it is his way and because he is bigger than me he can also smack me for his right, so I don't like that.

Most of the children were very happy to speak in their first language at home. The exception to this was Adrian who was very clear that he did not want to maintain his Romanian language, "I don't like Romanian. I don't like to speak Romanian". He knew that he had to continue speaking it though with his parents "It is important because I have to speak Romanian to my parents". Although Adrian recognised that it was important, he was still adamant that "I don't like it".

Most of the children believed that their parents felt that it was important for them to learn English. Some of the parents had taken decisions and actions that they felt would help the English learning process. As mentioned earlier, according to Adrianna, her mother wants her "to learn English quicker so I don't watch Romanian television anymore". She removed the satellite dish from the television. Adrianna's mum also makes her write in English sometimes, yet her mum also understands the importance of Adrianna retaining proficiency in Romanian. According to Adrianna, "sometimes my mum makes me write in Romanian just so I won't forget". She sometimes speaks with Adrianna in English because Adrianna's teacher told her not to speak with her in Romanian, though in general they speak in Romanian at home. Adrianna's mother does help her with her English at home. She recalled playing English language games with her mum "[w]e once played a game where we had to

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speak in English . . . another game had some pictures and some cards and we had to guess who is the person in the picture and we had to ask questions about the person in the picture". This concern with helping their children to learn English is displayed vividly in *Nowa Szkoła: New School* when Adam's parents are very happy with him when scores an A+ on his English test at the end of the school year (Figure 9).
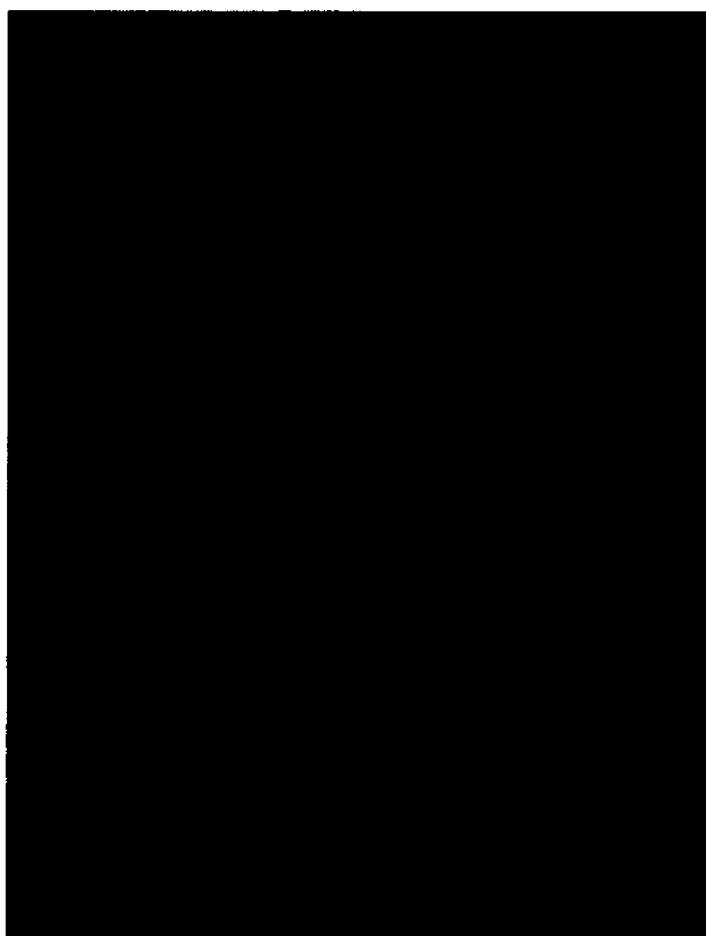

Figure 9. The Big Test in *Nowa Szkoła: New School*.

The general pattern of language use between the research participants and their grandparents involved their first languages. Gheorghe's grandfather who lives in

Ireland is happy that he is learning another language (English). Although his grandfather does not know many words in English, he does try to practice with the language with Gheorghe. Klaudia speaks with her grandparents only in Polish. Adrianna has joked with her grandparents at times by speaking English with them on purpose. Stefania found it funny that her grandma thought she would learn to speak only Irish in Ireland. The children reported speaking a lot of English with their brothers and sisters, especially if they were younger than them. According to Stefania her younger sister finds it easier to communicate through English than Romanian. Irenka had a similar experience and outlined that when her younger sister gets mad she "is talking to everyone in English". Stefan revealed that his older brother, who still lives in Romania, will challenge him to an English speaking competition when he returns there for holidays.

Accounts of interaction with their grandparents revealed some evidence of first language loss. Klaudia recounted how "I keep forgetting loads of words in Polish", and how, when she speaks with her grandparents "I speak slowly because I forget the words". Her grandparents have responded to this by telling her once "you are learning too much English". She said that this made her feel funny. Adrianna also has forgotten some Romanian words when she has been speaking with her grandparents on the phone, "I have forgotten a word and I can't even remember it! I can't remember something like . . . I don't know . . . Peas!". She did not tell her grandparents that she had forgotten the word, as she outlined, "I didn't tell them in English. I asked my mum [for the word in Romanian]". She has, on occasion though, joked with her grandparents by speaking English. Elisabeta also reported, "I forgot some words". Klaudia sometimes forgets words in Polish when she is talking with

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her mother and she uses English words instead. She conjectured that her mam thinks "what is she talking about?".

The use of English in the home is also based on a desire by the parents to improve their own English, or to help with their own communication skills. Gheorghe, for instance, outlined how he told his mum "to tell her boss where to put the bread because she didn't know how to...". Similarly, Klaudia's parents sometimes ask her to speak English so they can learn, "but my mum doesn't know English but I came from school and sometimes she asks me to teach her something". Klaudia finds this "funny". Some of the research participants are called on to act as interpreters and translators for their parents outside of the school also. According to Adrianna, "I had to do this for my mum once because she was talking on the phone with another woman and she didn't know how to say 'left' in English and so I told her". Elisabeta has had to help her mother to spell some words in English. Sylwia reflected that interpreting for her mother makes her feel like a teacher.

The role of parental support in other areas of the child's life emerged very clearly from the research participants. In *Rusul Ivan: Ivan The Russian*, Ivan's parents brought him to school on the first day and they also went to the school to find the children who had beaten him up at a later stage in the story. Stefan responded to this by identifying that his parents' support is particularly important. He spoke a lot with his parents about what was going on in school and how he felt about living in Ireland in general. Similarly in *Baiteul Cel Nou: The New Boy*, Raul told his mother everything that happened to him in school. Henric indicated that he does this when he goes home from school.

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Reading Material in the Home and Feelings of Recognition

The home reading patterns of the children again revealed a complicated linguistic mix. Most of the children read in their first language at home. Their family provides an important resource for obtaining these texts. For many of the participants, much of the reading material available in the home is in their first languages. Zofia recounted, for instance, how "there is a Polish shop where my father often buys newspapers or magazines in Polish". Similarly, Celina's "mother sometimes buys Polish newspapers". Sometimes these are sent by grandparents from their country of origin, while their grandparents also purchase them for the children in Ireland, for example, when Gheorghe's grandmother bought him five Romanian books at the church in Ireland. Stefan's mother similarly buys him Romanian books, again through a shop associated with the church. Some of the children brought books in their first language with them when they travelled to Ireland and revealed that they would like to have access to more books and magazines in their own language. When Stefan reads Romanian books in Ireland, it makes him feel "nice" and "like I am in Romania". Irenka spoke about a children's magazine which she used to read in Poland through Polish and which she can get an English language version of in Ireland. She enjoys reading it in English but would prefer to be able to read it in Polish.

Some children's parents, for instance, Adrian, Elisabeta and Stefania, prefer to read English language newspapers. These children themselves seemed to prefer to read in English. Stefania, for instance, revealed that "but we [her family] don't read many Romanian newspapers because we are not in Romania" and elaborated that "I like reading in Romanian but I don't have the books". She likes reading in English "because I have loads of them and want to read all of them, a whole library". Even

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though Adrian brought some books with him from Romania, he now feels that he would not like to buy any more books in Romanian, even if they were available to him in Ireland. Similarly Adrianna brought books with her from Romania, but now she feels "bad" when she reads in Romanian, arguing "I don't like reading in Romanian but I like it in English". Henric, who learned to read in English, now has difficulty reading in Romanian. As a result he feels "not that good because I can't read Romanian properly".

Summary

This chapter presented the children's feelings, experiences and understandings about the recognition of their first languages in their respective schools. In addition, the chapter also highlighted the importance of learning English for these children. Furthermore, the chapter also outlined relevant data regarding their experiences of arriving in Ireland and regarding language practices outside of school and in the home. Chapter Seven proceeds to interrogate these findings through the empirical basis and theoretical framework outlined in Chapters One, Two and Three.

CHAPTER SEVEN: TEARS, TEACHERS, TENSION AND TRANSFORMATION?

> *You're robbing us, robbing the young one saying her first sentence, reading her first book, writing her first poem. You're confirming her scorn of her cradle tongue. You're robbing her of a fine brew of language, a stew of words and ways that could inspire her to self-loving invention.*

I Recognize You by Rosario Morales (Santa Ana, 2004, p. 272).

Introduction

This dissertation aimed to discover and give voice to the feelings, understandings and experiences of minority language children who do not have their first languages recognised in the Irish education system. This is an important issue. Chapters One, Two and Three of this dissertation set out the social, pedagogical, linguistic and theoretical context within which the study took place. In essence they highlighted that due to recent demographic changes in Ireland, teachers in the Irish education system now teach speakers of up to possibly 170 different languages (O'Brien, 2006) from potentially 188 different countries (CSO, 2008). We know that there is clear and consistent international data that many such children have lower levels of educational attainment than their majority language peers (EC, 2008). In Ireland, these children have been given assistance to develop their English language proficiency through the provision of English language support teaching (DES, 2005; DES, 2007). It is argued herein that there has been no formal commitment to the recognition of these children's first languages within the system. This echoes wider public discourse, which identifies multilingualism as a *problem* rather than as a *resource* (Ruiz, 1984). Drawing on an interdisciplinary equality framework, this has been conceptualised as an issue of misrecognition, the deleterious effects of which have been described in international literature. The work of Cummins (Cummins, 1986; 2000; 2001a and

2001b) provides particular theoretical and empirical guidance on empowering minority language students to challenge these effects.

