LANGUAGE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN A MULTI-ETHNC HIGH SCHOOL IN WALES

A case study

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Abstract

As increased numbers of students from diverse backgrounds populate British schools, concerns have been raised around minority languages within monolingual contexts (Wilson 2014; King and Fogle 2016). Drawing on a case study of a state English-medium, multi-ethnic, mixed and comprehensive high school in Wales, this thesis examined ethnic language and identity concerns among multi-ethnic students, through exploring their everyday school-life experiences. It investigated the consequences of the distinct interactional, ideological, and physical manifestations of ethnicity, demonstrating the ways in which the relevant identity attributes instruct students' performances across a variety of social, educational, and most importantly psychological processes.

More than 80 per cent of the students in the case study site were ethnic learners from 54 ethnic groups, with 64 different languages spoken amongst this cohort (Policy Statements 2016-17). The setting offered a scene of cultural diversity, where language represented an instructive tool for studying identity matters, and where language attitudes and practices indicated that cultural values distinguished individuals and different ethnic groups. The study generated data from an all school student survey (N=915), key stages three and four (KS3-4) student focus groups (N=8 sessions), interviews with teachers and staff members (N=19) and KS5 students (N=4), in addition to a site observation, which lasted for four months (two school days a week, for four months).

Analysis of the data identified a significant native language use among Somali, Roma and Arab students even during lessons. The findings suggest strong associations

between the students' mother tongues' conversational exercise and negative social and academic experiences within the school. Native languages transcended their communicative functions to signal the negotiation and contestation of identity. Debating the practicality of native discourses and the discourses of stigma, the thesis evidences an incongruence between the mandated pedagogies, cultural diversities, and educational resources, while highlighting the significance of native interactions in students' ascription and loyalty to their spirituality, cultural affiliation, and perceptions of the self.

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'And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are signs for those who know'

(Qur'an Chapter 30:22)

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

There is little doubt that most contemporary societies are growing significantly and becoming increasingly multicultural (Flint 2007; Sánchez-Casal and Macdonald 2009; McLaren 2018), and arguably this ethnic diversity will continue to grow, at least for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, readiness for a synthesis that recognises and accounts for the characteristics of diversity is fundamental for a coherent society, where integration and cultural exchange are fostered, while borders between the different groups are carefully and fairly acknowledged. Educational spaces are no exception to this understanding (Archer 2008; Apple 2017), and over several decades ethnic matters have occupied social scientists, policy makers and educationalists.

However, empirical and theoretical endeavours have often rested on fragmented approaches addressing isolated groups, contexts or issues rather than seeing them as interdependent, and investigating their root causes (Tomlinson 2008a,2014; Rollock 2015). Discourses around underachievement, integration, and social conduct have generated an outcome-based approach, which has rarely attempted to examine the underlying reasons behind the associated 'ethnic struggles'. The complexity of these issues commands a deeper examination that strikes primarily into the heart of being ethnic before gauging its outcomes (Challinor 2012; Sedgwick 2015). Therefore, this research study offers an alternative to a reductionist

approach to studying ethnic learners' concerns through emphasising the construct of identity, and the multiple ways it impacts on individuals' self-conceptualisations, performances, and behaviour.

The research study outlines identity processes and struggles among minority ethnic students in a state high school in Wales. Using a qualitative case study, I explored their school-life experiences from the perspective of being a 'different' student, with regard to how they speak, look and/or their beliefs. I advance an indication of the ways in which these distinct cultural attributes affect their performances across a variety of social, educational, and most importantly psychological processes, which appear to be mainly orchestrated by identity conceptualisations. In investigating these manifestations in a highly diverse school, this study furthers awareness of how different forms of belonging can influence the formation of the ethnic self, and the ways the relevant perceptions could enjoin inter-group affinities and intra-group dissonance, therefore modelling considerations on educating the 'different' learner. Ideas and concepts drawn from Social and Ethnic Identity theories, and the Dialogical Self theory on the construction and performance of the ethnic persona are central to the theoretical basis of the thesis, which aims to contribute to the long-standing tradition of selfhood research. This framework highlights how the conventional socio-educationally constructed performances of identity are intensified through ethnic affirmation and belonging, outlining a subjective sense of contentedness about one's affiliation, and an asserted state of mental and emotional unrest (Tajfel 1981; Abrahams 1996; Branscombe et al. 1999; Devich-Navarro 2010; Banks 2015; Hogg 2016).

Embarking on doctoral study in the United Kingdom incited my resolve to explore the social processes among students in this context, particularly non-mainstream ones, and the way different symbolic, ideological, and communal models could co-exist. My study introduced me to a diverse setting that abruptly challenged the mono-cultural spirit inside me, and the socially (mostly) homogeneous structures of my home country, Algeria, as I elaborate further in section 1.2. I was initially intrigued by the potential ability of a remarkably multilingual student community to network their social interaction, strike the desired communication codes, and manage to observe the identifying aspects of their parlances. This also nurtured my desire to know how ethnic minority students are able to make academic, social, and personal ends meet knowing that some of them might not have the required level of literacy in the mainstream language being new arrivals to the country on admission to school. In culturally diverse schools, the everyday lives of young people convert the context from ordinary educational spaces into an unanticipated and factious realm of struggles to identify, which remains beyond the conventional and the familiar (Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017). In light of this, I find that contending with the customary demands of learning while bearing the burden of cultural difference is exceptionally interesting, and hence researchers ought to engage with a deeper scientific discernment.

1.2 An 'other' researching 'similar and different others'

The subjective nature of qualitative educational research has often been reproached for being 'trivial, flawed, or biased' (Jones 2001; Mertens 2014), while other critics condemn its inability to accurately handle the complex

tangles of personal values and preferences (Pajares 1992; Best and Kahn 2016). However, it is only through these same subjectivities, many researchers contend, that it becomes possible to compensate for the impossibility of objectively knowing a social-psychological world, as the investigator's values are said to shape the frame of the studied phenomena (Stevens 2007; Darawsheh and Stanley 2014; Tomlinson 2014; Goodson 2016; Creswell 2018). One of the subjective aspects in question is the sense and value the research's topic represents to the person of the researcher, a concept that could only be achieved through visiting the latter relevant past events and experiences; termed as autobiographies (Longhurst 2012; Cortazzi 2014). These personal memoirs play a crucial role in the development of research and writing, given that they are inextricably linked to research, and that writing is generally a response to a particular standpoint, which assists the readers' understanding of where the investigator is coming from (Mcleod 2004; Custer 2014). Thus, who the writer is, proves just as important as how they think.

As discussed earlier, my passion for researching identity matters has grown considerably during my transition from a mainly mono-cultural country to the United Kingdom, one of the most diverse countries in the world (Tomlinson 2005,2014; Afridi 2015; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017). The unplanned coercive move to the UK, which witnessed my heart breaking for my abandoned loved ones, also interrupted and brought to an end my PhD studies in Algeria, so that they became a dream that I was never able to fulfil in my home country. After several months I traversed escorted by light tears and heavy pains, I became uncomfortable just mourning, and dreaming about what my life

would look like if it were not afflicted with all this turmoil. Instead, a new conviction began haunting my soul, a belief that a true researcher is the one who never capitulates, a fighter who changes the tide in favour of the uncompromised mission of promoting honest knowledge and looking for the truth.

My blurred assessments began to clear, and I started seeing people, places, spaces, and 'even the weather', with new eyes, ones which, until then, had failed to get to grips with the wonders of diversity animating and adorning every corner of the country. Thereafter, I came to appreciate the obstinate conundrums with which identity experts might have to constantly contend. As a mother of school children, I also began to realise how unusually multi-ethnic many schools are, and how challenging the atmosphere could be inside them, notably at the amount of observing, comparing and contrasting students might be engaging with, both consciously and unconsciously. 'How on earth' could students from all these origins get along together, study and play, laugh and cry, fight and pacify? Can everyone understand everyone? These were questions I wished I were able to answer all at once. However, as only one step can start a thousand miles way, I made the choice to initiate my journey investigating ethnic identity manifestations in a highly diverse school, which is well known for its multi-lingual signage.

Personally, it seemed the right fit for me. My children were, and still are, part of the ethnic community in their school, while the whole family continues to reinforce the ethnic pattern at the mosques and community centres we have been part of to this day. Incidents, decisions and experiences involving stories

about 'us' and 'them' have often been the salt flavouring our discussions around the dinner table every night, although some of them tasted too bitter to be appreciated. However, perhaps hearing a high school girl's grievance communicated to her mother during a community gathering was my Eureka moment. The girl seemed to be, 'again', very frustrated about the lessons' time being wasted because of her peers who 'keep speaking in their languages inside classroom' despite their fluency in English. This dissatisfaction was especially apparent in her observations that all that the teacher could do was issue empty threats at these students: 'speak English or I'll refer you'. Despite the frustration in the account, and my sympathy for the girl, this discussion, on a personal level, also felt endlessly fulfilling. It brought a sudden answer to a long time of bewilderment and vague ambivalence, and flooded my mind with a light that became central in guiding my doctoral research study.

My innate interest in languages, my applied linguistics' background, my keenness to research identity, and the whole entourage I was surrounded with formed the right package for undertaking my research - if it were not for my lack of training in sociology and psychology. This was a significant concern for me, especially considering my awareness that I cannot be an overnight sociologist or psychologist. Nevertheless, I trusted my determination to redeem whatever deficiencies I had through reading and writing again and again. From there, I pulled my researcher self together, picked up the little personal documents I managed to save, and headed to the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University on the 16th of October 2013.

On the way to meet the PhD programme administrator that day, fingers crossed, I was hoping my English language proficiency level and my leave to remain pending application would not mar the picture I drew for my 'future me'. I thought it would be an 'either in or out situation', and had no expectations that there could be a 'one foot in, one foot out' alternative. I was fortunate enough to be offered a place to study despite these worries. But, unfortunately, I did not seem to have crossed enough fingers or made enough prayers to elude the issue of fees. I had to pay the international students' fee, an extraordinary requirement for someone who had just started her life from scratch and was desperate to gain permission to work. Thankfully, my prayers to Allah blessed my online search, which guided me to an organisation that funds academics going through hardships. I was finally awarded funding for my three-year PhD course at the end of December 2013, and subsequently enrolled on my course in January 2014.

These events and circumstances had me very frequently question my own position and identity during the different stations of my PhD journey, and whether I ever managed to be 'a good fit' (Walkerdine et al. 2004; Ward 2014). My journey in the quest for safety and stability saw me juggle my different selves, trimming some of their edges at times, while sometimes simply quitting the identification game when the risk to compromise a substantial part of me became imminent. I came to the UK in my late thirties already marked with the stinging disregard of a society that views a mother's work, let alone her further education, as selfish and audacious, while working and studying in a predominantly male environment burdened my social adjustment with additional challenges. The move to the UK made me more

conscious about my difference. My speaking, looking and behaving, which are all tailored and curtailed by my ethnicity, extended the perimeters of my integration among my neighbours, parent circles in my children's schools, my own school and university staff and colleagues, shorter than I would have genuinely desired. I have always had a feeling that every group I happen to be among summons a different persona that invalidates my other me(s). Fortunately though, and despite its alienating nature, struggling to 'fit in' seems relatively familiar in academia, and even widely recognised as vital for highlighting the impact upon one's own position in relation to our research (Cousin 2010; Easterby-Smith et al. 2012; Berger 2015).

Hence, although aspects of my persona have no direct involvement in my research, their relevance made this study specifically interesting to me, and will hopefully assist my readers in contextualising the remainder of the thesis in relation to the settings and manifestations it drew from and on. I would like to demonstrate, as Ward (2013b) maintains, that despite my maturity and education, I have a lot in common with the young identities I seek to portray and the voices I am bringing to the attention of the academic community. I could recognise some of them in myself, but also admit having been in the dark about others prior to my research experience. This is how I found myself 'the other' researching 'similar and different others', and perspectives such as the ones that follow framed and sustained my understanding and overall research approach.

1.3 General perspectives on the study and its contribution

This research centralises the identity performances and challenges of some ethnic minority groups in a high school in Wales, although an accurate perception of these processes remains incumbent upon an awareness of what the term ethnicity means, and who exactly could belong to the relevant group. Indeed, the concept of ethnicity has been examined in a variety of ways in the social sciences, assuming a vast range of definitions, which, however, seem to all concur that shared cultural values and social structures are its main constituents (Verma 1986; Carrington et al. 2001; Apple 2017). Such discernment essentially characterises ethnic status as being a social category defined by geographical and/or circumstantial significance, feeding groups' natural urge for distinctiveness and identity (Martinez and Dukes 1997; Modood 2006; Devich-Navarro 2010; Nakamura 2013). It also tends to differentiate 'ethnicity' from 'race', which privileges biological markers, like skin colour, to connote social and cultural differences, as well as accentuating the notion and value of relevant groups. Nevertheless, the biological referent is not completely denied but rather implicitly emphasized (Sansone 2003; Culley and Demaine 2006a; Pieterse et al. 2013).

The defining features of an ethnic group, however, have sectioned ethnic debates into two main standpoints. The first assessment regards an ethnic group as a number of individuals that entertain a subjective belief in their shared ancestry for physical and/or customary correspondences, besides colonial and migration histories, attaching little weight to objective blood relationships (Benhabib 2002). Inspired by this deduction, proponents of the second position who appreciate common descent, real or putative, and shared

histories, emphasize the group's focus on one of the many symbolic elements predominantly considered as the epitome of their peoplehood. These could involve one or any combination of: nationality, religion, kinship and tribalism, geographical contiguity, language or dialect forms, and phenotypical composition, accompanied with some level of common consciousness among individuals (Weber 1978; Weinreich 1986; Scourfield 2006; Hemming 2011; Crane 2012; Scourfield 2013).

Such assessments recognise the necessity to balance group's shared claims with personal consciousness about those claims. As well as equating ethnicity with a sense of belonging, they also define groups according to their strategies of differentiation, and processes of making and maintaining boundaries. This perspective has at its core the paradigm appreciating the juxtaposition or co-existence of cultures (Barth 1998; Horowitz 2001). Research following this framework found that in multicultural societies, notably those with minority and majority groups, the ideal environment appreciates the importance and meaning of group boundaries at assessing how individuals in multicultural societies choose to identify with an ethnic group (Nekby and Rodin 2007). A reverse fit approach, that stronger identification with one group implies a weaker association with the other, has often been advanced accordingly (Tajfel 1981; Tajfel and Turner 1986; Crocker et al. 1993; Abrahams 1996). However, arguments disassociating both statuses also exist, viewing the strength of individuals' affiliation to majority and minority ethnic groups as independent of each other (Burton et al. 2008). The first stance, being predominantly endorsed (Martin and Nakayama 2013), underpinned most ethnic identity research endeavours through investigating intra-group

differentiation and inter-group positive connections, viewing ethnicity as part of one's social identity.

Social psychologists, then, developed an interest in exploring connections between group identification and individuals' self-esteem, and how claiming and/or exercising affiliation to a minority group might challenge members to cultural modulation according to the conventionally valued mainstream paradigms, and hence impact on their self-evaluation (Crocker et al. 1993; Leary and Tangney 2011; Ferrari et al. 2015). This position evidences ethnic identity's susceptibility to environmental conditions that determine the options, functionality, and attractiveness of certain cultures and groups, and their impact on selfhood appraisals.

Thus, ethnic identity is crucial to the social and psychological wellbeing of both individuals and groups. However, and based on the complexities arising from the different groups' unique attributes, the relevant research still suffers disproportion and inefficiency. There is a perpetual tendency to overgeneralise findings across groups (Kádár and Pap 2009; Dord 2017), when focusing on the shared features applying across them. This could offer useful insight into the life experiences of 'the different' individuals, though, despite inconclusiveness. Among other works, Phinney (1990) cited Du Bois (1968), Hong Kingston (1976) and Rodriguez (1982) as the earliest research attempts to investigate ethnic identity, which, she adds, were incited by the rise in media's discrimination and racism discourses. Such studies adopted a unilateral approach driven by exploring the attitudes of the majority groups

towards minorities, and focused on the consciousness feeding stereotyping and prejudice.

Arguably, the impact of these matters on the individual persona and character remained undeveloped (Phinney 1992; Roberts et al. 1999; Tomlinson 2008a), as individuals' attachment to their group drew little attention from majority, generally white, research until social movements of the sixties and seventies lead to increased ethnic cognizance and recognition (Laosa 1984). Thereafter, awareness rose about the importance of positive belonging to ethnic people's psychological wellbeing and ability to attend to the social, political, economic and media threats, a position that paved the way to the nineties' both literary and political awakening to the need for explicit multiculturalism policies and support for relevant research (Padilla 1994; Chand and Thoburn 2005). Nonetheless, theoretical writings seemed to outweigh fieldwork, which remained mostly confined within childhood perimeters, lending little attention to adulthood, and more importantly to the transition between the two - adolescence (Phinney and Ong 2007; McCallum 2012). The last few decades have been more attentive to young people's ethic identity concerns, attaching increasing consideration to their developmental needs and processes, and calling for centralising integration in developmental research (Christian and Robert 2002; Sinha et al. 2007; Aveling and Gillespie 2008; Smith and Silva 2011; Rivas-Drake et al. 2014; Freire and Branco 2017).

Early adolescence marks children's exploration of group differences, and what distinguishes their ethnic category, informing the self-concept construct that will assume the mission of assimilating the self to culturally modelled in-group qualities (Syed and Azmitia 2008; Gartner et al. 2014). This assignment is likely to enhance the young individuals' intellect, and trigger their subjective appraisals of contextual effects. Gaining such social cognitive competencies will accordingly spark their sensitivities to intra-group disparities. Such processes are particularly relevant for ethnic minority adolescents as maintaining strong connections with 'similar others' can potentially deter discriminatory treatment, and help foster positive self-esteem and all types of learning pursuits (Martinez and Dukes 1997; Cummins 2005; Gartner et al. 2014; Jia et al. 2014; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017). Such processes are also particularly relevant to multi-ethnic high schools where ethnic minority students have to attend to the burdens of self-affirmation, often over and above academic duties (Theran 2009; Costigan et al. 2010).

Before highlighting the empirical handling of ethnic minority issues within educational settings, it is worth noting that ethnic identity has only recently started acquiring attention from developmental researchers, despite the traditionally acknowledged importance of identity processes and outcomes in Erikson's theories (Erikson 1968,1971; Markstrom 1999). Empirical work based on these frameworks has not directly drawn on culture, but only examined the domains Erikson suggested, namely occupation, religion, and political wisdom (McLeod 2013). Subsequently, researchers began observing interpersonal domains of gender, family, and friendship circles as significant

components of the identity synthesis, while these modest ventures still excluded ethnicity, class, or nationality, which are inherent parts of one's social identity (Balibar et al. 1991).

Attempts to remedy this reluctance were led by the advent of Social Identity Theory with consideration of social identity as 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership' (Tajfel 1981, p. 25). This understanding helmed Tajfel's explorations of minority groups' strife fuelled by majority culture's disparagement, and several studies appreciating the impact of inter-cultural interactions on the functionality of the various identity markers (Brown 1988,2000; Hogg and Terry 2000; Burford 2012). Such an assessment, however, appears to have only appealed to the group rather than attempting to question individuals' needs and/or answer selfhood interrogations.

These inadequacies were later addressed by research geared towards what makes minority individuals explore and commit to their self-structures through narrative and dialogical methodologies. Proponents of the first, McAdams (2001) and Syed and Azmitia (2008), acknowledge the necessity of using narrative approaches to ethnicity as manifested in the daily experiences of emerging adults to explore links between identity formation processes, the content of relevant contextual experiences, and ethnic individuals' perceptions of the self. This paradigm offered a developmental lens for triggering related self-defining memories and identifying

interactional propensities by selecting particular social experiences and interpreting them. It was later enhanced with the Master Narrative's approach's attendance to life stories individuals construct in parallel with local and global discourses (Hammack 2008,2010). Additionally, the Dialogical Self theory has observed the development of diverse statuses in interactional relations with others across social contexts, both in and outside the mind. This statement unveils the nature of today's mostly heterogeneous sociocultural contexts, where interacting with the different other occasions a conflict inside individuals (Aveling and Gillespie 2008; Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010; Hermans and Gieser 2012).

These are briefly the main stations in the ethnic identity's journey towards gaining scientific recognition and investigation. After a long battle to free the concept from the hegemony of the social class, the relevant literature mostly approached ethnicity as a single construct, a 'bigger picture' strategy that still does little justice to the sensitive traits featuring individuals' multiple aspects of persona. Addressing ethnic identity as a one package, comes at the cost of its fine, yet core constituents distinguishing the different groups in terms of, to only cite a few, language, ideology, and behavioural modalities (Chaitin et al. 2009). Little has been done to explore ethnic identity through ideology, religion, language and appearance, a level of complexity with which this study has sought to engage. Additionally, there has been a lacuna of research, which has sought to apply an 'inside-out' approach, whereby the understanding of the way one of these components, language in this context, is operated and perceived could be indicative of ethnic affiliation levels, and one's and others' assessments. This delineation resonates with an aspect of my contribution to

the ethnic identity debate, as I attach considerable weight to the independence, yet complementarity and hierarchy among facets of the ethnic self, and the individual and the social implications of their sanctioning or reinforcement. In this thesis, significant weight will be given to the role ethnic languages play in the ethnic self and other conceptualisations, and the need for educational systems to redress the long established monolingual policies.

In relation to school settings in particular, there appears to be relatively few recent appraisals of ethnic identity attitudes and negotiations, and their projection on young people's interactional dynamics and educational experiences (Brown 2000; Umaña-Taylor et al. 2014; Ting-Toomey 2017). These debates seem to be mostly steered towards the negative portrayals of the ethnic essence, alluding to concepts such as, the intellectual inferiority and indigent literacy, incongruity of ethnic cultures' codes' with mainstream instructional systems, lack of school engagement, and parents' intransigence to literacy (Kyuchukov 2000; Carter 2006; Dietz 2007; Pickett and Wilkinson 2008; Kjaerum 2014a; Bhopal 2016; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017; Shah 2017). The role of these studies in succeeding to raise ethnic students' concerns has been of undeniable importance, however, I argue that these perspectives lack an appreciation of the root-causes of these struggles.

In this thesis, I present a case study driven by reflections on the ethnic self and the ways in which the culturally structured physical, linguistic and ideological renditions of this self might induce mainstream retribution, breed social disturbance, and threaten the psychological tranquillity. Furthermore, the scholars involved, many of whom have been documented in this chapter and

will be returned to in the review of the literature, have mainly adopted individual approaches whereby single groups are targeted. Alternatively, the present study operates an assessing, comparing and contrasting approach that focuses not only on individuals, but also different ethnic groups with careful reference to the mainstream presence.

As many scholars have noted, research on educational matters can hardly step outside school perimeters and frameworks clearly blurring whatever contexts and mechanisms located beyond them (Connell 1989). Inspired by the few researchers who dissented from this tradition (Sobel 2004; Rousseau et al. 2009), I maintain that ethnic students' self-perceptions, formation, and negotiation processes connect a sequence of spatial, temporal and circumstantial dots that reveal an outline of their identity. I argue that research ought to address the contribution of different settings, events, social, political and economic considerations to this effect. Through a rich and in-depth case study, I put some of these pieces together and investigate their impact on identity conceptions and manifestations among students in a multi-ethnic high school. From observing them, and hearing from and about them, I explore how these young minds cope with the challenges of both mainstream and peer ethnic group stigmatising portrayals, laying out the big picture about schooling the different learner in an increasingly multi-cultural society.

I aim to contribute to the social and psychological research, enriching debates on ethnic identity, and stimulating deeper thoughts about its manifold nature, and its ramification through all aspects of life, by providing a perspective

from a local authority maintained multi-ethnic high school, serving a highly multi-cultural community in south Wales. The great majority of attention payed to such concerns in other parts of the world, mainly the United States, implies the necessity to invest in the local state of affairs more seriously, given the vast contextual differences between national contexts.

This study highlights the challenges of claiming the right to 'the different selfhood' due to its diversion from the essential embodiment of mainstream representations, particularly within school perimeters. It portrays the complexity of academic and social experiences of ethnic students therein nurtured by the coexistence of struggle and survival in a vastly multifaceted and dynamic ambience fostered by cultural discrepancies. It displays the level of consideration ethnic students' award their identity, underlining the crucial role multi-ethnic educational settings play in both bolstering and constraining cultural affiliation, in addition to jeopardising social cohesion.

The study transcends participants' academic experiences to report on their lived realities, and their wider social lives. Reflecting on these multiple spheres and using multiple methodologies, I offer a broad and deep investigation of ethnic identity formation and articulation within multi-ethnic schools. I illustrate how different forms of belonging impact on the constant reproduction of self-image, while also demonstrating the importance of studying ethnic boundaries and the conjoint cultural substance to discover the reasons behind ethnic identity's strength and persistence despite the majority culture's hegemony.

1.4 Research aim and questions

The discussion outlined in the previous section, and the more detailed engagement with the field presented in the Literature Review chapter, foregrounded the overarching aim of this study, which seeks to investigate ethnic language practices and attitudes, and their bearing on identity manifestations in a multi-ethnic high school in Wales. I aimed to analyse how ethnic language practices can frame these dynamics guided by the following research questions:

1- What are the different aspects and levels of ethnic language identification and interaction in a majority ethnic high school in Wales?

2- How do linguistic and ideological symbols intersect, and how are they viewed and negotiated in this context?

3- How does language ascription inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self?

To reach an understanding that is socially constructed by participants, and gain an insight into the ways in which they perceive and interpret their experiences, a qualitative multi-method case study was conducted. Observation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, ethnographic conversations with individuals during school events, conversations with caretakers, receptionists, secretaries, and governors on prize evenings have been central elements of the fieldwork. This methodology allowed me to access multiple sites and attend various activities in and outside the classroom, to access deep and rich descriptions of participants' identity experiences (Bassey 1999; Sarantakos 2013; Bailey 2018). This provided an insight into participants' more complex conceptualisations of how they

perceive and represent their selfhood and cultural affiliation, and observing classrooms, corridors, the canteen and baguette bar, teachers' common room, playgrounds and receptions, and sports halls and events, has contributed to the richness of data underlying the structure and processes of this doctoral study.

1.5 Thesis structure and overview

This thesis advances the understanding that ethnic students are social actors whose daily school experiences are framed by the intersection of ethnic identity development and significance. I draw a particular emphasis on the role of ethnic language in tapping into these young people's life experiences and personal assessments, thereafter cultivating discourses about religion, physical character, and community customs. As explained earlier, the ethnic identity construct has, for long, been superficially and partially addressed, while generally presented as a source of disparagement and inhibition. This research, however, questions these perceptions by highlighting ethnic minority students' complex engagement with components of their selfhood, investigating the various modes and processes in which the young individuals mobilize language, religion and other cultural traditions to endorse and facilitate identity representations and survival. I consider my research as a proposal to engage in further exploration and investigation rather than an end in itself.

There are nine chapters in this thesis. Initially, a theoretical paradigm upholds the structure of Chapters Two and Three, which follow this initial chapter. Both chapters set out the study's epistemological, and political locations

within the discipline. Seeing this research's overwhelming bearing on identification and minority education matters, and by virtue of its situation in a multi-ethnic environment, it was crucial to retrace the conventional belief that for a society to operate effectively, education needs to not only foster individuals' knowledge and skills but also instil them with and harness them for the interests of the dominant culture (Bishop and Glynn 2003; Bhopal 2016).

This mission was assumed in Chapter Two, which investigates how Britain has addressed the rights of minority ethnic groups to representation in pedagogical conceptualisations, and their individual members' freedoms to access standard adequate requisites. Recognising the substantial culmination of the country's educational policies and practices enjoining and regulating ethnic minority learners' experiences during the last few decades, the chapter traces the historical evolvement of tolerance and open mindedness in the way minority underachievement issues are politically delivered on. It questions Britain's mono-cultural approach to curriculum, and disputes its fairly restricted instructional articulations. In this sense, the key theme in this chapter is to determine whether the inherent legislative magnitude squares with its proclaimed intentions to achieve a genuinely multicultural society. In exploring these arguments, I embark comprehensively upon the relevant most central and influential legislative and operational measures assumed chiefly by the government's cabinet offices, departments for education, national education unions, assemblies, councils and commissions, Ofsted and Estyn, and local authorities and law suits. I argue that the schools' crucial mission of absorbing minority young people into the British society was hampered by

an education system that harnesses a rhetoric of meritocracy and equality to conceal a paradigm of increasing inequalities. The study's Welsh setting advocated the consideration of the state of the art in Wales, the United Kingdom's smallest and latest devolving nation.

To understand why ethnic identity has, for decades, proved challenging for both policy and practice, Chapter Three explores its mediation between individual's sense of self and life experiences, particularly inside schools. This entails a recognition of these settings' identity manifestations and the way they are framed by cultural hegemony, conflict, representation and social and psychological wellbeing issues. After reviewing the academic disadvantages experienced by minority students, and highlighting the alleged implications of their ethnic origins, I discuss significant patterns of cultural/ethnic identity that continue to apply to school settings and experiences. Drawing on the most influential theoretical paradigms, which advance developmental, socio-psychological, narrative, and dialogical exegeses, I assert that cultural/ethnic identity should centre educational negotiations given their potential significance in settling social and attainment issues of minority ethnic students. I aim through these two chapters to crystalize the view that ethnic identity's educational debates are orchestrated by feelings of affiliation to one minority group in response to mainstream hegemony, a position informing the study's various investigations reported in the following chapters. Therein, I explore a context stranded with group multiplicity and cultural diversity, drawing on the social, pedagogical and cultural ecologies nurturing the school experiences of minority students.

Accordingly, Chapter Four moves into addressing the methodological approaches followed in this research study to explore and determine the extent to which ethnic identity could shape interactional experiences in multi-ethnic schools. Surveying some of the methodological issues arising from conducting a case study on a multi-ethnic high school, the chapter outlines the facilitative function of this methodology in collecting, producing and managing a rich and varied range of data about the social experiences of ethnic students in mainstream educational contexts, and the way they feed into their perceptions of the self and others. To do this, a descriptive sequence frames the setting and its participants, the material resources relied on for generating findings, the way the latter were processed, and the ethical consideration observed throughout the study's two main phases. Through a coherent, multifaceted and ongoing course of evaluations, comparisons and reflections, in this chapter I attend to my struggles with my own values and personal experiences. For example, 'Who am I and what brought me to this research?' are questions I explored to manage my own biases in understanding, interpreting, and presenting knowledge.

Chapter Five provides the reader with situation, background, and picture of the research site, outlining local processes and actors, and how they relate to local, national, and international contexts and events. It is a structure that remains essential for understanding the research problem and its significance (Creswell 2018). In this pursuit, the chapter features the high multi-ethnic countenance of a school girdled with significant economic and educational disadvantage. It also highlights the role the prevailing social and political atmosphere played in questioning social affiliation, their permeation to school

social curricular, and their impact on ethnic students' selfhood conceptualisations.

After introducing my research participants, setting, and the methods employed in interpreting their voices, the rest of the thesis operationalises this knowledge, exploring and understanding identity related experiences of ethnic students. Asking the question: 'How do the relevant perceptions and experiences manifest, and what challenges ensue accordingly?', Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Nine articulate the diverse cultural expressions, and the way perceptions of the 'self' and the 'other' form and progress among the school's different groups.

Chapter Six examines ethnic cultures' linguistic renditions within the strikingly multilingual research site, and expatiates on the intractable conditions imposed by mainstream pedagogies and curricular on the native expression, despite the latter attendant social meanings and affirmations. I contest that the generated politico-economic controversies preclude the conventionally aspired harmony between the mandated pedagogies, cultural diversities, and limited educational resources. The chapter raises arguments about emotions of pride and pragmatism flaring from the bi/multilingual experiences, tracing the impact of distinctive linguistic, ethnocentric, and spiritual belongingness on group and selfhood appraisals. I suggest that internalising these disturbances can leave harmful and long-lasting effects on both perceived self-worth and life performances, and may induce social detachment and disengagement strategies.

Chapter Seven closely observes the progressive mechanisms of selfhood formation and development among the multiple ethnic communities, appreciating how minority students' sense of who they are and what they can affiliate to unfolds at the mother tongue's delimitation of the discursive perimeters. I substantiate the centrality of conversational customs in establishing, maintaining and sustaining cultural trends, subjective assessments, and group actions and categorizations. Drawing on the theoretical contemplations examined in Chapter Three, I continue to evidence the mother tongue's rooted connections to identity construction and negotiation among individuals and groups, and its genuinely indicative features of its speakers' endeavours to harmonise satisfactory belongingness with personal safety and social security. The chapter sets the scene for the unsuccessful social performance of some disputed native languages, allowing stigma and antipathy to strain the social ambience and belittle young people's perceived self-worth. Underlining the strong associations between the native parlance and the spiritual observance, the chapter detects the sensitive hierarchy and inveterate interdependence among identity symbols, and promotes the need for a comprehensive appreciation of the ethnic identity construct and its importance for the personal, social and educational wellbeing.

However, different communities seem to be affected differently, and Chapter Eight highlights the struggles of the Roma student community in coordinating and harmonising their identity performances within mainstream educational scenes. The chapter portrays the arduous educational journey of the Roma children, tracing a few paths in their customary struggles for reconciling

edification and self-fulfilment. It examines the social and academic consequences of disclosing the Roma identity within schools, revealing the community's assumed cognitive deficiencies, and debating potential materialistic, cultural, and self-representation embroilments in the Roma's educational misfortune. In this chapter, I contend that the community's yearning for standard prerogatives could be further jeopardised by a consciousness of absent trust in academic and labour organisations. The chapter also examines the social, political, and economic agenda sentencing the Roma's educational journey to disproportional affliction with disadvantage.

To conclude, Chapter Nine, draws together the central arguments of this study. I revisit my research questions discussing them in relation to key findings and analysis. I reiterate my argument that students' daily life experiences within multi-ethnic schools are burdened with the arduous obligations of cultural survival (Rong and Preissle 1998; Verkuyten 2016), which continue to twist and turn at negotiating identities through the constant evaluation of communities' symbolic paradigms; language, religion, standard norms of conduct and physical displays. I suggest that a constructive appreciation of ethnic identity ought to be based on a comprehensive approach, which demystifies the fixed notions around occupying the ethnic category, through considering the multiple resources individuals could draw on to construct their identity, whether ethnic, national, cultural, historical, locality, gender, class and/or sexual orientation.

I also note that despite a unifying agenda of conventional dedication to group affiliation and positivity, the ethnic category does divide its inherent groups according to which identity constituent they value most, and the extent of their commitment to reifying its modalities. On this note, I contend that while different groups peruse different ways of identifying, adjusting educational contexts to these variations should become a pedagogical fact engaging culturally sensitive and more efficient policies. This chapter explores these arguments in relation to the multiple dynamics dictating identity navigation by ethnic minority students to foster their cultural survival, besides communicating the academic and political value and importance of my research findings, sharing my recommendations for future research, and reflecting on the limitations of the study.

2. Ethnic minorities in the British educational story: the absent present

2.1 Introduction

Despite inherent differences among societies' formal education policies and practices, one fact stands for their unity; schooling remains the factory where all societies design minds and devise future citizens' socialisation. In addition to commanding instruction, delivering on learning and guiding to qualifications, schools assume the paramount mission of revealing society's values, where conserving its culture and structuring its roles stand at the core of the pedagogical mission (McCarthy 2014; Apple 2017). Therefore, for a society to operate effectively, education needs to not only foster individuals'

knowledge and skills, but also, imbue them with and dedicate them for welfare of the dominant culture (Bishop and Glynn 2003; Bhopal 2016). This, however, implies that society's dominant conceptions and ideologies would conceivably counsel perceptions of social verses individual needs: what resources are necessary for operating the education system, and who would be entitled to them. Unfortunately, this equation seems to override the rights of subordinate groups to representation in pedagogical conceptualisations, and limit freedoms of their individuals to access certain requisites and acquire particular skills. This could, consequently, result in a socio-educational hierarchy, where minority learners are constantly challenged and undermined.

This chapter traces the impact of British educational policies and practices on ethnic minority learners' experiences during the last few decades. Relying mainly on governmental resources, it explores issues relating to schooling non-native learners, notably addressing the compelling question of how fair Britain is, and whether its history of tolerance and open-mindedness has been evolving satisfactorily. The review will subsequently examine the way minority underachievement issues are politically delivered on, and question Britain's mono-cultural approach to curriculum and language instruction.

Aiming to trace the British political endeavours and the role of educational policies in the active restructuring of educational opportunities for different ethnic groups, this chapter focuses on the last few decades given their associations with the most significant events and developments in the history of schooling ethnic learners (Gillborn 1996,2005; Tomlinson 2008a; Rollock

2015). Particular reference to Wales, the study's site, will be emphasised where information is available.

2.2 Major challenges in educating ethnicity

Education practice and policy debates in the United Kingdom (UK) have for decades been struggling to cope with the increasing influences of racial, ethnic and cultural concepts, which have gained strong currency for bearing allusions to distinct cultures, modes of life, and all aspects of socialisation, notably inside schools. These factors, Tomlinson (2008a) argues, never cease to model life experiences of education at a variety of levels and respects, including school experiences, occupational opportunities, social interactions, family influences, curriculum responsiveness, evaluation and assessment issues. The terms 'race' and 'ethnicity' have evidenced intricacy within these parameters as far as the British context is concerned, seeing that the education system attempted, with varying degrees of success, to respond to racial and ethnic minorities' needs, while seeking to educate the majority about living in and benefiting from an ethnically diverse society (Rollock 2015). The national education system has indeed seen aspirations to create and maintain pedagogical policies and provisions sensitive to minority needs and values, but the processes have been complicated with demands to forge provisions around equality and fair representation. Equality, achievement, curriculum, and language concerns are substantiated centrality in this respect, as will be demonstrated throughout the rest of this chapter. However, before proceeding with this discussion, the following short section will clarify the terminology that was adopted throughout this account.

2.2.1 Terminology

Discourses around group diversity have long been incited by the belief that there are distinct groups whose different biological, social and/or cultural qualities suggest variant racial affiliation   (Cokley et al. 2003; Afridi 2015; Rollock 2015; Bhopal 2016). While distinguishing people into separate race groups is a moot point biologists prefer to avert (Smedley and Smedley 2005; Culley and Demaine 2006a), sociologists tend to be mindful that genetic lines within a supposed group might be more salient than lines demarcating group boundaries. Sociologists, then, show more engagement with the term ethnicity, a position advised by their interest in the socially constructed differences entrenched in cultural practices, heritage, and interactional codes (Carter and Fenton 2010). In light of this, and while still conscious of the biological consequences, I will use the terms ethnic, race and minority interchangeably throughout this chapter to address the relevant depictions and remediation through principles of action adopted by educational policies.

For Culley and Demaine (2006a), although modern approaches emphasise the dynamism, fluidity and contextual nature of group identification processes, including those pertinent to ethnicity, and despite strong allusions to their sensitive intersectionality with other dimensions (gender, class and sexuality), professional discourses remain helmed by cultural essentialist concepts of race and ethnicity. Concurrently, British educational policy is reproached for failing to consolidate the conceptual framework of their operational terminology, which remains a largely under theorised discourse of race rather than ethnicity discourse (Gillborn 2005; Culley and Demaine 2006a; Carter and Fenton

2010). According to these authors, the terms race and ethnic identity are used interchangeably for comprehensive references, while alleged group coherences and discordances invite further classifications; ethnic verses multi-ethnic, cultural verses multi-cultural and racial verses multi-racial.

2.2.2 Equality

As well as being a right in itself, equality is an enabling right, allowing individuals to access resources which would enable them to develop the skills, capacity and confidence needed to secure other social, political and economic rights and opportunities (Lynch and Baker 2005). A wealth of evidence has demonstrated that equality is a key determinant in balancing academic life opportunities among different groups being a crucial structure in the masonry of the educational utopia (Aspinall and Hashem 2011; Brubaker 2014; Bhopal 2016; Elvio 2016). For ethnic minority groups in Britain, striving to obtain fairness in schools suggests that equality remains a privilege numerous government policies have not yet been able to achieve (Tomlinson 2014).

Being one of the world's most modern and democratic societies (Afridi 2015; Elvio 2016), it seems axiomatic for Britain to endeavour for the realisation of equal opportunities for all, which would at least theoretically imply uniform access to and benefit from education, wealth, social status and power, regardless of social, biological, cultural and/or ideological subjectivities. According to Verma (1986) and Heymann et al. (2014), ensuring statutory provision for the realisation and protection of such a principle is essential for the functionality of institutional processes as all individuals would be

similarly equipped to face life exigencies from the start. Schools have been identified as key institutions in this debate for their crucial role in promoting individual self-development and ensuring the acquisition of skills required by society (Betts et al. 2016; Bowe et al. 2017; Tattum and Tattum 2017). However, in a multi-ethnic context, diversity seems to be the stumbling block facing this course of action as not everyone starts the race with the same power and pace. Debates about ethnic minority children in British schools escalated as their numbers increased in the aftermath of post-war migration from new Commonwealth countries, such as Africa, South East Asian and the Caribbean, while despite their heterogeneity, educational policies insisted on approaching them over-inclusively (Cummins 2005; Gillborn 2005; Rollock 2015; Bowe et al. 2017).

The pressures on ethnic minority groups have always been to find a secure position, somewhere in a continuum ranging from assimilation to threats of exclusion (Slade and Möllering 2010; Jandt 2017). This concern constantly challenges educational authorities seeking appropriate academic provisions, because of the need to design curricular around strategies of positive management of the British way of life (Tomlinson 2008a). Although learning the English language and identifying with its culture have been regarded as crucial in this mission, educational sociologists (Tomlinson 2008a; Gillborn 2015; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017; Shah 2017) have also recognised race relations, ethnicity, and religion as noteworthy for minority children's smooth absorption into mainstream education. This sociological position, however, stands in stark discrepancy with fundamental policies considering minority cultures as a barrier to, not only social and educational assimilation, but most

importantly achievement (Gillborn 1996; Culley and Demaine 2006b; Stevens 2007). Archer (2008) contends that for many decades, Britain's dominant discourses of the successful child have denied minority students a position on authentic success lists, an issue that will be visited in more detail later in this chapter (section 2.2.3). Yet, transforming educational institutions into truly egalitarian organisations remains a captive of rhetorical pledges, legislative fallacies and incongruent actions (Gillborn 2005; Rollock 2015).

Educational equity is recognised as being the fruit of a pluralist society, where ideologically different groups and/or those marked by the value of their symbolic distinctiveness from others within the same society are enabled to reinforce and preserve their own cultural identities, thereby constructing healthy self-images (Elvio 2016; Heywood 2017). Genuine pluralism, May (2001) contends, requires all social groups to have equal power and equal access to material and social resources, active engagement with social purposes and the ability to affect state plans and actions for maintaining their cultural and political autonomy. Arguably, this has never been the case in Britain, as the main tendencies to implement social equity centred on geographical and cultural cohesion plans, and ghetto-like approaches considered as a new form of racism, which do nothing but support traditional stratification patterns (Wilson 2007; Werbner 2015; Apple 2017).

Education appropriates a major part of the debate around issues of equality and ethnicity. Werbner (2015) contends that more holistic and integrated polices are needed to guarantee egalitarianism in British academic spheres, for example 'equality of resources, respect and recognition, love, care and

solidarity, power, and working and learning' (p.2). She adds that such a paradigm's efficiency rests upon the recognition of the deeply integrated relationship between education and the society's economic, political, socio-cultural and affective systems.

Lord Swann's report (1985)[1] outlined the British educational system's inadequacies as early as the 1960s, claiming that the system reinforced notions of inferiority among minority groups. He titled his report 'education for all' to avoid explicit reference to and focus on race and ethnicity (Tomlinson 2008a), and a clear emphasis was placed on the importance of educating every child regardless of their social group (SCRIB 2010). His findings denounced the assimilation and integration solutions adopted then as incompatible with the constantly changing and evolving nature of the British society (Verma 1989). In fact, the British government's 1977 Green paper 'Education in Schools' incited all schools to instil an understanding of both multi-ethnic nature of the British society, and the significant place Britain occupies in the interdependent world (HDA 2009). This could be seen in the first major government report urging for the implementation of a curriculum responsive to the multiracial nature of the British society (Verma 1989). However, the government was later reported to lack genuine support, and good progress could only be reported twenty five years later, although some of the recommendations are still relevant today (HDA 2009; Jeffcoate 2017).

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[1] The Swann Report (1985), Education for All, is a report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups. This report is about the response of the education service to ethnic diversity concerns; all who have responsibilities in education as well as all parents and their children.

Priorities around language teaching were communicated in the 1985 Swann report, which recommended English language provision within schools, while also emphasising the need for minority languages to be part of modern language curriculum of secondary schools. The committee also expressed objections to establishing separate religious schools, as it might potentially exacerbate feelings of exclusion and isolation, highlighting the need for all pupils to share common school-life experiences (National Council for Mother Tongue Teaching (2010). Introducing a different language and ideology was believed to potentially factorise division (SCRIB 2010). It is worth highlighting that more than 25 years later, researchers and practitioners are still mounting heated debates about faith schools and community cohesion, yet often sparking reversed themes; for example, the argument that faith schools need to become schools for both religious and secular pupils to encourage interaction and teach them tolerance at younger ages (Flint 2007; Paton 2010).

Instructional equality has also triggered contention. The Swann report made serious recommendations about teacher education and ethnic minority teachers' employment. It held that all teachers should receive training about multicultural contexts regardless of the nature of their actual placements, revealing concerns about ethnic minority teachers' underrepresentation, and urging statistical institutions to engage in collecting data on the ethnic origins of teachers and teacher trainees (National Council for Mother Tongue Teaching 2010). According to 2010 statistics, only six per cent of the UK's total instructional board was ethnic, although this could be regarded as significant progress compared to 2.4 per cent in 2004 (Cabinet Office 2017).

However, the most recent figures by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and Runnymede Trust do not show a significant progress in 2018, as BME teachers represented only ten percent in secondary schools, seven percent in primary, and less than 4 per cent of head teachers were reported in both primary and secondary schools (Pells 2017).

It is important here to note the obvious differences between the United Kingdom's countries. In England, out of 498,100, the total state-funded schools' teachers (classroom, head teachers and deputy and assistant heads), 13.6 per cent of all those whose ethnicity was known were 'all other ethnic' in England in 2017 (Department for Education 2018). However, this lack of instructional diversity is reported as a real issue in Wales, as National Assembly for Wales (2018) warn that Black And Minority Ethnic (BAME) teachers, currently three per cent of the total teacher population, continue to be highly underrepresented. Such a claim is corroborated by the Wales Education Workforce Council confirming that none of Wales's 1,458 head teachers are ethnic (WalesOnline 2017; Wightwick 2017). The same sources communicate school leader organisations' grievances for the absence of ethnic head teachers in Wales citing the example of Blaenau Gwent employing the first ever black head teacher, who assumes he might have been the first black person his pupils have come across in their life.

In 2015, the Educational Institution of Scotland (EIS) made an urgent call to gather data on the number of ethnic teachers and lecturers, with specific emphasis on those holding senior management positions. This followed a report from the Official Scottish Government statistics (Educational Institute

of Scotland 2016). Denholm (2015) revealed that 'one per cent of teachers come from a minority ethnic group despite the fact they account for four per cent of the Scottish population'. The Educational Institute of Scotland have also shared concerns that Scotland's diverse population is not reflected in the landscape of higher education. Similarly, in Northern Ireland experts have warned against the disadvantageous professional environments apprising 60 per cent of black and ethnic minority teachers' volition of leaving their profession. Besides low expectations and little support from senior staff in their schools, these teachers were found to be beaten down by daily social micro-aggressions and frustrating mountains of paperwork (Adams 2017; Pells 2017).

In light of this, teacher recruitment appears to be an important equality issue to address, insofar as more ethnic background teacher employment was a measure promoted and enacted by the UK government via its Teaching and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) in 2005 (Culley and Demaine 2006b). The agency strives for the realisation of its nine percent minority ethnic background trainee target in the UK, and is responsible for overseeing teacher recruitment, although the procedure itself is mostly assumed by the institutional departments in question and a few specialist organisations (The National Archives 2003).

This is a matter that warrants deep scrutiny, however, it does not seem to be the only issue as representation is far from escaping the tangle of geographic and demographic disparities, and how they can shape schools' landscapes. The 17 per cent figure of pupils categorised as ethnic minority (Department for

Edcation and Skills 2005b) does not reflect the regional ethnic concentration, nor does it seem to reveal attempts to match teacher-pupil ethnic background profiles, and the potential appropriateness of such a direction, not least in terms of the schools' approval. Carrington et al. (2001) report that teacher trainees do not seem to favour career placement according to ethnic profile, and Culley and Demaine (2006b) contend that apart from the nine per cent workforce policy, underachievement and exclusion figures, there are few efficient ethnic education related endeavours. Lynch and Baker (2005) advocate for a multi-perspective approach for a fairer and more efficient management of educational diversity through treasuring educational democracy, fostering emotional values (love, care and solidarity), and tackling social class differences.

However, since the Swann Report's publication in 1985, commendable strides have been made in adopting a race/ethnicity-neutral approach. Attainment levels of ethnic students have risen, but not with the aspired consistency and constancy to see the gap between them and the majority (their non-ethnic peers) close (Lymperopoulou 2015; Bhopal 2016). Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) illustrated that in the enrolments by personal characteristics from 2012/13 to 2016/17, only 419105 (18.2 %) ethnic students were enrolled compared to a total of 2,317,880 (HESA 2018). Similarly, Smith 2017 drew a similar picture regarding attainment, as the percentage achievement of good graduate degrees among BME students is 46%, compared to 64% of their White counterparts.

One important government policy was the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA) 2000. It was an 'Act to extend further the application of the Race Relations Act 1976 to the police and other public authorities…for the purpose of safeguarding national security, and for connected purposes' (UK.GOV 2000, p. 11). The Act came into force two years later, assigning legal duties for all public institutions including schools to formulate strategies for promoting race equality, and endorsing plans to narrow attainment gaps between majority and minority groups.

Diversity and life in a multicultural society were also reinforced by a government legislation intended at introducing citizenship in the curriculum to enable the students to safely negotiate the exigencies of multicultural Britain. This has been considered a more explicit move compared with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) established under the 1997 Education Act, which entails observance of race, religion and multicultural issues in the assessment measures and qualifications. It is interesting to note that Lord Swann himself called for a reinforcement of such measures back in the late seventies, criticizing the government's tendency in the 1950's and 1960's for playing down the implications of immigration, when suggesting that no relevant social policy response or school measures needed to be taken. He also noted that many urban schools in England had already been attempting minority responsive programmes for some ethnic learners 'without any guidance from the then Ministry of Education' (Verma 1986, p. 66).

Further equality enhancement policies were endorsed in 2006 by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), through the revised Race and Equality Scheme (Ofsted 2006). This scheme aimed 'to increase the number of BME (Black, minority and ethnic) staff in senior roles, including a review of our recruitment, promotion, secondment and induction process, and further diversity training for staff' (Offsted 2006, online). It also instructed school inspections to assess equality policies put in place 'for employees, children, young people and learners of all backgrounds '. Ofsted later reinforced this with the New School Inspection Framework (NSIF) in 2009, which required inspectors to prioritise achievement of different learner groups as well as overall attainment (Ofsted 2009).

In 2010 a new Act came into force bringing together 116 pieces of legislation into one single Act, the Equality Act (UK Parliament 2015). This replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act to provide a single consolidated source of discrimination law. The term 'protected characteristics' was introduced to consider age, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy and maternity, gender assignment, sexual orientation and marriage as aspects of identity, which warrant legal action if transgressed. All public sectors and institutions must abide by the Act's equality provisions, putting into force the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which was introduced in 2011, as a lever for ensuring equality in their day-to-day work. Subsequently, directives were given to schools to eradicate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, promote the right to equivalent opportunities, and foster positive relations between people who share a relevant protected

characteristic and those who do not (Ministry of Justice 2012). Active demonstration of how such duties are met was made a mandatory practice to be documented through annually published information about compliance with the equality duty, and publishing precise and measurable targets every four years.

Two years later, the government instructed the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) and the International Centre for Public and Social Policy (CPSP) to investigate general organisations' accommodation and application of the Equality Act's decrees, based on a survey of more than 1800 organisations throughout the United Kingdom (Government Equalities Office 2012). In 76 per cent of the businesses investigated, reputation and equality measures correlated highly, and only six per cent of employers were reported to have experienced complaints. These finding might not be of a direct relevance to schools, however, they could be useful in gauging the general landscape of equality matters.

Making a more direct link with education, in 2014, ROTA-Race On The Agenda (2014) concluded that the majority of free schools are not making reference to the Equality Act 2010 or the PSED, confirming that over a third failed to publish any equalities information or objectives. Perry (2016) attributes this reluctance to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the Equality Act, hindering schools' commitment to equality and inclusion, and affecting communities' awareness of how their schools are advancing on diversity issues. She also contends that the issue transcends these executive concerns to rather structural ones. For her, the problem lies in the way the

European Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is operated, being arguably assigned the duty of enforcing the Equality Act while allocated insufficient funding for executing the task.

This chronicle reflects the broad remit and long history of ethnic groups' recognition concerns. However, the most radical and far-reaching type of equal opportunity has always been the realisation of equality of achievement (Ofsted 2014; Quinn and Cooc 2015; Vaughan et al. 2015; Schotte et al. 2017). This concept is undeniably replete with principles of social justice. All social groups, however defined by religion, class of origin, gender, culture or ethnicity, should have equal opportunities to and levels of educational attainment (Eisenberg and Spinner-Halev 2005; Francis 2006; Elvio 2016). The next section offers an account of ethnic minority achievement debates, policymaking and implementation in the UK.

2.2.3 Achievement

Underachievement debates have traditionally been characterised by a gendered approach, which mostly pathologises male learners' intellectual abilities (Archer 2016; Bristol 2015; Moreau 20111; Stahl 2015; Tizard 2017), despite a few initiatives to investigate these concerns among female students (Jones 2004; Jones 2005; Pop 2016). However, it is worth considering the tendency of consistently lower school performance and examination results among minority leaners, which became a major issue from the 1960's onwards in the UK (Tomlinson 2008a). The trend was concomitant with parents' feelings of bitterness and exasperation, notably as

families became more conscious of the indispensability of educational credentials for, not only moving to higher education, but for employment opportunities and social mobility.

The identified ethnic groups' assimilation deficit was formally voiced in the Rampton Report (1981) (HDA 2009), and later substantiated in the Swann Report (1985) (Verma 1986; Culley and Demaine 2006b). A large body of research documenting ethnic academic underachievement has been amassed since the 1960s confirming recurrent perplexing patterns among African-Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students, insofar as the issue has developed into an important aspect of public policy debate (Department for Education and Skills 2005a), and a focal interest of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted 2005). Assuming the responsibility of recording and publishing public examination results of students aged 16 to 18, Ofsted acknowledges variations between individual schools, and similar disparities among educational authorities, while an inveterate performance modality characterises children from different ethnic backgrounds. Chinese and Indian girls top the exam results' lists, while African-Caribbean boys reside at the bottom (Culley and Demaine 2006b; Crawford and Wang 2015). Similarly, Gillborn and Mirza (2000) evidenced progressive attainment inequalities for African-Caribbean boys, notably at the end of primary and secondary school phases, while Gillborn (2015) and Rollock (2015) further to confirm a similar pattern in school exclusions rates.

Tomlinson (2008a) refers to the 1990s as the decade the government made explicit promises to deliver on such concerns. The Labour government then

set up a unit in the Education Department to monitor achievement, now called Ethnic Minorities Achievement Division. Initiated in 1997, the ring-fenced Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) was allocated on a needs based formula to all local authorities for covering some of the costs of additional bilingual and underachieving BME pupils' support. This was followed with the 1998 government inquiry on the dimensions of ethnic minority underachievement, and from then onwards, every White Paper[2] and legislation document included relevant recommendations, with encouraging signs already reported in 2002 (Tomlinson 2008a), despite persisting claims that Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students are least likely to leave high school with sufficient General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades (Department for Education and Skills 2003a; Strand 2012; Wong 2016). In fact, the years 2001/2 witnessed a brisk political motion feeding into the government's promises of 'education as passion and priority' (Tomlinson 2008a, p. 127). The main initiatives included:

- Further emphasis on and funding to the Labour Government's 1999 Excellence in Cities programme (EIC) (Kendall et al. 2005), originally meant to raise standards and promote inclusion, while being chiefly concerned with inner cities and other urban areas. In 2001, GCSEs at A*-C in Excellence in Cities schools was almost double that of schools who were not in the programme, and by 2005, Ofsted reports show the gap between both cohorts narrowing from 10.4 percentage points to 7.8 percentage points (Ofsted 2005).

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[2] The term white paper originated with the British government, and many point to the Churchill White Paper of 1922 as the earliest well-known example under this name. It is a policy document that requires both Cabinet and House of Commons' approval (James 2017).

- Increasing the number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the qualifications and aspirations to enter higher education, an Excellence Challenge programme was launched by the DfES in 2001 targeting 13 to 19-year-old students from deprived areas, whether in EiC or non-EiC Education Action Zones (EAZs).

- Better monitoring of the EMAG to support English as Additional Language (EAL) students' needs, and the recruitment of more ethnic-background teachers (Cunningham and Hargreaves 2007).

Nonetheless, Tomlinson (2005) and (Rollock 2015) contend that these recommendations did not achieve the intended outcomes. It seems a rational stand, though, considering the   disconcerting acknowledgements made by DfES (2003, p4), as 'opportunities are unequal for many of the one in eight pupils who come from a minority ethnic background'. DfES urged for stronger EAL strategies, while presuming the existence of differences among ethnic groups, to the extent of warning that African-Caribbean children will end up in the criminal justice system if political systems continue to fail them (Tomlinson 2008a; Rollock 2015). Sadly, this failure proved to be still evident in 2004. Simplistic comparisons expounded this inter-group discrepancy with family educational background, aligning Indian and Chinese students with success stories, while pathologising Black and Muslim students and their families. However, facile comparisons in this context could sound more reasonable compared to the blame-shifting made by politicians who observed that failure and success are inherent in who one is, their identity.

Tomlinson (2005) positioned approaches in the Aiming High policies as ineffectual, because they recorded these pupils' high likelihood of exclusion due to special educational needs socially and culturally cultivated. For Tomlinson, they lacked reference to the 'long history of negative treatment of black students in the British educational system, and which has continued well into the 2000s' (p162). The cultural obstacle pretext was also mounted by Adolph Cameron, then-current Head of the Jamaican Teachers' Association (2002-2014), who exonerated educational policies from alleged deficiencies, while imputing African-Caribbean and Jamaican males' school failure to cultural and gender ideologies. He stated:

That notion of masculinity says that if as a male you aspire to perform highly it means you are feminine, even to the extent of saying you are gay. But in the context of Jamaica, which is so homophobic, male students don't want to be categorised in that way so that they would deliberately underperform in order that they are not… I would not be surprised if here in England the same or similar things occur in terms of how they feel about themselves and how they respond to and with respect to the society around them […] Boys are more interested in hustling, which is a quick way of making a living, rather than making the commitment to study. This is supposed to be a street thing which is a male thing…The influence of this attitude towards masculinity seems to be having a tremendous impact on how well African-Caribbean and Jamaican males do (Wardrop 2011, online).

Conceptualising the Black community's educational difficulties deepened the gap between politicians, on the one hand, and human rights activists and practitioners on the other hand. The practitioners hands on experience appear to generate a different rational. One of them is the general secretary of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) Christine Blower (2009-2016) who appreciates the 'obvious issues' with Black boys both in Jamaica and the UK, while at the same time reproaching educational policies for failing to acknowledge and replicate positive experiences among this cohort. Similarly, the Commission for Racial Equality, a non-departmental body currently named Equality and Human Rights Commission, has for long disputed this position ascribing African-Caribbean boys' pedagogical struggles to failing educational systems, which risk alienating this group into a 'permanent underclass' (Smithers 2005).

The attainment discourses in the 2010's seem to strike a new tone, shifting away from documenting hopeless and deficient policies to impressively acclaim unprecedented educational progress among ethnic minority students (Jivraj and Simpson 2015; Miah 2015; Shah 2017), but only to commend students' resilience to the barriers they face. The point is that racial and ethnic marginalisation, enclosure in deprived areas, language and cultural impediments, poverty, and lack of general social capital were subdued by attitudes, behaviour, aspirations and financial contributions of parents of minority ethnic students. Such an attitude seems to have played a significant role in raising their children's ambitions and attainment, and was regarded as a compensation for many government inefficiencies, including the 2012

discontinuation of the ring-fenced property of EMAG to become part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

This meant that schools were no longer required to spend the funding on provision for EAL learners or minority ethnic pupils at risk of school failure (Arnot et al. 2014). Similarly, the Welsh Government amalgamated the previously ring-fenced grant into the new Education Improvement Grant from 2015-16 on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children (National Assembly for Wales 2017). The move triggered concerns in the National Assembly for Wales' Children, Young People and Education Committee over the potential impact of the 2015-16 and 2016-17 budget on the same student cohort, in that the Welsh Government failed to deliver on the aims of the original grants (National Assembly for Wales 2017).

By 2015, the UK parliament seems to be trapped in a vicious loop of repetitions and contradictions, which saw the House of Commons 'again' recommending research into the reasons why ethnic pupils from certain communities do better at school than others (UK Parliament 2015), and whether to engage a Pupil Premium for addressing deficient parental involvement. In December 2017, a reduced gap between disadvantaged pupil groups was reported, with claims that it was narrower than ever (Education Endowment Foundation 2018). However, this position has been challenged:

> Theresa May's government will make little or no headway in
> closing the attainment gap in schools before the next election…A
> study by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) found that

the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates grows

wider at every stage of education (Ladin 2015, online).

The same source also contends that the attainment gap recorded in 2017 will increase in 2021. Elsewhere, the National Education Union general secretary Mary Bousted claimed that 'the link between social demography and educational destiny has not been broken' (National Eduction Union 2018), accusing Conservative dogma of undermining efforts for progress, and criticising current educational policies for compounding the gap created by disadvantage. For her, current funding for early-years provision is wholly inadequate and needs to be reviewed if the government is serious about ensuring that disadvantaged children get the best start.

Thus, it seems there has been little genuine effort to support the UK government's stipulations that educational institutions have a legal duty to end differential educational outcomes among ethnic and all disadvantaged pupils. In fact, some researchers claim that the issue transcends economic and social disadvantage into positive consideration of cultural values and systems, which can greatly influence learning processes for their decisiveness over psychological wellbeing and identity manifestations (Cummins 2005; Crawford and Wang 2015; Jacob et al. 2015). Good and Lavigne (2017) believe that ethnic students attainment has for decades been a difficult conundrum for experts, nevertheless, as discussed in the following section, culturally responsive curricula might be the answer.

2.2.3.1 Insights into the Roma, Somali and Arab students' achievement in the UK

The chapter has so far consolidated the idea that recent decades were marked by significant concerns amongst academics and policy makers both in and outside the UK about the educational achievements and aspirations of children from different racial and ethnic minority groups, although the tendency has recently been to address both categories as ethnic (Khattab 2009; Shah et al. 2010; Platt 2011; Stevenson et al. 2019). Findings stress the high cost such a belonging and its affirmation incur on individuals' school experiences, emphasising the risks of ethnic group visibility, whether in terms of skin colour, phenotypical traits, and cultural proximity to the hegemonic culture. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, results from many studies in the United Kingdom indicate that, overall, ethnic minority students' educational processes are not progressing satisfactorily across school grades, standardized achievement tests, higher/further education representation, and levels of educational attainment (Cassen 2007; Hutchinson 2016). These sources further stress that the white/ethnic achievement gap appears in the early school years, continues and escalates during the primary school stage, and persists through the secondary education.

However, the main/subordinate group analogy should not obscure facts about the diverging experiences of members of different ethnic groups, which imply that the latter cannot be regarded as a homogenised group. Indeed, and as previously mentioned in section 2.2.3, some groups such as Caribbean, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis students, appear to have been reinforcing

patterns of educational underperformance, unlike their Chinese and Indian peers generally regarded as proportionally high achievers (Khattab 2009; Shah et al. 2010; Crawford and Wang 2015). In fact, even more unfortunate groups appeared later as 'Gypsy/Roma' and 'Travellers of Irish heritage', and these have only been included as separate ethnic categories by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in England and Wales as late as 2003 (DfES 2003). Despite the UK government's 2003 commitments to equality of opportunity and inclusion as 'Every Child Matters' slogan implied, Cudworth (2008) believes Gypsy/Traveller pupils' educational experiences continue to be synonymous with discrimination, while remaining the worst achieving ethnic minority group in the history of the UK schooling system. Evidence shows that many years later (2011), the group's levels at core subjects (22%), and percentages of 5+A*-C including English and Maths (10%) were not only lower than all other groups, but also lowest recorded thus far (Foster and Norton 2012). Contrarily, the same source elaborates, Roma did frequently prove to top the figures, but it was solely in negative performance areas, such as school exclusion, behavioural referrals, truancy and absences.

Sadly, such performance patterns kept reinforcing over the years that followed. As an illustration of the intra-ethnic group achievement disparities, England's 2015/16 progress rates by ethnicity for students aged between 11 and 16 results ranked Roma/Gypsy groups last, well below average (-1.16, -0.69) (GOV.UK 2017). Even when breaking these results down to the number of GCSEs obtained, the Gypsy Roma students were the least likely to obtain

a grade 5 or above in English and maths, besides their highest overall absence rates with pupils missing 10% or even more of their school sessions. Figures 1 and 2 display some very recent statistics, which were released by UK Parliament 2018 about the community's school attendance and GCSE attainment rates corroborating most impressions reported so far.