This concluding chapter brings together the literature and theoretical framework as outlined in Chapters One, Two and Three and the data presented in Chapter Six to provide a detailed discussion of the problem at the heart of this study. It also offers relevant recommendations, which will in some way ameliorate this problem. The chapter is structured around the articulation of three central linguistic based themes which emerge from that data: Linguistic Outsiders; English as an Elixir?; and Linguistic Choice and Acts of Resistance., and a fourth theme Power, Pedagogues and Perpetuation, which examines in further detail the role of the minority language children's teachers. Prior to engaging in this discussion, however, the chapter briefly returns to the methodological approach devised within the research project.

TLC

In attempting to answer the research question, "what are the feelings, experiences and understandings of minority language children in the Irish primary education system with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in school?", it was deemed necessary to construct a TLC, rooted in the principles of participatory action research. The Camp was based on the involvement of 13 speakers of Romanian and Polish as a first language attending primary school in Ireland. The Camp was structured around the development of dual language texts focused on the topic *Me, My School and My Languages.* These texts were subsequently used as child developed codifications, which acted as points of departure for dialogue around the issue of language recognition in school. Further data was collected during the Camp through structured

focus groups and participant observations. The use of first languages was normalised during the Camp through the availability of interpreters. A teaching assistant worked during the week to further ensure the smooth running of the Camp. A full description of the methodology of the Camp is outlined in Chapter Four.

It can be accurately concluded that despite the limitations outlined in Chapter Five, the TLC provided an opportunity for minority language children to articulate their feelings, experiences and understandings with regard to the non-recognition of their first languages in the Irish school system. The structure of the Camp was respectful of their knowledge, lived experiences, and potential contributions. Furthermore, it explored an issue of inequality, heretofore unexamined within the context of educational research in Ireland. In this case, then, the TLC has properly responded to Burgess' call for the development of innovative research practices to properly gain access to children's perspectives (Burgess, 2000). This innovative research practice has unearthed very interesting data, which will now be discussed.

Linguistic Outsiders

Drawing on the children's feelings, understandings and experiences as enunciated through the focus groups and in reaction to their dual language texts, the argument is made that the minority language children who participated in the TLC have been constructed as linguistic outsiders within their schools. Misrecognition of their linguistic capabilities by teachers is articulated through a pedagogical commitment to the acquisition of English, based on an approach rooted in the time-on-task argument (Imhoff, 1990). Minority language children's lack of proficiency in English is constructed as problematic. These pedagogical actions seek to reform the child's

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linguistic identity and do so at the expense of their first languages. These actions construct linguistic insiders as those children who display English language proficiency. Displays of multilingual proficiency, even in the context of one of those languages being English, is not accordant with such insider positioning. Thus, while it is possible for minority language children to become linguistic insiders, their proficiency in languages other than English remain undervalued. Children who lack English language proficiency, or who publicly display proficiency in other languages, remain as linguistic outsiders.

It is true that this is not a universal experience within the research sample. Two teachers emerged as having grasped some of the significance of positive recognition of the linguistic identities of the minority language children in their schools. Elisabeta, Petru and Adrian revealed how their English language support teacher, Miss O'Reilly, for instance, used their first language to scaffold their learning in both oral language work and literacy activities. Adrian also revealed that his mainstream class teacher has made dual language books available to him. These teachers clearly understand the pedagogical implication of first language recognition, at the very least, and, perhaps, are in some way appreciative of the importance of the intersection between recognition of linguistic identity and self-image (Churchill, 2003). These two examples notwithstanding, however, the dominant experience has been misrecognition of the children's linguistic identity. There is very little evidence that their linguistic identity is either accepted or appreciated. Rather, it is seen as a barrier to be overcome, or at best as a difference to be merely tolerated (Lynch and Baker, 2005).

None of the children involved in this research project had ever been asked directly by any of their teachers to talk with them about their languages. In addition to this, detailed evidence emerged of cases of actual repression of these languages. Many of the children have been explicitly told to desist from using their first languages in school. According to Irenka, Celina's teacher "always tells me to talk to her in English, not in Polish". This occurs both in the classroom and at break times. According to Adrianna, "we are not allowed to speak Romanian in class". This message is conveyed to the children new to the class, and the teachers expect their peers to help to enforce it, with Adrianna again revealing "when I first got here the teacher told the other kids not to speak to me in Romanian because I had to learn English very quickly". This message has also been conveyed into children's social practices in the school, for example Gheorghe and Adrianna, have been instructed to speak only in English on the yard. In this respect, these minority language children are given a clear message that their own first language is a barrier to succeeding in the Irish education system.

These public statements of failings (Honneth, 1992) constitute an institutionalised pattern (Fraser, 2000) that presents English language speakers as normative and minority language speakers as deficient or inferior. Proficiency in first languages is devalued and condemned (Lynch and Baker, 2005). Many of the children experience the message that the solution to these "failings" lies in successful acquisition of English. This is often pursued through quite detrimental pedagogical practices, including the repression of their own first language. Moreover, some of the children's classmates echo and enforce this prioritisation of English within the school. According to the data, a number of the children experienced injury as a result.

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Stefan's displeasure resulting from his teacher shouting at him for speaking Romanian is important in this context, as is Adrianna's experience of her Romanian speaking peer speaking with her only in Romanian, and Klaudia's account of feeling "stupid because I have to talk in English and I can't talk in my own language". The language that Klaudia uses echoes Baker *et al.* (2004, p. 6), and points to what they refer to as the "pervasive inequality of recognition in the education system". The link between self-image and identity emerges quite strongly at this point. In this context, then, it is insightful to reflect again on the words of Anzaldúa (1987, p. 59), "I am my language". While the effect of Klaudia's interaction might not exactly constitute what Honneth (1992, p. 189) characterises as "an injury that can cause the identity of the entire person to collapse", in that Klaudia did not seem decimated by the interaction, it is important to reflect on Taylor's caution that the conversation with those who matter to us continues within us as long as we live (Taylor, 1994). In this regard, then, it is difficult to foretell the longer-term consequences of the experiences of Klaudia, Adrianna and Stefan, though the potential for damage is quite significant.

When the children spoke of how their multilingualism was recognised in their schools, it was either quite instrumentalist or in an extremely peripheral fashion. The use of dictionaries is a very good pedagogical method for scaffolding learning. The children themselves see the merit in their usage in this regard and it is obvious that some teachers have grasped this potential. Nevertheless, such activity is similarly rooted in the need to learn English rather than any recognition of the importance of the children's linguistic capabilities. There is no sense in which the children's linguistic capabilities are showcased as something to be proud of (Cummins *et al.*, 2005). Rather, a cultural arbitrary which aims at first language replacement in favour

of English language proficiency is imposed by the teachers (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Proficiency in English is legitimised while multilingualism is problematised and rendered illegitimate.

On other occasions when the children's linguistic capabilities are recognised, these once more emerge from the overall context of addressing the problematics of lack of English language proficiency on the part of minority language speakers within the school. The use of children as interpreters in school can be understood in this context. The literature highlights the difficulties teachers face in communicating with minority language parents (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007). In the absence of an available translation and interpretation service they are often faced with asking children to work as language brokers within their school. In many cases, this is seemingly unavoidable. While the literature is inconclusive as to the overall effect on parent/child relations, there is evidence that it can, for instance, challenge traditional intergenerational authority relationships within families (De Ment *et al.*, 2005, p. 260). This emerged as an issue within the present study, with Sylwia reflecting that she felt like a teacher when she had to interpret for her mother. There is a very clear sense in which Sylwia has attained greater linguistic capital than her mother. Gheorghe's account of interpreting for his mother highlights the feelings of embarrassment which can emerge as a result of language brokering. He has had to do this in school because "she doesn't really speak any English, but she knows some English". He doesn't like doing this work for his mother because "she has four years here and she don't speak English". Importantly, he believes that his mother speaks "like a baby" when she tries to speak English and he feels "ashamed to do that" for her. This feeling of shame has also been found in other studies (McQuillan and Tse,

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1995 and Hall and Sham, 2007). Gheorghe's mother's linguistic capital has no purchase within the institution. In this context, her proficiency in Romanian is problematic. In addition to the negative consequences for Gheorghe's mother in experiencing such infantilisation, this is also a potentially injurious activity for Gheorghe himself, the longer-term consequences of which might only be revealed well into the future (Taylor, 1994).

Some of the children have been asked to translate particular high profile phrases or words, for instance, 'Hello', 'Easter' or 'Happy Christmas'. Such activities reflect recommendations made in the Intercultural Guidelines for Primary Schools (NCCA, 2005a) that the children should be encouraged to take pride in using words from their own language. It is an important first step on the recognition ladder but it remains quite peripheral recognition, more fixed in the "Steel Bands, Saris and Samosas" (Troyna, 1983) approach to multicultural education, than one rooted in respect for and recognition of diversity. Such peripheral activity will not adequately address the fundamental issues of inequality of recognition that remain embedded within these children's schools.

English as an Elixir?

The data reveal that all of the children have a firm commitment to learning the English language. This was particularly articulated through the dual language texts. The children appreciate what can be understood as the "transformative potential" of English language learning. This potential is applicable to both the pedagogical and social aspects of their lives and reflects the assertion that English is a coveted linguistic capital that can provide minority language children with access to many

economic and social rewards (Canagarajah, 1999). The discussion about how the children position Adam in a wheelchair was particularly insightful with regard to the transformative potential of learning English. Adam's positioning in the wheelchair clearly echoes Cummins (1986) understanding of how minority students are disabled by pedagogic practices, which exclude their linguistic and cultural identity. The authors of *Nowa Szkoła: New School* had originally decided to parallel Adam's learning of English with a new-found ability to walk at the end of their text. On further reflection, they decided that this would seem illogical and decided against this storyline. The children were clear, however, that English language learning has the potential to correct the disabling feature of low English language proficiency.

With regard to the pedagogical perspective, the children understand the importance of acquiring English within the Irish education system. In the initial stages of schooling, the linguistic barrier has proven to be a source of extreme frustration, often resulting in the children becoming very upset. Many of the girls reported crying partly as a result of linguistic difficulties experienced in their initial days in school. In addition, Stefan spoke of feeling excluded when he could not do the same homework as the other boys in his class. Among those children with low English language proficiency, there is a very strong belief that learning English will transform their pedagogical experience and empower them to properly access the curriculum. Thus, according to Zofia, "[a]t the moment is not that good because I don't speak good English. I presume that once I learn more and my English gets better it is going to be even better". This belief in the transformative aspect of English acquisition seems well founded as evidenced by those children who have moved into that linguistic space. This is detailed by Sylwia who outlines, "I feel better now than last year because I can

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speak more English and I can understand what they are speaking to me, not like last year". The children's commitment to learning English is further exemplified through diffuse educational practices (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) outside of the institutionalised educational setting of the school, which include practising English with their friends.

It must be acknowledged, however, that the learning imperative is not the main incentive for developing English language proficiency. Much of the data reveal the levels of isolation experienced by the children when they cannot converse with other children. While some children are fortunate enough to make friends with other children who speak a similar minority language, for many of them, learning English is a central element in overcoming this isolation. As Adrianna outlined, "it is easier to make friends when you can talk to them" and "you have more friends this way". English language proficiency is also important in accessing their immediate social surroundings. They point out for instance that it is important for going to the shops and generally communicating with people.

In addition to the immediate transformative potential of learning English, the children also understand it in the context of the increasingly dominant global position it occupies. Learning English also opens up the possibility of new experiences to the children, such as access to information on the Internet. Thus, learning English is instrumentally understood as providing much greater future opportunities for travel and work. The children vividly project their appreciation of the dominance of English in prestigious domains, such as popular culture and electronic information transfer (May, 2008).

The children generally seemed to enjoy learning English, and in particular they highlighted the role of their English language support teachers in making them feel happy and in helping them to learn English. All of the children were withdrawn for English language support, with none of them receiving any specialised assistance within the classroom from their English language support teacher. This substantiates the findings of Nowlan (2008) and Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006) with respect to withdrawal practices in schools. They generally enjoyed withdrawal, though Zofia indicated that she was unhappy when she missed out on fun activities such as drawing or art.

The children reveal mixed messages about their conceptualisations of the best ways to learn English. Adrianna, for instance, feels that speaking more and more English is a good approach to learning English and claims "it was good because it helped me to learn quicker". This is symptomatic of the time-on-task approach to English language learning (Imhoff, 1990). This approach extended into Adrianna's family education through the removal of access to Romanian television. She highlights how "[m]y mum wants me to learn English quicker so I don't watch Romanian television anymore". During the first week that Adrianna was in school, her teacher had told her mother to only speak with Adrianna in English at home. Adrianna has now very clearly accepted this pedagogical approach advanced with the teacher's imprimatur or status authority (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977).

Other children, however, identify the positive aspects of using their first language to aid their learning of English. Many of them appreciated the importance of dictionary work, with Zofia arguing that is makes her work easier. Gheorghe and Stefan

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continue to use their first language to help with English language work. According to Gheorghe "if I have to write something I write it in English but I think and I tell it to myself in Romanian". This is a clear example of cross-linguistic transfer (Cummins *et al.*, 2005). According to Stefan, "if me and Gheorghe don't understand something maybe Gheorghe does and tells it to me, he says it to me in Romanian or translate me if I don't know how to say something". Thus, the children themselves illustrate the importance of basing both their content learning and their language learning in their prior knowledge, in this case, encapsulated within their first languages. Cummins is very clear on the importance of this:

> For English language learners, the integration of new learning with prior knowledge involves connecting what students know in their first language to English. We must explore classroom strategies that have proven effective in helping students transfer knowledge they have in their first language to English. (Cummins, 2007, p. 1).

In conclusion, then, the children in this particular study are very aware of the importance of learning English, understand it in terms of its transformative potential and are willing to invest quite heavily in developing their proficiency.

The children's commitment to learning English echoes a similar commitment within their families. The literature reveals that minority language families are very supportive of their children's efforts to succeed in school (Azmitia *et al.*, 1994; Kenner, 2004; Sohn and Wang, 2006; McGorman and Sugrue, 2007; and Archer and Francis, 2007). This emerges quite strongly in this study also. It is clear that their parents, in particular, understand that the development of proficiency in English is a very important aspect of achieving academic success in Ireland. Each of the children

could recall instances when their parents either used English with them or asked them about learning English. Many parents actively encourage English language use outside of school with some parents taking it upon themselves to help with teaching. This includes the use of English language games and even removing the satellite service from the television so as to promote greater access to English. This is a significant investment on the part of these particular parents, especially in light of the commitment to first language maintenance evidenced both within this study and McGorman and Sugrue (2007) and the potential impact that this has on their own social experiences.

It is important to note this commitment to learning English. These findings concur with other relevant research data (McGorman and Sugure, 2007). Development of proficiency in English has been found to be of high importance with regard to employment, income and social networking prospects (Ip *et al.*; 2007; New Zealand Department of Labour, 1999; Wikleman and Winkleman, 1998; Lidgard *et al.*;1998; Ip *et al.*; 1998). Yet the literature plainly reveals that proficiency in the majority language does not simply eradicate issues of social inequality. The situation of the Irish Traveller population acutely exposes this myth, as do international findings about the failure rates among certain third and subsequent generation Asian students in the United States of America (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix, 2000). In this context, then, there is a sense in which the children's belief in the transformative potential of developing English language proficiency is somewhat unfounded. The development of this view has been shaped by the positioning of English as a dominant global language, wider societal discourse in Ireland which views multilingualism as a *problem* (Ruiz, 1984), and the singular focus on developing English language

proficiency within the Irish education system. This view fails to appreciate other, non-linguistic, structural barriers to the eradication of social inequality, such as institutionalised racism or class based inequalities. Pedagogical polices and practices, which continue to isolate English language proficiency as the key to academic and social achievement, perpetuate this inaccurate expectation. Recognition of diversity is fundamental to challenging these other structural barriers, and recognition of linguistic diversity is an essential element in this wider challenge.

Linguistic Choice and Acts of Resistance

The above section vividly illustrates the centrality of the English language in the lives of the minority language children who participated in this research project. This however, must be understood in the context of the children displaying a very sophisticated appreciation of linguistic choice and concomitant use. In the main, they are prepared to use English when necessary or desirable, but their own first languages continue to play a central role in their lives. This is demonstrated through continued use both in the home and other social arenas.

Linguistic interactions within the home continue to occur predominantly through the children's first languages. This is true both with parents and, in particular, with grandparents, with ICT playing a significant role in maintaining the contact with members of the family who do not live in the child's immediate surroundings in Ireland. While some children indicate conversing in English with some of their siblings, this mainly occurs with younger siblings who are more proficient in English than either Polish or Romanian, or with older siblings interested in helping the child with their English language proficiency.

In addition to family interactions, first language use is central to many of the friendships that the children have outside of school. They reported talking with each other in their first languages outside of school and *en route* to and from school. The children also use their first languages to maintain contact with friends from their country of origin, whether these friends are still in that country or have, themselves, emigrated. There was widespread evidence of the importance of ICT in helping to maintain those friendships. This was also seen to be important for new friendships also, as evidenced by Stefania and Adrianna using the Internet to discuss the central character in their dual language text on the first night of the TLC. ICT also provides access to first language material of interest to the children, in the form of websites and popular music.

Despite these activities, some of the children, Klaudia, Elisabeta and Adrianna in particular, reported clear examples of language loss. Klaudia, for instance, recounted how "I keep forgetting loads of words in Polish", and how, when she speaks with her grandparents, "I speak slowly because I forget the words". She recalled how her grandparents once told her "you are learning too much English". This is exemplary of similar experiences highlighted in the literature. Furthermore, it points to future issues with regard to language loss experienced by first and subsequent generation minority language children, including the impact on self-image (Churchill, 2003) and relationships within the family (Wong-Fillmore, 1991).

While the above discussion highlights how the children use their own first language in a normative sense within their daily lives, there also emerged clear examples of how the children used their first languages to resist the imposition of the English dominance. Strategies of resistance rooted in linguistic choice are nothing new in the

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Irish education system. Mac Ruairc (2004), for instance, highlights how the linguistic register of working class children is very much in tension with the middle class register, which is understood as standard and is valued in Irish schools. The working class children in his study appreciate the importance of appropriating the standard variety with regard to educational success, but yet, engage in high levels of resistance within the school.

Similar findings emerge from the children in this study. Some of the children continue to talk in their first language in school despite being told not to by the teachers. Irenka has been told by Celina's teacher not to talk with her in Polish, however, as she outlines "we still talk in Polish . . . [because] it is our language so . . .". These are very low-level acts of resistance however, with Klaudia outlining that while she does continue to speak Polish, her teachers do not know about it. She does not do it in front of them because she thinks, "they would be angry that I speak Polish". Both Stefan and Gheorghe also offered examples of resistance to the monolingual English only message conveyed to them. They continue to use Romanian in the class with each other when they feel it necessary to understand some of their work, but only when the teacher cannot hear them. When he does hear them, Gheorghe reported that "he shouts at me". Both of these children also continue to speak in Romanian with each other on the yard despite being told not to. This is a low level act of resistance, again, however. According to Gheorghe "I speak in the yard but they don't know". If there is a chance of being discovered, he desists, "if Sir is in the yard and I see him coming I speak in English" and when he goes away "I speak in Romanian again". Such activities provide very clear evidence of covert resistance (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004).