Figure 1: Persistent absence by ethnicity 2016-17/ UK Parliament
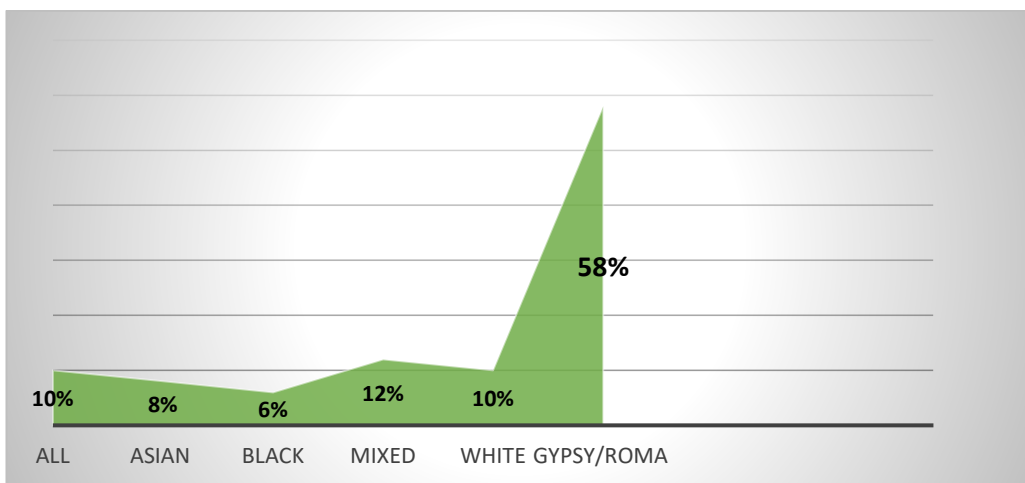
Figure 2: % of achieving A*-C in English and Maths and 5 A*-C at GCSE 2015-16
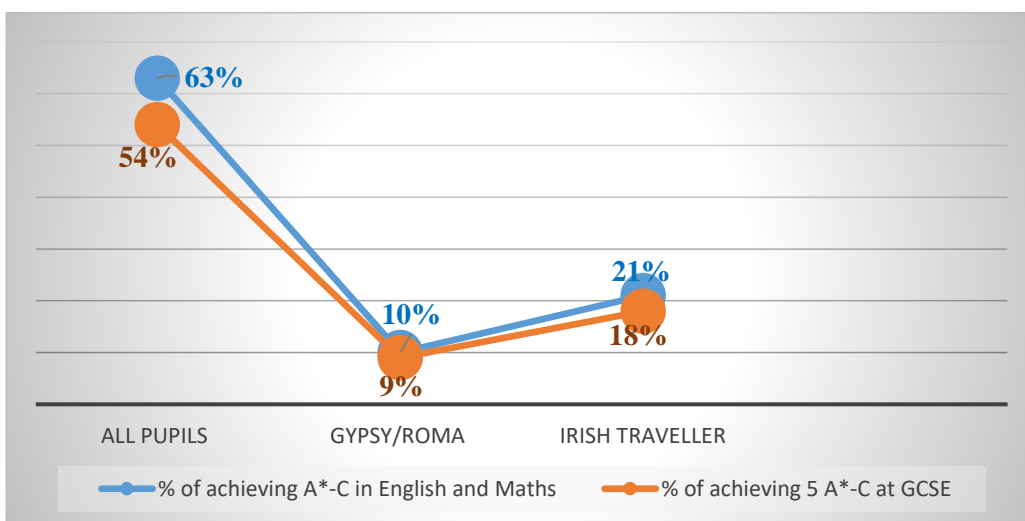
Achievement by ethnic group, might sometimes still need further discernment, though, especially as sub-ethnic categorisation could in some cases conceal additional contrasts, such as the school performance of Somali heritage students which remains far below their Black African and Black Caribbean peers. Relevant arguments point that this community's needs have been overlooked given its lack of recognition as a distinct ethnic group. In 2006, for instance, the Department for Educational Standards (DfES) ranked the Somali students at the bottom of GCSE performance compared to other ethnic groups (Chinese, Indian, White, British, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African and Black Caribbean) in England, with only 34%, even lower than all other Black groups (Demie and Lewis 2006) . Many years later, findings in several of London's Boroughs, such as Lambeth and Brent, also revealed a consistent low attainment pattern raising particular concerns about the male student community. The performance of a significant proportion of Somali boys was the lowest of all ethnic groups, with only 30% of them achieving 5 GCSEs grade A*- C (Arnold et al. 2011). Correspondingly, the Welsh Assembly Government 2002/03 report, which seems to be the latest to acknowledge Somali related performance matters, presented data where Somali students showed a significant and continuous decline in English, maths and science from Key Stage two (KS2)- pupils in years 3 to 6 (see figure 3 below generated based on the report's data). Regrettably, more recent investigations on the community appear to be unavailable, notably with regard to educational representation and attainment across different levels of

schooling. So far, work has tended to mainly describe social, economic and political circumstances (Hill 2017; Mahmoud 2011; Ahmed 2012) with little, if any, relevance to school performance at all.

Figure 3: Specific ethnic groups' core subject indicator comparison
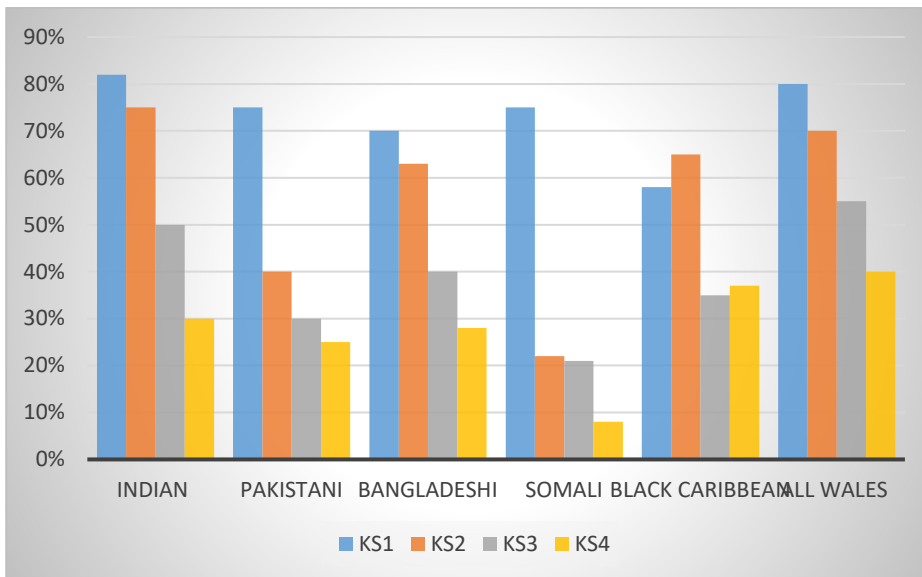
Yet, there is a reverse version of the story. The way ethnic categorisation seems to conceal some groups perceived to be worthy of individual classification, as is the case with Somali students, a comprehensive 'Arab' ethnic category has only recently been conferred on student groups from the Arab League[3] countries. The National Association of British Arabs (NABA) and other Arab organisations campaigned for the introduction of an independent 'Arab' entry, which would include inappropriately recorded groups from the Arab world, like Syrians, Yemenis, Somalis and Maghrebis,

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3 The Arab League is a regional organization of Arab states in and around North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Arabia. It was formed in Cairo on 22 March 1945 with six members: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan , Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Yemen joined as a member on 5 May 1945. Currently, the League has 22 members, but Syria's participation has been suspended since November 2011, as a consequence of government repression during the Syrian Civil War.

who all had to tick 'other' before 2011 (Jivraj 2012). Before then (2003), and as a matter of fact, EALAW[4] had to put a foot-note for Yemeni pupils whose 2001 attainment was 'the lowest overall'. Interestingly, and before 2011, Arab students were generally referred to with their language; 'Arabic-speaking students' (EALAW 2003; Malcolm 2008), despite that some of them might not be able to speak it in real life by virtue of birth or long life in the UK. Although this late recognition has eased some concerns over discrimination and planning of services, a number of governmental statistics still fail to reference the category, such as all 2016/7 England's Ethnicity Facts and Figures referenced earlier in the section. This then might have contributed to the dearth of information in respect to Arab community's educational achievement, a lack mostly redressed by single country data, such as BME students' attainment figures where 'Yemeni' presented as a separate category throughout ethnic classification. The next census (2021), it is hoped, will cover this shortage with more inclusive and accurate information about issues relevant to Arab students as an ethnic category, away from reference to the Arabic language and culture, which seem to dominate the debates about school achievement of this community, although most of them are aimed outside UK contexts (Abu-Hilal et al. 2016; United Nations 2016, EALAW 2003).

This argument shows that the efficiency of comparative studies and statistics can only be obtained through a balancing act that acknowledges the substantiality of individual differences within each ethnic group as well as the

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[4] EALAW: English as an additional language association of Wales.

need to appropriately cluster communities sharing strong cultural, geographical, social and political attributes.

2.2.4 Curriculum and language issues

Despite the plethora of initiatives, legislations and interventions, Britain's government policies regarding school curriculum remain arguably among the least culturally responsive in the West (Machin and Vignoles 2006). Successive governments seem to have failed to deliver on policies that address cultural ignorance and intolerance, ethnocentric attitudes, and the deep-rooted racism in society (UNESCO World Report 2009; Baldwin 2017). Based on the definition of school curriculum as an essential selection, a representative sample from the culture of a society (Gillborn 1990), it would be hard to conclude if Britain has or has ever had a single culture based on its mono-cultural approach to curriculum.

Sociologists of education have increasingly been interested in the selection, implementation and outcomes of different curricular models (Penuel et al. 2007; Crawford and Wang 2015), in the midst of heated and often discordant debates involving claims and counter-claims about ethnic minority cultures' representations within the curriculum. These confrontations sharpened at the introduction of the national curriculum[5] (late 1980s-early 1990s), which

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[5]The national curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject. Other types of school like academies and private schools do not have to follow the national curriculum' (GOV. UK 2014, online).

magnified curriculum issues among practitioners and activists, marking a new phase in a long established quest for an education which is of relevance to every pupil in the country (Henson 2015). McLaren (2015) considers that UK legislations in this context have been counselled by the wider political context of changing perspectives regarding the root-cause issues of race relations in the country.

Indeed, in the 1970's and early 1980's, some courses were designed and implemented in schools, with a psychological drive to counter the problems of identity and self-image promulgated at the time as their reason for their failure (Rollock 2015). Despite being perceived as a radical change, the initiative was regarded by Gillborn (1990) as 'compensatory, locating the problem in the victim rather than the system' (p. 148). But even when momentum grew for change across the entire curriculum, it was difficult to achieve a commonly accepted definition of what multicultural curriculum should parallel (Tomlinson 2008a). Early endeavours, 1960s-1980s, saw policies based on attempts to assimilation and integration fail for devaluing EM individuals, and reducing the problem to a temporary issue that could go away as soon as they are fully assimilated, to eventually become just another congruous part of society (Gillborn 2005; Rollock 2015).

Arguably, Lord Swann's 1985 report failed to change the entrenched resistance to recommendations for rethinking curricular towards reflecting the pluralist nature of society. Bringing modification to an Anglo centric syllabus was constantly faced with antagonism (Aman 2017). There have been claims that the British government in the eighties used to exercise considerable pressure on and interference with the different groups appointed for the development of

the national curriculum (Johnson et al. 2007). For example, Tomlinson (2008b) found Margaret Thatcher's, Prime Minister at the time, attempts to impose her views of traditional British history as epitomic, especially when documenting in her memoires conspicuous exasperation at dealing with proposals about multiculturalism or anti-racism. Similarly, Graham and Tytler (1993), based on Graham's three year experience as a chief executive of the newly-established National Curriculum Council (NCC), raised serious concerns over Conservative ministers' 'starkly clear' statements that any allusions to multicultural education is impermissible:

> What must be said is that it was made starkly clear by to NCC by ministers that whatever influence it might have would be rapidly dissipated by entering what was widely seen as a non-go area. Perhaps expectations were too high among those affected and the pressure groups so active in the field. Certainly, NCC has conscientiously sought to remove inequality and gender-bias from each subject tackled (p.132).

Graham's mission of introducing the inclusive curriculum into the 24,000 state schools in England and Wales from 1988 to 1991 failed, when he resigned as Chairman and Chief Executive of the National Curriculum Council following deep ideological divisions with the Education Secretary. The 1988 Education Reform Act rhetoric and implementation strategies proved highly incongruent, notably at promising greater attention to culture and diversity in:

a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (Department for education 2014),

while in practice, it recommends teaching children aged 5-16 with:

particular prominence to the three core subjects of English, mathematics, and science (with Welsh providing a core subject in Wales). In addition there were seven further foundation subjects, consisting of history, geography, design and technology, art, music, physical education and (secondary pupils only) a (1) foreign language (Martin 1997, p. 186).

In addition to neglecting the 17 to 18-year-old range, and making no reference to the other not yet devolved nations at the time, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the proclaimed balance does not appear to attach any value to culture as the Act spelled out, and by extension to ethnic and racial matters. Nowadays, compulsory teaching of only one foreign language in children's school time is still practiced, but further restricted to up to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level, and constantly regarded as highly deficient (McLelland 2017,2018).

The succeeding Labour government (1997) continued to show similar reluctance to implement educational content aimed at preparing all young

people to live in a multi-ethnic society (Tomlinson 2008a), until the Macpherson Report 1999. The report reviewed the murder of a black young man, Stephen Lawrence, by a group of white men in 1993, and concretely evidenced institutional racism among some social sectors, thereby unearthing ethnic responsive educational demands (Yuval-Davis 1999; Cottle 2004). It concluded that the incident was 'solely and unequivocally motivated by racism' (Jones 2017, online) and its 70 recommendations were considered a turning point in the overall social relations history in Britain. Four of these were assigned to better recognise diversity and reflect the needs of ethnic communities in education, through amending the national curriculum to value cultural diversity and prevent racism (Tomlinson 2005; Rollock 2015). This was met with assurances from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) that from 2000 onwards the curriculum would endorse mechanisms for healthier, livelier, inquisitive, and rational young people, with positive participation in the multi-ethnic society (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 1999; The National Archives 2009). These recommendations were approached with scepticism, however, as teachers remained concerned over appropriate guidance, while the subsequent government's main action enforced a mandatory citizenship education across the UK in 2002 (Howe and Covell 2009). In Tomlinson's (2008) assessment, this substantiated another government's failure to handle the classic dilemmas of diversity, gender and ethnic equality, and anti-racism.

The following few years hosted a promotion of policies to teach English to new citizens, while applicants still have the option of any UK language, English, Welsh or Irish (Crick 2003). There have been very few signs of genuine

engagement with fostering bilingual skills in mainstream schools and the wider society, specifically outside the local linguistic triad (Anderson 2008). Publications from the Department for Education and Skills (2003a) seem to disregard the value of children's home languages in building a national positive attitude towards language learning in general, while Li and Moyer (2009) allude to underlying assumptions of monolingualism. They discuss the example of David Blunkett (former Labour secretary) who identified the inability to speak English at home as 'the schizophrenia which bedevils generational relationships' (p, 307). More recently, current Prime Minister, Theresa May, failed to acknowledge multilingualism among the five British values: 'regard for the rule of law, participation in and acceptance of democracy, equality, free speech and respect for minorities…which have made our multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society succeed'. This extract could be found in both Brady and Wire (2015) and GOV.UK (2015).

Arnot et al. (2014) believe that failure to satisfy the needs of bilingual learners has subverted endeavours to design appropriate pedagogies for supporting bilingual learners, notably through policies such as DfE's 2012 policy document, which states that the main responsibility for preserving heritage languages rests within the ethnic minority community themselves. In light of this, suggestions have been made to adopt bilingual teaching programmes similar to those that have been successfully developed for Welsh in Wales, and Gaelic in Scotland alongside English (Williams 2008; O'Hanlon 2014). However, whilst there is clearly scope for such a measure in some contexts, it would be hard to pursue everywhere in the country seeing the significant range of languages spoken in British schools today. Nonetheless, alternatives

have to be endorsed if governments intend to promote a smooth home-school transition, better learner and community involvement in the learning process, and importantly minority students' emotional stability, which Krashen (1987) sees as a key enhancer of cognitive output.

The account above suggests that cultural and ethnic representation in education has always been at the disposal of politics, while it seems uncommon to question whether politics have any duties towards embodying identity agendas as part of ethnic citizens' exercise of their universal rights. Such geopolitical comprehension, however, could not be balanced unless reversed to examine the state of the art among the nations' smaller matryoshkas[6]. I will take the example of the smallest doll in the UK, Wales, because of its direct relevance to this study.

2.2.5 Legal and local considerations

It is useful to locate this issue within its legal framework; minority languages and education rights in international law. In this respect, May (2001) draws on two broad legal approaches. First, under the principle that 'the state does not interfere with efforts on the part of the minority to make of their language in the private domains' (p. 185), tolerance-oriented rights foster the prerogative of preserving mother tongues in the national life's private and nongovernmental sphere: home and public, cultural, social and economic

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[6] Matryoshkas is a set of traditional Russian wooden dolls of differing sizes, each somewhat resembling a skittle in shape and designed to nest inside the next largest (Oxford English Dictionary).

institutions, and the legal entitlement to foster native languages in private schools. The second, and under the percept of recognising minority rights within the civic realm of the nation state, commands public authorities to promote minority languages in all formal domains.

The United Nations stress minorities' 'right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language in private and in public…and allow them adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue, or to have instruction in their mother tongue' (UN Office for the High Commissioner 1992). Such directives, May (2001) confirms, 'would necessarily require the provision of state-funded minority language education as of a right' (p. 185). This statement alone could bear a legal evidence that minority language rights continue to face considerable opposition from the British government. Afridi (2015) argues that Britain's long-held antipathy towards separate minority rights has been particularly evident where mother tongues are involved. Other researchers condemn the notable lack of genuine discussion and ethical assaying of the term 'mother-tongue', besides the social, cultural and psychological repercussions ethnic identity endures, due to inefficient directives minorities have for long been afflicted with (Kandler et al. 2010; Aspinall and Hashem 2011; Pennycook 2017).

Another concern is indirectly raised by this chapter. Besides inefficient directives towards ethnic identity recognition, insufficient directives seem to characterise educational system's policy adaptations to and engagement with the particularities of Britain's devolved nations. The extent to which local governments and their authorities are free to legislate laws affecting domestic

affairs remains ambiguous (Machin and Vignoles 2006). In fact, nuances in the stratagems applied to ensure that students throughout the country are equitably instructed, and their needs fairly supported are yet to be proffered.

For example, different from Wales and Scotland, anti-discrimination legislation seems to be a devolved sector in Northern Ireland (Fiona and Pay 2010), which signifies that Westminster's parliament does not have a say over equality issues in Northern Ireland, and consequently individual rights there are weighed with a different scale to the 2010 Equality Act. Furthermore, the UCU (2016) report reflects the tenuous platform of the political sagacity when the main parliament appears to unevenly dole out political autonomy. The Scotland Act 2015 substantiates this claim, as Scotland secured a partial independence to monitor equality legislation for many public services including local councils, education, housing, social work and the National Health Service. Wales is, yet, still unable to pass its relevant legislation, while only able to make regulations under Acts of parliament passed at Westminster (Jones and Hazell 2015), and/or issue revisions similar to Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan for 2016–2020 (Welsh Government 2016-2017). This vision is operated through a 'reserved powers' model, a legislative assembly with powers reserved to Westminster, which despite appealing to relative restrictiveness, Jones and Hazell (2015) argue, it fosters a more coherent, stable and better functioning devolution.

Therefore, Wales, which hosts the current study, has also remained home to the educational legislation passed down from Westminster's parliament after devolution, even for many more years after 2011 referendum (Browne 2017).

During this period, Law Wales (2016a) maintains, education progressed from secondary legislation under conditional authorisation from UK Parliament into a 'largely' (but not fully) devolved topic, where the Welsh Ministers 'regulate' (but not legislate) almost all (still not all) of its 22 areas of legislation in Wales, including education. This autonomy, Law Wales (2016b, online) contend, conceals significant control as 'although the National Assembly's power to legislate in this area is very wide, the UK Parliament continues to be able to pass laws for Wales relating to education and training, and it has done so on a number of occasions since the National Assembly gained its current legislative competence following the national referendum in Wales in 2011'.

Later, the Welsh Government rather than Welsh Assembly Government[7], conferred further powers on the body, while still containing too many inherent reservations (Law Wales 2016a). There have been a variety of National Assembly Acts relating to education and training, partly distinguishing devolved Wales' education policy from the rest of the country. Among others, Wales has a distinct system of student support and grants, such as the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) later changed to the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) (Welsh goverment 2018), as a result of regulations made by the Welsh Ministers (Browne 2017). Thus, conspicuous autonomy in deciding over academic content and implementation strategies is both insufficient and fairly recent in Wales, and this might explain why England and the other devolved parts keep performing better in terms of achievement (Hume 2016; Wightwick 2016).

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[7] Name change was recognised in law under the Wales Act 2014.

However, and feeding into to this research's concern, such argument could also justify the dearth of information regarding Wales's legislation about matters related to ethnic minority education in general. Earliest educational devolution steps followed the country's struggles with basic and structural issues, such as the shift from SAT (Standards and Testing Agency) towards more convenient assessment methods, amid claims stressing the pressing need for alternative legislations that enable the education system to be sufficiently geared to long term change (Jones 2014). Daugherty et al. (2004) contend that although Scotland and Wales officially devolved in the same year, 1998, Scotland's instant parliament formation allowed Scottish policy makers and practitioners longer experiences in dealing with educational issues. Resultantly, as Evans (2016) points out, Wales' policy makers have just started introducing fundamental changes, like GCSE exams, new contents and assessments (2015-2016), besides initiating new qualifications in 2017. Ethnic minority matters are still waiting on the reserve bench.

Many years after the 2011 referendum, Wales's basic educational policies and practices are still being criticised for lacking the quality of preparation, efficient implementation and consistent long term follow up (Jones et al. 2016). Furthermore, Hodgson and Spours (2017) report the ongoing impact of Westminster on higher education institutions, as '[England] continues to provide the majority of USE [upper secondary education] qualifications for Wales and Northern Ireland, and for the small number of schools in Scotland that wish to offer them' (p. 5). This suggests that it might be slightly too early to expect race and ethnicity to substantially resonate in the Assembly's

galleries. Yet, this is not to ignore the propitious plans to pay the matter due consideration, although the recurrent use of the auxiliary 'will' does not guarantee promises will certainly see the light:

> The Wales Race Forum will support the successful inclusion of people from different races in all aspects of Welsh society. The forum will help the Welsh Government to understand the key issues and barriers within Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) communities. It will enable ongoing engagement and inform Welsh Ministers in respect of their duties under the Equality Act. The forum will meet twice a year (Welsh Government 2016).

Equality and diversity legislation is still a non-devolved area in Wales (Welsh Government 2018). Therefore, until the smallest matryoshka doll dwells in its own shell, and genuine autonomy is bestowed on the country, Welsh minorities remain trapped in the taut tangle of convergence and divergence interwoven by the tortuous politics of devolution.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has endeavoured to provide an account of the main educational issues, events and conflicts characterising contemporary Britain. Throughout this epoch, the country's education system has witnessed significant highs and lows in their bid to redress the long-running educational grievances conditioned by diversity. Although the inherent legislative statutes, notably from the 1980s onwards, have frequently signalled intentions to achieve a

genuinely multicultural society, the outcomes have often proved that good intentions and politics are hard to harmonise.

A major premise throughout the chapter was that schools have been designed and continue to be assigned the crucial mission of absorbing minority young people into the British society. Regrettably, this has been implemented by an education system that harnesses a rhetoric of meritocracy and equality to conceal a system of increasing inequalities. From the failing early assimilation and integration policies (1960-1980s), passing by the short-lived National curriculum in 1993, to eventually reach the 2010's DfE's disclaimer about teaching minority languages, the reform journey to cultural and political recognition and autonomy swerved back to traditional stratification.

Absorption into British society meant technical restructuring into assimilationist mainstream education, which stands in stark discrepancy with fundamental policies considering minority cultures as a handicap to both social integration and achievement. The 2001/2 Aiming High papers, for instance, set as historical testimony for pathologising ethnic young cohorts, while up until 2016, legislations seem to impute ethnic minority underachievement to cultural and gender ideologies. Consequently, attainment remains a major hindrance to the paragon of efficient legislation.

Absorption into British society also meant that the national curriculum needs to reflect Britain as a multicultural society; another aim reduced to despondency thanks to policies targeting ethnic exclusion through political plans and actions for core British values 'only' to be made compulsory in the curriculum (2006). Speaking the mother tongue does certainly not constitute

one of these values, especially when successive governments, including the current conservative one, have assigned the responsibility for preserving heritage languages to ethnic communities themselves.

The review concludes with few legal recommendations for observing minority rights within the civic realm of the nation state, aligning British policies and practices with inefficiency for lacking promotion of BME identity. However, Wales seems to be particularly affected due to the late devolution and the lack of political autonomy implying on BME rights to hold back until domestic sovereignty is gained.

Reviewing the British educational system suggested that ethnic identity has, for decades, been a challenging area for both policy and institutional practices. In response to this, the next chapter will venture through the realms of identity, exploring its mediation between individual's sense of self and life experiences, particularly inside schools.

3. Schooling the different learner: challenges to ethnic identity within educational settings

3.1 Introduction

As early as the 1920's, identity emerged as a prominent feature topic of educational research, policies and practices. The concept continues to receive a growing interest, which is partially related to discourses around national issues of cultural diversity and minority education. One area of focus among researchers and education theorists has been on identifying connections between learning and the social world, notably the instructional integration of cultural identity (Berry et al. 2006; Rienties and Tempelaar 2013; Schotte et al. 2017). This has marked a significant shift away from the classical rhetoric observing the impact of cultural disparity on academic achievement of minority learners across all educational categories. Therefore, school identity manifestations and the way they are framed by cultural hegemony, conflict, representation and social and psychological wellbeing are issues that structure many research conversations (Warschauer 1998; Bishop and Glynn 2003; Lynn 2006; Ondrejka 2008; McCarthy 2014).

This chapter will present an overview of the work on academic disadvantage among minorities around the world, and the reasons behind their low performance, highlighting significant implications for learners' ethnic origins. Ethnic, racial, linguistic, social, religious and/or economic differences are thought to cause cultural disconnections leading to academic disadvantage. The chapter will then trace the complicated process of identity formation as it

gradually develops in social milieus, drawing mainly on recent debates about cultural and ethnic identity and the distinguished patterns it applies to school settings and experiences. This discussion will consider both developmental and social psychology advancing three main theoretical paradigms, Acculturation theory (AT), Social Identity theory (SIT) and Ethnic Identity theory (EIT), which lead efforts in investigating matters related to self-identification, belonging and social processes. Then, narrative approaches will be visited to highlight the importance of contemporary conceptualisations of the self, including complex selfhood patterns within narratives imbued by social, cultural and ideological tenors. An account of language and religion will conclude this chapter as markers with potential decisiveness over learners' perceptions of the self and the other, considering their ability to both capitalise on and sustain social agency.

3.2 Diverse challenges of school diversity

Many consider that multicultural education issues have transcended local and national boundaries to delineate a world-wide concern nurtured by the complex manifestations of ethnic, racial and linguistic diversities (Nieto 2002; Darder et al. 2009). Educators seem discontent with the increasingly challenging multi-cultural experiences within their curricula, school settings, and educational systems as a whole, for being still inadequately acknowledged (Cummins 1988; Bowl 2001; Bhattacharyya et al. 2003; Aikman et al. 2005; Arnot and Mac an Ghaill 2006). Yet, there are critiques around the inability of a deficient professional approach to transform those challenges into functional tools that could steer educational processes towards the establishment of strong, coherent, and inclusive learning communities. For example, Nieto

(2002) recognises this lack of knowledge, and warns against excluding diversity from the reformation agendas adopted globally, as political, economic, and even social processes appear to be marginalising the relevant issues in the pedagogical enterprise.

The centrality of a cultural index in diversity instructional debates might sound axiomatic. However, traditional debates have marked a consistent trend for summing up achievement aggregates, rather than investigating minority students' cultural differences and their potential decisiveness over both quantity and quality of acquisition. As early as kindergarten stage, three to four year old, Lee and Burkham (2002) alert to substantial deficiencies in cognitive abilities among ethnic children based on their underachievement scores in literacy and mathematics. Race and ethnicity in this study are associated with the socio-economic status of the family, family structure and educational expectations. These findings, based on the United States Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, are confirmed as part of an underperformance legacy among minority students for their disadvantaging placement in lower-resources primary schools compared to their more advantaged counterparts (p. 1-2).

Nevertheless, others argue that attainment difficulties are not overarching. Bhattacharyya et al. (2003) highlight prominent educational disparities among ethnic minorities, such as special educational needs among Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi both primary and secondary school learners in Birmingham (UK), which put them at variance with not only their white peers, but also Indian and Chinese students. These findings are corroborated by Demie

(2001), who, however, confutes the argument that heritage presupposes underachievement.

Even after having merited access, higher education's minority students seem to complete with lower degree classifications. For example, Zorlu (2013) contends that Dutch, Mediterranean, Caribbean, and other non-Western minority graduates face significant levels of disadvantage in degree performance across specialty boards. Kim (2011) reports that the American Council on Education acknowledges not only the important challenges to providing greater minority access to post-secondary education, but also reports unsatisfactory rates of bachelor degree attainment. Regrettably, the same report claims that African Americans and Hispanics made no apparent gain over their elder counterparts in previous cohorts, and that American Indians scored even lower. Interestingly though, many years before these studies were conducted, Swail (2003, p. 11) had reported the same groups' higher education dreams as either stalled or prematurely terminated, communicating a pressing need to equip key stakeholders with a reference framework for improving retention of this category through 'pre-college preparation, admission policies, affirmative action and financial aid'. More than a decade later, this reformation agenda seems to have failed to yield its expected fruits, with no further claims made as to which side bears responsibility; is it an institutional reluctance or a minority cognitive deficiency?

Higher education in the UK has also remained unattainable for most ethnic students. Richardson et al. (2014) reported Black and Asian medical postgraduate and distance-learning students to be less likely to obtain good

degrees. It has been a consistent trend demarcating the last few decades, and featuring interesting findings such as Connor et al. (1996)'s conclusion that achieving good degrees in UK higher education in 1993 has sectioned the student map into white and ethnic, with a significant 26 per cent difference in favour of the former. This pattern was later confirmed in Richardson (2008, 2012), Wakeling (2009), Richardson (2012) and Crawford and Wang (2015) who investigated achievement rates among UK domiciled graduates.

Despite the concerted tone voicing academic disadvantage among minorities in and outside the UK, the grounds behind their low performance in higher education articulate disparate perceptions. For instance, in order to increase and sustain the flow of underrepresented minorities, Richardson (2008) reports criticisms about university social life and campus experiences between mainstream and ethnic students inferred from UK small scale quantitative studies. However, the 2009 National Students' Survey (NSS) data allude to significant dis-satisfaction with teaching and learning among students from all minority backgrounds (White 2010), which echoes Bowl (2001, p. 142) disapproval of institutional contexts for problematizing 'non-traditional' students (over 21 years of age, female and ethnic minorities) rather than acknowledging responsibility for their progress. Nonetheless, succeeding against the economic odds, whether in early or higher education stages, is an argument that managed to unite those who believe that subduing minority students' economic disadvantage is necessary for achieving fair academic representation at all levels (Connor et al. 1996; Bhattacharyya et al. 2003; Richardson 2008; Siraj-Blatchford 2010).

Although academic achievement and social affiliation of diverse students remain prone to incompatibility, the engendered perplexities might be alleviated at the political and instructional recognition of ethnic heritage featured by, not only different physical traits, but also moral, religious and linguistic particularities (Hurtado et al. 1998). The cultural mapping of contemporary educational settings shapes the diversified quality of social and interactional dynamics therein. In this respect, Nunan et al. (2005) claim that schools with high proportions of mainstream learners are dwindling. They pointed at the consequent and constant limitation for interactional opportunities across race/ethnic lines, which deprives students from the learning experiences cultural integration extends. Based on the argument linking educational performance to self-perceptions, it is worth exploring the links between culture and ethnic identity's potential centrality in educational negotiations, and the way the literature has handled the related matters within instructional institutions.

Indeed, many studies have linked educational underachievement to ethnic students' perceptions of themselves as different learners. Lynn (2006) points at the slender representation of minority among many countries' medical students including the UK's, and highlights their likelihood to be perceived stereotypically and negatively, and that their consciousness of the negative stereotype about their group is a fact that raises the possibility of their underachievement. This perception resonates with Hurtado and Carter (1997), who argues that perceptions of a hostile racial climate tends to impact students' sense of belonging leading to maladjustment to college life and educational experiences. It is also worth mentioning Pascarella (1991) and Pascarella and

Terenzin (2005) studies, which summarise findings from 1990's to early 2000's on the impact of college life on students, and contend that perceptions of ethnic identity development can affect a number of their critical educational outcomes, including academic skills.

The following section offers more insights into the learning/ethnic salience pair, using the term 'ethnic identity' to explore how ethnicity-related underachievement and under-representation in education could be potentially defined by students' consciousness of their ethnic origin.

3.3 Ethnic identity and education

The last few decades marked substantial capitalisations on identity matters ramifying through countless disciplines and phenomena, to the extent that the term's meaningfulness could only deliver in connection to a given facet of human life, social, cultural, and personal. This section expounds the concept attempting to help appraise the epistemic inferences emanating from its interaction with physical, verbal, spiritual and/or moral codes.

3.3.1 Identity

Identity has traditionally been the answer to the 'who are you?' question aimed at probing the substantial and theoretical constructs advising individuals' performances, choices and ways of making sense of life. However, despite disparate distributions as to which constructs and how much of them contribute most to our consciousness when reading the world and perceiving its inhabitants, the literature advances a patterned sectioning of identity into two complementary exegeses.

The most prevalent among them pertains to the unchanging qualities of human beings that presuppose their substantial invariability despite potential inconsistent circumstances. This dimension is reified in Joseph (2004, p. 21) through the 'names',

which refer to the 'deictic function' of directing the addressee's attention to a phenomenon in the addressor's perceptual field. This sensory attribution is further supplemented by associating individuals with 'identity contents' (Hardy et al. 2017), categories and constructs around which perceptions of self/others are built, such as language, attitudes and ideologies. For a successful staging of this side of our being, Aydin (2017, p. 126) appreciates that this 'static' perspective underlines the importance of independence and autonomy in implementing and exercising these contents, but still maintains that whatever change they undergo, the person remains the same.

Moya (2006) who refers to them as 'ascriptive' categories and fosters Joseph's (2004) notion of their operation through the logic of visibility, highlights these categories' implication in people's assessment of the other, and alludes to the social conflicts arising from selective disproportionate ownership of resources and interests based on the number, quality and extent of the attributed category. These categories and social structures embodied in the first aspect of our identity need to be mobilised through individuals' sense of self in order to pattern the other side of us. It is a subjective (Moya 2006), dynamic (Aydin 2017), and structural (Hardy et al. 2017) process whereby self-perceptions, despite feeling internal, are notably conditioned by the lived experiences, and constantly judged by how coherent the self has been across time. This notion

extends identity beyond the borders of ourselves, which suggests that the self is required to step out of its box to understand itself, and hence stimulate the human senses through cultural artefacts giving the human identity its progressive and reinterpreted nature (Joseph 2004).

Thus, congruence between the two aspects of human identity, names and contents, presupposes dependence on the outside world that is belonging to and in development with social networks, which provide orientation through values and ideals for individuals to observe, based on personal choices. However, harmonising self-acclamations with social identification can be delusionary as most social inconsistencies are imputed to institutional and structural failures to fairly accommodate human differences (Topping and Maloney 2005; Kelly 2008; Sánchez-Casal and Macdonald 2009). For instance, Ho (1990) reports the incompetence of the Australian assimilationist approach regarding the equitable management of diverse departments, and the pernicious effect this has on individuals' self-perceptions and social performances.

In this pursuit, Banting (2010) cautions against Western democracies' failure to strengthen and maintain bonds among ethnically diverse societies for the lack of reliable paradigms meant to reconcile cultural diversity with the sense of national identity. She affirms that culture is a key tool to bring sections of multi-ethnic societies together. Therefore, cultural differences represent a central concern in most identity dilemmas, insofar as Aydin (2017) concluded that personal identity 'is to a great extent a cultural identity' that radiates through and reflects on the operation of national sectors (p. 127). From a

different perspective, Jesse and Williams (2005) emphasise that social, political, economic and educational institutions need to allow multiple forums of cultural representation, through equal access to resources and the promotion of minority identities among the 'warring communities' (p.3).

Culture's decisiveness over settling social and attainment issues of ethnic minority students in schools has been a prominent feature of social research (Erickson 1988; Bankston and Zhou 1995; Gillborn 1996; Demie 2001; Arnot et al. 2014). I will proceed by visiting some important debates about ethnic identity and the distinguished patterns it applies to the educational landscape. Special emphasis will be given to the adolescent population for, not only, representing the age category of the student participant in this study, but also for the variegated and contested nature of identity negotiations taking place during this crucial developmental stage.

3.3.2 Balancing 'I am' with 'I know'

More than a century ago, a consistent line of thought advocated close links between education and identity. It was mainly sparked by Bourne (1916), Drachsler (1920) and (Kallen 1924), who debated the right of American immigrants to exercise their cultural lineaments and preserve their identity, while emphasising ethnicity and language as invaluable heritage. Banks and Nguyen (2008) note the pioneering efforts of this stream of research in fighting for cultural democracy, improving race relations and increasing academic attainment among European, African and Mexican Americans, and highlighted the earliest proposals of identity and culture responsive curricula, the neglect of which would inevitably lead to 'mis-education' (p. 141).

These voices were later echoed throughout Canada, Britain, Europe, and Australia, when a series of ethnic and Aboriginal movements stood up against institutional discrimination in a bid for responsiveness to their economic, political and cultural needs (Ratner 1984; Banks and Nguyen 2008). Native histories and cultures' reflection in national culture and educational curricular deserves legitimacy and official recognition, according to these groups (Gillborn 1990,1996), which lead to the development of multi-cultural education aimed at fostering diverse groups' feelings of affiliation to mainstream national civic culture.

However, the argument of Mishler (1978) that education is still far from reaching this target and will remain as such until learners find a way to have an identity and appreciate their diversity, retains importance in contemporary debates. He points at the assumption that British children should know more about British history, geography, culture, etc. than about the other countries. For her,

> …in other cases it would seem to us peculiar, or even a sign of insecurity, to do this. In teaching mathematics, for example, or science, or music, we do not normally think that children should concentrate on British mathematics or science or music. We seem to accept these subjects or forms of thought as existing in their own right, and to regard any connections with group identity or national history as irrelevant (p. 198).

Hence, balancing funds of knowledge with funds of identity to realise social equality and security is still in the core of contemporary quests for an effective pedagogy, which needs to deploy 'contextualisation', connecting school life to the students' (Esteban-Guitart and Moll 2014, p. 71).

Ethnic identities, then, continue to populate the socially constructed, and academically oriented research endeavours. For minority children anywhere in the world, identities are an important index of social and educational incorporations into mainstream societies, and adolescence has proved to be an important site for negotiating affiliation and adaptation matters (Phinney and Alipura 1990; Phinney and Chavira 1992; Coleman 1999; Markstorm 1999; Roberts et al. 1999; Smith et al. 1999; Espelage 2003). The following sections explore how research has addressed the issue of identity over the last decades.

3.3.3 Idenity research

Coleman (1999), Côté (1996), Côté and Schwartz (2002) and Hammack (2008) highly recommend Erikson's theory for studying identity formation among the youth, based on the constant exploration of goals and alternatives, which is followed by relevant potential commitments as probable courses of future action. However, James Marcia (1966) reframed Erikson's work bringing more operationalised and empirically sound constructs, focusing on the ideas of exploration and commitment in moral and pragmatic matters. The degree of exploration and commitment categorises individuals into one of four independent identity statuses:

- achievement: high in both exploration and commitment with open ideological exploration and clear engagement,

- moratorium: high exploration but low commitment demarcating a developing identity awaiting process coherence,

- foreclosure: high identification with environmental patterns with low exploration endeavours, and

- diffusion: both aspects are low characterising a general apathy towards goals, values and ideologies (Erikson 1971; Coleman 1999; Hammack 2008; Syed and Azmitia 2008; Kroger et al. 2010).

Despite the wide adoption of this model in social and psychological studies, arguably, it needs to be consolidated by considering the interplay between identity development and contextual factors affecting adolescents' agency, such as gender, cultural, ethnic, geographical, and historical circumstances, in addition to heterogeneous group settings. Furthermore, the model needs to escape the American confinement to be consistently tested in other parts of the world, and break out of childhood and adolescence stages to embrace a lifetime consciousness, especially that although adolescence witnesses the onset of ethnic identity formation (French et al. 2006), the latter remains a lifetime process of construction, interpretation and consolidation. Many scholars remain unsatisfied with Marcia for overlooking Erikson's emphasis on sociocultural factors through his 'static environment' assumption: fixed social structure, economic stability, opportune and identifiable life-course choices, and caution that disregarding socio-cultural factors individualises

accountability for unsuccessful identity task completion (Côté 1996, 2002; Schwartz et al. 2013b; Webb et al. 2017).

For Yoder (2000), a safer path to understand identity would be to move away from exclusive consideration of psychological internal exploration and development, and towards a multiplicity of contexts where true individualisation resides. However, Yoder warns of many 'barriers' (p. 98), which represent external social, cultural, economic, political and ideological limitations to this process that remain beyond individuals' control. Barriers are contextual boundaries, limiting the safe exploration of and commitment to choices, such as gender-assigned roles, however, these barriers have yet to be tested empirically.

Similarly, Hammack (2008) reproaches Marcia's identity statuses theory for its narrowness and lack of consideration of the larger social-contextual framework embracing developmental changes, while advocating a focus on content, structure and process in his suggested model. Identity herein is portrayed along the lines of individual subjectivity and the way it is negotiated through engagement and interaction with social and political environment. Findings from Hammack (2008) and Hammack (2010) reveal aspects of both inclination to and estrangement from master narratives of Palestinian and Jewish identities, illustrating the complex interplay among culture, politics, and identity. More details on Hammack's work will follow in section 3.3.4.

In this respect, a more comprehensive approach is advanced by James Côté's identity capital approach. Côté links 'macro-sociological factors through

micro-interactional ones to psychological factors' (Côté 1996, p. 4174). The ebb and flow of individuals' self-perception is probed through a model, which represents a developmental-social-psychological approach to identity formation. Côté and Schwartz (2002) contend that socially, individuals tend to lack sufficient institutional support for making developmental transitions causing their increasing self-reliance while negotiating life courses, particularly in respect to the management of personal goals' agendas. However, psychologically, they highlight the importance of the internal (cognitive, emotional, ideological) resources for regulating movement through and adjustment with social structures and developmental contexts.

Arguably, contemporary societies are becoming increasingly 'manipulative, chaotic and less supportive of stable, long term identities' (Côté 1997, p. 577), an anomic challenging new members' (young adults, adolescents) adoption or construction of an identity apprised by conventionality. This situates adolescent individualisation within a continuum extending from a passive acceptance of ordained social patterns to an active adaptation, giving them a greater say over their personal growth through involvement in more difficult developmental tasks and higher social/occupational accomplishments (Côté and Schwartz 2002). Individualisation, Webb et al. (2017) argue, continues to develop during the maturation process, which is characterised by education and training, and where internal/intangible attributes (self-esteem, confidence, aspirations), and external/tangible resources (academic, financial, and human capital) are needed. However, more successful active adaptations, that is identity gains, presuppose the deployment of agentic inclinations and behaviours to exploit them both, and the statistical measurement of the

interaction between their different components would suggest which individuals could be more agentic in investing in future adult identities, and negotiating individualised life-course passages (Côté 1997).

Indeed, Côté (1997) presented the first empirical assessment of identity capital model testing the late passage of university students to adulthood. In addition to confirming the model's merit, the study positioned human capital as both a resilient predictor of identity formation and an important associate with the tangible resources. In a three-panel longitudinal study, Côté (2002) explored the extent to which his model could account for the temporal and functional aspects of later middle-class life-course trajectories when boarding maturity. He concluded that intangible resources are the main predictors of identity formation, and that contextually salient resource differences (for example, gender and parental financial support) have impacts not predicted by hard structural conventions. Schwartz et al. (2013a) also highlighted the effect of personal disposition (here, self-esteem) on occupational outcomes of emerging adults, and its negative correlation with developmental stability, while individuals' investment in intangible resources might settle their quest for a validating adult community and bring their diffusion state (Marcia 1966) to conclusion. Although all these studies were quantitative, Webb et al. (2017) adopted a qualitative lens for exploring the influence of enhanced social and identity capital on agentic individualisation and personal resilience, to demonstrate their usefulness for explaining developmental changes associated with volunteering activities.

Despite their comprehensiveness, these theories could be reproached for localising identity debates into a fairly homogeneous ecology, hardly experiencing divisions other than along the lines of age, gender and class. Researchers' focus on young adults, college and university students' identity formation processes does not seem to appeal to racial and ethnic relevance to identity formation issues, nor does it reach to younger cohorts, or explore less modern contexts. One of these neglected areas, ethnicity, will frame the following section's review on ethnic identity research for its core positioning in this study. Attention will also be drawn to potential gaps for future observation.

As to what ethnic identity constitutes, and despite common dismissal of a universal explicit definition of the concept (Evans et al. 2010), a tacit agreement in the literature observes culture, religion, language and social experiences among individuals connected by kinship and symbolic loyalties as a characterising synthesis (Bosher 1997; Bhattacharyya et al. 2003; Bari 2005; Brown 2009; Andreouli 2013; Pieterse et al. 2013; Jivraj and Simpson 2015; van Bochove et al. 2015). Patton et al. (2016) disaggregate these components into observable social and cultural displays, such as language, traditions, and group affiliation, and internal functions where cognitive views of the self are modelled around moral obligations to individuals' heritage, attachment feelings and yearning to pursue homogeneous social and cultural patterns. The importance of group membership is salient in these perceptions, which closely associate identity information with individuals' self-categorization in and psychological attachment to an ethnic group, while characterizing ethnic identity as part of one's overarching self-concept makeup. The role of group

appraisal in individuals' perceptions of self will follow a brief account on identity development and research in the following section.

3.4 Ethnic identity research

Despite a traditional interest in ethnic identity matters, as discussed in section 1.3.1, theories about its development and attempted models for investigation are fairly recent. It is interesting to note that efforts to interrogate belonging have resided at the intersection of two disciplines, developmental and social psychology. Developmental psychology has mostly featured the seminal work of Erikson (see section 1.3.3) where the search for and development of identity is allocated to the critical cognitive and emotional exercise accompanying adolescents' quest for reconciliation between imposed and desired identities. Forming a healthy, safely evolving identity through the search for suitable patterns and staying committed to them is deemed essential to individuals' mental wellbeing.

However, social psychologists center their interest on issues of one's group salience compared to the rest, and the consequences of such belongingness (Tajfel 1981). This is achieved through the negotiation of groups' symbolic references and epitomic values in the broader emblematic paradigm society advances; the higher a group is the lesser individuals would feel the need to negotiate and/or modify their identity (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Abrahams 1996; Brown 2000). To serve this aim, the main conceptual framework structuring research endeavors in the field of ethnic identity has generally been advised by a consultation of three broad perspectives: Acculturation theory (AT), Social Identity theory (SIT) and Ethnic Identity theory (EIT).

3.4.1 Acculturation Theory

AT investigates the process of acculturation where social, psychological, and cultural changes stem from blending two (sometimes more) cultures together, while ethnic identity could only represent significance at the co-existence of two or multiple groups over a period of time (Berry 2003; Kim-Jo et al. 2010). In this respect, ethnic identity may be regarded as a facet of acculturation. The theory attaches importance to individuals, however, its main focus is on the individual's positioning within their group, which on its turn represents a subgroup of the larger society (Phinney 1990). Barth (1998) recognises the importance of subjectively marked boundaries to social group identification, and does not exclude stability and persistent relationships between groups across such boundaries.

The first psychological theory of acculturation was introduced in W.I. Thomas's and Florian Znaniecki's (1918) 'The Polish Peasant in Europe and America' study, where Polish immigrants in Chicago displayed three forms of acculturation: Bohemian (adopting the host culture and abandoning their culture of origin), Philistine (failing to adopt the host culture but preserving their culture of origin), and creative (able to adapt to the host culture while preserving their culture of origin). Although this early conceptualization constituted a breakthrough in the early twentieth century, its restriction to native/host dichotomy inspired Berry (1990) later developments of more complex and multi-dimensional concepts. These were thought to more usefully articulate the interactional processes between one's value systems and the

surrounding one/s. In a model that mobilizes two main dimensions, Berry coined terms which gauge social adaptation and participation rather than profiling personalities, 'retention of one's tradition and the establishment and maintenance of relationships with the larger society' (Coleman 1999, p. 66). There are four positions:

1. Integration defines high retention of cultural traditions while maintaining relationships with mainstream culture,

2. Assimilation, mother culture's retention lowers allowing stronger bonds with the host's,

3. Separation characterises a high native culture retention versus a low identification with the mainstream's, and

4. Marginalisation, where both aspects of cultural identification are low.

For Berry (1997), the model differentiates acculturation outcomes based on contextual structure. In a melting pot society, where a harmonious and homogenous culture is promoted, there is a tendency to endorse assimilation, while in racially grouped segregationist societies acculturation strategies become rather separatist. However, moving towards a positive appreciation of cultural plurality fashions an encouragement for individuals to embrace an integrationist agenda, contrary to exclusionist settings, which leave individuals out of functional choices but for marginalization. According to this model, strong identification with both cultures is indicative of integration (biculturalism), while failing to identify with either culture suggests marginality.

In spite of the wider recognition of the model, though, and later reinforcements by Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997), there arguably remains a need to

standardize its focus in order to equally include further categories, such as gender, faith and ideology. The model also needs to appreciate the extent of generational disparities in terms of acquiring new cultural features and maintaining them over time, whenever contact with the dominant culture is established. Here individuals' conscious volition, too, may affect the type and extent of acculturation. For some, the desire to preserve personal uniqueness and distinctiveness is the best option at all times, but others seem to be flexible with occasional cultural swings. It is also important to explore the transitional processes, whether marked by integration or are more marginalization oriented, and their impact on self-verification and psychological adjustment. The verification and adjustment processes would also require specific consultation when cultural transition processes are multi-dimensional, i.e. more than one group involved, which requires the model to lay more weight to affiliation and group processes as essential determinants of ethnic identity development.

Although the cultural discourse and issues around integration and adaptation are key to this study, acculturation approaches appear to lack the necessary practicality for exploring the complex processes at play in multi-ethnic schools. As will be reported in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, the assumed pressure on ethnic students to envisage assimilation is rendered insignificant by the size of cultural plurality, amid demands for structural representation within standard systems. Acculturation models generally uphold that mainstream groups form the majority, while such a view could be dismissed in specific settings like this study, and hence different lenses are required to examine it. The acculturation model's upward-forward process, that is reaching up to mainstream culture and striving to maintain its line, could only hold little ground in this case. It will also be shown

that despite dwelling in the same environment, different student groups respond to cultural challenges differently, even among group members themselves. Multi-ethnic schools' mono-cultural configuration struggles to prevail as mainstream symbolism has to confront an emblematic plurality, which characterizes the context with dynamism rather than assumed 'staticity'.

This is not to undermine this theory's usefulness in handling educational matters, which directly capitalise on language. Indeed, in relation to English as a Second Language (ESL), Schumann (1986) drew on acculturation models to address minority learners' mainstream language acquisition processes among first generation immigrants and their immediate descendants through the language-culture nexus. Shumann's acculturation model traces the latter educational journey in order to establish links between the degrees of target language acquisition and acculturation to its native group. Since then, a continuum of his ideological premises bound an evolution of research about second language acquisition (SLA) processes within natural contexts (mainstream language settings), advancing a core argument that acculturation is a natural phase of SLA processes (Krashen 1987; Long 1990; Young and Gardner 1990; Culhane 2004; Jiang et al. 2009; Jia et al. 2014).

However in considering culture as a whole, Hughes et al. (2009) explored the adaptation strategies of a minority Hispanic group in a predominantly Black high school to end up locating the students across all four acculturation modes explained earlier with only half of them demonstrating substantial affiliation with the American culture. Schachner et al. (2016) gathered self-reports from 902 early adolescents with an immigrant background to investigate school, family, and ethnic group as conditions for their acculturation and school adjustment.

Findings suggest that home and school inclusive and integrative climates promote integration and both social and psychological adjustment of young adolescent immigrants.

However, as the aim of this research decentralises processes of cultural amalgamation in favour of observing a socio-psychological consciousness instructed by individuals' collective frames of reference, a different paradigm is needed. Social identify theory seems quintessential as it allows the possibility to gauge the quality of contact between groups and their members without being wholly engulfed in heritage accounts, or dominated by passion to accommodate the self in majority culture for minimizing emotional conflict. Instead, maintaining positivity while relating to others is rather axial for individuals' mental and emotional wellbeing (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Stets and Burke 2000).

3.4.2 Social identity theory

Many scholars ground the ethnic identity concept in social identity theory, which essentially premises one's consciousness of being connected to a social category or group consisting of individuals who hold common social identifications (Abrahams 1996). A process of social categorization occurs at the classification of persons into those similar to the self and labelled 'in-group', and those different from the self and categorised as 'out-group'. Amid struggles for social integrity, individuals need to maintain a positive sense of self, accentuating an affiliation to and salience of a group, i.e. the group is a central component in considering who one is (Stets and Burke 2000).

Every birth cry apprises society of a new member to be later accommodated in one of its pre-structured categories, imposing on the young occupant a given sense of self derived from a unique combination of social classifications in constant lifetime processing. For SIT, people tend to socially classify themselves and others into various social categories, such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Ashforth and Mael 1989). As Hogg and Abrams (1988) maintain, the social categories into which individuals are born or in which they later place themselves can only manifest salience when contrasted with others (for example, black versus white and male versus female), with incommensurate powers, prestige, and status. Thus, two central processes are involved in social identity formation, self-categorization and social comparison (Stets and Burke 2000). Self-categorization underlines perceived similarities between the self and other in-group members, while emphasizing perceived differences between the self and out-group affiliates. Social comparison is the varied application of the emphasized dimensions, such as beliefs and value systems, affective articulations, and linguistic and behavioural codes, which are perceived to occasion self-enhancing outcomes for the self.

Proponents of SIT cite Kurt Lewin as an early source emphasizing individuals' strong affiliation needs to maintain a sense of well-being, which paved the way to today's more recent proposals by SIT (Burnes 2004). These proposals affirm that identity would be more salient among groups who have been subject to greater discrimination while striving to preserve self-esteem (Phinney 1990). This stream mobilizes the negotiation of individuals' social identity in the broader context of social principles and value codes, which advise the terms

for group membership. In light of this, relating to highly valued groups does not ensue a need to amend or reinforce identity, unlike witnessing group devaluation, which may trigger its negotiation.

This negotiation process is outlined by Tajfel and Turner (1986) in three main strategies by which individuals can operate their devalued social membership. They can either physically change membership into a better-valued group, while impermeable categories, such as gender or ethnicity, might suggest a psychological desertion with potential attitudinal alterations. The second option defines a collective group initiative to term new affiliation measures, which promote dimension of superiority, or modulate group attributes from negative to positive. Finally, a competitive approach where the whole group challenges the established social hierarchy. Pioneering these social ventures, Crocker and Luhtanen (1990) affirm, is the analogy that feeling good about one's group ensures high collective self-esteem in the same way feeling good about oneself ensures a high level of self-esteem; both states are deemed necessary for individuals' wellbeing, being themselves important aspects of the self.

Self-esteem embodies individuals' overall subjective emotional appraisal of their own worth evincing both a judgment of and an attitude towards oneself (Crocker et al. 1993). It accommodates beliefs about oneself, like competence, worthiness, as well as emotional and attitudinal states, such as loyalty, pride, and shame. Many expound it in relation to the self-concept notion, which is as an in interpretation of self-esteem, the positive or negative evaluations of the self and the way one feels about it (Smith and Tyler 1997; Smith et al. 1999;

Ponsford et al. 2014). However, collective self-esteem is what Ashmore et al. (2004) believe stems from collective identity, which overarches a set of psychological and affective dimensions for positioning individuals in a group. Researchers have related this framework to ethnic identity development when recognizing that the frame in which individuals' conscious or unconscious identification with those holding similar traditions, symbols and value systems, affects categorized members' perceptions of the world around them and pride in their belonging (Chávez and Guido-Dibrito 1999). If these assessments feed negative ethnic group messages and lack the means to counteract unfavourable public depictions, potential rise in feelings of shame and/or threat to one's identity becomes eminent calling to action the negotiation process stated above (Chávez and Guido-Dibrito 1999).

In fact, theoretical and empirical endeavours drawing on SIT have gone a long way in demonstrating how applying the social identity lens to view the world, mainly focusing on environments that compel their inhabitants to do so, can rob individuals' self-esteem of the necessary social relevance leading to harmful effects on and instability to their self-concepts (Crocker and Major 1989b; Crocker et al. 1993; Ellemers et al. 1999). These consequences, which have generally responded to perceived group status differences and have been indoctrinated by inescapable social perceptions of legitimacy and stability, have also been redacted to underline concepts of intergroup discrimination, group psychological representation, group positivity/negativity asymmetry and in-group bias.

However, little has been done to address the nature of the threatening contexts and feelings of stigma incurred by the singled out categories through a social identity cognition. How do individuals' performance, self-esteem and self-concept change through lifetime and among different contexts? It is necessary to further examine strategies to reverse processes which convey exclusionary messages and signal group marginality. Reformation of harmful environments is important to repair the affected personal and collective identity, notably when inuring individuals to consciously construct them based on human equity. Unfortunately, the term stigma itself has hardly been used as an investigative concept or measure in SIT research, even though its consideration might reveal a course of circumstances leading to underperformance, uncertainty and feelings of rejection.

The link between a positive/negative social identity and high/low self-esteem deserves more contemplation as confining one's perceptions of self-efficacy inside the perimeters of in-group bias, and positively correlate one's worth with discrimination cannot be simply void of the personal ideologies and symbolic assessments of the perceiver. For this, too, the social creativity phase of the SIT's negotiation process should not discount the importance of personal creativity and individual ability for maintaining self-positivity, as Turner and Tajfel (1986) believe 'the group members may seek positive distinctiveness for the in-group by redefining or altering the elements of the comparative situation' (pp. 19-20). This could be achieved through adaptation to challenging contexts rather than resolving to desertion strategies promoted by SIT's 'individual mobility' routes. This raises controversies over SIT's appraisal of individuals' volition and powers for undervaluing the conscious state of doing membership (active participation) compared to being member of

a group (positioning), which would better be equated as complementary features for a balanced identity. Personality, then seems to be an absent variable in SIT based on the fact that different members apply different approaches and contributions to the group. In light of this assumption, then, authoritarian and submissive individuals, for instance, would have different degrees and types of connections to one's group, and hence their self-esteem/concepts would be impacted differently.

During the last few decades, research using ethnic identity evolved significantly due to the abundant conceptualizations, definitions and measures involved (Phinney 1990; Russell 2011; Hogg 2016). However, many assert that key concept in the relevant field has been SIT's role of ethnic identity in the formation of (Phinney 1992; Gozalez and Brown 2006 ; Kim 2012; Hogg 2016) self-concept. The main concern, as expressed in the studies below, seeks to correlate strong ethnic group identification with self-concept/esteem promotion, with greater focus on groups held in low regard by mainstream society.

Despite the lack of proclaimed connections to SIT and, at least, a decade's precedence to it, Jane Elliott's 'blue eyes brown eyes' experiment (Stewart et al. 2003) has been frequently reported as significantly relevant since it emphasises the impact of discrimination and group favouritism on personal self-esteem . Elliott divided a year three primary class (eight year olds) into groups based on eye colour, where the blue-eyed were told they were smarter, quicker and more successful, and that the brown eyed were lazy, untruthful and stupid, and consequently, the formers were given privilege (Peters 1987). A

few days later, the roles were reversed. The results showed that whoever was in the positively valued group started acquiring traits of superiority, arrogance, discrimination, but also learning improvement (Byrnes and Kiger 1990). Despite reproaching Elliott's experiment for being unethical due to the psychological and emotional damage caused to participants (Peters 1987), this work is recognised as an illustration that group membership affects self-perception and behaviour towards other groups. However, for such claims to be validated, this experiment needs more empirical reliability. Despite later reconnecting with some of the adult participants, no similar follow ups were conducted with children and adolescents. Thus, more frequent and regular revisits might caution against environmental influences and developmental considerations, as both maturity and adulthood contextual and cognitive processes could be determining variables.

In order to test SIT's main premises of group bias (ethnocentrism), in-group favouritism, stereotypical thinking and conformity to group norms, Tajfel (1970) conducted experiments to put his discrimination claims to test. Schoolboys from Bristol (UK) were randomly assigned to groups on the basis of minimal differences (preference to artwork of even a coin flip), and made conscious of their participation in a decision making experiment where they have to assign points to opposite in and outgroups. Tajfel realised the boys' tendency to favour group partners (in-group favouritism) and maximise differences between groups (category accentuation), although sometimes at one's group disadvantage (Crocker et al. 1993). Thus, belonging to a group, even if it is based on a minimal paradigm, suffices to induce bias against others

(Mummendey and Otten 1998) and create antagonism (Turner 1988; Livingstone 2008).

Cialdini et al. (1976) tested groups of fans from U.S. prestigious football schools to observe their demeanour after the game. They realised students' tendency to dress up more in apparel associating them with their school when their team won. Based on this, the students were interviewed to further confirm this association as verbal connections were made using the pronoun 'we' to describe their team, as opposed to using 'they' when they lost. It was then concluded that group affiliation affects behaviour. When suffering a public image threat, individuals are entrained into associating with positive others (Brown and 2000), which corroborates SIT's concept that self-esteem is enhanced by the group's sense of positive distinctiveness.

Findings in these early studies have very little to indicate in terms of genuine self-interest since participants are not expected to experience a direct win or lose, or by valid material competition between the groups. Such endeavours examined social identity packing all the emotional, evaluative, and other psychological components of in-group categorisation together, but later research responded to this inefficiency by separating the self-categorisation correlate from the evaluative component (self-esteem) and the psychological construct (group commitment) to examine their interaction (Young et al. 1997). For instance, attempting to investigate the centrality of social stigma in the self-concept, Crocker and Major (1989b) affirm that self-esteem is but one of many variables susceptible to harm in response to prejudice and discrimination resulting from categorisation.

Research has also demonstrated how disparities in category salience and specific group identification are likely to dictate group-based processes and phenomena through affecting individual's motivation to affiliate according to the symbolic paradigm of the group (Brown et al. 1992; Geraint 2016). A longitudinal quantitative study by Thomas et al. (2017) identified personal identity incentives (self-esteem, perceptions of distinctiveness and membership efficiency), social drive (sense of belonging and continuity the team represents) and collective identity motives (common credence of group distinctiveness) as material predictors of social affiliation.

Thus, both AT and SIT frameworks recognise the dynamism of identity, notably ethnic identity, its instability, and a high degree of contextual contingency (place and time). As noted above, these approaches stress that a conscious process of self-appraisal, role choices and informed performances, drives the construct's realisation. However, despite assertions that ethnic identity is a complex synthesis of values, characters and process, AT and SIT researchers appear to have remained distanced from exploring internal mechanisms, which prevented them from hearing the influence physical and cognitive development have in one's identification. Jean Phinney advanced an approach to studying identity, which successfully responded to growing concerns with ethnic identity issues (Syed 2008). She contends that ethnic identity is an important component of the self (Phinney 1992), and her contribution is addressed in the ethnic identity formation model.

3.4.3 Ethnic identity theory

Building mainly on Marcia's (1980) modification of Erikson's (1968) theory of identity development (see previous section), and drawing on various conceptual models about both young people's and adults' identity progression, Phinney (1992) suggested that ethnic identity development is a facet of adolescence and a process that takes place over time. It is the time needed for people to explore and decide about their ethnic connections and substantial purport in their lives. Her initial work was later enhanced in Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1977) in a more elaborate paradigm, which is characterised by alternating positions between mother and host cultures as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 4: Phinney and Devich-Navvaro (1997) Identification Patterns Model (IPM)
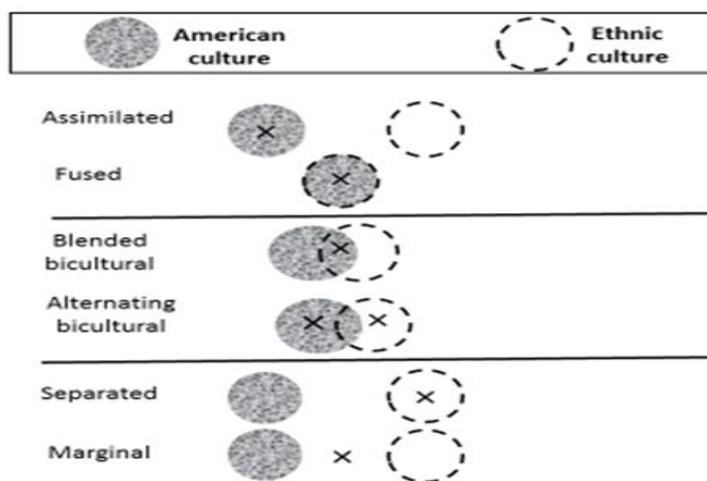
The model is a dynamic three layered panel pattern (Coleman 1999). In the first panel, the individual either totally rejects their culture or manages to fuse

it with the majority one. The second panel is more complex as both cultures tend to overlap allowing both a centred accommodation in the blended bicultural area, and equal alternation between both. A place for individuals whose cultural combination skills are inoperative is available in the third panel, which positions them either in one culture or the other, or forces them to reside outside both (Phinney and Devich-Navarro 1997). Yet, despite the comprehensiveness of this model, it falls short of appealing to issues of personal mutations arising from an urge to move among the panels for social, developmental or pragmatic reasons, (as will be discussed in Chapter Four). This model might also be improved through consideration of contextual circumstances; such as, how similar individuals from different cultures operate according to this model, the influence of different contexts other than the American culture, and the reactions of mainstream and other minority culture groups in this respect. However, a crucial aspect that needs careful revision is the element of choice the model attributes to individual's acculturation strategies.

The conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity as a multidimensional, dynamic construct developing over time through a process of exploration and commitment (Phinney and Ong 2007) led to the development of the 'Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) (Phinney, 1992). MEIM has been one of the most widely used ethnic identity measures since its introduction in 1992, contributing to the growth of ethnic identity research (Syed and Azmitia 2008; Syed and Juan 2012; Dimitrova et al. 2018). The EIS (Ethic Identity Status) and the MEIM-R (Racial Identity) are, however, more recently developed measures to address some limitations of the

MEIM' (Yoon 2011), Phinney's 'seminal work on ethnic identity' (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2014, p. 25).