Children's Complex Chat

Hence the data reveal quite a picture of quite complex linguistic practices by the minority language children involved in this study. There emerge from the data conspicuous examples of the prioritisation by the children of the English language within school settings. There is also evidence of a concomitant self-censorship by many of the children with regard to the use of their own first languages in school. This self-censorship is informed by the teachers who perpetuate a cultural arbitrary which suppresses multilingualism. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argue that this is the model of censorship which best serves the material and symbolic interests of the dominant groups in society, in this case, publicly monolingual speakers in Ireland. This domination of English within the classroom replicates the pre-eminence of English as a hegemonic global language. Furthermore, it is informed by wider societal discourse, which positions multilingualism as a barrier to integration. There is some evidence that the children have internalised the principles of the cultural arbitrary in school, which renders their first languages as illegitimate. In addition, however, there is also evidence that the children are making well-informed decisions about their own multilingualism. English will potentially gain them access to positions of prestige (May, 2008). They are also aware, however, that their own first languages retain both an immediate and longer-term importance. In essence, they are making a calculated investment in their immediate and long-term futures through practices which they feel will help them to learn English, while concurrently attempting to maintain proficiency in their own first languages. Evidence of language loss illustrates that this is not a completely successful endeavour.

Pedagogues, Power and Perpetuation

The data reveal that the majority of the teachers from the children's schools have clearly prioritised the attainment of English language proficiency for the minority language children in their classes. Other studies in Ireland reveal similar findings (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006; McGorman and Sugrue, 2007; Nowlan, 2008). Devine (2005) argues that this originates in a construction of children in deficit terms, and asserts that it is underpinned by a concern that the children could not integrate socially without the requisite proficiency in English. It is important to further understand this approach in the context of wider public discourse that establishes multilingualism as a barrier to integration, and an associated focus by the DES on the provision of monolingual English language support to minority language children to access the curriculum.

It is evident that teachers exercise considerable power over the life experiences of the minority language children in this study. This can be understood through Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) who argue that teachers are endowed with status authority by the school by virtue of their very appointment to the position of teacher. This status authority then empowers them to perpetuate a cultural arbitrary within the school system. Devine (2003a) highlights that children understand that power is exercised by teachers through this authority and that the teachers in her study regard their authority as sacrosanct. The cultural arbitrary transmitted to the children in this study legitimises monolingual English and renders the children's multilingualism as illegitimate.

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Bourdieu and Passeron argue that pedagogic action may constitute a form of symbolic violence when the cultural values of the dominant are imposed on the less dominant group. The deligitimisation of the first languages of the children in this study constitutes a form of symbolic violence within the institutionalised educational setting of their schools. In addition, however, teacher power and concomitant influence is not confined within the school, rather it also extends into both family education and diffuse education (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). This is most clearly indicated through the experience of Adrianna. Not only has her teacher excluded her language within the institutionalised education setting of school, but also in the diffuse educational setting and the family educational setting. Adrianna's mother clearly accepted the status authority of the teacher who told her not to speak with Adrianna in Romanian at home. She proceeded to try to speak with her in English, and also to remove other vestiges of linguistic diversity, most obviously the access to Romanian television through the satellite dish. While she found that she could not sustain speaking only in English with Adrianna, the television situation remained unaltered. Adrianna, herself, has also now come to understand that the best way to learn English is through using it as much as possible. In addition to the family space, the teacher also influenced the social space, wherein one of Adrianna's Romanian speaking friends stopped speaking with her in Romanian after the teacher instructed her to so do. This introduced an unnecessary tension into the relationship between these two children, with Adrianna recalling that "I was upset with her at first but then I apologised when I knew what the situation was".

In the absence of evidence as to the motivation of the teacher in this regard it is possible to interpret the teacher's actions in light of Devine's findings that teachers are concerned with social integration. In not having had access to adequate pre-

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service or in-service training on this issue (McGorman and Sugrue, 2007; ESRI, 2008), it is probable that the teacher simply fails to understand the positive benefit between first language proficiency and English language learning and the empirical data that contradicts the time-on-task argument. While the message regarding the importance of first languages is laid out in the Intercultural Guidelines for Primary Schools (NCCA, 2005a), it is evident that the importance of this message has not filtered down to some teachers. The origin of this perspective notwithstanding, as articulated quite eloquently by the children in this study, the result is in no doubt. There is clear misrecognition of them as multilingual children.

There is very little evidence that these children's teachers understand the purpose of education as the empowerment of minority language children to challenge the *status quo* within wider Irish society (Cummins, 2001a). The data reveal that these children's teachers hold quite conservative identity options for their students and for the society that they hope their students will help to form. There is little respect for the students' language (Lucas *et al.*, 1990). There is a very clear message that a public multilingual identity is not acceptable in the classroom and society (Cummins, 1997). To retain a public multilingual identity is to remain as a linguistic outsider. The perpetuation of the English language, to the exclusion of minority languages within the classroom replicates and reinforces the problematisation of multilingualism in wider Irish society. These pedagogues have failed to create "interpersonal spaces where students identities are validated" (Cummins, 2001b, p. 48) and in so doing miss the opportunity to challenge the understanding of multilinglualism as a *problem* (Ruiz, 1984). The data reveal that some of the children's peers are interested in multilingualism, substantiating the findings of McGorman and Sugure (2007) that the

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Irish children in their study regretted that they only spoke English at home. This is a fertile base upon which to build a challenge to the wider societal problematisation of multilingualism. In neglecting to do so, however, these teachers legitimise interactions such as Gheorghe being subjected to jeering in the context of "blah, blah, blah" or Klaudia being told to not to speak Polish by some of her majority language friends.

I understand, as Lynch highlights, that teachers may have little control over the forms of knowledge that they teach (Lynch, 1999, p. 81). This is particularly acute in the context of Ireland, given the centralised nature of the school curriculum. Lynch holds out the possibility of concerted action on the part of teachers to realise or resist change in Irish education. It must be also realised, however, that teachers do make choices within their classrooms as to their pedagogical practices. They can choose to recognise the importance of first languages through a whole range of pedagogical practices, what Cummins (2000) articulates as collaborative micro-level interactions, many of which are rooted in solid pedagogical theory and are entirely consistent with the aims of the Primary School Curriculum (Ireland, 1999).

According to Cummins (2001b, p. 48), "to acknowledge that culturally diverse students' religion, culture and language are valid forms of *self*-expression, and to encourage their development, is to challenge the prevailing attitudes in the wider society and the coercive structures that reflect these attitudes". This form of challenge is embedded within the use of dual language texts as a pedagogical tool. While not wishing to overstate the transformative potential of dual language texts, their use does convey to minority language children that their linguistic identity is cherished and

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valued within the school. Through the public use and showcasing of first languages, a central aspect of the child's identity is recognised as important within their educational experience. Furthermore, as the literature is clear on the benefits that maintaining and developing first language proficiency has for learning English, this is, in essence, a win-win scenario for Irish pedagogues, and more importantly, for minority language children in Irish schools.

Recommendations

Research Recommendations

1. Particular attention should be paid in future educational research to the voice of minority language children. The TLC has offered one example of a possible methodology that may be employed. Other methodologies should be further explored to examine their potential.

2. Future research might examine the relationship between lower status ethnic identity, minority language, and feelings, understandings and experiences within the Irish education system.

3. Further research might also pay far closer attention to the issue of social class and the dynamic it plays with regard to this particular topic in Ireland.

4. Further research on this particular research topic might consider the perspectives of other key educational personnel, specifically teachers, parents and English language support staff.

Recognition Recommendations

1. In order to ensure robust recognition of first languages schools should attend to the following:

   i.   The generation of a whole school, and class, culture which establishes multilingualism as normal. At a whole school level this might involve replication of the *Language of the Month* initiative from Newbury Park Primary School, Redbridge, London, England [27] or similar programme. In addition, it would also include the teacher displaying multilingual proficiency where possible, through learning phrases in some of the

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[27] Available at http://www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth/

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minority languages present in the class. Schools should also actively encourage the use of first languages within the classroom. This can be through focused individual or group work, or general interaction.

ii. The creation of dual language identity texts on a whole school basis.

iii. The use of dual language texts in both literacy teaching and content area teaching.

iv. The provision and use of bilingual dictionaries.

v. Consistent display of multilingual signage.

vi. Home-school communication using translated material.

vii. Foster informed engagement with minority language parents, an integral aspect of which is to normalise the use of minority languages within the school setting.

viii. Full implementation of the recommendations of the NCCA that teachers should draw on the child's knowledge of their own first language, and use it:

- To determine the meaning of words.

- To explore the similarities and differences in sounds between English and the home language.

- To explore, where possible, grammatical conventions in the home language that may be the same or different from English.

- To make comparisons between the script and letter sound relationships used or the home language and that of English. (NCCA, 2006a, p.10).

In order to facilitate this, the DES should initiate delivery of informed in-service training for all teaching staff on the teaching of minority language children. In addition to training in the teaching of English, a core element of this training should include a focus on the cognitive benefits of first language use and the potential of teaching for cross-linguistic transfer. This training should be supplemented with examples of the myriad of methodological approaches available to access this cognitive resource, including a focus on the potential of contained within ICT resources.