An extensive body of research embraced the model's concept of cultural shift and acquisition. For example, Hong et al. (2000) examined how bicultural individuals navigate their ways around cultural frames stimulated by culturally laden symbols, which they believe are potent drivers of behaviour and might engender varying degrees of cognitive effects among individuals. Exploring two groups of Chinese American biculturals, both Chinese and American cultural primes separately proved to activate cultural frame switching, making more cultural attributions according to the symbolic system subjected to (age, gender, and social position not documented in the original paper or secondary citations) (Benet-Martinez et al. 2002). However, Hong's study did not investigate the outcomes of participants' encounter with both systems simultaneously, nor did it specify the quantitative and qualitative proximity of the emblematic substance provided, or emphasise how conscious and deliberate the acquisition process would be.

Elsewhere, and in an amalgamated account of several developmental and acculturation works, Dwivedi (2002) found that young individuals who reached the commitment level (Erikson 1966) have a secure ethnic identity, which grants them access to higher self-esteem and multicultural competence, with a greater ability to manage psychological challenges bred by racism and discrimination. To gain more insight into the issue, Devich-Navarro (2010) studied 46 middle and working-class Mexican American and 52 middle-class African American multi-ethnic high school students in Southern California,

USA. They sought to identify the ways in which different ethnic groups manage their bicultural identification through interviews and questionnaires targeting perceptions about their complex identity features (ethnic, American, both), self-concept, anxieties and out-group attitudes. The results sectioned participants into blended, alternating, and separated adolescents, while ethnic and American identity categories uncorrelated, confirming the multidimensionality of biculturalism.

Devich-Navarro's (2010) work redeemed many empirical deficiencies. Nevertheless, it did not caution against the instability of identity stages in that individuals, notably youth, might experience occasional impetuses to revisit prior stages for a variety of needs. González et al. (2017) developed several hypotheses based on prior conceptual approaches and empirical endeavours including EIT's to test, among other factors, the role of minority identity formation across adolescence. Findings suggested that in-group norms supporting contact and quality of intergroup contact predicted student's changes in ethnic identification. Positive quality of contact and normative support for contact proved to influence both indigenous and nonindigenous adolescents' commitment to ethnic identity.

Estrada and Jimenez (2018) used MEIM with college ethnic minority students to assess their degree of cultural-ethnic identification through ethnic attitudes and behaviours. They found that ethnic identity was related to Caballerismo (chivalric, masculine code of behaviour) and connectedness with others ethnic identity. However, Oppedal et al. (2017) used Identity Status (EIS), a newly developed measure, addressing Phinney's MEIM limitation Umaña-Taylor et

al. (2004), to examine unaccompanied refugee adolescents' exploration and commitment mechanisms during identity formation processes. The results revealed similarities between their IS distributions and any of the global IS distribution of their Western peers who have not experienced the same adversities.

On the whole, despite their indubitable role in establishing and promoting self-related theories and research paradigms, a tendency to treat identity as a trait, an ideal type model, marks the approaches and studies discussed. Contemporary voices call for approaching identity as a condition liable for change in reaction to environmental and circumstantial stimuli. Attempts to address this concern have yielded extensive endeavours fuelled with multi-dimensional ethnic identity conceptualisation. Adolescents' increasing cognitive capacities parallel the constant impact of social, cultural and ideological circumstances, which are catalytic for identity development, while their narratives proved a good platform for staging the relevant impact of life experiences. More recent theories, such as the narrative and dialogical self-theories, discussed in the following section, address these issues centring the surrounding multiple discourses and multivoicedness within-individual tensions of conflicting 'voices'.

3.4.4 Narrative and dialogical approaches to ethnic identity

Engagement with young adults' narratives emerged following a need to enhance knowledge about the developmental nature of ethnic identity away from the static, visible and passive representations of ethnic identity, and

towards discovering what makes individuals explore and commit to self-structures (Safran 2008; Syed and Azmitia 2008; Pasupathi and Hoyt 2009; Singer et al. 2013). It is an approach that locates the onset of self-identification in late adolescence and early adulthood, synchronising with societal expectations framing personality and formal operational thinking (McAdams 2001), while asserting that cause-effect and thematic cohehrences in contructing life stories cannot take place before adolescence (Habermas and Bluck 2000).

Starting from the premise that identity is constructed by integrating life experiences into an internalized, evolving story of the self, through which individuals secure a sense of unity and purpose in life, McAdams (2001), and Syed and Azmitia (2008) used a narrative approach to ethnicity as manifested in the daily experiences of emerging adults. They explored links between identity formation processes, the content of relevant contextual experiences, and different ethnic groups' perceptions of the self. Ethnic experiences were investigated as told (in written narratives) by participants with particular emphasis on stories involving peers and close friends. With the first objective being to test Phinney's identity statuses model, Syed and Azmitia (2008) explored similarities and differences across 'achieved, moratorium and unexamined' identity formation phases (see section 1.3.7) to assess whether they provide a reliable developmental lens for triggering related self-defining memories when selecting particular social experiences and interpreting them (p. 1015). The findings supported the identity statuses model as being 'relevant for understanding emerging adults' ethnicity related experiences' (p. 1018), and recommended the use of narratives to tap into the experiential framework of ethnic identity contents. Narratives paved new ways for exploring

developmental considerations, such as age of the event and its congruence with a certain developmental stages, when it occurred, and participants' potential subsequent change in feelings.

A few years later, Syed and Juan (2012) applied a similar methodology to assess the degree to which pairs of friends report similar levels of ethnic belonging. However, despite exploring identity statuses in a similar way to the former study, participants engaged in a 10-minute audio-recorded catch-up conversation (after completing the survey individually). Findings provided evidence for ethnic identity similarities in attitudes and behaviours among ethnic minority friends, whether during exploration or commitment stages, and that such homogeneity is not solely an outcome of relationship closeness, but rather can be expounded by individuals' propensity to interact with their friends about ethnicity-related issues. Both studies make significant contributions to many areas of research including identity development. However, there remains a need for further replication within family and professional circles, and for exploring the impact of gender and age on ethnic friendship choices at different stages of development.

Guided by McLean's and Pasupathi (2012) argument that narrative activities may be a facet of status processes' manifestations, McLean et al. (2016) examined the role of identity content in framing social processes defined by identity, in a sample of college-going emerging adults. The participants provided written perceptions about the relationship between different ideological, social, religious and gender structures, and personal experiences. Although ethnicity was not a factor in this study, it revealed similar findings

to those of Syed and Juan (2012). Regardless of their social affiliation, young persons demonstrated that identity structural contents (occupation, religion, politics, values, sex roles, family, friendship, and dating) are generally salient to them, with some degree of identity commitment, and active engagement in exploring identities.

Tracing the narrative thread to demonstrate the importance of weaving the identity fabric into ongoing social processes is also documented by Hammack (2008), who believes that 'the process of identity development represents a link between self and society' (p. 224), and that the relationship between master and personal narratives could advise about social reproduction and social change phenomena. To draw a broader picture about the self, narratives are further sectioned into two juxtaposed types, individual verses social discourses. It is a task of integrating cognitive, social and cultural levels of analysis through a tripartite model that conceives identity in terms of content, structures and process, as Hammack (2008) contends:

> Identity is defined as ideology cognized through the individual engagement with discourse, made manifest in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across the life course and scripted in and through social interaction and social practice (p. 230).

For Hammack, ideology is inherently cognitive as it internalises collective symbolisations of beliefs and/or historical narratives, creating integrity within both individuals and their cultural milieus, which results in concurrent generation of structural patterns of social order with all its shared narratives.

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This conceptualisation outlines a comprehensive scheme that helps to recognise identity beyond traits and concerns through life stories individuals have constructed in parallel with local and global discourses. The latter, compete for primacy in the self- development process. This active multi-dimensional model seeks to interrogate identity as 'enculturated, socially situated and fully contextualised' (p. 240), providing an answer to concerns about distinguishing selfhood psychology from its concrete and abstract ecologies.

Hammack argues that writers have, to some degree, applied this multi-levelled approach which anchors developmental investigations in the intersection between master, or cultural scripts, and personal narratives, such as McAdams (2006) whose findings closely tied the latter to the reproduction of particular economic order. Mention was also made of Thorne and McLean (2003) who identified close connection between narratives and the production of gendered social categories. This connection was later corroborated by Hammack and Cohler (2011), who explored the enduring legacy of exclusion and subordination on the basis of desire through the master narrative approach. Hammack's own work on the Palestinian and Israeli identity sought to explore the possibility of mutual identity recognition, and the impact of intergroup contact on the extreme polarisation of identities that characterises both groups. The youth life-story narratives Hammack collected at several points across adolescence suggested a strong tendency to reproduce an identity master narrative, which enhances and further engages the political conflict and its immanent disadvantageous interdependence.

From the basic narrative approach's position that socio-developmental factors mandate individual experiences during transition to adulthood, to the master narrative's consideration of a selfhood tied to competing narratives about power and intergroup dynamics, lies a complex line of investigation. This not only speaks to the research integrity needed for studying emerging adult identities with all their psychological, social, cultural, and historical contexts and processes, but could also apprise the contemporary variable context of social structural processes. External narratives have proved their potential decisiveness over self-identification mechanisms and outcomes, nevertheless another narrative argument is communicating similar perspectives but this time drawing attention the socio-cultural noise within the silent sphere of the mind. The 'society of mind' (McLean and Breen 2015) labels a conceptualisation concerned foremost with exploring identity development amid individual participation in divergent conflicting social contexts. The Dialogical Self Theory (DST) created by Hubert Hermans (Hermans and Gieser 2012) has gained momentum in identity research over the last two decades, particularly in multicultural settings (Gube 2017).

Instead of assessing the one directional impact of the external social and cultural discourses and mechanisms on selfhood perceptions, as maintained by the previous narrative approaches, DST infuses the external to the internal in an inside out direction. The self here is populated by a profusion of personae in constant communication with each other, negotiating social and cultural positions 'internally (as self-characterizing acts) and externally (as self-characterizing acts with reference to other individuals)' (Gube 2017, p 4). Each of the I-positions one takes is part of a society of mind (Hermans and Gieser

2012). This means that individuals develop diverse statuses in interactional relations with others across social contexts both in and outside the mind. Aveling and Gillepsie (2008) maintain that the society of mind can get as complex as the outside world's, and with each I-position standing in relation to the social world, an internal dialogue is created. With different positions being in constant competition therein, Hermans (2012) alerts to dialogical frictions fuelled by power.

Today's mostly heterogeneous sociocultural contexts are perfect environments for competing discourses, interaction among which results in a conflict inside the individual; each newly accessed social environment invites a new conflicting position (Hermans 2012). The study of the dialogical self aims at identifying these positions, notably among asymmetrical categories represented by dominant discourses (majority) verses minority less heard ones (for example ethnic groups). Majority judgements' tendency to silence and monopolize minority's consciousness externally engenders power asymmetries within the society of mind, and dialogical relationships emerge with a sense of self and the other in continuous progression and renewal as core units of the wider society (Aveling and Gillespie 2008).

Jan Gube highlights Dialogical Self Theory's promises of understanding the impact of ethnic students' bi-or-multicultural profiles on the development of a compound identity. This feature has stimulated DST's application in various social and cultural contexts such as ethnicity and education. Indeed, Van Meijl (2006) investigated the ability of urban Maori (indigenous group in New Zealand) late teen students to construct ethnic identity in the midst of a

mainstream cultural and political hegemony, by exploring the way they mediate different internal representations of their ethnic identity. Findings indicated that dominant ideologies enshrine a sustained identity crisis for urban Maori who remain concerned about meeting the orthodox criteria for recognition as 'genuine Maori' (p. 919). Essentially, urban Maori's modicum commitment to genuine Maori language and traditions' learning and transmission forces them into dialogical conflicts between political and personal conceptions of their ethnic identity.

Aveling and Gillespie (2008) investigated the dialogical structure of second generation Turkish adolescents paying careful attention to the competing social discourses surrounding the individual. Similar to Hammack's capitalisation on master narratives (see section 1.3.3), they attempted to capture the spasms and harmonies of internal interactions between the self's positions and the others'. Through asking the questions: who is doing the talking and who is being talked to, the study revealed complex dialogical relations between personal and collective discourses that shape selfhood. Participants marked various I-positions stimulated by and reflecting power asymmetries among the various ideological and structural systems in their actual contexts. Being both a member of the Turkish community and a member of an ethnic group in Britain seems to have trapped the young Turks in a tangle of loyalties and racialising discourses, while 'their movement between the various positions is nonetheless adaptive' (p. 219). Aveling and Gillespie (2008) contend that identities are multiple, fluid and hybridised by virtue of these adolescents' appropriation of cultural resources.

Bell (2011) moved from exploring conflict and reconciliation of multiple self-positions within the individual to individuals' creation of new positions using DST. In the identity narration of a young who second-generation Asian Indian woman, an 'I' as both Asian and American category characterised the developing organisation of a new position in her dialogical processes. Through relating/conciliating previously competing positions, this work highlights the readiness of some individuals to engage in self-exploration processes once a chance for personal narration presents.

Others do not seem to be ready for such transformation though, as in Gube (2017) who arrived at this conclusion following attempts to identify institutional symbolic and ideological structures that contribute to ethnic students' dialogical processes. Gube's textual analysis of an Arab student's encounter with a culturally oppressive school rule highlights the synapsis of dialogical tensions while negotiating institutional power relations aiming at preserving the desired I-position. Institutions' roles in delineating dialogical operations are also emphasised in Freire and Branco (2017) whose case study demonstrated how learning experiences can affect self-conceptualisations, in that students' self-qualifications proved to shift from lacking confidence to being more cognitively capable, and that such positions may end up mediating the student's engagement in learning practices, especially when student's agency is favoured. These examples of DST call for educational professionals to be more aware of learners' problematic and constructive self-positioning and identity negotiations for the promotion of both learning and development.

3.4.5 Criticism and relevance

I have reviewed the main conceptual and empirical frameworks of identity formation, although the list remains far less exhaustive in relation to identity research. These two sets of theories have evidenced their strong relevance to this study's focal interest, identity challenges among minority high school student groups. The epistemic and empirical disparities between the three theories do not prevent them from hosting a range of core commonalities. The first set, AT (Acculturation Theory), Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Ethnic Identity Theory (EIT) are differentiated not in terms of subject principles and emphasis, but their types and methods of addressing them. For all three, group is foregrounded as the nurturing repository for the accretion of the different segments of self, but it is also the group that divides them seeing that each theory espouses a distinct and differential perception of group processes.

For SIT, group affiliation shapes one's identity, who we are, (Seth et al. 2011), while EIT views individuals' roles, what members do, as its basis (Stets and Burke 2000), and AT universalises its stance to suggest that all groups undergo the same identity processes throughout their acculturation journeys (Bhatia and Ram 2001). However, arguably, these conflicting being and doing aspects of identity are no more than two sides of the same coin. A better approach to the study of the self and group would equate it to the ongoing interaction between feelings of belonging and the way perceptions of the self may advise individuals' contribution to, and stability across groups (roles, social outcomes, situations).

However, such a merger could be further strengthened if individuals' direct voices were considered, as the narrative and dialogical sets advocate. It is important to listen to individuals' personal stories that they tell about their life experiences, which enable a more authentic staging of events and characters that have once been relevant to the construction of self. Through such scenarios, narrative approaches can help to appreciate how people sense the fine borders between bodily and subjective continuities, which coalesce to enable individuals exercise views, intentions and actions.

These epistemic and empirical considerations will guide this study's exploration of matters related to ethnic identity, delving into students' descriptions of the way they value themselves in relation to their belonging, their life experiences and actions, and their perceptions of self-consistencies and continuities. Identity is arguably composed of sets markers (Atkins (2008; Scourfield 2006), or indicators of ethnic involvement and descriptions pertaining to one's physical and psychological abilities, among which are ethnicity, language, religious and political convictions (Phinney and Chavira 1992). This study will engage with the social and moral concerns stemming from the mediating role language and religion assume in the relationships with specific others and the engendered self-subjectivities, notably for such considerations as 'the boundary that marks the terms in which an ethnic group expresses itself and makes political demands may be language or religion' (Safran 2008, p. 171).

3.5 Language

Undoubtedly, language is one of the most investigated aspects of the socio-cultural exercise (Slade and Möllering 2010; Evans 2014). Relevant debates have for long questioned interactional codes and symbols, and illustrated how the choice of a sign might transcend the linguistic sphere to enjoin political and cultural dimensions, and therefore demarcate an important side of the identity perimeter (Bosher 1997; Brown 2009). The scope of language and identity associations is so broad as to probe social, political, economic, historical, anthropological, educational and scientific intersections. However, May (2001) cautions against perceptions of imminent correspondence between the ethnic character and its discursive framework (single group's potential adoption of multilingualism while many other groups may endorse a mono-verbal code). Nevertheless, Joseph (2004) avers rather stronger ties between language and identity when appreciating that identity fields are demarcated by linguistic boundaries, and that the latter's decrease or blurring may jeopardise a whole group's existence. This stance is bolstered by Smolicz (1995), who believes that sharing one language fosters unity, a connection often harnessed by ethnic and nationalist movements rallying for the promotion of common histories and emblematic embodiments. For example, Safran (2008) evidences that the Basques, Catalans and Corsicans have been prioritising language matters for nationalistic goals.

In fact, this symbolic bordering function of language is firmly established to the extent that individuals' inability to speak a certain language has a restrictive effect on communication and, hence, identification with its speaker' community (Lo 1999; Cashman 2005). Geraint (2016) evidenced

that speaking Welsh may result in an increased national identification with an urge to differentiate from the English out-group. However, although she observed that Welsh language affiliation inspires high school Welsh children's perceptions of their national identity, she also reported many young participants' social discomfort at using it among mainly English speaking peers. This might justify why a larger and more varied sample of eight to eleven year olds identified by Scourfield (2006) across different locations in Wales rejected a structural contingency between being and speaking Welsh.

Therefore, language and identity debates are subject to greater definition in multicultural environments, where linguistic boundaries are more salient, especially in relation to mainstream languages. Language and community associations are sometimes so salient that a name given to a certain language also labels the speaking community. Taking the example of Algeria (my home country), Arabic, the first language, is enclosed with several dialects some of which succeeded to gain partial officiality through introduction to national curriculum and some allowance of administrative functionality. Each of these languages/dialects' names refers to both language and the geographical territory its speakers occupy, for example, Kabyl spoken in Kbail, Shawi in Shawia, and Mzabia in Mzab. In the UK, easier ties of language and community might be distinguished in the case of Welsh mainly spoken in Wales, and Irish in Ireland. Even when some people are denied a segment of earth's geography, a language like Roma is still able to qualify both language and group, but the relationship in this case might be fraught with hardships (Etxeberria 2002; European Roma Rights Center 2003; Canagarajah 2013) for the same symbolic connections between language and culture. May (2001)

contends that languages' progress and regress is not purely dependent on linguistic merit, but the 'social and political circumstances of those who speak a particular language will have a significant impact on the subsequent symbolic and communicative statuses attached to that language' (p. 134). This might expound how dominant languages benefit from their socio-political ascendancy and stability, and reflect the greater socio-political status of their speakers compared to subordinate groups, cultures and languages. Based on this, non-dominant languages are left to endure some of the hard lines of socialisation.

3.5.1 Ethnic language concerns

Many decades ago, Fishman (1965) dwelt on a history of neglect and apathy towards minority languages in the US and warned against the stigma attached to learning and speaking a language other than English in the US at the time, and its potential conversion to a mark of individual inferiority. Three decades later Guth (1997) confirmed the depiction is still valid and might lead to mother tongue renouncement because of, not only mainstream political and economic coercions, but also educational system's dissemination of ethnic languages' triviality and inadequacy.

These negative portrayals resonate with Link and Phelan's (2001) conceptualisation of stigma being an accumulation of inaccurate distorted images, and discriminatory attitudes and conduct towards a group leading to expected status loss; the less powerful the group is, the easier the mission will

be. Knifton (2012) confirms that stigma can operate on three levels: internalised by individuals (anticipated discrimination), social (experienced daily through interaction with family, friends and community), and institutional (prejudice is embedded into legal, educational, economic and media, and cultural institutions). Therefore, users activating distinctive interactional codes are more prone to social prejudice, notably those condemned by cultural contexts promoting mainstreamness, and dissuading minority colloquies for purported association with cognitive inefficiency. Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982) point out that for groups that are not readily salient, language may be a categorising factor, and hence may provide a bridge for prejudice to inflict social groups with less positively salient traits. Therefore, marginalised and powerless groups appear to be consistent targets to language stigmatisation given that the associated speech varieties have a tendency to be disparaged.

Empirical studies, in this respect, could be categorised into two groups; one assesses language identity manifestations among white immigrants mostly from European origins, and the other extensively examines non-whites, but mostly in the States. The first category defines subjects who flowed from Continental Europe to English speaking countries (Dustmann and Fabbri 2003; Slade and Möllering 2010; Canagarajah 2013) probing their options of retaining language, intercultural communication, labour market and social adjustment. Many also showed interest in tracing the evolvement of these issues beyond first generation immigrants shedding light on the desire of parents to preserve and confer their linguistic identity on their progeny (Portes 2001; Zhang 2010; Vervoort et al. 2012).

Among the second group, findings tend to highlight more issues of identity and language socialisation practices and allegiance to linguistic practices, besides exploring strategies for mother tongue's potential home instruction (Schecter and Bayley 1997). However, some directed their interest to explore how multilinguals' identity positions emerge during discursive practices, with a particular focus on gender (Preece 2009). Similarly, and hoping to consolidate traditional sociological theories about issues of integration, devolution and exclusion, Hester et al. (2002) analysed naturally occurring bilingual conversations to locate national identity in talk-in-interaction. Hence, regardless of the racial, cultural, and/or ethnic origin of migrants, native language retention is a significant factor in minority groups' cultural agenda in the integration mission, despite mainstream's strong linguistic rivalry.

The continuous testimony that linguistic profiles embody cultural identities also appear to have traces of local manifestations. Indigenous populations around the world report unsettled embroilments between majority languages and the home-grown parlance, as a result of nation states' assimilationist polices. Piché (2017) criticises the Canadian linguistic strategies as unable to address the French speaking community's linguistic and integrational concerns, leading to both physical and cultural isolation of the Quebec region, while statistics warn against the alarming decline of French's use in civic and pubic spheres. Mother tongue deterioration is also a source of distress to Turkish Kurds, for whom attempts to maintain national and ethnic identification are confronted with the unlawful suppression of Kurdish language. Çelebi et al. (2015) conclude that Kurdish language rights' support

has a crucial operational value in managing their national identification. Similarly, among reports of indigenous languages' consistent decline in Mexico, Mesinas and Perez (2016) depict the parents and young children's explicit identification as indigenous and highlight their encouragement of Zapotec language use, in contrast with their adolescent group who seem to deny both features.

Language does not only constitute words and meaning within discourse, but is also a powerful tool to construct identities, express them, and earn them social recognition (Ngcobo 2014). Unfortunately, this trilogy seems to tremble in Wales at the slender proportion of the population who claim fluency in Welsh despite studies confirming 'language to a large extent serves as a symbol of Welsh identity' (Bourhis 1973; Scourfield 2006). The 2011 Census saw a decline in 'both the number and proportion of Welsh speakers in Wales. The number of Welsh speakers decreased from 582,000 (21%) in 2001 to 562,000 (19%) in 2011' (McAllister and Blunt 2013, p. 77). Although the 2013-14 Welsh Language Use Survey raises the figure to 23% (Jones and Sion 2015), the same sources warn against inconsistencies arising from censuses and surveys' data collection disparate protocols. 29.3 % is the most recent estimate put by Stats Wales (2018) while no detail about data generation is provided. Where differences across nation are concerned though, figures range from 17% to 76%, with high dependence on locality as in some areas almost a third of the population speak Welsh (StatsWales 2018).

Many contend that Welsh and English statuses are not equally reflected in and by the different sectors and services causing adverse effects on peoples'

feelings of national identity (Bourhis 1973; Birch 1978; Drake and Simper 2003). Therefore, whether for the hosts or their guests, discourses around the mother tongue impart strong emotional swings between gratification and frustration. The bittersweet feelings of pride in cultural belonging and concerns about social recognition and representation compel minority language speakers to vacillate between two courses of action, struggle for social integration and equality, while maintaining the right for self-expression in the language of the self.

Language has so far proved its high significance to identity, but more needs to be known about how much language mastery is necessary to qualify into or relocate to certain social categories. Traditionally, laguage has been identified as one of many resources for practicing identification, while its significance might easily evanesce when the need for social affilfiation ceases to exist. No one denies the exisitence of individuals and groups who do not seem to appreciate that language is the other face of the cultural coin, nor should we discard thoughts about deliberate actions and conscious decision to repudiate mother-tongue and/or its relative symbols for the very goal of integration. Concepts and studies driven by an identity and language combination have, however, shown little commitment to personal and social statuses conditioned by linguisitic alterations between mother and host languages in the midst of interaction. The phenoemenon, commonly called code-swiching (CS) (Backus 2003), has mostly been confined to second or foreign language learning environments, while its connections to identity matters are not well examined. The following section will explore how the arousal of identity

feelings could condition lexical varieties, with an attempt to trace potential theoretical underpings.

3.5.1.1 Code Switching

Identity has been described by Auer (2005) as beeing a useful mediating concept between language and social structure for its ability to structure interactional practices according to 'linguistic acts of identity through which they claim or ascribe group membership' (p. 404). This is ensured through determining the social features of the linguistic variables involved. The type of language used and the way it is implemented in conversations serve as an index of social identities, notably CS processes where the speakers alternate between two or more languages known as code switching.

This mostly bilingual exercise is defined as the proximal mobilisation of different grammatical systems or sub-systems within one speech event, driven by the interlocutors' tendency to use verbal contextualisation cues to formulate and negotiate meanings and identities (Gumperz 1982b). Bourhis (1973) and (Saunders 1982) corroborate stressing that CS is symptomatic of bilibgual communitaion modes, a practice that confers linguistic and social skills on its users, specifically among speakers of the same languages. In addition to the linguistic pre-requisites, this skill, Corcoll López and González-Davies (2016) confirm, is procured as a result of contextual, strategic, emotional and proficiency-oriented decisions. Putting these concepts together, it could be argued that CS is an exercise actuated by individuals' cognitive ability to switch between/among languages' code systems, and apprised by the nature and context of the communicative situation. However, and despite this

systemic formulation, a prevalent view among many bilinguals' approaches CS as a fact of life, as natural and innate as harnessing a single tongue among monolinguals, which commits the literature to transcending the mere appreciation of vocal manifestations towards diligently addressing the inherent social, developmental, and functional processes.

When it comes to studying CS, and in addition to those who prefer to frame their discussion around analysing structural models of converssatinal acts through highlighting lexical and syntactic syntheses (Bentahila and Davies 1983; Backus 2003), many focus on juxtaposing the the verbal systems involved in conversation. It is through balancing positions and assessing preeminence and advantage among them. The second route might impart this study's investigations, notably in relation to the pragmatic, social and cultural imbededness of CS.

Code switching, power and stigma

Social discourses around CS seem to be generally dominated by their relationship to power and stigma. In Balam and De Prada Pérez (2017) study, teachers, most of whom had a positive predisposition to use CS as an instructional tool, reported negative perceptions of the Belizean Spanish variety while standard Spanish, language of instruction, was thought to be 'better' (p. 17). However, this contrasted with students' views as their negative attitudes towards the schooling tongue were overwhelming, which stimulated the authors' plea to 'destigmatise' Spanish and bolster its maintenance and protection from the ongoing threat of 'prestige' the Belizean kriol continues to present (ibid. p. 29). Nonetheless, tales about mother tongue preponderence

over mainstream language are infrequent as problematic native-speakerism stories seem more predominant.

Indeed, information gathered by Carli et al. (2003) from six European border commuities interviewees confirmed language as a fundamantal ethnic identity marker, and that linguistic diversity is harnessed to confirm power interests. Both sides of the border claimed 'that the unique 'character' or 'mentality' of each people is created by their mother tongue, as well as on the 'one nation, one language principle' (p. 865). This allowed the authors to evidence obsolescence and stigma among subordiante tongues and the way power and social statuses are affected, notably when observing the East-West direction of code-switching, which seems irreversible. Brubaker (2014) corroborates associating this state of cultural difference, which transforms to social inequality, with the languaged nature of political systems that confer social, economic and cultural differential values on particular languages. Brubaker also alluded to the engendered discriminating processes that promolgate linguistic majority prestige versus minority stigma.

Therefore, for minority individuals, the low status of their language becomes a concern because of its association with stigma and low prestige (Gumperz 1982b), and this might support arguments about the restriction of CS to private spheres and its dependence on situatioanl factors (Rubagumya 1994; Myers-Scotton 1998; Auer 2005). This conceptualisation might help expound the recurrence of this exercise among students in the study site, where Gumperz's model seems useful to consider.

Gumperz's Code swiching model

CS stories in general disitinguish between types of language switch according to micro and macro-factors (Auer 2005); the former being bound to the conversational elements, while the latter is regualted by factors laying outside intractional perimeters (Then and Ting 2011). Gumperz (1982a) semantic model, described as a semantic approach in the literature, emphasises the sematic value attached to the two languages throughout the Cs process, while preserving the social predications mostly represented in the 'we code' and the 'they code', which transcends linguistic properties to impose structural disproportionality. Gumperz (1982a) bases this concept on the consideration of subordinate languages as the 'we code' attributing them to miority in-groups as non-official social acts to be practiced in private spheres, and which are appraised as lower in prestige. The 'they code', however, indicates the more formal out-group relations. The potential significance of this classification is expected to manifest accordingly as part of the cultural/linguistic competence of the bilingual speaker, while the significance ascribed to each of the languages is determined by the two main parts of the model, metaphorical and situational CS.

The model's distinction is delineated by two paradigms. First, situational Cs , which advances an interactants' body, interactional tools, and conventions to realise the 'simple one-to-one relationship' between linguistic decisions and the situation's paralinguistic framework (Gumperz 1982a, p. 61). Second is the metaphorical language alternation, which underlays a form of violation of the commonly aggreed on social codes, as it remains open to individual speakers' verbal choices. However, as the situational choices represent the conventional

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sysytem (Then and Ting 2011), notably the language of interaction, adopting a disparate conversational system might disfavour its speakers for its consideration by the majority language's users as a breach of the Gricean maxim of manner. This situation, then, will imply a recourse to social categorisation according to 'we' and 'they' codes, a necessary phase for the local interpretation of metaphorical Cs.

Auer (2005) corroborates that a change in situational factors may lead to CS into minority languages. This is considered unconventional and marked, i.e. unpredicted (Myers-Scotton 1988) due to minority language's low status in this stuation , and ascribes its use to the need to 'express soliadrity, or to rebel, or to exclude a particular conversant' (p. 239), an issue this research will visit when exploring the interctional practices among ethnic minority students in the study school. Putting these arguments together, this model entails a link between linguisitc practices and the ideologies endorsing disparate appraisal of communication tools and concepts, legitimising the unequal observance of values granted to them, and to the represenatations they have in peoples' lives.

Gumperz, and the advocates of this model, assert that CS, mainly its metaphoric aspect, could serve as a power gauge for its ability to deomstrate the implication of social intitutions and values in instructing and mediating the intractional course. However, research undetaken in this respect has been mostly confined to the bilingual ambience interposing the conversational stage bewteeen two linguistic systems with disparate symbolic representations and disproportionate social powers; the privilege is traditionaly confered on standard languages. However, Cs' could be enacted by a process as complex

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as mobilising more than two languages at a time, and potentially recruiting several agents, each promoting a different verbal system and each being instructed by different cultural directives. It is not yet known how the model applies to pluriligual settings, such as the study's context, and whether the one-directional power trend fits within this frame. Although it is not the aim of this research to investigate power displays in verbal communication, connections will be made in the current study where it is believed this notion might be active, particularly in respect of young bilinguals' development and maintenance of mother languages and the engendered social and emotional consequences.

CS models in general need to account for multi-ethnic schools' disproportionate populations, where a mature professional collective is placed at one end of the conversational continuum as opposed to a young developing student interlocutor body. Here, and in addition to cultural inequalities enjoined by the situation, the adult-child situation favours the latter in terms of interactional efficiency (linguistic mastery, talk initiation, and subject manipulation). This study aims to illuminate some of the conditions under and because of which language alternations take place, and the complex negotiations around language choices, and situational circumstances.

3.6 Religion

The way in which adolescents in general conceptualise their sense of who they are, their own agency and personality is crucial for determining their resolutions and various commitments in subsequent life (Coleman 1999; Kehily and Swann 2003; Hemming and Madge 2012). Many researchers have

ventured through the complex worlds of young people's identity investigating transition from childhood to adulthood, and the role of ideological frameworks therein (Muuss 1990; Conger 1991; Coleman 1999; Roberts et al. 1999). Much less, though, has addressed the phenomena from the distinct perspectives each of the identity markers offers, such as language and religion.

Bari (2005) and Ysseldyk et al. (2010) contend that religion has emerged as a key issue among the Muslim student minority for defining the traits of the self and solving prosocial concerns. Erikson's model, discussed in section 3.3.3, identified the search for and commitment to an ideological framework as the product of identity achievement process. The extent of this achievement, Furrow et al. (2004) confirm, is tested against the formulation of purposeful commitment to life and to surrounding collectives, a prosocial approach to identity asserting its inculcation with moral and civic obligations. Many researchers attribute adolescents' safe transfer from a state of individuality to the stage of performing and maintaining extrinsic associations to the usefulness of beliefs and value systems in guiding their common directions and social ascriptions (Erikson 1968; Coleman 1999; Gozalez and Brown 2006 ; Madge et al. 2014).

For Omoniyi (2010), religion represents a strong ideological source of youth identity nurture because of its ability to shape a worldview structured according to values embedded within social relations, which, in turn, ensure maintenance and protection of individuals' sense of purposeful belonging. This feeds into the belief that identity cohesion quest among young individuals is incited by a search for self-definition in a psychological journey

aimed at consolidating and making sense of both their experiences of self, and the extended definitions in relation to familial, vocational, and societal characters (Marcia 1966; Erikson 1968; Offer 1969; Afshar et al. 2015; Hemming 2017). Ebstyne King (2003, p. 198) appears to trust religion's 'intentional' provision of beliefs, moral codes, and values to aspire the construction of youth personal belief systems. Religion then represents the cornerstone of many individuals' sense of distinctiveness, and hence is a crucial part of who they are.

Based on Marcia (1966) and Kroger et al. (2010) reviewed in sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, religious figuration and formation operate at the moratorium and achievement stages, which mark human beings' transition from childhood to mature adults. Here, Markstorm (1999) highlights adolescents' initiation to formal operational thought through abstract reasoning, where spirituality provides a boost to young people's exercise of their new intellectual powers; critical and sceptical approach to previously held beliefs, which may become highly relevant in the search for, the questioning and consolidation of identity. Ebstyne King (2003) reports great levels of symbolic symmetries with adults among religiously active teens, which for her, grant them a coherent worldview facilitating considerations of self and manipulation of relevant concerns. Erikson (1968) maintains that it is the embodiment of these belief concepts and codes of conduct that ascribe religion with efficiency in the development of identity. Such conceptualisation will guide this study's investigation on whether abstract ideologies and their practical implementation in life are two interacting ends of the spiritual continuum, or could perform as alternative independent sections.

Despite considerable lack of both depth and breadth in handling matters related to Muslim youth struggles for managing continuity of religious identity within multi-ideological settings, some have attempted to portray the dissonance and challenges of operating in communities laced with cultural incongruences. Both Jacobson (1998) and Berns McGown (1999) consider spiritual identification as an anchoring factor to which Muslim youth identity remains firmly based. Their empirical endeavours lead to locating healthy and flourishing religious identity within convoluted and fluctuating social directives for identity formation. While these directives will often frame the tumultuous experience of dislocation, disconnection and integration into host communities, they are dissipated by commitment to religious practices, through temporary dissociation from daily struggles during the five times prayers. Accordingly, this study aims to explore portrayals among the Muslim student community, and the degree of their spiritual salience compared to the rest the school's diasporic groups, notably in terms of rituals' veneration, and religion's potential instruction of conduct.

Spirituality appears to serve as a buffer against minority's full assimilation within mainstream culture as documented by Gibson (1988), who reports young Punjabis and Sikhs' ideological perseverance, despite successful adaptation to the host culture's emblematic structures. Similarly, Zine (2001, p. 4194) contends that 'commitment to living an Islamic way of life' was key to the continuity of students' Islamic identification. Nevertheless, studies picturing ideological selves as sites of spiritual praxis and moral resilience still fall short of comprehensively accounting for all the stages of spiritual

consciousness, ambivalent affiliation, and social pressures. Indeed, increasing awareness seems to characterise positive youth development issues, and greater attention is directed to factors affecting them. In this pursuit, capitalising on spiritual inclinations constitute a cogent stratagem and a pervasive resource, according to contemporary research (Ebstyne King 2003; Suad Nasir and Kirshner 2003; Van Dyke et al. 2009), which substantiates arguments about religion's protective particularities for young people's struggles, risks and experimentation, by facilitating structure to their boundary-testing adventures.

Educationally, Regnerus (2001) describes the advantages of religious involvement in disadvantaged neighbourhoods as opposed to affluent ones. Church attendance was found to encourage school attendance and promote academic performance leading the author to highlight the functionality of the church community for at-risk youth in overcoming their dysfunctional localities. This is corroborated in Sinha et al. (2007) who associated religiosity with decreased truancy risk, and Christian and Robert (2002) who found that high school seniors who participate in religious groups and those from Baptist, other protestant and Catholic communities are less prone to skipping school than their non-religious peers. However, Glaeser and Sacerdote (2008) went further to confirm the reciprocal benefit between both educational and religious institutions as each raises attendance in the other for both operate through similar social and personal systems, attendance, norms of politeness and respect, besides similar spatial and temporal dispositions.

Socially and morally, religion consolidates its prophylactic role among young populations. Religiously involved youth have confirmed their dissociation, or at least distancement form drug abuse, steroids and drink-driving (Christian and Robert 2002; Ebstyne King 2003). Reduced theft and delinquency, increased participation in abstinence programs, low probability of premature and pre-marital sexual involvement, and controlled suicide ideation and attempts were also attributed to spiritual engagement (Donahue and Benson 1995; Markstorm 1999; Smidt 1999; Ebstyne King 2003; Glaeser and Sacerdote 2008). However, spirituality is still far from claiming cure to all ills of society's young, as many social boundaries remain unsurmountable. In fact, religiosity and sexuality proved highly incompatible in studies conducted by Woodford et al. (2013), Shipley (2014) and Yip and Page (2016), who evidence striking analogies, such as, spiritual ideologies are sex-negative, and that the socially prevalent and desirable sexual models and the relevant norms perpetuated in religious communities are dissonant.

Therefore, little attention has been paid to the intersection of religious identity with other forms of social difference, such as ethnicity, race and/or gender in the schooling experiences of youth minorities, especially among the secular public. Peer pressure, racism and islamophobia, are other challenges, which deserve deeper investigation. Moreover, despite the mostly positive relationship between young people's belief systems and life practicalities, research tends to treat religions as an ideological mass, while distinguished considerations might be more adequate, for their disparate natures, which cannot bear generalisations. More needs to be known about religion's journey from affecting development and the promotion of the sense of self to the stage

of forming a proportional share of mature identities, and consequently explaining why some individuals grow more imbued with religious ideologies than others despite a commensurate conditioning. The way that the literature deals with multi-faith settings remains an issue, as little if any research at all has been done to explore young people's positionality in the midst of the ideological plurality characteristic of multi-ethnic settings. The current conceptualisations and findings bear little solutions to young people embroiled in the meshed symbolic make-up of multicultural communities framed by both spiritual and secular modalities.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated how ethnic identity managed to capture a universal interest in the literature for its core relevance to most, if not all, aspects of political, social, and personal life. The task of understanding ethnic identity is complex given the uniqueness distinguishing minority groups, while the diversified settings they occupy make it difficult to draw general conclusions. The increasing multicultural aspects of communities around the world imparted research endeavours to undestand the social and psychological impact caused by mainstream attitudes and policies on individuals' sense of self and belonging to ethnic groups.

This chapter has shown that schools are among the most diverse social institutions, advancing debates about the decisiveness of their cultural mappings and crucial developmental processes over social stabiltiy and learners' identity construction. It observed worldwide concerns regarding ethnic, racial and linguistic diversities, highlighting educators, researchers

and learners' dissatisfaction with their multi-cultural experiences within curricula, school settings, and educational systems. Such a concern was later addressed with proposals to treat cultural/ethnic identity as a central value in educational negotiations, supported by claims about culture's potential significance in settling social and attainment issues of minority students in multi-ethnic schools, and reinforcing ethnic identity's association with self-worth.

The chapter highlighted strong connections between education, personal and social identities, where adolescence appropriates significant attention for its relevant complex developmental negotiations. The conceptual paradigm driving discussion was first framed by Acculturation Theory, Social Identity Theory and Ethnic Identity Theory, which acknowledge the importance of groups' symbolic references and the broader emblematic framework society advances for constructing a healthy self-image in relation to a group. The review also draws on more contemporary conceptualisations stemming from the need to engage with narratives to explore links between identity formation processes and the content of relevant cultural, ideological and social messages. This debate has proved to both draw on and feed back into communities' symbolic structures, including language and religion, establishing strong connections between one's styles of expression, ideologies and perceptions of both self and the other.

This review has informed the various investigations of this study. If the above ethnic identity debates are orchestrated by feelings of affiliation to one minority group in response to mainstream hegemony, what happens in

contexts stranded with group multiplicity such this study's? This chapter's readings have guided the investigation of ethnic language practices and attitudes, and their potential information about identity formation and manifestations in a multi-ethnic high school in Wales. It directed the exploration of the cultural manifestations among different groups within the school environment, and helped to frame the evolving discourses of both affiliation and repudiation sustained by distinct types and levels of cultural exhibitions and loyalties.

The analysis of how mother tongues' operationalisation can frame these dynamics could be instructed by identifying which aspects and levels of ethnic language identification and representation inhabit the context? How does the intersection between and negotiation of ethnic ideological symbols occur? In addition to understanding the ways language ascription could inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self. These issues represent the main concerns that will be addressed in the rest of the thesis.

In summary, reflecting on the literature reviewed, the guiding research questions defined for this study are:

1- What are the different aspects and levels of ethnic language identification and interaction in a majority ethnic high school in Wales?

2- How do linguistic and ideological symbols intersect, and how are they viewed and negotiated in this context?

3- How does language ascription inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self?

The next chapter will present the methodological approach and procedures adopted to attend to these research questions, and examine the various issues and circumstances surrounding the education of minority children in a state comprehensive high school in Wales.

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores some of the methodological issues arising from conducting a case study on a multi-ethnic high school in Wales, an approach considered in consonance with the recent decades' marked increase in engaging qualitative methodologies in social and psychological research (Sarantakos 2013; Creswell and Creswell 2017; Yin 2018). This methodology defined the course of this study, and the different implementations and evaluation processes underlying the structure of this chapter. Consequently, I will outline the advantages of using a qualitative case study as a core method for my research seeing its facilitative functions in collecting and managing a rich and varied range of data, notably about the interactional experiences of ethnic students in mainstream educational contexts, and the way they feed into their perceptions of the self and others.

The chapter will embark on a descriptive journey of the setting, participants and the material resources relied on for generating findings, in addition to laying out the two phases perused for data collection. This will be followed by an account about data processing, coding and analysis, and the ethical consideration observed throughout these stages. I then continue by focusing on issues of positionality and reflexivity; how my experiences, and the way I was perceived according to certain personal and cultural features, have infiltrated my field relationships and the generation of data.

4. 2 Research Design

This study took an interpretivist and social constructivist approach where people are engaged as self-interpreting beings, perceiving and talking about their social involvement rather than describing phenomena (Syed and Azmitia 2008; Pasupathi and Hoyt 2009; Pietkiewicz and Smith 2014; Gill 2015). The emphasis of this thesis is on participants' subjective perspectives, and I have attempted to understand the complex world of lived experiences from my participants' point of view, appealing to the general object of qualitative investigation, which appreciates that social phenomena and situation-specific meanings are constructed by social actors (Gray 2013). To understand this world of meanings, I had to interpret it through the processes detailed in the rest of this chapter, clarifying what and how different understandings are contained in the verbal and behavioural expressions of the social actors. Hence, and consistent with Schwandt (1994), these interpretations are no more than a construction of the participants' constructions, and that the latter are unsettled, constantly amended depending on experience. This understanding, indeed, seems to involve the concept of 'self' and individuals' approaches to the relevant negotiations, self-portrayals and the engagement of cultural values with life experiences.

In this pursuit, qualitative approaches are increasingly used among education and psychology researchers driven by insights into how individuals make sense of phenomena surrounding them in a given context, notably those pertaining to experiences, events and people of some personal significance (Smith 1999a; Smith and Osborn 2008). A qualitative case study approach then is well suited to studying individuals' perceptions about and conceptualisations of identity and belonging. Additionally, this thesis will stress the locally embedded practices, and depict the

relevant socio-culturally conditioned experiences of diverse communities within educational settings for reaching a deep understanding of the attendant processes feeding into individuals' personas. This study aimed to capture young ethnic minority students' subjective self-experiences within educational contexts, and their influences on their identity conceptualisations. Brocki and Wearden (2006) appreciate that consciousness and self-manifestations are indubitable and can be studied and verified insofar as the underlying emotional or cognitive phenomena, whether self-centred or relating to external factors, have a primary influence on the way individuals perceive, process, interpret and act upon information.

The study adopted a case study of a state comprehensive high school in Wales, as such a methodology is mostly driven by the 'what' and 'why' questions about the researched phenomenon (Yin 2018). Investigating how and why minority students operate their symbolic systems, perceive their selfhood and act upon such conceptions is a context-dependent knowledge and continued proximity to the inherent experiences and realities is necessary for avoiding stultified research processes. Flyvbjerg (2006) acknowledges case study methodology's ability to efficiently address such inadequacies, recommending the need to keep careful consideration of individual cases, not for the sake of proving anything, but rather for the sake of learning something. This sustains this research's position that case study methodology is exemplary for attending to the central research aims and questions.

The case study approach also recognises the quality of its empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena taking place within real-life settings. Due to the lack of clear delineation between the latter boundaries and individuals' social and psychological experiences, multiple sources of evidence are required, a core

characteristic distinguishing case studies (Sarantakos 2013; Silverman 2013; Yin 2018). The multiplicity of data collection and analysis sources identify the in-depth, multi-sided approach case studies are endorsed for, notably when attempting to gain insights into aspects of human thoughts and actions the study of which is deemed unethical or impractical if explored through a different methodology (Flyvbjerg 2006). Despite arguments over generalisability, replication and researcher bias, achieving replication and generalisation of findings into theoretical frameworks could be fulfilled through case study methodology. It is able to generate new ideas to form a feedstock for other methods to test, illustrate reliable theoretical stands, and highlight spaces of accord and contention within the self or among individuals, therefore exposing avenues requiring greater examination (Flyvbjerg 2006; Everett and Aitchison 2008; Biggerstaff 2012).

Having determined the rationale for adopting a case study approach for my research, I later became aware of its identification with models frequently used in educational research for its 'intrinsic' nature, which stems from a genuine interest in a problem, while not undertaken for illustrative purposes or explication of abstract constructs or generic phenomena (Stake 1995, p. 33). The case then still remains as a bounded unit but empirical processes are not geared to inform a broad inclusive portrait, but are shaped by the focal interest of the case (Creswell 2018). Seeing that the issue under investigation is school-based, the next step was to identify the desirable school level, type and location. However, considering the qualitative nature of the study and the size limit informed by the aspired in-depth scale of data collection, it was not desirable to proceed with sampling procedure to represent a particular school population. Alternatively, it was thought to be more productive to pursue a

purposive sampling where a site with specific relevant profiles might be practical.

4.3 Case selection

This study's focus on multi-lingual manifestations and the way they condition selfhood conceptualisations within diverse schools in Wales centred my interest on multi-ethnic school institutions, while the ethnic factor was the primary criterion for selection. Among the four formal educational consortia in Wales, central and south Wales contain the highest percentage of English as Additional Language (EAL) speakers, 31.4%, compared to the rest, north Wales 21.7%, South West and Mid Wales 27.6%, and South East Wales 19.2%. This confirms the tendency for non-native language speakers to congregate in or closer to the capital (Jones and Bhatt 2014). School choice was then limited to Cardiff being allocated the highest percentage, 14.8%, of 'ethnicity by area and ethnic group/people who say they are from a non-white background' by March 2015 statistics (Stats Wales 2015).

Primary schools were excluded for the young learners' relatively immature language systems, and the lack of significant evidence about involvement in complex psycho-social self-negotiations beyond close family circle (Courage et al. 2004; Lewis 2011; Tomasello 2015). This, then, advocated for the recruitment of adolescent students for the association of their developmental stages with the conflicting appraisals of their value systems, social roles, and cultural performances (Erikson 1994; Markstrom 1999; Carpendale and Lewis 2006). Berry et al. (2006) emphasise these learners' emersion in cross-examining one's and others' self-images, while IHS for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (2017) highlight the additional pressure

such a phase exposes 'minority or biracial status, being an adopted child, gay/lesbian identity' to (p. 7).

4.4 Participants and data collection

According to Creswell (2018), increasing the quality and substantiality of a case study evidence should be yielded by multiple resources to facilitate confirmation for most study's main topics, and include attempts to investigate similar and/or conflicting explanations. Consequently, evidence was drawn from six main sources, whole school student survey, participant observation, one-to-one teachers and staff members' interviews, A level students' group interview, Key stage (KS) three and four students' focus groups, and documentation. In a non-hierarchical and temporally imbricating fashion, these sources' diversity allowed the study to meet the triangulation requirements recommended (Stavros and Westberg 2009); and Yin (2018) considers this multi-sourced data strategy as 'one of the major strengths of case study' (p. 126).

> It is important to outline the quality of my research design in relation to standard measures (Silverman 2013; Bailey 2018; Yin 2018). Although not all applicable, these comprise four distinct measures:
> - construct validity, adopting the correct design for the studied concepts,
> - internal validity, a strategy for explanatory studies that seeks to establish causal relationships, and hence lacks relevance to this study,
> - external validity speaks to the potential generalisation of findings, and
> - reliability, which concerns the possibility to repeat the different operational measures used in the study (Yin 2018, p. 42).

In fact, another pole of researchers (Bassey 1999; Sarantakos 2013) believe that validity and reliability remain problematic for case studies seeing their singularity, while their generally limited meaningfulness to the interest of the researcher and their institution remains troublesome. This view favours the concept of trustworthiness, which, for them, better serves the integrity, authenticity and ethics of truth. Trustworthiness is usually obtained through: credibility, which addresses truthfulness and accuracy of data, transferability, which observes replication (similar to reliability seen above), conformability that guards against researcher bias, and finally dependability, which counsels the ability of a different researcher to repeat the study while the consistency of the initial findings is preserved.

In fact, the two positions seem to have more similarities than differences, and therefore, I treated them as complementary attempting to amalgamate their principles accordingly. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena, I used multiple sources of evidence to give more credibility to findings and meet the triangulation requirement (Anderson and Arsenault 1998; Travers 2001; Creswell 2018). I reviewed the generalizability condition through thinking theoretically; initial findings from new evidence gave rise to new data that again was verified in the available evidence. It was a cyclical, slowly inching forward process of constantly checking evidence and findings. Finally, although the chances of repeating case studies are rare (Bailey 2018), I tried to meet the reliability recommendation through documenting all the procedures, and adopting the necessary theoretical and ethical frameworks with the desired level of explicitness.

For this, I used thick descriptions of phenomena to enhance my findings' applicability to similar contexts, circumstances and situations, besides keeping a set of records for data items with contents, destinations and source to provide accessible sequential evidence of the activities and procedures of the case. Importantly, two supervisors and one progress reviewer regularly examined my work.

The next section details the data generation process, which was marked by two main phases. During the first phase, a questionnaire, was distributed to all the student population. It was aimed at identifying the groups whose switch to mother tongue during interaction is a prevalent practice. It was also meant to gauge their peers' consciousness and perceptions of the anonymous conversing. The emerging findings informed the second phase, comprising individual interviews with teachers and staff members, group interviews with six-form students, and KS3 and KS4 student focus group sessions. At this stage, data was generated about the interplay between language and identity exhibited in the heart of the school's mainstream conversational context. However, the two phases were not completely isolated as they were underlain by a field observation process that started as soon as access was granted. Input from observation was significantly conducive to the elucidation and corroboration of data obtained through the other methods. Moreover, a document analysis was deemed necessary for enhancing the findings. These processes will be outlined in the following sections.

4.4.1 Research activity and participants

As outlined in Table 1, initial fieldwork occurred during the winter half term of 2014, before the school break for the Christmas holidays. Based on my supervisors' advice, a volunteering application for a teacher assistant role was approved by the school a few weeks earlier, as it was thought to facilitate access to educational institutions. During this phase, and while waiting for field work application to be agreed by Cardiff University's School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee, I was assigned the task of helping the new arrival students in the Ethnic Minority Achievement Services (EMAS) department, where I made the teachers and staff members aware of my forthcoming research activity in the premises.

Table 1: Research activity and participants

Activities	Dates	Location	Number of participants
Student questionnaire	Distributed in October 2015	School	All students
School observations/Field notes	From December 2014 to June 2016	Classroom lessons and whole school site: -classrooms - assembly hall -corridors, receptions and playgrounds-Dinner Halls -Teacher and staff rooms	All school
One-to-one interviews Teachers and staff	From May 2015 to June 2017	-classrooms -senior staff members interviewed in their offices	19

Students' focus groups	March 2016 to July 2016	Office of Assistant Head teacher (Teaching & Learning/Curriculum)	23
Sixth formers' interviews	October 2016	Café opposite the school	4

This role enabled me to witness and sometimes become part of the targeted interactional practices, and a plethora of relevant phenomena, during lessons, break and lunchtimes, assemblies, parents' and prize evenings, and many after school occasions, such as adults English classes, Roma parents project, community cultural fairs and some student after school clubs. This new arrivals section did not match my targeted student population, which included ethnic students receiving mainstream instruction, and whose English language level have been assessed by the school as equal to or higher than Entry Three (E3). However, this experience offered me an insider's insight into the school's life, and helped me establish valuable relationships with staff and pupils, notably the sixth formers whose crucial role in data collection and participant recruitment is discussed in section 4.7.

4.5 Phase one

4.5.1. Source one: Student questionnaire

A student questionnaire (Appendix 3) was designed to probe this population's linguistic propensities in their day-to-day interactional exercise, in and outside the classroom. All the students were considered for this phase, including those in the EMAS, given that a section of them are partially released to mainstream classes to study core subjects after demonstrating sufficient progress with their

English language. The questions asked essentially ranged from: Do you speak any language other than English? Where/how often do you use it/them in school? How do you feel when using this language or hearing others using a language you do not understand?

The first attempt to distribute the questionnaires in the summer of 2015 was unsuccessful. Despite reminders, they were not distributed by the relevant staff member and were then reported as lost. In October 2015, in close coordination with the Head of School for Pupil Development, I was issued with empty envelopes labelled with each form's initials and room numbers to assume the responsibility of distribution myself, with the help of the sixth form pupils. Each form tutor was provided with a sealed envelope with the name of the class and number of copies. Although the teachers were meant to have been made aware of this research activity by the school administration, most of them appeared surprised by the request. However, their engagement at this stage marked a noticeable countenance amongst the few who returned the copies in few days' time, sometimes the same day, while others had to be continuously solicited to render this service. The questionnaire's language and style were redacted to accessible levels, and my worry that EMAS students might need translation was quickly dismissed by the Assistant Head teacher who saw in it a good opportunity for them to learn English when working on the questions during the lesson. Ensuring the children remain the only ones aware of their answers was emphasised to the teachers.

416 copies, just above 40 percent of the total sample, were returned in total, revealing compelling substantiation about the need to pay the multilingual

exercise within schools a serious regard. These are summarised in Table 2, which shows that 304 students reported either themselves or their peers speaking other languages than English, led by the Czech Roma 119 (39.14%), followed by Somali 73 (24.01%), 51 (16.77%) reported Arabic, and other languages clustered in one group for insignificant reference of 61 references (20.06%). These findings, in addition to the perceptions students revealed about native language interactional propensities, along with the site observation and field notes, set the grounds for more in-depth investigation processes between January 2016 and July 2017.

Table 2: Most frequently spoken languages in Ysamrywiol

Languages spoken	How many students said this language was used	Percentage (of the total 416 responses)
Roma	119	39.14%
Somali	73	24.01%
Arabic	51	16.77%
Other languages (insignificantly reported/summed)	61	20.06%
Total	304	100%

When I resumed field work activity after the 2015/2016 Christmas vacation, parent consent forms were handed out in January 2016 to KS3 and KS4 students from the three main groups, Czech Roma, Somali and Arab, to take part in focus groups. Formal invitations for one-to-one interviews were also sent out to teachers via emails (some were contacted to confirm previous verbal approval), while sixth form students were contacted personally.

To this point, the research journey had been a continuous and progressive series of negotiations. Reminding prospective participants directly or through a gatekeeper, constantly carrying spare participation forms to cover shortage or loss, and unconsciously developing rapport with the participants characterised this stage. Being a chaser has been an integral aspect of my research persona, although I myself was also chased by time, pressure and uncertainty. Detailed information on the second phase is presented in the following section.

4.6 Phase two

Interviews

Interviews are a typical method for collecting qualitative data (Biggerstaff 2012; Seidman 2013). They are regarded for their ability to generate deep information, suggest explanations to important phenomena and key circumstances, in addition to gaining insight into interviewee's perspectives (Yin 2018). I established an interview schedule to elicit participants' accounts of relevant experiences, with constant caution against potential inferences, and careful references to my review of the literature (Bailey 2018).

Based on my experience with phase one, I broached the second phase with disquietude from further nightmares the field could conjure up for me. It is a particularly demanding stage considering the amount of skill and dedication

needed when the researcher has to juggle many roles and fit in, manage, organize, and cope with different tasks simultaneously. In fact, it was not possible to adhere to the time plan I designed initially to carry out the different meetings, as most of the sessions, especially the teachers', were the fruit of a short if not a last minute notice of accepting invitation. However, and as far the sessions were concerned, whether teachers or students', and while prompts were involved in the interviews schedule, pre-empting potential grounds for participant experiences was impractical. This open approach to constructing discussion was essential considering the homogeneity of all consulted groups (Fragkiadaki et al. 2013; Chan and Farmer 2017).

4.6.1 Source two: Teachers and staff members' interviews

Although a significant part of the data gathering processes was concerned with ethnic students' perceptions about various issues relating to their conversational dispositions, teachers' perceptions were of equal significance for being key actors in the lives of their learners and the management of school. Their conceptualisation of the school experiences of minority ethnic students constituted a different and powerful lens for examining these phenomena.

Two groups of participants were invited to these sessions. 16 teachers and three staff members were interviewed individually in school offices and classrooms after school time. As for teachers, there were two head teachers (a male who served up to the end of 2015, and a female who took over in 2016), one male deputy head, three male assistant heads, six permanents (one male and five females), four assistants (two males and two females), and three (one male and

two females) staff members (see Table 3). Emails and face-to face invitations were used to recruit this cohort. As advised for case studies, the interview sessions were conducted in the form of guided rather than structured conversations (Sarantakos 2013), where I attempted to maintain my line of inquiry, while verbalising the few questions dedicated for the sake of this research.

Unstructured interviews allowed my participants to offer their own accounts of what was important to them, while the thematic course was still followed without me overly guiding conversation. All interviews were digitally recorded and after I transcribed them, they were all uploaded to the NVivo software, a qualitative data analysis computer software, which helped in the lexical and thematic organisation of data. Interviewees were all made aware about the possibility of obtaining a hard copy of the transcript at request, an offer declined by all participants.

I met most of my interviewees and formed positive relationships with them during my volunteering service. I met my participants mostly during breaks in the teachers' common room, social events such as prize and presentation evenings, school projects such as 'mindfulness', in addition to fund raising events. The levels of trust and rapport I built with them certainly contributed to their comfort and spontaneity, which helped them relate rich and elaborate explanations of phenomena. However, these relationships were formally and objectively maintained to yield valid and robust insights. These interviews involved asking participants about their working experience in a widely multi-

ethnic, multi-lingual context, and the way it compares to other settings they had potentially served in previously.

Some of the topics involved challenges faced within classrooms accommodating many ethnic groups, relevant local authority and school's strategies, and the way cultural commonalities and disparities might apprise or affect instructional processes. All interviews took longer than one hour. Worth noting, though, is that teachers and staff interviews have spanned over a 14 months' period. In parallel, an intensive research activity was taking place through focus groups, field observations and data collection about school activity and demographic profiles from domestic, local authority and government resources.

Table 3: Teacher and staff participants

1	Mr Hayden	Previous head teacher
2	Mrs Trave	Current head teacher
3	Mr Bales	Deputy head teacher
4	Mr Isles	Assistant head teacher: inclusion and wellbeing
5	Mr Preston	Assistant head teacher: teaching and learning/curriculum
6	Mrs Polrod	English teacher
7	Mrs Trevnon	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher
8	Mrs Teneley	French teacher
9	Ms Carter	Spanish teacher

10	Ms Perl	Maths
11	Mrs Netter	Food technology teacher
12	Mr Gauge	History and geography teacher
13	Mrs Ismat	Arabic and ESOL teacher assistant
14	Mr Archer	English teacher assistant
15	Mr Rakamo	Somali and ESOL
16	Mr Pavel	Czech, Roma and ESOL teacher assistant
17	Mr Byron	Administrator
18	Ms Bloom	Community coordinator
19	Mrs Lime	Receptionist

4.6.2 Source three: Sixth formers interview

A one hour and 43 minute interview was conducted with a group of four as students in a café opposite the school. In concurrence with their request, the students were interviewed collectively after school on June 14th, 2016. As many students seemed to be eager to know about new faces in their classroom, Maroua, the Moroccan girl was full of excitement to find out that I am Algerian for the very close cultural ties between our countries; same language, dialect, religion, and even politics (Willis 2014) . Maroua could not hide her excitement the first day I helped in her English class, and started speaking to me in Moroccan Arabic instantly, and continued doing so whenever possible. According to Maroua, she has always hoped to meet someone in school who could speak her language (Moroccan version of Arabic). By virtue of her long residence in Ysamrywiol and her good relationships with teachers, 'popular'

Maroua's gatekeeper role was crucial to this study, notably during the questionnaire distribution and collection, besides peer A level students' recruitment. Although Maroua succeeded to engage a bigger number of her peers, only four were recruited (see Table 4), as it is deemed a suitable number for preserving both depth and breadth of personal reflections, while participants could still enjoy a fair opportunity to express themselves amply (Bassey 1999; Bailey 2018).

During the meeting, students were initially reminded of their right to withdraw consent, or object to recording, while at asking them for their request to be interviewed in a group, they expressed their wish to hear each other's experiences, and the potential need to remind one another about certain details. They had also made it clear that group interviews are less worrying to them than individual ones. Participants were able to express themselves freely away from any academic presence or authority, and this was clear in aspects of their accounts, which might not have found way to research audiences had the meeting been held within school boundaries. The participants were encouraged to reflect on their experiences as minority ethnic students, and many topics were raised in relation to contextual challenges faced by and among diverse groups. Discussions involved issues such as barriers to integration, achievement, observing cultural values and the relevant conflicts. The session's output was processed in the same way as the teachers' interviews.

However, and in accordance with the literature's reports about the difficulties in accessing or even identifying the Roma community (European Roma Rights Center 2003; Ofsted 2014; Dunajeva 2017), Roma students have never been

part of the A level school community until that date, which regrettably reduced my chances to meet their over 16 cohort. Embarking on a quest outside school was suggested by a teacher, who highlighted the invisibility of this category of young people for their fear to identify as Roma, and their aversion of being aggressed for their belonging (see Chapter Six and Eight for more details). Sadly, I was not able to attend the 'Beyond stereotypes: Understanding the 'Roma' event on the 20th July 2016 in Cardiff, aimed at raising awareness about the Roma issues, identities and cultures, and eliminate misconceptions about them (Blake 2016). The Romani Cultural and Arts Company who organised it were not eager to wave the attendance cost (£145.00) despite my offer to volunteer. Additionally, I was unable to access and university research events funding. The last station in this journey was Gypsy and Traveller Wales. After emails, and phone requests were unsuccessful, I attended one of their drop-in session, where although kindly received by one of their volunteer trustees, I was unable to draw support to access participants.

4.6.3 Source four: Focus groups

Information obtained from the questionnaires (see Table 4) and their high correspondence with teachers' and staff members' accounts helmed the need to conduct a loosely constructed discussion with the students identified for their distinguished interactional exercise. The reasons why the Roma, Somali and Arab groups partake a fervency for the mother tongue, and whether this is underpinned with and/or conductive to social, and psychological contentions directed the course of these meetings.

Parent consent forms (see Appendix 1) for the targeted communities were sent out in March 2016, and final lists of the students selected by the school to participate were ready in the third week of April 2016, which marked the onset of this operation with a pilot group discussion. Four students took part in a 45-minute discussion, a Somali girl, 13, a Saudi boy, 13, an Iraqi boy, 14, and a Sudani girl aged 15. This experience was a rehearsal opportunity of my facilitator role, and allowed me to identify important issues about timing, agreement and disagreement among participants, and the potentially intimidating aspects of the experience.

The actual sessions were incepted on May 3rd 2016. They took place either in the assistant head teacher's office, or in the adjacent inclusion meeting room. The four groups (see Table 4) were met twice each, with at least a one-week interval. Although some of these meetings had to be rescheduled more than once, they were all achieved by mid-June 2016. However, I had to further negotiate and liaise with the Pupil Development and Pupil Inclusion Department for inviting the Roma students. According to these authorities, it was hard to obtain consent from the parents for their children. Eventually, on the 12th of July, the first 'and second' meetings with the Roma group took place on the same day, before and after lunch.