2. Furthermore, the DES should engage in the following activities:

   i.   Clearly convey the message that first language maintenance and development is actually of benefit to the minority language learners in the Irish education system. The most likely positive way in which this could be achieved is through the issuing of a Circular to this effect. This message must also be conveyed through multifarious means, including WSE reports, policy documents and informed public announcements by the Minister for Education and Science

   ii. Investigate the possibility of provision of first language teaching in mainstream schools, as available in the CES.

   iii. Investigate the possibility of financing schools to recruit bilingual teaching assistants.

   iv. Inform parents of minority language children of the positive benefits of maintaining use of first languages within the home and family environment. This is best done through a diverse strategy involving

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school personnel, local community groups and majority and minority language media.

v. Investigate the feasibility of providing interpretation and translation services to schools on a national basis. Such a programme would take advantage of economies of scale. The DES should also investigate ways in which ICT could be used to facilitate the project, for instance, through webcast interpretation or downloadable school notes. The DES might take the lead on this on a European wide level. This would facilitate the translation of school policy documents and communication material in the most prominent minority languages within the school. Schools should be made aware of the importance of this form of recognition.

vi. Issue a Circular on the use of children as language brokers in schools. It is understood that in certain circumstances this activity is unavoidable, yet teachers need to be informed as to the possible implications of their actions in this regard.

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APPENDICES

St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra,
Dublin 9

A chara,

My name is Rory Mc Daid. I used to work as an English language support teacher in
St. Gabriel's N.S., Cowper Street, Dublin 7. I have now returned to education and am
currently carrying out research for my Doctorate in St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra, D9.

The main focus of my research is minority language children in the Irish education
system. In particular, I am investigating issues relating to the use of their own first
languages in schools. As part of my research, I intend to run a trilingual literacy camp
with 12 students from the 25th to 28th of March, during the Easter break. I intend to
work with six Romanian speaking students and six Polish speaking students between
the ages of 9 and 12 years. The focus of the camp will be the development of a dual
language text, in either Romanian/English or Polish/English entitled: Me, My School
and My Languages!

I wonder if it might be possible to have a conversation with you to identify possible
Romanian or Polish speaking children with a view to their participation in the camp?

Thank you sincerely for your help with this issue,

Is mise le meas,

_____

Rory Mc Daid

Appendix B1

Letter to Children

<u>English</u>

Hi,

My name is Rory Mc Daid. I used to work as an English language support teacher in a school in Dublin. I have gone back to college to learn more about working with children who speak different languages. As part of my learning I would like to run a project with some children who speak either Romanian or Polish at home. I am going to do this during the Easter holidays, from the 25th to the 28th of March and I would really like it if you would work with me during that time. I would like to let you know that I will not use your real name when I write anything about the project.

Consent form
- -
- - -

I _____ would like to be part of the project with Rory during the Easter holidays.

Signed _____ (student)

Letter to Children

Romanian

Bună,

Numele meu este Rory Mc Daid. Am fost profesor de limba engleză în o şcoală din Dublin. M-am întors la facultate ca să învăţ mai multe despre cum să lucrez cu copiii care vorbesc alte limbi. Ca şi parte a studiilor mele aş dori să efectuez un proiect cu nişte copii care vorbesc limba română sau poloneză acasă. Voi face acest lucru în timpul vacanţei de Paşte, din data de 25 pană în 28 martie. Vom face lucruri interesante şi sper că vom scrie şi o scurtă carte despre limbile voastre până la sfârşitul săptămânii. Mi-ar plăcea foarte mult dacă aţi lucra cu mine de-a lungul acestei perioade. Vreu să vă spun că nu voi folosi numele voastre adevărate când voi scrie despre acest proiect şi, de asemenea, că puteţi decide să nu vă mai întoarceţi la proiect dacă nu mai vreţi.

Vă mulţumesc foarte mult,

_____

Rory

Formular de accept
- -
- - -

Eu, _____, aş dori să particip la acest proiect cu Rory, în timpul vacanţei de Paşte.

Semnătura _____ (elev)

Appendix B3

Letter to Children

<u>Polish</u>

Cześć,

Nazywam się Rory McDaid. Kiedyś pracowałem jako Language Support Teacher w
jednej ze szkół w Dublinie. Teraz wróciłem ponownie na studia w celu zdobycia
większej wiedzy na temat pracy z dziećmi, które mówią w innym języku. Dlatego tez
chciałbym zorganizować program, w którym wzięłyby udział dzieci mówiące w domu
językiem rumuńskim lub polskim. Chciałbym, aby ten program odbył się w czasie
wielkanocnej przerwy świątecznej w dniach od 25 do 28 marca. W czasie trwania
tego projektu zajęlibyśmy się różnymi ciekawymi rzeczami i może spróbowali w
przeciągu tygodnia napisać krótką książkę o naszych własnych językach. Byłbym
bardzo szczęśliwy, gdybyś zechciał(a) wziąć udział w moim programie. Możesz być
również pewien/ pewna, że nigdzie nie zostanie wymienione Twoje imię czy
nazwisko, jak również, że w każdej chwili będziesz mógł/ mogła zrezygnować z
brania udziału w programie.

Dzięki,

_____

Rory

Wyrażenie zgody na udział w programie

Ja _____ chciał(a)bym wziąć udział w programie
prowadzonym przez Roryego w czasie wielkanocnej przerwy świątecznej.

Podpis _____ (uczeń/ uczennica)

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Letter to Parent/Guardian

<u>English</u>

Dear _____ (parent),

My name is Rory Mc Daid. I used to work as an English language support teacher in St. Gabriel's N.S., a primary school on Cowper Street in Dublin 7. I have now returned to education and am currently carrying out research for my Doctorate in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, D9.

The main focus of my research is minority language children in the Irish education system. In particular, I am investigating issues relating to the use of their own first languages in schools. As part of my research, I intend to run a trilingual literacy project with 12 students from the 25th to 28th of March, during the Easter break. I intend to work with six Romanian speaking students and six Polish speaking students between the ages of 9 and 12 years. The focus of the project will be the development of a dual language book, in either Romanian/English or Polish/English entitled: Me, My School and My Languages! During the project the students will be asked to think about issues such as their life at home in Poland/Romania, how they felt when the came to Ireland and about their experiences in school. All of the information gathered will be treated with strict confidentiality and none of the students will be named in any of the documentation emerging from the project.

I wonder if you would like to let _____ get involved in the project?
It will run from 9 am to 2 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the 25th to the 28th of March, in St. Gabriel's N.S., which is just off the North Circular Road, near to the Phoenix Park. I will be there for the week, along with two trained interpreters, one Romanian interpreter and one Polish interpreter, and one other teacher. I also plan to run a "thank you" night for the children who take part, during which they will have an opportunity to show their work to their family and friends. This night will take place in Dublin, towards the end of April.
I would be delighted to meet you to have a talk about this, and I can bring along the interpreter who will be working with me during the week if you wish.

Thank you,

Is mise le meas,

_____

Rory Mc Daid

Consent form

- - -

I _____ would like my child,
_____ to work with Rory during the Easter holidays.

Signed _____ (parent)

Letter to Parent/Guardian

Romanian

Stimată doamnă/Stimate domnule _____ ,

Numele meu este Rory Mc Daid. Am lucrat ca și profesor de limba engleză la St. Gabriel's N.S., o școală primară de pe Cowper Street, în Dublin 7. M-am reîntors în domeniul educației, iar în prezent desfășor un studiu pentru teza mea de doctorat în St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, D9.

Punctul central al studiului îl constituie copiii minoritari lingvistic din cadrul sistemului educațional irlandez. În mod special, investighez factorii legați de folosirea limbii lor materne în școli. Ca și parte a cercetării mele intenționez să desfășor un proiect trilingv de despre învățare cu 12 elevi, din 25 până în 28 martie, în timpul vacanței de Paște. Intenționez să lucrez cu șase elevi vorbitori de limbă română și șase vorbitori de limbă poloneză, cu vârste cuprinse între 9 și 12 ani. În centrul proiectului va sta crearea unei cărți bilingve, în română/engleză sau în poloneză/engleză, intitulată "Eu, școala mea și limbile mele!". De-a lungul proiectului elevii vor fi rugați să se gândească la teme precum viața la ei acasă în România/Polonia, cum s-au simțit când au venit în Irlanda, precum și la întâmplări de la școală. Toate informațiile vor fi tratate cu strictă confidențialitate și nici unuia dintre elevi nu i se va menționa numele în documentele legate de acest proiect. De asemenea aș dori să menționez că oricare copil implicat va putea decide oricând că nu mai dorește să participe.

Aș dori să știu dacă îi veți permite lui_____ să ia parte la acest proiect? Se va desfășura de la ora 9 la ora 2 în zilele de marți, miercuri, joi și vineri, din 25 până în 28 martie, la St. Gabriel's N.S., care este situată langă North Circular Road, aproape de Phoenix Park. Voi fi acolo toată săptămâna alături de doi interpreți calificați, unul român și unul polonez, precum și un alt profesor. De asemenea intenționez să organizez o seară de mulțumire pentru copiii care vor lua parte, în timpul căreia ei vor avea ocazia să-și prezinte lucrările familiilor lor și prietenilor. Această seară va avea loc în Dublin, spre sfârțitul lunii aprilie.
Aș fi încântat să vă întâlnesc și să discutăm despre acest poiect și, dacă doriți, voi putea aduce și interpretul care va lucra cu de mine de-a lungul săptămânii .

Vă mulțumesc!

Cu stimă,
Is mise le meas,

_____

Rory Mc Daid

Formular de accept

- -
- - -

Eu, _____, aş dori ca şi copilul meu,
_____ să lucreze cu Rory în timpul vacanţei de Paşte.