Table 4: Interview and focus groups' student demography

Level	Ethnicity	Name, gender and age of participant	Number
A Level (KS5) Interview	Syrian-Iraqi Somali-Moroccan	Midhat, boy 18- Atif, boy 18, Zina, girl 19- Maroua, girl 18	04

Years 8-11 (KS3 and 4)	Roma	Charani, girl 14- Lumas, girl 15- Tsura, girl 14- Damian, boy 15- Vai, girl 15- Daena, girl 14- Miroslav, boy 13	07
	Somali	Badria, girl 15,- Hamza, boy 16 Abdul, boy 14- Fatima, girl14- Naeem, boy 13	05
Focus	Arab boys	Tariq, 14- Ahmad, 15 - Sinane, 14 Hassan 13- Omar 13	05
groups	Arab girls	Tasneem, 15- Sana, 14- Nora, 13 Ryma, 14- Farah, 14	05
Total		14 girls and 12 boys	26

Despite my awareness of the potential breach of the focus group protocol when holding both meeting on the same day, and the 'researcher as a vampire' (Ward 2013a, p. 85) notion painfully hanging over my head, I had to consider this option knowing that it might be the only chance these students could be brought together, and get their voices heard. Already thwarted with the failure to breakthrough to this community's post-16 students, I endeavoured to strike an ethical balance by preserving this opportunity. Enough reassurance was advanced from the school authorities that no harm or distraction will affect the students and their learning, while ensuring students' agreement to proceed with this plan prior to each session.

Despite general high rates of participation expressions, only few students could be recruited. The groups ranged from five to seven each in accordance with Sarantakos (2013, p. 208), who suggests a five to ten member group size provides a basis for a reasonable discussion, and allows equal opportunities from fair expression to lucid comprehension. At the beginning of every session, students were reminded of their rights including their unconditional

right to withdraw participation, or decline engagement with any question. The sessions progressed with discussion, generating questions around native languages' use in students' daily conversations in and outside school, and the perceived cultural values they attach to them. However, at later stages arguments diversified as each group seemed to modulate discourses according to particular inter-group interests; a perceptible diversity which later categorised data into a set of dynamic themes classifying and amplifying voices which might not be heard otherwise.

Facilitating these groups was not an easy mission. The pilot session was indicative of many aspects for improvement, however, the homogeneity of the real groups advanced the challenge of participant familiarity, which seemed to promote occasional in-between rather than among member discussions. Worth noting, too, is the fact that the tone and pace of discussions seemed to have sectioned my groups into two categories, one with slow engagement and slender elaborations, as is the case of the Arab girls, verses precipitant and overlapping, often unclear contributions, which mainly defined the Arab boys and Roma group. Mechanisms adopted to ensure a fair and balanced group discussion varied based on these two distinct paradigms. In the first circumstance, I was helping slow discussions to gain momentum through rephrasing and adding questions, besides frequent probing. As for the second, intervening at isolated conversations, and controlling dominating participants was my strategy to keep discussion moving. In both roles, it was important to remain a facilitating observer rather than an interviewer, which remains the essence of focus group methodology (Creswell 2018). Recording data in both instances was problematic, given that some extracts required a lot more time

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for listening, either because a participant's voice was too low, or due to overlapping segments.

Despite these difficulties, group discussion delivered constructive data and the participants' ages did not prevent them from conceptualising with breadth and variation. Even when homogeneity discomposed some of the aspects of interaction, the groups succeeded in addressing, describing, and negotiating the different concepts. These sessions generated deep and rich information in short periods of time, an hour each as scheduled by the school, provided crucial insights into the complex multifaceted areas of ethnic identity inside school settings, inter and intra-group processes, and reasons for and attitudes about cultural manifestations of ethnic languages. These revelations were consolidated by findings from other methods, such as field observation.

4.6.4 Source five: Observation and field notes

Observation is an integral part of qualitative research, notably case studies (Taylor et al. 2015); and many successful case studies in education rely on observing the practicalities of teachers and students' academic lives (Patton 2005; Yin 2018). In this study, observational evidence was necessary not only for providing additional information about the interactional agenda among ethnic minority students in Ysamrywiol, and the relevant personal, social and instructional challenges, but also to balance and redeem subjectivities that might arise from participant direct conceptualisations.

The December 2014-April 2016 observation period outlined in Table 1 could be divided into two main periods. In the first three months, I served in the New Arrivals Department, where EAL students are admitted according to English language levels rather than the age categorisation adopted in mainstream classrooms. The over 16 EAL students are not allowed to do A levels, while their ESOL six form class still entitles them to studying for their five GCSEs that can only be obtained through a Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) course for Health & Social Care. Observing these students was considered as a piloting period given that their English language level is still below the required fluency for the study. The targeted sample needs to be receiving mainstream instruction, where their ability to speak English problematizes their determination to constantly resort to their mother tongue. Although the observation method has rarely been subject to piloting, I took this decision based on Birmingham and Wilkinson (2003, pp. 21-22) who argue that researchers should apply what they call 'intelligent common sense', dispelling the myth and mystery of social research to their work rather than relying on meaningless simulations.

With access approved in February 2015, I gave up my teaching assistant duties and embarked on a formal and intensive observation process of mainstream lessons, assemblies, reception, corridor and courtyard activities, parents' and prize evenings, and teachers' room environment. Due to the participatory nature of this observation, my activity transcended mere passive observation to assume a variety of roles. These ranged from helping students with subjects' material and tidying up after them, and assisting in guiding and explaining to Arabic speaking visitors on parent's and prize evenings, to washing the dishes

and cleaning the surfaces hoping the Food Technology teacher could spare some time for the interview. I have to admit, though, that I was sweetly rewarded with the Easter themed cupcakes the students cooked; they tasted divine. I am so grateful my housewife skills made me useful outside academia. They even helped me earn the staff badge instead of the visitor's badge for the rest of the study. I also assisted on the 2016 Bake Sale at a teacher's invitation, where I helped students who were making savoury breaded bracelets and necklaces to be sold for staff and pupils on sports relief day. The yummy experiences not only slipped refreshingly down my palate, but also rendered my movement around the school smoother and more admissible.

Observing the varieties of settings and events, and meeting people from all walks of life were the most enjoyable parts of my fieldwork. However, this pleasure faded every time I had to isolate myself or hide to take notes. Unlike individual and group discussions, the digital technology could not efficiently serve this aim. Video recording inside the school premises is strictly forbidden, while using an audio-recorder was impractical for the need to obtain consent from every passer-by whose voice might be captured by the device. Even if every individual in school granted consent, a good recording quality remains incumbent on a good distance between speakers and the device. Therefore, putting pen to paper seemed the most practical method, albeit not free of concerns.

Writing on my diary during classroom-based observations seemed both acceptable and practical as writing is generally an integral part of lesson activities. However, where I needed to be an active part of the lesson or the

event, I had to resort to the IT room and squeeze my memories out on a word sheet before stress and fatigue permanently flushed them away. I even used to frequent neighbouring cafés to speak my notes out to my recorder for later transcription. One of these reads:

> […] This is getting very stressful and exhausting. I know it's just the tip of the iceberg so far! I wish I had a car. At least I could jot something down in the car park inside the school instead of going all the way out.
>
> Diary notes, March 3rd, 2016

Copious notes were recorded about the students' linguistic choices, their temporal and spatial preferences for using them, and the way others react to such an exercise. Seating plans and preferences, layout of the classrooms and different parts of the school were also noted. This information was either consolidating or enhanced by the rest of the methods in progress. These notes became more refined as I became familiar with the context, and as weeks went by, I started to gradually withdraw from observations towards more focus on individual and group interviews. My notes ended up rich and abundant filling two medium note pads, and few megabytes on my memory stick. The journey was exhausting, but I felt remunerated at every note I revisited and every memory I recalled. The sound of pupils running and laughing down the corridor, the smell of coffee from the teachers' room, the students' art displays adorning the school walls, the enchanting musicals, and the sweet smile of the receptionist every time I signed in and out of the building, are but a fraction of a diary journal that teems with life.

4.6.5 Sources six: Documentation

For a case study to reach the required level of depth and breadth, documentary evidence and physical artefacts are crucial for presenting a rich and detailed account about the studied phenomena (Lauckner et al. 2012; Yin 2018). Documents, too, can tell their side of the story about the different aspects of a project, and their version is deemed credible if satisfying five principles, widely known as the RAVEN model. It comprises good reputation (reliable source and history), ability to see (sources need to be well positioned to access evidence), vested interest (no personal interest in the promulgated material), expertise (lack of specialist background knowledge and understanding negatively affects interpretations), and neutrality (adopting objectivity and avoiding being swayed by personal prejudice) (Cambridge International 2013). Only documents applying to this model were selected for the sake of this study having all a formal, academic, institutional and/or governmental profile. Relevant paper and electronic evidence were acquired from inside and outside school after gaining access. The main sources consist of:

 Documents obtained at request from the school:

• School spread sheets about all student population, ethnic population, FSM and other internal records

• 2013 Estyn[8] inspection report

• School policies for the year 2015/2016:

o Policy statement 2014-2016 , 2015-2016

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[8]Estyn is the education and training inspectorate for Wales. It is led by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales and inspects quality and standards (Estyn.Gov.Wales).

o   Anti-Bullying (Respectful Relationship) Policy

o   Annual Equality Report 2015, 2016

o   Annual Governors' Report 2014-15 and 2015-2016

o   The school's full Complaints Policy documents relating to the school curriculum

o   Equal Opportunities Policy (including race & disability equality policies)

o   Anti-bullying policy

o   Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2016

o   Special Educational Needs Policy

o   Curriculum organisation

•   2013/2014/2015/2016/2017 school magazines

    Documents obtained at request form the Welsh Government's School and Teacher Statistics department:

•   Pupils aged five and over by ethnic background, from the January 2015 school census

•   Pupil development grant allocations by consortium

•   Evaluation of the Minority Ethnic Language and Achievement Project (MELAP)

•   Welsh Government estimate documents

The need to consult these resources accompanied every step of my research. At the early stages, facts and figures about the student ethnic minority demographic and educational profiles helped proportion Ysamrywiol's population to its counterparts within both local authority and all Wales's institutions. This built a picture of the similarities and differences between Ysamrywiol and the rest of the

schools, some of which were raised with teachers, such as EAL provision and mainstream curriculum conflict with cultural demands, while others were discussed with students notably in relation to integration and equal opportunity. Later, information from these documents were used to corroborate and augment evidence obtained through the other methods in this study. Their role ranged from being a source of additional knowledge, to simply correcting spellings, titles or names of individuals and institutions, or amending information provided by participants. For instance, some teachers' statements regarding community representation diverged from the documentary facts. However, this experience advanced the argument that this needs to be a two-way process as drawing on some documents, news articles in my case, revealed marked inconsistencies. Further inquiries about potential contradictions is an essential task case study researchers need to implement for enhancing its internal validity. Therefore, I tried to avoid overreliance on documentation after realising that not all of them contained unmitigated truth.

Despite these inconveniences, documents played a prominent role in this study, being a valuable source of data and evaluation, while their stability and availability, and the potential existence of alternative soft or hard copies were also advantageous. The fact that these sources are highly relevant, specific and precise, and not created for my study's sake confers my findings further reliability.

4.7 Data analysis

The data generated from the various methods in this case study (see Table 5) were analysed by perusing a combination of procedures, repeated examination of transcripts and documents, informants and information categorisation, thematic categorisation, matching, cross comparing, coding and drafting. The qualitative nature of my research, which enabled the freedom from constraints of overly restrictive rules of analysis, allowed me 'play with the data' (Yin 2018, p. 164) in my quest for promising patterns, which would assist in the definition and prioritisation of what to interpret and investigate, and why.

Atkinson et al. (2003) suggest that, in qualitative research, writing-up is as important as fieldwork, while still acknowledging that the boundaries between the two phases remain blurred. I conducted both procedures in parallel, with the writing extending to witness the end of the project. However, the writing process was further constrained by the data themselves, which are, by their qualitative nature, highly beneficial but also highly problematic (Bailey 2018; Creswell 2018; Yin 2018).

Table 5: Research tools and data generated

Research tool	Data generated
Observation and field notes	23131 words word document (from two note pads)
Teacher and staff interviews	1195 minutes-19.91 hrs

AS interview	95 minutes
Focus groups	55 minutes each- 440 minutes-7.33 hrs
Student questionnaire	15047 words word document

Data abundance and richness made it arduous to forge analytical paths through them, potentially subjecting researchers to confusion (Bryman 2016). To overcome this, I used the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) software NVivo to organise data, and make sense of and establish connections among them as follows in this section. I found great relief using NVivo as Lewis (2015) experienced, especially that some of its simplest tasks, such as word count and frequency would have remained otherwise unattainable even with an open-ended research time-scale. To train on and familiarise myself with the software, I attended two workshop sessions organised yearly by the Doctoral Academy, Cardiff University, in June 2015 and June 2016.

I aimed to address and understand my subjects' experiences in the expressive and concrete context of the social world. This decision however is not straightforward as multiple visits to each individual or group discussion was needed for in-depth analysis. Each recording and the relevant transcript were consulted several times, with annotations made on the margins of the initial word document, before all transcripts and field notes were uploaded to NVivo through separate entries. Here, exploratory comments reflecting early impressions about content, frequency of language and ideas, besides more conceptual and interrogative comments were made. A second margin was then created to note the emergent themes drawing on the previous initial evaluation, a process I followed until all 27 transcripts and diary notes had been analysed

to this level. Documentary evidence was uploaded on a separate entry folder, and consulted for cross-referencing and cross comparing with emerging themes from collected data.

At this stage, emergent themes from all entries were listed on a separate spreadsheet in NVivo, then moved around to form aggregates of correlating themes. This process was inspired by Tindall (2009) who structured identification of super-ordinate themes according to:

- abstraction, clustering similar emerging themes together and assigning new names to the emerging one,

- subsumption, preliminary thoughts become super-ordinate themes attracting related topics,

- polarisation, identification of conflicting themes,

- contextualisation, temporal and spatial connections among different sources,

- numeration, verbal and conceptual frequency supporting a theme, and

- function, which is the position and purpose of a theme among the rest.

The next stage saw a wider scale comparing and contrasting activity (Yin 2018) mainly characterised by looking for patterns across transcripts, fieldnotes, and collected documents. This involved drawing up a list of topics for each resource then clustering them into master themes, which represented higher-order qualities overarching the whole data set.

I cautiously and constantly attempted to present the most relevant evidence neutrally with both corroborating and contradicting data (Flyvbjerg 2006; Silverman 2013). It was hoped that such methodology could guide the reader to an independent conclusion about the substantiality and merits of particular interpretations, notably through vigilance and self-questioning, enhance the trustworthiness of data shaped my processing of evidence throughout (Alvesson et al. 2017). My own stance vis-à-vis data and analysis is subject to constant attempts of offsetting my own values, experiences and motives with my personal experiences, sensitivity and self-knowledge, which, Berger (2015) argues, are a valuable resource for enhancing researchers' engagement with their empirical materials and widening their insights into its meaning and significance. In fact, qualitative methodologies recommend emotional engagement with informants, encouraging emphatic reactions with their experiences (Kidd and Finalyson 2006).

4.7.1 The way NVivo facilitated my data analysis

In my project, NVivo helped me organise my data by themes through a coding process. References to different themes are contained in a container called Node that helped explore, experiment and see the project in action. Initially, I uploaded all my data (survey data, audio recordings, focus groups, interviews, diary, observations and policy documents) in the Internals folders (see figure 1), and in a getting to know the data stage, sources were explored through several techniques, Text Search and Word Frequency queries for instance, that allowed me to explore words and phrases such as what languages appeared most in the data, the way and frequency the term

'language' itself was used by participants in interviews and focus groups, and what contexts relevant expressions were raised in. I was able to access results numerically, verbally and graphically, and clicking any of these representations would display all the live data behind it. Appendix 4, shows a Word Tree, Word Cloud and Nodes Numerical Comparison representations obtained through the processes of investigating the type and degree of native languages used. This step set up my journey towards identifying themes, which was mainly guided by analysing the content and the text structures, connecting topics and their relevant material segments, while assigning significance accordingly.

Figure 5: Data Sources

Themes were developing progressively through adding text, audio or graphic data and descriptions, while assigning colour to the coded sections advised by the location of certain information. On the side of each document, coding appears in coloured stripes, the darker the bar is the more coding is attached to the section. It was important to observe the resulting Nodes' consistency

considering the relationships and hierarchies among them, a process that also guided my division of Parent (main) and Child (subordinate) Nodes (see appendix 5). The number of sources and references which were coded at each Node not only appeared on opposite columns, but also clicking on any one of them opened all the coded references for the theme in one place, showed how many references were coded, the percentage of the sources that were coded at that Node and links to the original source material. Although the coding processes did get fairly complex at times, I attended to this restriction by only selecting specific coding and labelling methods consistent with the research questions (Lewis 2015).

After generating themes to address the research questions, the main aim of a qualitative analysis (Tindal 2009), I later started interpreting the main findings based on the respective meanings and evidence from the data. At this post-coding stage, visual representation of the themes, their relationships, and related ideas were crucial for understanding results (Saldana, 2013), and the Explore function's Project Maps, Concept Maps, charts, and Cluster Trees helped me both read and connect my findings (see figure 2).

Figure 6: Explore function- main nodes connection diagram
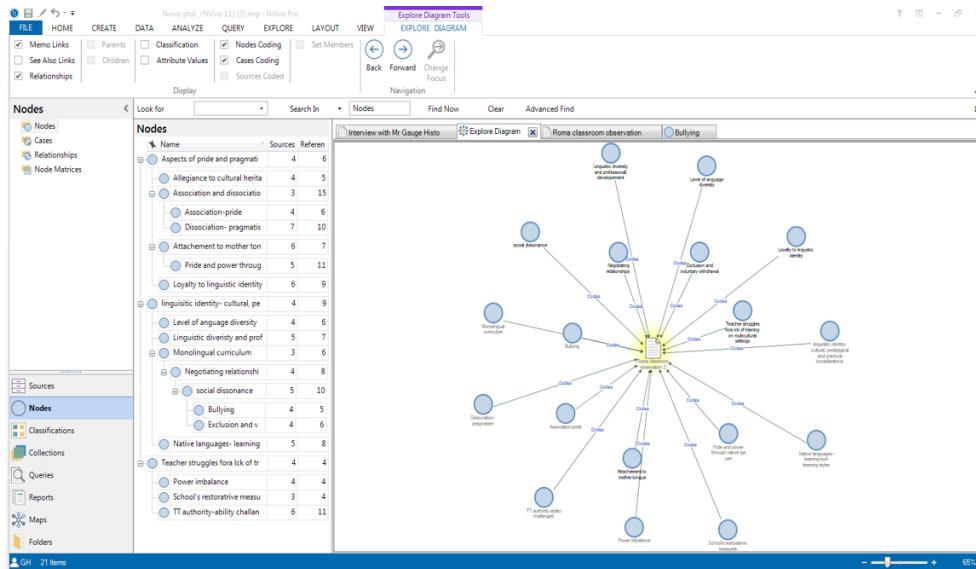
Overall, NVivo's analysis processes were intensive and required careful and systematic reduction of data to themes in order to address the research questions. The software has been particularly helpful with my data set seeing its large size and the capacity it brings in helping to retrieve word strings in large data sets, and move among the different sources seamlessly. Interestingly, too, the way the software allowed me to archive any data type and connect to already transcribed data has been invaluable for content analysis, especially at facilitating the use of hyperlinks to find connections and relations, which would have not been possible if done manually.

As demonstrated above, the methods I used granted me the privilege of accessing and studying deep-seated aspects of my participants' life experiences, while such a proximity in qualitative research remains constrained by ethical dilemmas when it comes to disseminating rich data

(Alderson 2011; Sarantakos 2013; Bailey 2018). One such dilemma tears researchers' potential between relating accurate statements about the social world, while simultaneously attempting to protect the identities of individuals inhabiting it. I provide an account of how I attempted to balance rich data with the necessity to maintain confidentiality in the following section.

4.8 Ethical considerations

For Anderson and Arsenault (1998), all human behaviour is subject to ethical principles, rules and conventions which 'distinguish behaviour from that which is generally considered unacceptable' (p. 16). Knowing that research activity is no exception, the moral and legal obligations to protect all humans, but specifically vulnerable categories (children, elderly, mentally and physically impaired) are seriously regulated (Alderson 2011). Indeed, research in education is highly observant of widely held values of integrity and ethical responsibility, which Bassey (1999) discuses under three main facets of respect. First, respect for democracy and the freedoms it grants researchers to set out on their queries, give and receive information, express and criticise viewpoints, in addition to disseminating their findings. However, these freedoms presuppose researchers to be bound to the two other types of respect, respect for truth and respect for person. Respect for truth in data generation, analysis and reporting findings, and respect for person, whereby researchers need to recognise participants' ownership of data and treasure their humanity with dignity and privacy.

Guided by these rules, and Cardiff University's Research Ethics, I strove to deliver on principles of integrity all throughout the data generation, writing,

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and dissemination processes. My student participants were informed about the research they would undertake in a clear and understandable language. I was aware that for many amongst them and their parents, English is an additional language, so I drafted the consent forms to E3 level (familiar words, short sentences) (OCR Oxford Cambridge and RSA 2010), while the language style was kept simple. The forms also contained my phone number and email to allow consideration of individual concerns. Moreover, all participants were openly informed of my activity, why I was in Ysamrywiol, and what I was researching. I provided the school with the various consent forms (see Appendix 1 and 2) and information sheets to be distributed to KS3 and KS4 students with special coordination with teacher assistants in relation to parent communities who might need translation, interpretation or direct contact, such as the Roma.

Although I was often disheartened and sometimes even concerned when seeing the invitation sheets discarded on the school's floor, or nearby the site outside the main gates, I was relieved to find out that information went far enough to recruit more than the required number of students. While it had been my intention to be recognisable to everyone in the school, I went through many occasions of quiet interrogative stares from both staff and students during large events, especially assemblies, where everyone is meant to look familiar, but as the research progressed this issue became less and less frequent. It was also impractical to introduce myself to visitors on duty or during social events; unless outright asked, it often went undeclared.

All participants were given pseudonyms, which would only preserve gender and ethnicity features, but not to the point of suggesting direct identification. Declining some students' request to be correctly identified felt unpleasant, especially for the KS3 who seemed too young to understand my responsibility to protect them. The school's name was also concealed as noted in section 4.3.1, with a pseudonym bearing standard reference to most high school institutions in Cardiff. However, the fact that Cardiff has a large number of high schools, notably those holding close characteristics with the research site, guard against the latter identification.

Although informed consents were obtained before initiating the research activity, I treated my participants' approval as always provisional (Simons 2009), an ongoing process verbally renegotiated throughout all fieldwork stages. However, special care was taken with the students, notably KS3 and KS4 in accordance with the Committee of the rights of the child (2009), which requires researchers to adhere to the United Nations' articles 3 and 12. These articles respectively presuppose the best interest of children, and that, commensurate with their age and maturity, the right to express their own views should imperatively be granted to those able to form their own views. This resonates with David et al. (2001) who contend that research taking place in schools might be coercive to children who may feel obliged to give consent, seeing the authoritative nature structuring school contexts. I tried to mitigate this risk through reminding them of their absolute freedom to participate, and that their initial consent was not irreversible. As a mother, I am aware that children's enthusiasm about new experiences might generate an initial wish to participate, which could quickly fade away at realising the inherent

commitments. Therefore, I made sure my young participants were made to feel comfortable with altering their compliance whenever they wished.

In the Arab boys' first focus groups' session, and while I was reviewing these issues with them, Sinane (13) smiled at Tariq (14) saying quietly: 'we gonna be famous man!', and all laughed. Although I did not want to spoil the moment for the boys, I had to emphasise the need for anonymity and that all material collected would be managed in a way that neither the school nor them will be identified. Fortunately, this did not affect their willingness to proceed with the study. Recording discussion was a request made recurrently at every session with all participants, while only declined on two occasions, first with the Arab students' pilot group by a girl participant, then with one teacher. Therefore, analysis involving their information relied solely on notes taken during the meeting.

These issues and processes were marked by a unidirectional caution, researcher vis-à-vis participant, while experts warn against ignoring the bi-directional pathway where researchers' development of self-conscious awareness and scrutiny necessitates looking through their participants, and the way they could be affected by research decisions (Darawsheh and Stanley 2014; Damsa and Ugelvik 2017). Acknowledging one's baggage of assumptions, cultural and ideological values to perceive data, evaluating findings, and then feeding reflexive insights back into them is a necessary cyclical action in qualitative research (Berger 2015), which is the focus of the following section.

4.9 Exercising reflexivity and managing field positions

In qualitative research, conclusions are shaped by researchers' backgrounds and conceptualisations, which affect the way they question and structure the world, and filter participants' perceptions (Berger 2015). It is an understanding that accentuates our sub-identities' structure within the social hierarchy of the research community. Nationality, language, dress, age and ethnicity are primary signifiers playing essential roles in research actions and interpretations (Giwa 2015). Thus, although not void of opportunities, for an ethnic researcher to efficiently engage in exploring the way ethnic minority students negotiate cultural challenges could set multiple challenges at the fading line between being an insider or an outsider. This section highlights potential implications of being cognisant of one's position in the research process addressing the concept of reflexivity. Every interpretation must have been reached through contextualisation and can never be free from presuppositions. It is a consequence of the very nature of being a human born into and living within a busy world, cognitively, ideologically and linguistically stratified, and through which individual perceptions are modelled (Shinebourne 2011).

My subject position as a Muslim Arab woman, mother of two children who attend a similar category school to my study site, albeit mainly white, are factors that had a great impact on the process of my research. I have always been self-conscious of my cultural and ethnic origins through the othering processes people who look and speak different can be subjected to. Despite being often called 'camel', 'Paki', 'tent-head', and 'terrorist' in the streets of Cardiff, this had not curbed my propensity for valuing and operationalising my

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affiliation to the British society through my academic institution and my children's strong bonds with all aspects of the Welsh society. The number of years I spent in this country saw me witness my initially vulnerable and dependent children develop 'local' attitudes and identity performances, with an increased orientation to mainstream culture, and who would only get their national and/or religious pertinence questioned by a new friend when I happen to be around. My children's functionality in British society legitimised my persuasion that I am part of both native and host communities (Starr and Brilmayer 2003), while problematizing my research mission, due to my dual positioning. As Darawsheh and Stanley (2014) maintain, by presenting the 'other' I am presenting myself, and hence I am interpreting my data with a complex consciousness of and investment in reception. It is a controversial obligation to confront squarely the ethics and twists of one's representation, but it is possible to deliver on decolonising the discourse of the other through a non-exploitative and compassionate treatment of participants when carefully monitoring interpretations made through the eyes and cultural standards of the researcher (Shinebourne 2011).

With such understanding, reflexivity extends beyond highlighting one's selfhood frameworks to the need for acknowledging our recipient's personal structures. Indeed, Ozkazanc-Pan (2012) stressed the consequences of researchers' claims on our audiences and calls for their imperative and accurate identification if the research's political implications are to be successfully handled. For this, I identify myself, as more Algerian Arab than British addressing a Western audience; an aspect, I acknowledge, has infiltrated the wisdoms and multiple judgements of my study. As ethically commanded, I

have, mobilised my own ideological voice to activate my participants', where both are the output of social, cultural, ideological and historical formulae interlacing to weave the genuine material of reality (Shabbar 2015). The next section describes some field action modulated through divergence and analogy.

4.9.1 Similarity and difference; both make a difference

For Damsa and Ugelvik (2017) research represents a space operated by both researcher and participants, with their identities having the potential impact on its proceedings. Indeed, primarily focusing on participants' perceptions in relation to identity manifestations, identity comes to play in other ways. Through my own perceptions not only of others, but how I felt others would perceive the middle aged Arab woman, modestly dressed, clearly Muslim (wearing head scarf), and speaking English with an accent (and a 'few' mistakes). These biases have frequently shaped feelings, suspicions, decisions, and expectations of the setting and served as checkpoints all along the way. Recognising my difference has frequently helped me gain insight into managing my field relations, notably with individuals and groups of similar attributes, as with Arab and Muslim teachers, students, and even the guests I met during various events. Similarities between me and this cohort seemed to facilitate recruitment and thwart reservation, while the same features might have delayed my Roma participants' embracement of the session's mood when they started questioning my identity, my research, and 'why us (Czech)?', a question Daena asked on the way to the science lab (see Chapter Eight, section 8.2). Hogg and Terry (2014) acknowledge that people have multiple

overlapping identities, which frame their understanding of the world, while differences among them often occasion mistrust. Others argue that 'being a collective attribute, trust is applicable to the relations among people rather than to their psychological states taken individually' (David and Andrew 1985, p. 968).

Although the choice of the setting was a personal decision, the thought of potential existence among strangers for a prolonged period of time was unnerving. After stress had taken its toll on me for weeks, arriving at Ysamrywiol for the first time disproved my concerns and strangely felt like coming 'home'. In addition to the good-natured and amiable treatment I received from teachers and staff members, the diversity of the school population was very welcoming; no matter where you come from in the world you feel instantly harboured by analogy. The guarantee of seeing a familiar face or race, hearing a familiar tongue, or recognising a familiar pattern, I believe allayed my apprehensions, and finding some reflection of this on the working crew, too, conjured up an unexpected sense of ease in me, although later deemed insufficient by both teacher and student participants (see Chapter Four). 'At least now', I thought back then, 'I know I can be familiar with some codes (social) and have an idea of how to approach some participants, make them feel comfortable, and easily get what they mean' (diary notes, December 15th, 2014).

Although splitting different aspects of persona (gender, faith, language, etc.) is entirely artificial given their entanglement in the real social world, different aspects of my identity drove me through different pathways. The most

significant experiences in this respect were incited by my linguistic and national denotations.

4.9.1.1 Language

A shared language represents a solid common ground between people and groups, insofar as a similar linguistic package can temporarily bind strangers together (Damsa and Ugelvik 2017). For me, speaking Arabic and some (rusty) French was certainly an important factor in successfully appealing to and connecting with many school residents, to such an extent the sound of my words appeased Maroua's (Morrocan) nostalgias for home and family, and again confirmed 'the intrapersonal dimension of having an accent' (Jones 1997, p. 453). They made it easy for students to relate to me and served as passkey when those who speak these languages assumed I was brought to their classes specifically for them, help them learn and listen to their concerns:

> Today, I was in 11 RH (pseudonymous form tutor initials), second
>
> lesson, and the students were working on last year's (2015) exam
>
> paper to practice the way language is used to create a sense of voice.
>
> As we were discussing the use of linguistic and literary features, the
>
> influence of audience, purpose and context, Taha (Algerian 17) and
>
> Souad (Moroccan 17) were clearly struggling. They then engaged
>
> in a conversation reproaching curriculum designers for not
>
> producing bilingual textbooks ' زعمة لوكان هادو القايدلاينز جاو بالعربية ولا
>
> I mean' ,(Taha) لي كاستيو كان تسهلك. و يزيد يقلك يوزتسروس. منهم بصح هاذو؟'
>
> suppose these guidelines were in Arabic, things would have been so

much easier. On top of that they suggest you use thesaurus. Are they

being serious? (Field notes, May 11th 2015) - [My translation]

However, there are ways in which speaking vulnerable participants' language might prove a moot point when one is expected to understand and sympathise, or even uphold certain individuals' or group positions. During interviews and focus group meetings with Arab students, the latter used to often address me directly to confirm their views, 'isn't it Miss', or 'you know this Miss don't you' assuming an implicit co-understanding of concepts. But this does not compare to situations when researchers' involvement commits them to settling disagreement or resolving contentions. I was once asked by the teacher to translate the meaning of a few inappropriate French words shouted during a verbal fight between two Senegalese students in a row over stationary. I denied knowledge at that moment, but later explained to her my duties as a researcher not to affect participants' experiences. I was torn between a testimony that might cost me students' trust, and my ethical duty as a shadow teacher to ensure misconduct is addressed when identified. Taken by surprise, a careful well thought through decision was not an option, so I promptly opted for the first position, but later was content with it regarding the amount of harm the second might have engendered on the students. Nevertheless, I have to admit that I am still uncertain whether my reaction was appropriate, which suggests that ethics training for students and early career researchers could be more domain specific, and more appreciative of such sensitive issues.

According to Mannay (2010), shared knowledge and shared understanding might tame conflicts between interviewer and interviewees' domesticity and distance. Indeed, whether positively or negatively, language has undoubtedly created a shared space between my participants and me, which was marked with a mutual understanding of sameness and otherness that, I often felt, offered both parties a respite from the work-laden perimeter of school life.

4.10 Conclusion

For England (1994, p. 82), 'research is a process, not just a product'. This chapter upholds the argument that for a study to claim robustness, studied phenomena have to undergo a coherent, multifaceted and ongoing course of evaluations, comparisons and reflections. After starting with the epistemological philosophies underpinning the research, I elaborated on the case study methodology, which shored up the structure of the study's two data generation phases. These phases were devised to attend to the research questions within the ethical protocol described in this chapter. I then continued by focusing on some methodological complexities I faced while investigating issues among young ethnic individuals within educational settings, and communicated some practical and ethical limitations encountered during both fieldwork and data analysis. Finally, the chapter considered how the physical and ideological aspects of my persona helped or hindered my research activity, with special consideration to a researching-through the mirror practice that engages reflexivity and contemplates field relations.

However, with respect to empirical findings, the reported accounts and field notes are not exhaustive, but they demonstrated relevance to multiple positions

to be addressed. The remainder of the thesis is advised by an emphasis on the themes generated throughout the analysis: multilingual practices among ethnic students, cultural influence on interactional choices, linguistic loyalties and social stigma, in addition to the consequences of exposing young individuals to negative representations. To offer the reader a contextual foundation for the subsequent analysis chapters, the following chapter will draw on the vicissitudes of the global political atmosphere thought to have distinguished the findings of this study.