Semnătura_____ (părinte/ tutore)

Letter to Parent/Guardian

Polish

Szanowny Panie/ Szanowna Pani _____ ,

Nazywam się Rory McDaid. Wcześniej pracowałem jako Language Suport Teacher (nauczyciel języka angielskiego pomagający uczniom mówiącym innym językiem) w szkole podstawowej St. Gabriel's N.S. mieszczącej się przy Cowper Street w Dublin 7. Powróciłem do szkolnictwa i w chwili obecnej przeprowadzam projekt związany z moją praca doktorską na uniwersytecie St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

Główny punkt skupienia mojej pracy doktorskiej stanowią dzieci mówiący językiem obcym i kształcące się obecnie w ramach irlandzkiego systemu edukacji. Jestem szczególnie zainteresowany kwestią użycia ich rodzimego języka w szkole. W ramach przeprowadzanego projektu zamierzam zorganizować obejmujący trzy różne języki program edukacyjny dla 12 uczniów. Program ten odbędzie się w dniach od 25 do 28 marca, tj. w czasie wielkanocnej przerwy świątecznej. Chciałbym, by w programie wzięło udział sześcioro dzieci mówiących w języku rumuńskim oraz sześcioro dzieci mówiących w języku polskim w wieku od 9 do 12 lat. Celem tego projektu jest stworzenie dwujęzycznego podręcznika językowego, w językach albo rumuńskim – angielskim lub polskim – angielskim zatytułowanego „Ja, moja szkoła i moje języki!". W czasie trwania tego projektu uczniowie zostaną poproszeni o przemyślenie kwestii takich jak ich życie w domu w Polsce/ Rumunii, jak czuli się, gdy po raz pierwszy przyjechali do Irlandii oraz jakie doświadczenia spotkały ich w szkole. Wszelkie otrzymane informacje są poufne i ostateczna dokumentacja projektu nie będzie zawierać jakichkolwiek danych osobowych. Chciałbym również zaznaczyć, że każde dziecko, które w czasie trwania projektu zdecyduje, że nie chce w nim brać dłużej udziału, będzie mogło w każdej chwili z niego zrezygnować.

Chciałbym spytać, czy chcieliby Państwo pozwolić swojemu dziecku _____ wziąć udział w moim projekcie?
Program odbywać się będzie w godzinach od 9 rano do 14 w następujące dni: wtorek, środa, czwartek, piątek, tj. od 25 do 28 marca w szkole St. Gabriel's N.S., która znajduje się tuż przy ulicy North Circular Road w pobliżu parku Phoenix Park. Będę tam przez cały tydzień, wraz z dwójką wykwalifikowanych tłumaczy (polskim i rumuńskim) oraz z jednym nauczycielem. Chcę również zorganizować spotkanie, na którym chciałbym podziękować wszystkim dzieciom i ich rodzicom za chęć wzięcia udziału w moim programie, w czasie którego będziemy mieli okazję przedstawić Waszym przyjaciołom i rodzinie owoce wspólnej pracy. Spotkanie to odbędzie się w Dublinie, pod koniec kwietnia.
Byłbym niezmiernie wdzięczny, gdybyście zechcieli Państwo spotkać się ze mną i o tym porozmawiać. Na takim spotkaniu obecny byłby również tłumacz, który wraz ze mną będzie prowadzić program.

Serdecznie dziekuję,

Is mise le meas,

_____

Rory Mc Daid

Zgoda na wzięcie udziału dziecka w programie
- -
- - -

Ja _____ chciał(a)bym, by moje dziecko
_____ wzięło udział w programie prowadzonym w czasie
przerwy wielkanocnej przez Roryego.

Podpis _____ (rodzice / opiekuni)

Appendix D

Creative Dialogue: Guiding Questions

<u>Descriptive Phase:</u>

1. Have any of you seen this episode of the Simpsons before?

2. What happened in this cartoon?

3. Did you like this episode? Why?

<u>Personal Interpretive Phase:</u>

1. What did you think about how Bart was treated in France?

2. Bart seemed to learn French very quickly. Was/is it as easy for you to learn English as it was for Bart?

3. How do you feel about what Principal Skinner said about Adil when he was introducing him to the school in Springfield?

4. Why do you think Bart was so happy to see his family again?

<u>Critical / Multicultural / Anti-Bias Phase:</u>

1. Bart's new family spoke to him in English, Bart's first language. Do people in Ireland speak to people from Romania and Poland in Romanian and Polish?

2. Some people think that when a new person comes to Ireland that they should only speak English, that they should not be allowed to speak their own language. How do you feel about this?

3. This episode of the Simpsons showed some things about some French people which were not so nice. What do you think about this? Do people ever say things about your country which make you feel sad or upset?

<u>Creative Transformative Phase:</u>

1. We did not see Bart going to school. What makes you happy about being in school in Ireland?

2. Is there anything which you would like to change about your school in Ireland.

3. Thinking about your languages and school, what message would you like to give about your languages and school to your teachers, family, friends etc.

Story Mapping   Schiţarea povestirii
Character Development   Dezvoltarea personajelor

Character Map   Schiţa personajului

Cum reacţionează celelalte personaje din povestire faţă de acest personaj?

How do other characters in

the story react to this character?

Cum arată personajul?
What does the character look like?

How does the character act?
Cum se comportă personajul?

read·write·think

Story Mapping Plan wydarzeń opowieści

Character Development Rozwój bohatera opowleści

Character Map Opis bohatera
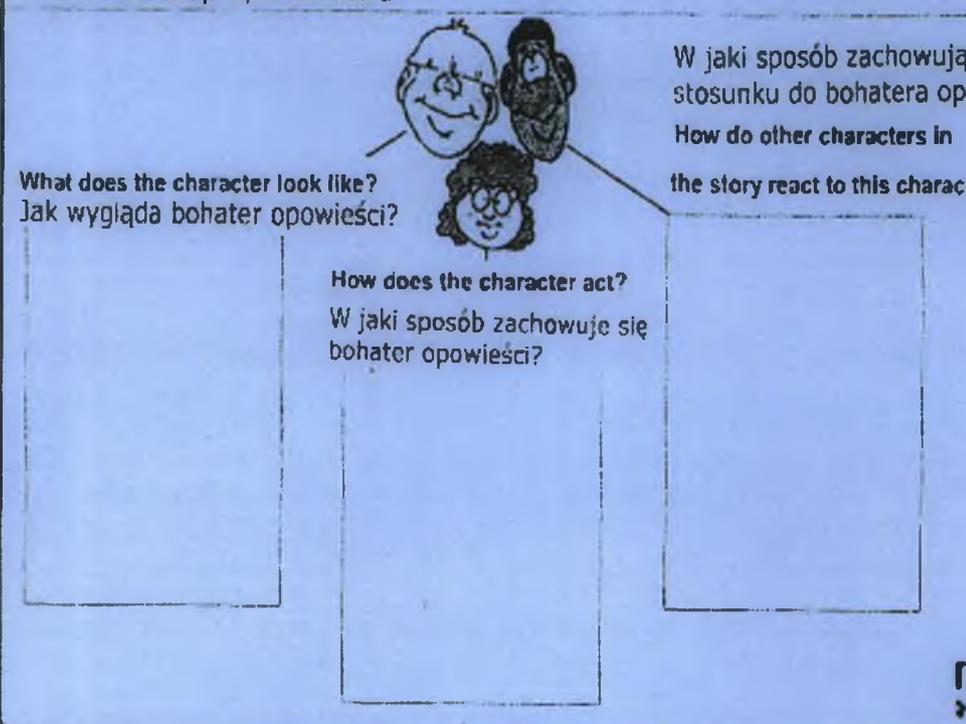
W jaki sposób zachowują się pozostałe oso
stosunku do bohatera opowieści?

How do other characters in

the story react to this character?

What does the character look like?
Jak wygląda bohater opowieści?

How does the character act?
W jaki sposób zachowuje się
bohater opowieści?

read·write·thi

NCTE

Appendix F1

Story Map

<u>Romanian</u>

Nume   **Data**
Name _____ Date _____

Schiţa povestirii
Story Map 2

Write notes in each section.
Scrieţi în fiecare căsuţă

Cadru
Setting:
Where:
Unde

When:
Când

Major Characters:
Personajele principale

Minor Characters:
Personajele minor

Plot/Problem:
Intriga/problema

Event 1:	Event 2:	Event 3:
Evenimentul 1	**Evenimentul 2**	**Evenimentul 3**

Outcome:
Rezultat

260

Appendix F2

Story Map

<u>Polish</u>

Imię _____ **Data**
Name _____ Date _____

Plan wydarzeń 2
Story Map 2

Write notes in each section.
Uzupełnij poszczególne pola:

Miejsce akcji
Setting:
Where:
Gdzie?

When:
Kiedy?

Major Characters:
Główni bohaterowie

Minor Characters:
Bohaterowie poboczni

Plot/Problem:
Główny wątek/ problem

| Event 1: | Event 2: | Event 3: |
| **Wydarzenie nr 1** | **Wydarzenie nr 2** | **Wydarzenie nr 3** |

Outcome:
Wynik

Appendix G

Dual Language Texts

Malt_____!
Dziękuję!
Thank you!
Go raibh maith agat!

Przygoda Kuzko W Irlandii:
Kuzko's Adventure in Ireland
By Celina and Irenka

Rusul Ivan:
Ivan the Russian
By Adrian, Gheorghe and Stefan

Baiteul Cel Nou:
The New Boy
By Henric and Petru

Adela Învață Engle:
Adlea Learns English
By Elisabeta, Adrianna and Stefania

Nowa Szkoła:
New School
By Klaudia, Sylwia and Zofia

PRZYGODA KUZKO W IRLANDII

KUZKO'S ADVENTURE IN IRELAND

Kuzko   Malina

Kuzko i jego klasa pojechali na wycieczkę do Irlandii. Izma jako dyrektorka pojechała z nimi. Izma zabrała ze sobą magiczny eliksir. Kiedy Kuzko podlizywał się Malinie i próbował zaprosić ją na randkę, Izma dała im po hotdogu. Lecz do hotdoga Kuzko dodała magiczny Elíksír.

Kuzko and his class had a trip to Ireland. Izma as the principal went with the class. Izma took a magic potion with her. When Kuzko was trying to chat Malina up, Izma gave them hotdogs to eat. Before she gave them hotdogs, she had put some potion into Kuzko's hotdog.

Kuzko zamienił się w motyla. Malina go wszędzie szukała, lecz nigdzie nie mogła go znaleźć. Cała klasa pojechała z powrotem do Polski za wyjątkiem Kuzko, który sam został w Irlandii.

Kuzko changed into a butterfly. Malina was looking everywhere for him but she couldn't find him. The whole class went back to Poland apart from Kuzko who stayed in Ireland on his own.

Kuzko musiał chodzić do szkoły. Na początku było mu bardzo przykro gdy wszyscy się z niego naśmiewali. Było mu bardzo trudno rozmawiać z ludźmi oraz ciężko mu było ich zrozumieć. Kuzko nie miał przyjaciół, inne dzieci śmiały się z niego, bo nie znał angielskiego i nic nie rozumiał.

Kuzko had to go to school. At the start he felt upset when everyone was laughing at him. It was very hard for him to speak to other people and to understand them. At first Kuzko had no friends, other children were laughing at him because he didn't speak or understand English.

Miss Reynolds

Żeby mu było lepiej pani Reynolds dała mu karteczki z obrazkami np. kanapka oznaczała „Jestem głodny". Kuzko bał się coś powiedzieć, bo wiedział że dzieci go wyśmieją jeśli będzie mówił z błędami. Kuzko był w irlandzkiej szkole 5 lat. Po 5 latach Kuzko nauczył się języka angielskiego.

Miss Reynolds gave him flash cards in order to make it easier for him. For example a picture of a sandwich meant 'I am hungry'. Kuzko was scared to say anything because he knew children would laugh at him if he made a mistake. Kuzko was in school for 5 years. After 5 years Kuzko learned English.

Pewnego dnia Kuzko spotkał policjanta i opowiedział mu co
się stało 5 lat temu. Policjant wysłał go z powrotem do Polski.
Kiedy Kuzko spotkał się z przyjaciółmi ze swojej starej
szkoły w Polsce opowiedział im jak trudno było mu nauczyć
się angielskiego i jaki smutny był na początku. Kuzko i
Malina pobrali się i żyli długo i szczęśliwie.

One day Kuzko met a guard and told him what happened 5 years
ago. The guard sent him back to Poland. When Kuzko met other
children from his old school he told how difficult it was to learn
English and how upset he was. Kuzko and Malina got married and
lived happily ever after.

IVAN THE RUSSIAN

RUSUL IVAN

Ivan e din Rusia. Are 12 ani. E înalt, are părul blond și are ochii căprui.
El a venit în România.

Ivan is from Russia. He is 12 years old. He is tall, has blond hair and has brown eyes. He came to Romania.

A doua zi părinţii lui au venit la şcoală ca să-l înscrie.
Şcoala se numeşte Mihai Eminescu.
Părinţii lui l-au înscris în clasa a 5 a.

Next day his parents came to school to enrol him.
The school is called Mihai Eminescu.
His parents enrol him in 5th class.

Ivan nu ştie să vorbească limba română .
Lui îi place istoria şi războaiele. El are doar un prieten
din Rusia, Igor, care îl ajută să înveţe româneşte şi îi
traduce. El nu are prieteni români .
Profesorul lui nu-i dă teme pentru ca nu stie română.

Ivan doesn't speak Romanian. He has just one friend
from Russia, Igor, who helps him to learn the rules and
Romanian. He doesn't have any Romanian friends. His
teacher doesn't give him homework because doesn't
speak

Într-o seară se plimba pe alee dar doi băieți l-au prins și l-au bătut pentru că nu știe românește. Pentru că se dădea mare și tare și avea foarte multă încredere în el, de aceea băieții l-au batut.

One evening he was walking in an alley but two boys caught him and beat him up because he didn't know the language. The guys thought he was so full of himself and he was very self confident. That's why they beat him up.

Peste câtva timp părintii lui au venit şi l-au văzut bătut,
ei au chemat ambulanţa .

After a while his parents came, saw him beaten up and
they called the ambulance.

A doua zi au venit părintii lui la şcoală ca să-i pe caute
băietii la-u bătut pe Ivan.
Copii i-au spus lui Ivan că ştiu cine l-a bătut. Numele lor
este Moartea din Carpaţi şi Andrei. Igor l-a ajutat pe Ivan
să le spună profesorilor ce s-a întamplat. Copiii răi au
fost pedepsiti.

The next day his parents went to school to find the boys
who beat Ivan up .The children told Ivan that they knew
who beat him up. Their names were Death from the
Carpathians and Andrei. Igor helped Ivan to tell the
teachers what happened.
The bad children were punished.

Prietenul lui, Igor, l-a ajutat să învete toate regulile,
limba română, să își facă temele și să nu se mai bată.

His friend, Igor, helped him to learn the rules, to speak
Romanian, to do his homework and not to fight.

BĂIATUL CEL NOU

THE NEW BOY

Este prima zi de şcoala. Raul este un elev nou. El este în clasa a 4 a.El
este spaniol. Raul are ochi negri şi par şaten .El era foarte înalt pentru
vârsta lui.
Când a fost timpul, toată lumea s-a dus în linie , el nu a ştiut ce sa faca şi
directorul i-a aratat ce sa faca.

It's the first day of school. Raul is a new student. He is in fourth class.
Raul is Spanish. Raul has black eyes and blonde hair. He was very tall
for his age. When everyone was going into their lines he didn't know
what to do. The principal showed him what to do.

Mai târziu domna a întrebat pentru numele fiecaruia .El si-a spus numele
si a început sa vorbeasca spaniolă.Toata lumea l-a întrebat dacă ştie să
vorbeasca engleza .El a dat din umeri , şi toţi au înţeles ca nu. La finalul
zilei el i-a spus familiei ce i-sa întâmplat.

After the teacher asked the class for their names, he said his name was
Raul. He started talking Spanish. Everyone asked him if he knew
English. He said no. At the end of the day he told his mother what
happened.

A doa zi toţi râdeau de el ca nu stia engleza .A tunci a rezistat sa nu se bata dar dupa 5 minute s-a luat la bataie cu cineva penru ca lumea enerva şi râdeau de el ca nu ştia engleza.

 On the second day everyone was laughing at him because he didn't know English. He resisted fighting but after five minutes then he started fighting because people were annoying him and laughing at him because he didn't know English.

Raul se simţea frustrat. Dupa acea doar directorul i-a despărţit şi a spus
ca Raul o sa ia un cartonaş galben şi celălalt ia un cartonaş roşu .
După 15 minute de plâns şi-a cerut scuze şi a spus ca nu mai face .

 Raul felt sad. After that the principal said to Raul that he was getting a
yellow card. And the other boy was getting a red card. After fifteen
minutes of crying he said, 'Sorry'.

Dupa un timp a început s-a înveţe engleza . Şi-a facut un prieten pe nume
Chris.
Chris era în clasa a5a .El avea ochi albaştri şi păr negru .Chris era
irlandez.El
Era un elev nou .Chris era cel mai bun prieten al lui Raul .

After one week he started to learn a bit of English. He had a friend called
Chris who was in fifth class. He had brown eyes and black hair. He was
Irish. He was a new student, too. Chris was Raul's best friend.

Dupa un timp toata şcoala îl cunoştea.
Când Raul sa dus în vacanţa a cumpărat la cei mai buni prieteni câte un cadou
Acum Chris îl ajuta pe Raul să înveţe engleza şi acum nimeni nu mai râde de Raul
ca nu ştie engleza .
Ei dormeau unu'la celălalt şi se jucau fotbal toata ziua .Acum raul nu mai are probleme cu engleza şi ei eru cei mai buni prieteni din şcoala.

After four weeks Raul started to learn a bit of English. They were playing together and they also made more and more friends. Now Chris helps Raul to learn English and nobody laughs at him anymore because he knows how to speak English. They had sleepovers and always play football with each other. Now Raul does not have problems with his English. Raul and Chris were the best friends in the school!.

Adela învață engleză

Adela learns English

Într-o zi de vară, Adela a venit în Irlanda. Ea a început școala în septembrie și nu știa engleză. Când a început prima zi de școală ea era rușinată pentru că era străină. Se apropie pauza și ea este foarte tristă pentru nu avea prieteni și nici nu știa engleză.

One day in the spring, Adela came to Ireland.
She started school in September, and she didn't speak English .
When she started the first day of school she was nervous because was a foreigner.
The break gets closer and she is very sad because she hasn't friends and she doesn't speak English.

 A stat într-un colţ supărată pentru că nimeni nu se juca cu ea. Nu s-a
simţit prea bine în ziua aceea. Apoi a doua zi nu a mai vrut să meargă la
şcoală. Dar trebuia.
–De ce eşti supărată? a întrebat-o învăţătoarea.
Dar Adela nu a înţeles ce a întrebat învăţătoarea.

She stayed in the corner upset and sad because nobody would play with
her. She didn't feel too well that day. The next day she didn't want to go
to school. But she had to. "Why are you sad?" asked the teacher. But
Adela didn't understand what the teacher said.

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În pauză, Adela s-a dus să se pună pe banca de afară şi a început să
plângă. Şi atunci a venit Anna şi Roxana şi a întrebat-o:
-De ce plângi?
 Dar Adela nu aînţeles ce a întrebat-o Anna şi Roxana pentru că ele
vorbeau engleză.

At   break time she went outside and sat on the bench and she started
crying. Then Anna and Roxana asked. "Why are you crying?" But
Adela didn't understand what they asked her because they spoke English.

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Iar apoi fetele au întrebat-o:

–Where are you from? Şi ea a înţeles ce au spus ele pentru că ştia puţină engleză din România.. Şi a spus că e din România. Anna şi Roxana au întrebat-o pe româneşte:

–Ştii engleză?

Şi ea i-a spus:

- Nu ştiu engleză.

The girls asked: "Where are you from?" And she understood what they asked, because she knew some English from Romania. And Adela said "I come from Romania." "Do you know English?' asked Anna and Roxana in Romanian. And she said: "I don't speak English!'

.Anna şi Roxana o întreabă pe Adela:
 —Vrei să te ajutăm să înveţi engleză?
 Şi Adela îi răspunde. —Da, vreau.
—Bine, spuse Anna şi Roxana.
—Vrei să te joci cu noi, Adela?
- Da
După pauză a mers la învăţătoare de engleză. Când a ajuns la profesoara
de engleză a îceput să plângă pentru că nu ştia engleză. . Profesoara de
engleză a ajutat-o să înveţe engleză.
După câteve luni Adela a ştiut puţină engleză şi după ce a ştiut puţină
engleză a avut mai multe prietene.

Anna and Roxana asked Adela: "Do you want us to help you to learn
English?" And Adela answered: "Yes, I do." "Ok." "Do you want to
play with us?" "Yes." After the break she went to her English teacher.
When Adela went to the English teacher she started to cry because she
didn't know any English. The English teacher helped her to learn
English.
A few months later, Adela knew a little English and then she had more
friends.

NOWA SZKOŁA

NEW   SCHOOL

Pewnego dnia do Irlandii przyleciał chłopiec o imieniu Adam. Chłopiec miał krótkie, brązowe włosy i niebieskie oczy. Był wysoki i inteligentny. Jeżdził na wózku inwalidzkim. Gdy Adam poszedł do szkoły to wszyscy się z niego wyśmiewali. Gdy zaczęła się lekcja, nauczycielka podeszła do niego i zaczęła się pytać o różne rzeczy, ale Adam nic nie rozumiał i zaczął płakać. Pani spostrzegła, że Adam nie rozumie angielskiego, więc chłopiec zaczął chodzić na dodatkowe lekcje języka angielskiego.

One day a new boy called Adam came to Ireland .The boy had short, brown hair and blue eyes. He was tall and smart. He was in a wheelchair. When Adam went to school, everybody was laughing at him. When lessons started, the teacher came to him and she was asking him questions but Adam could not understand and he started to cry. The teacher realised that the boy did not understand her so he started going to English support class.

Na przerwach dzieci dobrze się bawiły, a Adam smutny siedział na swoim wózku inwalidzkim. Gdy chłopiec wracał do domu to żalił się rodzicom, że inne dzieci z niego się śmieją. Adam był zawiedziony, ponieważ myślał, że dzieci z klasy będą dla niego milsze i bardziej wyrozumiałe.

On the breaks children were playing together and having fun. Adam was upset and was always staying in his wheelchair. When Adam was back home from school, he was complaining to his parents that other children were laughing at him. Adam was sad and disappointed because he thought that the children from his class would be nicer to him.

Następnego dnia pani ogłosiła wycieczkę do zoo. Gdy byli w zoo pani powiedziała, że mają się rozdielić na grupy. Nikt nie chciał żeby Adam się do nich przyłączył, więc chłopiec potanowił, że sam zwiedzi zoo. Kiedy oglądał zwierzęta to zobaczył dziewczynę, która rozmawiała przez telefon komórkowy po polsku. Adam zbliżył się do niej i spytał jak ma na imię i jak długo jest w Irlandii. Powiedziała, że ma na imię Magda i jest w Irlandii od dwóch lat. Adam zapytał czy chciałaby zwiedzić z nim zoo, a Magda odparła, że chętnie.

The next day the teacher said that they were going to the zoo .When they were in the zoo, the teacher said that they had divide into the groups, but no one wanted Adam to join them so the boy decided to see the zoo on his own. When he was watching animals he saw a girl talking in Polish on the mobile phone. He asked her what her name was and how long she had been in Ireland. She said that her name was Magda and she had been in Ireland two years. Adam asked if she would like to see the zoo with him and she agreed.

Chłopiec zapytał Magdę czy nauczyłaby go angielskiego. Odpowiedziała: „Fajnie będzie kogoś uczyć". Adam bardzo się ucieszył, a Magda została jego najlepszą koleżanką. Od czasu tego spotkania chłopiec codziennie po lekcjach uczył się z Magdą. Dziewczynce nie przeszkadzało wcale, że Adam jeździł na wózku. Chłopiec robił duże postępy w angielskim.

Adam asked Magda could she teach him more English. She said, "Of course. That will be cool if I could teach you." Adam was very happy and Magda became his best friend. Everyday after lessons the boy was studying English with Magda. She said that it didn't matter that Adam was in a wheelchair. The boy was doing very well and his English started to get better.

Pod koniec roku szkolnego gdy pisali sprawdzian z języka angielskiego. pani zauważyła, że Adam zrobił duże postępy. Dostał najlepszą ocenę w klasie. Gdy rodzice dowiedzieli się, że Adam dostał dobrą ocenę to się bardzo ucieszyli. Chłopiec miał teraz dużo więcej przyjaciół. Jednak jego najlepszą przyjeciółką była wciąż Magda.

At the end of the school year, they were doing a big test in English. The teacher said that Adam did very well in his English test. Adam got the best mark in the whole class. When his parents learned that Adam got the best mark in the class they were very happy. The boy made more friends than at the start of the year, but Magda was still his best friend.

Public Display: Invitations

<u>English</u>

INVITATION

You are invited to the launch of my book about learning languages in school in Ireland

Where:

Room B103
St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra,
Dublin 9

When:

Tuesday 10th June @ 7pm

Please call Rory on 087 661 2079 if you have any problems!

Public Display: Invitations

<u>Romanian</u>

INVITAȚIE

Sunteți invitat/ă la lansarea cărții mele despre învățarea de limbi străine în cadrul școlii în Irlanda

<u>*Unde:*</u>

<u>*Room B103*</u>
St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra,
Dublin 9

<u>*Când:*</u>
Marți, 10 iunie la ora 19.00

Vă rog să-l sunați pe Rory la 087 661 2079 dacă aveți orice problemă!

Public Display: Invitations

<u>Polish</u>

ZAPROSZENIE

*Serdecznie zapraszam na uroczystość poświęconą wydaniu mojej
książki o nauce języka w szkole w Irlandii*

<u>Miejsce:</u>

<u>Pokój B103</u>
*St. Patrick's College,
Drumcondra,
Dublin 9*

<u>Data i godz.:</u>
Wtorek 10 czerwiec, godz.19.00

W razie pytań proszę do mnie dzwonić - Rory 087 661 2079

Certificate of Completion

English

> ....
>
> *successfully participated in the*
>
> # Trilingual Literacy Camp
>
> *Which was held from 25th March to 28th*
>
> *March 2008*
> *in*
>
> *St. Gabriel's National School.*
>
> ....
>
> *Rory Mc Daid*
>
> ....
>
> *Translator*
>
> ....
>
> *Cecelia Gavigan*

Certificate of Completion

<u>Romanian</u>

a participat cu succes la

Tabăra trilingvă de scriere

organizată între

25 martie 2008 și 28 martie 2008
la

St. Gabriel's National School.

Rory Mc Daid

Oana Bizian

Cecelia Gavigan

Certificate of Completion

Polish

---

uczestniczył/a w

Zajęciach wielojęzykowych,

które odbywały się w dniach

od 25 do 28 marca 2008

w szkole

St. Gabriel's National School.

....

Rory Mc Daid

....

Justyna Stachura

....

Cecelia Gavigan

Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Session 1

Coming to Ireland
Can you tell me something about what you liked to do back in Romania/Poland?
Who was in your family back in Romania/Poland / who lived with you in Romania/Poland?
Who came with you to Ireland?
Were you in school with your brothers and sisters in Romania/Poland?
What languages did you speak (in school) in Romania/Poland?
Can you tell me what you really liked / did not like about school in Romania/Poland
Who looked after you when you came home from school in Romania/Poland ?
Can you tell me what type of jobs that your mother or father had in Romania/Poland?

Life in Ireland (non-school)
Time for reflection – can you remember anything about your first day/week/month in Ireland?
Did you or members of your family know anyone in Ireland before you came?
Are there things that you like about Ireland?
Is there anything that you find hard about Ireland?
When you are outside of school which language do you use when you speak with
> Parents
> Brothers / sisters
> Aunts / uncles
> Grandparents
> Cousins
> Friends
Is/are this/these the same language(s) that you used before you came to Ireland? How does this make you feel?

What do you think about reading – Do you like books?/Do you read at home?
> School / non-school
> What languages are the magazines/books/newspapers written in
> Polish/Romanian?
> Would you like more magazines/books/newspapers written in
Polish/Romanian?
> Did you bring any books from Poland/Romania with you? / Have family sent
> books over?

What about other people at home – do they read?/what else do they like to do?
> What do they read?
> In what languages?
> Has this practice changed since you moved to Ireland? How does this make
> you feel?

Do you watch TV at home?

What do you watch?

In what languages?

Satellite TV?

What type of programmes do your parents / adults in the house watch?

Language?

Do you use the internet very often?

What web pages do you view? Language

Do you use them to stay in touch with friends / relations in Poland/Romania?

Appendix J2

Focus Group Questions

<u>Focus Group Session 2</u>

Life in Ireland (school)

How long have you been in school in Ireland?

What is school like in Ireland?

Are there things you would you change about school in Ireland?

Does anyone else in the school (adult/child) speak the same first language as you?
    How does this make you feel?

How long have you been learning English (in Ireland or elsewhere)?

Are you receiving (did you receive) extra help to learn English?

How do you feel about learning English? Why is it important?

How do you feel about learning Irish?

Do you use your own language in your main class/support classes
    Dictionary
    Group work

Do any of the teachers ever talk with you about your own language?

What language do you speak before / after school when waiting?

What language do you speak on the yard or at break times?

Are you ever told what languages to speak on the yard or in school?

Can you remember anything about how other children react if/when you speak your language?

Have you ever had to translate information for your parents and/or other adults/children in the school?
    What was that like?

Would you like to be able to use your own language in school?

Would you like to have lessons in your own language in school/before or after school?

Are there any books/magazines in your own language in your school?

Has anyone ever told you not to use your own language in school?

Do you think that your own language is important in school?

Would you like your own language to be more important in school?

What is it like using your own language now that you are learning English (and Irish)?
    Family
    Friends
    Reading
    Speaking

Appendix K1

NVivo

Tree nodes

Appendix K2

NVivo

Dual language texts

Appendix K3

NVivo

Audio