5. Contextual issues

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide the reader with situation, background, and picture of this study's site, processes and actors, and how they relate to local, national, and international contexts and events. In addition to providing an essential structure for understanding the research problem and its significance, contextualisation, for Creswell (2018), also promotes research reliability and the overall quality of analysis and findings. The chapter starts with a welcome address to the research site, striking a diverse demographic, linguistic, and cultural note, besides advancing some structural, historical, and curricular familiarisations. This is then enhanced by an account of the prevailing social and political circumstances, mainly communicated by a converging islamophobia and Brexit rhetoric.

5.2 Welcome to Ysamrywiol!

Given that ethnic student populations are usually enticed by standard educational institutions (Shepherd 2011), Ysamrywiol, the research site, was chosen among the 14 state secondary comprehensive schools with post-16 provision, school year 2104/15, where national curriculum is taught, and instruction is delivered through the medium of English (GOV. UK (2014). Consequently, Welsh medium, grammar and independent schools were eliminated for their contended ethnic minority representation (Pells 2013), while faith schools' particular religious character and formal connections to

religious organisations remain incongruent with this study's aim for potential interference with students' ideologies.

These characteristics lead to choosing a school with the following particular profiles: a state comprehensive secondary (high school with sixth form provision), managed under the policy of all-comer, equal opportunity school of a public and non-denominational character, and a socially mixed intake, nevertheless free school meal rates among children are among the highest in Wales. Some demographic information has not been referenced as this might lead to direct identification of the research site. The school has been referred to by the pseudonym 'Ysamrywiol', a combination of two Welsh language words 'ysgol' for school, and 'amrywiol' for diversity. Further ethical measures will be detailed in the coming sections. Nevertheless, where integral progress with the case's assessment necessiates mention of particular data, the '*' sign will be placed next to approximate figues or information.

After obtaining ethical approval from the school in October 2014, access was an issue with the research site as my initial visits, phone calls and emails to the head of administaration office were unproductive. However, my supervisors' advice to access it through volunteering proved an effective strategy. I enrolled as a teaching assistant on 2nd December 2014, a role I carried on assuming as a volunteer for the next few months. The connections I made during this phase and different experiences I underwent were crucial for facilitating admittamce as a researcher, and building up an insider perspective (see Chapter Four, section 4.9).

After access was granted in April 2015, I collected preleminary data on demographic and contexctual information about the school, part of which was supplied by the school administration head, and the deputy head of pupil development. Other information were gathered online, from the Welsh inspectorate (Estyn) 2014 inspection reports, or directly obtained from Statistics Wales. Table 6 maps the ethnic landscape in Ysamrywiol, juxtaposing its diverse groups' representations to total local authority coordinates. The '*' sign is used where exact numbers are avoided to prevent direct identification of the site, and approximate/rounded figures are introduced instead.

Table 6: Human and demographic layout in Cardiff and Ysamrywiol. Sources: Office for National Statistics, Wales and School Data

Ethinc student population in:	Number	Percentgage	Ethnic groups in:	Ethnic languages
Cardiff (aged five and over by ethnic background)	43790	100%	107	Absent figure
Ysamrywiol (all: aged 12-19)	655	1.5% (of all Cardiff's ethinc student population)	Over 50 *	Over 60* 70% EAL

For a single school of a mediuum capacity, accommodating 1.5% of the total local authorities' ethnic minority student polpulation of all age groups is a remarkable aspect. This feature offered an opportunity to explore the way such

a contenenace is handled by instructional and management processes, notably the challenges cultural and linguisitic sizealibilties might occasion.

Ysamrywiol High is located in the city of Cardiff and mainly serves two catchment areas. However, 61% of pupils come from other parts of Cardiff, and 27% living in the city's more deprived wards (Estyn 2014). The school's 37% free school meal entitlement rate is regarded as higher than the national average, and significantly higher than the figures of many other schools of similar educational provisions (Mr Bales, Ysamrywiol). The 2015 school records report high pupil polpulation turnover of 26%, with a considerable 100 of the same year's year 7 to 11 students being new arrivals to the country on enrollment to school. This, according to Mr Bales, leaves a significant minority of students 'funtionally illiterate' at admission.

The ethnic topography spans over 75% of the pupil population map, mainly reprsented in Somali, Czech or Slovak Roma, Arab, Bangladeshi and Pakistani, with 36% categorised as 'less competent in English', a figure regarded as not only the highest amongst analogous schools, but 'much higher' than the runner up establishment (reference concealed). However, there are no records of any students speaking Welsh at home, while it remains a statutory requirement that all pupils study Welsh language in Key stage four (KS4). As in all state schools, Ysamrywiol's pupils are prepared for a GCSE qualification in Welsh Second Language, for which they sit the oral, reading and writing examinations in year 11. The only other language currently enjoying a similar provision, although optional, is Spanish, while students willing to take the same qualification in other native languages will be assessed in terms of their

current linguistic ability and the potential existence of relevant instructional assistance within school. It remains far beyond the shool's ability to grant such a wish to speakers of all

the languages spoken in school, but for successful candidates, lessons are usually scheduled after school.

5.2.1 Curriculum

The curriculum in Ysamrywiol officially speaks three languages, English, Welsh and Spanish, and is delivered according to students' individual ability in subject sets all taught in the medium of English. The Welsh langugae is taught as a sepeprate subject in the curriculum. All KS3 (Year 7, 8 and 9) students are taught the national curriculum, which consists of core and foundation subjects. Core subjects are: English, Mathematics, Science, Welsh, Physical Education and Games, Personal and Social Education, and Religious Education (including Careers in Year 9). Foundation subjects comprise Music and Drama, History, Geography, Spanish, Art, Technology, and Information Technology. At KS4 (years 10 and 11), core sbjects of National Curriculum continue to be taught, in addition to English literature, Numeracy and the Welsh Baccalaureate. Three additinal subject options are also provided such as dance and community languages.

For those who prefer to finish their secondary education in Ysamrywiol rather than college, there is a sixth form department. There, years 12 and 13 students are offered a range of courses, which prepare them for university, further education, commerce and industry. They form three blocks, main, secondary,

and partnership, as represented in Table 7, which draws on school online and hard document resources, and shows that minority languages are introduced as a secondary options. Only eight of the 64 minority languages are offered for further instruction; Arabic, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Greek; Portuguese, Persian, and French.

Table 7: Level choices in Ysamrywiol

Subject blocks	Venue	Timetable
Compulsory subjects Welsh baccalaurate	Ysamrywiol	Main - School day
Main subject block offered at Ysamrywiol Art & Design, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Dance, Drama, English, Food Technology, History, ICT, Mathematics, Physics, Sociology, Sport and Health and Social Care	Ysamrywiol	Main - School day
Secondary subject block offered at Ysamrywiol Arabic, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Greek, Portuguese, Persian, French	Ysamrywiol	Extra curricular-After school
Subjects offered in partnership Accounting, Music, Philosophy, Law, Psychology, Photography, Film Studies, Government & Politics, World Development, Media Studies, Religious Education, Economics, Further Maths, Food Tech, Graphics, Computing, Applied Science, Electronics, Spanish, Geology, Applied Health & Social Care, PE, German, Computing, IT, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Applied Science	Colleges and other high school partners	Joint timetable-Host institutions' main timetable

Unfortunately, language choice is not only determined by student will, but more importantly, potential conflict with other options' location or timing, which means

students might have to repress their linguistic aspirations to meet 'more essential' learning ends. More arrangements are needed between the interested students and the teachers designed to deliver the chosen language subject, while success depends on temporal and spatial agreements between their schedules and conveniences, which often get impacted by parallel arrangements for after school activity. It is also important to mention that an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course is available for students with limited English.

5.2.2 History and structure

As the standard ethical practice for educational research advances mandatory requirements to protect both individuals and the research from identification (Walford 2005), the school in this study was offered confidentiality. Even when many adult participants overtly expressed permission to use their real names, the need to protect the school and student cohort, implied full anonymity. Therefore, geographical location, street description or any account regarding the school's physical environment and neighbourhood have been avoided.

Ysamrywiol provides a mixed comprehensive education to hundreds of students from all walks of life, social class, ethnicity, and physical and mental ability. According to Estyn, Ysamrywiol offers an average budget per pupil for

£5,056 (2012-2013), compared to a maximum of £9,511 and a minimum of £3,988 offered in similar category schools. However, it is not clear how the Wales Pupil Development Grant (PDG) of £1,150 and the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) of £1,050 (2015) (Welsh Governement 2018) contribute towards this sum. The school documents demonstrate that its individual pupil budget ranks fifth out of 21 secondary schools in Cardiff, and is meant to help prepare more talented and able students to attend top universities, run classes for newly arriving parents to develop their skills and gain qualifications in English, and support pupils with Autism, and those who may be vulnerable to social inclusion due to emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The latter category, also known as having special educational needs (SEN) represents 42% of the students' population in Yasmrywiol, with 4% having a statement of educational needs compared to 2.6% nationally. It is worth noting that ethnic students whose English is below functional ability are on the SEN register. The following sections expatiate upon the wider socio-political discourses that surrounded this research site.

5.3 Political wrangles marring social integrity

An efficient case study methodology, notably those investigating human interaction, should account for the prevailing physical, social, economic, cultural, and/or political circumstances (Yin 2018). This study's field work period was characterised with tense political discourses and practices fuelled by islamophobia and immigration fears of which have infiltrated the educational premises in the UK, as in most developed countries, spreading unparalleled moral and political panic (Morgan 2016). Anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant rhetoric had spiked across Britain. Compounded by the terrorist

attacks in France, notably the Charlie Hebdo incident on the 7 January 2015, my case study was situated within the freshly flaring emotions of frustration among Muslim participants, students and teachers alike. However, the intense anti-immigrant sentiment forged by the 2015 leave or remain in the European Union campaign, later resulting in a majority leave vote in May 2016[9], came to the Roma students' dismay, subjecting their sense of peace to further jeopardy.

5.3.1 Islamophobia

As for the issue of Islam, the last decade has marked a staggering rise of immigration figures from Arab Muslim countries, being allegedly associated with terrorist attacks committed by radical groups, who on their turn never hesitate to cast trauma among innocents in the name of Islam (Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017). Imbued with phobic conceptualisations against Islam and its symbols (head scarves, mosques and Arabic language) (Kallis 2013), this argument fuelled injurious hostilities towards Muslim even inside schools (see Chapter Seven). Ysamrywiol was no exception, and the deep anxieties communicated by its Muslim community deserve attention. It is a call to a greater scrutiny of the national structuration of discourses about religion within secular curricular, and whether educational institutions, as Güveli and Platt (2011) inquire, could be posing threats to faith.

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[9] The UK voted to leave the EU by 51.9 per cent to 48.1 per cent. Wales voted 52.5 per cent in favour of leaving the European Union (The Electoral Commission 2018).

The years 2014, 2015 and 2016 witnessed a wave of terror attacks across Europe, responsibility for most was claimed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Ostaeyen 2016; Jane 2017). These series of coordinated assaults have influenced public opinion's streams against the emblematic representations of the Islamic religion, notably the Arabic nationality and language. The role of media and different online social platforms in advocating and committing to the production, packaging and dissemination of antagonism against Islamic identification was significant (Awan 2014).

In fact, media messages leaked into schools permeating young people's minds, who would often turn the advertised representations into social character, with potential consequences for in and out-group relations. On the 03/02/2017, approximately a year from meeting the students, the world woke up to another 'Allah Akbar' story far and wide over the news (Mulholland and Burke 2017). Once more, the Arabic/terrorism pair has been constantly and consistently twinned throughout media narrations as illustrated in Figures 2 to 4.

Figure 7: BBC News report. 3/2/2017- Paris terror attack

Figure 8: Le Monde Newspaper. 3/2/2017- Paris terror attack

Figure 9: The Telegraph. 3/2/2017- Paris terror attack

This study's atmosphere witnessed an infectious cultivation of outgroup prejudice, nurtured by social and psychological traumas, which continued to weave distress as language and faith associatively persist on compromising identity. Association between terrorism acts and the Arabic language indicted its speakers' with criminality through profiling them as security threats, even when only peripherally involved with such serious matters. Westminster's March 22ⁿᵈ and Manchester's May 23ʳᵈ perpetrators did not need to chant 'Allah Akbar' to cast fury as their Arab Muslim names saved them the hassle to trigger further media and social onslaught against Muslims, especially Arabs ((Dodd and Marsh 2017). Internationally, contentions over accommodating the prospective walking Syrian refugees suspected of bearing the seeds of terror, if not already comprising terrorists, were breeding a wide scale of unrest (Aiken 2014; Rettberg and Gajjala 2016).

These events appeared to impact on Muslim students' stature within local communities in and outside the UK. From 2015 to 2017, threat and attack stories remained on the rise in schools, placing Muslim students at 'the

receiving end of discrimination and racism' (Shah 2017, p. 60). The Muslim participants' accounts (see Chapter Seven) made a case for educational institutions grappling with, not only pedagogical dilemmas, but cultural incoherence, too. One teacher who bears an Arab first name related to an incident where a Czech girl called him 'terrorist' during playground duty while he was trying to settle an argument between her and another student. Another teacher suggested that she represents the 'full dooming package' of Islam, and has hence been verbally discriminated against inside school ' انت بحجابك و اسمك مخلتيش مجال للشك انك مسلمة. شيء لا مآخذة يودى ف دهية. و الصراحة العالم دول بيصدقو كل حاجة' (the fact that you are wearing a head scarf and called an Arab name unmistakeably tell you are Muslim, you are in for big trouble, and to be honest these people tend to believe anything) [My translation]. Chapter Seven will expatiate on similar student anecdotes.

5.3.2 Brexit

During this school year, membership of the European Union (EU) had triggered hot debates in the United Kingdom, and the yearlong electoral campaign progressively instilled feelings of division, not only among the country's immigrant community, but the whole continent's (Hobolt 2016). In 2015, a target of 160, 000 refugees had been set for relocation by the EU, but practically faced major implementation challenges after Paris's November attack causing intense scrutiny of the EU's free passport travel system, Shengen, and intense public emotions against the undesired guests (Geddes and Scholten 2016). In the summer, Hungary constructed its border fence, initiating an outbreak of border enforcement in many European countries, such

as Greece, Spain and France (Dearden 2016). It was not just new fences that were emerging, some countries reinstated border checks to curb, not only refugee, but emigrant influx as well (Darren 2016). The latter category defines the free mobility within EU by EU citizens, which hit record figures particularly from new member states, Poland, Hungary and Romania, centralising, perhaps more than ever, the issue of migration in the European political and social debates. The day-to-day business of living among immigrants in countries targeted by immigration started to bear more negative connotations, breeding intolerance and division among both societies and political systems (Hobolt 2016).

In the UK, such prejudice was regarded as a major determining factor in the 23/05/2016 referendum's result, suggesting that the campaign's capitalisation on immigration had been politically manipulated to incite intolerance against EU residents. The British social attitude reported 50% of the British population's conviction that immigrants are an economic burden, a sentiment conveyed even by some already established migrant communities fearing fresh waves of immigrants might be a threat to their employment and their children's education opportunities (Barysch 2016). Racist 'Get out' or 'go home' graffiti, hateful slogans and even physical aggression, became the actualities of a society divided by politics (Hobolt 2016).

Schools, being miniatures of the wider society (Haghseresht 2011), have been no exception to these tensions, and have themselves been accommodating the Eurosceptic material, albeit not through the curriculum. One teacher

commented that she 'cannot forgive the Brexiteers' for disturbing their 'innocent' EU students, affirming the detrimental impact of the protruding hate discourses against immigrants, like herself. Furthermore, and as Chapter Six communicates, my Roma participants and some of the teachers admitted how this issue is roiling the school's sense of harmony, whether through outrageous conduct or mere banter. The Roma students were discussing:

(while debating the issue of a lost origin)

Charani: Basically, we don't have a country. Romas are everywhere

Damian: We came from India hundreds of years ago and then we like
spread out everywhere kinda any country you find us

Charani: Basically like this group yeah, like each one of us comes from
somewhere

Daena: Like my grandparents, yeah, my Nan is a Russian Gyspy and my
grand dad is a like Czech gypsy, we come from everywhere

Interviewer: Can you guys ask Miroslav what he thinks?

Miroslav: [interpreted by Charani] there is a law asking all the Czechs to go
back to their countries

Interviewer: Which law is that? Do you know anything about it?

Vai: The government, they're saying [interrupted by researcher]

Interviewer: The Czech Republic government you mean?

Damian: No Cameron here in this country

Interviewer: Are you talking about if the UK leaves Europe?

Few together: Yeah, yeah

　　(Damian 15, Charani 14, Daena 15, Miroslav 13 and Vai 15, Roma
　　　　group)

These events, attitudes and emotions have markedly shaped data generated with these participants, and most importantly, as this thesis claims, the way identity was used to pursue perceptions of both self and the other. In April 2015, a rumour invaded the school about accommodating a prospective 100 Syrian students lot from the refugees walking through Europe, and this seemed to trigger some students' concerns about the capacity of Ysamrywiol to meet such an ambition, when the current population is awaiting adequate support:

Ryma: And they say they're gonna bring a 100 Syrian refugees to our

school. That's just kinda not right? Cause you know, like I'm

not trying to be racist, but like I'd imagine them going to

[naming two other schools] but not over here.

A couple of peers [together]: yeah

Interviewer: Why not here do you think girls?

Sana: Cause Miss, (the other two schools) are kinda big [interrupted by next

speaker]

Ryma: And rich

(Ryma 14, Sana 14, Arab girls' group)

It was clear that contentious discourses on immigration did not spare Ysamrywiol, which became a host for issues dividing social attitude, and reflecting the widespread public concern about resources and social and cultural coherence. Both Islamophobia and immigration themes were

prevalent during the data generation process and seem to have been resources participants drew from to perceive some of their selfhood.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter outlined some of the basic physical, demographic, and organizational structures of the research site, a school featuring a high multi-ethnic countenance with significant economic and educational disadvantage. However, despite acclaiming the school's instructional and managerial endeavours to accommodate ethnic learners and support their progress, this account reproaches the national curriculum's monolingual tendencies for ethnic languages' lack of both representation and support for relevant academic qualifications. The chapter also acknowledged the key role the prevailing social and political atmosphere played in questioning social affiliation, drawing on the shadows cast by Islamophobia and Brexit on diverse communities, their permeation to school environments, and impact on participants' selfhood conceptualisations. The following chapters will focus on communicating the key findings of the study, which were highly observant of the local and national context.

6. Linguistic identities: between cultural gratification and practicality

6.1 Introduction

With the worldwide increasing cultural diversity that is characteristic of globalization, and visible within schools, traditional ideas of ethnic belonging are constantly and sharply brought into question (Aspinall and Hashem 2011; Ozkazanc-Pan 2012;

ROTA-Race On The Agenda 2014; Banks 2015). The relevant policies and instructional strategies remain confined in the dominant majority's culture and mainstream social paradigms (Carrasquillo 2001; Kallis 2013), whose main mission towards national integration often flounders at minority ethnic students' embodiment of cultural variations, such as language (Edwards 2009; Ainscow et al. 2016).

This chapter will look at the striking multilingual character of this research's site, where classroom instruction cannot be declaimed in ethnic languages, and where curricula, too, are designed to be delivered monolingually, despite the native tongues' attendant social meanings and affirmations. This controversial politico-economic issue often raises questions about the potential realistic reconciliation between the mandated pedagogies, cultural diversities, and limited educational resources.

Later, attention will be drawn to the eminent role minority languages perform in driving and leading to identity debates, where pride and pragmatism substantiate their centrality in considering arguments about bilingual experiences. Working through a native language lens, the chapter concludes with a look at the strong impact distinctive linguistic belongingness has on one's perceptions of the self, tracing potential ethnocentric and spiritual embroilments.

6.2 Uniforming diversity: mother tongues in monolingual moulds

The 2015 school's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) document showcases 63 languages spoken by English as a second/foreign (ES/FL) language learners identified as belonging to 54 ethnic groups. During my first visit to the school on the 22/10/2014, I was struck by how diverse the school's population looked. It was not simply heterogeneous, but an explosion of differences. Diversity is vividly captured in a festival of colour and conspicuously distinct physical traits all amalgamated in a multi-phenotype environment. From the school magazines and posters displayed at main reception, to pupils' artworks and writings all over the corridors and classrooms' walls, everything is shouting out diversity, but tacitly aspiring towards unison. There are white and dark skins, scarves and hairstyles, short and long skirts, afros and dreadlocks, and everybody meets in a place that inspires both strength with its cultural hybridity, and bewilderment at the potential overlap between its various sections. One of my earliest field notes reads:

> Walls in this school have more to deliver on than just embracing
> classrooms; they, too, can teach! Bulletin boards decorated with

cloth and staples all over year sevens and eights' classroom walls. Students and teachers must have spent long hours pasting and laminating so that walls are enliven with calls for harmony and success. A multi-coloured handprints flower stands out in Ms Tenely's room skilfully capturing cultural diversity, uniformity and happiness through its vibrating coloured hands, carefully placed around circles that keep on widening around to reach out further and further. The teacher thinks 'the message is worth it' and that 'these displays are an informal instructional tool that teaches not just about the curriculum but life in general'. In Mr Gauge's classroom, another display titled 'Hopes and Dreams' is very culturally relevant, too. Students have completed the sentence 'I want to be…' in many different languages, and ES/FL ones signed their names in their first languages next to English (when script is different, for example Urdu). Mr. Gauge believes that future is born from the present: 'we make it now, we work hard now to meet a good future. This is how history was built up.' He added that writing it in many languages fosters the kids' confidence and belief in who they are. The message is clear: no matter where they come from, what languages they speak, the future is what students want themselves to be (Field notes, December 2nd 2014).

Multilingualism within the school is a phenomenon that everyone deals with and sometimes benefits from, as will be shown further down in the next three sections. On many occasions, I heard members of staff addressing or replying to visitors and students in the latter different

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languages, albeit basic phrases sometimes, such as in Arabic' ' شكرا '

(/ʃakrən/, thank you), or 'Lección ahora, (lesson now)?'. This is common

inside classrooms too, for example, Mrs Loom shouted at Roma students

'být zticha' (be quiet in Czech) during my volunteering in her classes.

Many teachers and staff members appreciated the valuable experience

that the setting offered them such as Mr Archer (English Teacher

Assistant - TA) who valued the opportunities the environment allowed

him to practice his French and learn some more words: 'Yeah, I know a

bit of French and try and get by there may be with a few Moroccan

children. Um, I'm learning a bit of Arabic as well'. Other teachers

consider their experience in Ysamrywiol as a 'cultural eye opener,

something you can't get with your PGCE training. You have to actually

work here to get it' (Ms Carter), a self-development concept omnipresent

in most teachers and staff members' interviews. However, concerns were

articulated about the valuable amount of skills acquired from working in

such a considerably multi-cultural setting, which were not necessarily

valued in the labour market:

> I love my job, especially in this school. You learn new things every
>
> day. Now I can greet people in many languages. I learnt many
>
> phrases from students, and [stressed and highly intonated] their
>
> parents [laughs] (Mrs Lime).

> Um, I mean, yeah, my experience working in this school 'should'
>
> [air quoting] make job hunting easier for me in the future. Having
>
> dealt with so many nationalities and languages in particular is a skill

that I would have over most candidates, you know, globalisation and the growing multicultural profile of the whole country would suggest that…you sort of feel you are needed everywhere nowadays, more employable, you know? Technically, but, unfortunately, that's not how things are done right now (Mr Moller).

In this vein, many, including ESTYN (2013) and the media seem to appreciate the unique experience the school offers as it serves students with tens of different languages, several of which could be spoken simultaneously within the same classroom:

I've seen a class where each child speaks a different language, and they talk and they all laughed at the same time. I was like 'how are they doing that?' Because there is not one common language they're saying, they're just speaking and laughing […] (Mrs Polrod).

I haven't worked in a school like this before, big huge diversity of ethnicity and of language and of culture, and, yeah, it's, it's really interesting challenge, it's really fun, it brings with it a lot of issues obviously… yeah it's something that keeps the job be interesting (Mr Gauge).

On the face of it, these accounts seem to depict the school setting with idealistic, utopian characteristics of a learning context that nurtures language diversity while being void of unfortunate encounters with obstinate

contentions. However, issues of identity and language legitimacy appear to be subverting the stability of minority learners' academic progress, preventing them from aspiring the heights their mainstream peers attain.

In Chapter Two, I discussed the officially bilingual curriculum delivered only through the medium of English and Welsh in Wales (Jones 1988; Jones 2014). English and Welsh's linguistic hegemony sends mixed messages to the minority young learners. On the one hand, multilingualism is portrayed as a cultural embellishment adorning the linguistic landscape of their educational institutions (Department for Edcation 2018), while on the other hand, the instructional system's key determinates are inculcated with ideologies and structures aimed at legitimating, operationalizing and generating linguistic inequalities (Brubaker 2014). Despite being in a Welsh environment, in the capital of Wales, English is perceived by the informants as being the language of power, and is awarded the legitimacy their heritage languages keep yearning for:

Mrs Ismat: Mother languages? Not much honestly, not used much. I mean officially, not among students who speak them. Apart from taking GCSEs in them, which only a few do, there is no other way they could belong to the curriculum. I mean, yeah, I work as a TA, and my feeling is that the students who need help with English to grasp whatever material, could already be at high levels [in those subjects], but the language barrier would prevent them from showing it. I mean, personally, I would teach them subjects in their language with English in parallel, yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah

Mrs Ismat: It will save so much time. Instead of spending months learning terminology, they will reach their targets quicker, and, yeah, let alone their pride and confidence. It is a shame. Isn't it?

(Mrs Ismat) [Original interview conducted in Arabic]

For Mrs Trevnoc, the issue has a wider institutional and social scope:

I think in society in general, but schools particularly, the purpose of education is sometimes, unfortunately, to undermine, not to say to 'eliminate' [whispered the quoted word] native languages. To be honest, it could be, by well- meaning teachers who perceive native languages as a handicap or an illness students have to recover from. It's not their, I mean not <u>our</u> fault, to be fair. It is the educational system of the country as it is, very monolingual.

The feeling that minority languages are being ostracized instead of recognised was a striking theme among sixth form students, too. Maroua (17, British Moroccan girl) has studied in Cardiff for the last 10 years since her family moved to Wales. She reproached the educational system for causing her to forget her language, while the inefficiency of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) she was put through meant she is still floundering in English, and hence many other English language dependent subjects. Unfortunately, Maroua's dream specialty does not only take passion, patience and sweat, but a good English level, too: 'I have always dreamt to be a midwife but here in

Cardiff, they ask for Bs in the three core subjects! It is so frustrating. You need a bloody good English to have a B in science'.

Like Maroua, Midhat (18, Syrian refugee boy) condemned the current educational approach at handling minority languages as lacklustre and deficient. He contended that better educational outcomes could be enabled if schools built on students' first languages instead of tearing them down. Midhat fled the war in Syria with his family when he was 15 and enrolled in a state school, which, following the norm of any state school, prevented him from registering for GCSE exams due to the lack of proficiency in English. He is currently doing a BTEC in few subjects that would potentially allow him access to college. Midhat denounced the educational system for being arbitrary and discriminatory, an approach that failed his dream of becoming an aircraft engineer when he was on the verge of qualifying to it back home. Midhat's perceptions seem to be by no means isolated seeing their resonance with Atif's (boy classmate, 18, an Iraqi asylum seeker since 2013) in their interview:

Midhat: It is not my fault that war broke out in my country. Is it? Everyone
called me the king of numbers, like…nothing in maths stop me
at all! I shutted down teachers [all laugh]. Man, they jinxed me
haaaard (.) you know in science, the last10 grade I get there is B,
so frustrating, so frustrating! [Looked down clenching his fists].
I was little kid, I looked up at the planes flying and I'm like

---

[10]Meaning the lowest grade he used to get

'wait' I'll fix you one day' [Laughed sarcastically][11]. Look

where I am now, if only they let me pass exams in Arabic. I get

the best results in the school. What will this cost the school, uh?

Few pounds for translate the paper? Too much for me? Too

much for stupid refugee

Atif: Say no more mate; say no more

Whether teachers, staff or students' stories, data are replete with comparable messages about the need to reform curricular approaches treating the native tongue like a 'crutch to lean on' on the way to mastering the language of school. Some, for example, stated:

Well certainly we're all so proud of the EMAS department here, we have bi-lingual teaching assistants who're there often on the ground, um but to be fair I think some effort needs to go towards helping students develop their languages as well (Mr Gauge).

انا بساعد الطلبة العرب اللى بيدرسو في الاماس, و كمان الطلبة اللى

بيحضرو   عربى, بس دول مش كثير اصلهم بينسو اغلب لغتهم لما يوصلو

للمستوى ده. I help Arab students, mostly in the EMAS section, as

well as some of those who wish to sit for an Arabic GCSE, not many

to be honest, because most of them by the time they get to this stage,

---

[11]Phrase used by Arab speakers to express strength and ability in defiance of a person or thing competing for similar objectives.

they would have already forgotten their language […] (Mrs Ismat).

[My translation]

These voices articulate the need to discontinue forcing minority languages to fit in the mainstream moulds as this, according, to some would deny its speakers the timely and realistic accommodation of their individual needs and aspirations, notably new arrivals. Hernandez (1992) emphasises that curricular not only need to be relevant, stimulating and practical, but also look beyond the 'prototypical' learner model (p. 148) to establish the appropriate instructional methods and approaches for addressing students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Hernandez also criticizes the scarcity of research looking at potential functional alternatives when bilingual education is not an option.

In contrast, the Deputy Head highlighted that the school's enlightened and inclusive frameworks through its integrative and multicultural policies: 'we are proud to accommodate a huge, probably the largest student diverse groups in Wales, and our current performances and efforts are rated 'good' [by Estyn 2013]'. This is also corroborated in some of the media's same year reports about the institution, as some describe it as excellent in some places and showing sector-leading practice in others. For minority students, however, these momentous accomplishments remain suboptimal, and seem to be dwelling only in the minds of educational authorities and their subordinate agencies. When the first head teacher proclaims: 'We certainly encourage them [students] to have ambitions as high as they can be', concerns arise over

an institutional leadership that shows little awareness of the veritable social purposes and outcomes of the policies governing 'all' subordinate individuals. One of these individuals is Hibo, and her frustrations contradict this positive position:

> […] we're all messed up. No one is doing what they really wanted with their life, like, I'm finding it so hard to catch up. I'm 19, should be at uni right now not still running after Cs, I'm all over the place. It's just (.) just mad (Hibo 19, girl, Somali sixth former).

This suggests that this multi-ethnic schools' 'inclusive' frameworks is unable to take into account the significance of language differences. Notwithstanding the fact that race, class and gender are in the core of multicultural education schema, there is no sign yet of a similar observance of minority languages, which do not fit neatly in any of the categories. Most participants' accounts confirm that homogenising linguistic diversity in multilingual school settings exacerbates the relegation of ES/FL learners to secondary positions, an ideal venue for celebrating failure, many students and teachers contest. A US national report conducted by Quintana et al. (2012) fosters this argument at the data's stark demonstration of the 'alarming' (p. 40) attainment gap between ES/FL and native learners. This gap does not seem to be closing in later years, however, even after students' presumed successful completion of the ESL services (European Union 2013; Learning Wales 2016).

There are also reflections about numerous fluid and unstable descriptions of bilingualism in a social setting where the inhabitants' views might often prove dissenting. Bilingualism is seen by some as analogous to deprivation and low economic status, when Mr Bales maintains that minority pupils often come poor and with dysfunctional literacy levels, while still acclaiming their determination to prevent poverty from being a barrier to their aspirations. This echoes reports by Estyn (2012) which revealed that free school meal (FSM) children are over-represented in this group. Interestingly though, labels such as FSM, could rise contention among those who appreciate their potential to be demeaning rather than defining. Mr Archer is one of this position's advocates, and his call for espousing a more careful selection of the terminology is evident in endorsing the 'bilingual/cultural' term as a better classification given that it 'emphasizes what these children have rather than what they lack [...]'. Such an approach acclaims the valuable cultural markers minority students possess, and perceives these symbols, notably bi/multilingualism, as powerful assets to conquer social and educational realms:

I mean I wish I could speak a language other than English, even my Welsh is so bad [laughs]. We have a lazy approach to languages in this country, and it's not helpful at all. These kids are just brilliant. They are linguistically rich, and you can say they relate to more than one culture, which is amazing! Look at the many advantages they have. It is simply wrong to call them 'disadvantaged' or are 'at-risk' or whatever. I think they need to know and hear from us all that they have more resources to succeed than fail (Mrs Polrod).

So far, there are suggestions that minority languages' both preservation and educational opportunities are being supressed by monolingual instructional curricular indoctrinated by such educational ideologies, that could claim any achievement but integration. Such findings address the relevant policies with the serious need to consider cultural identity and native language as integral, through realistic, comprehensive and consistent instructional strategies. Projecting on linguistic diversity in primary schools, Ainscow et al. (2016) stress the necessity of wisely perceiving the differences emerging from the interactions amongst/with children in educational contexts. Such conversations, they add, shape young learners' shared and distinctive characteristics, which need to be understood and handled by policy and practice interventions, as negatively valued attributes are cast as obstacles to be overcome.

Handling such sizeable linguistic diversities in schools is a hard mission; however, ignoring its requisites and implications might not be the best strategy. This dilemma is evident in many teachers and staff members' observations about the consistent and continuous fall in the numbers of ethnic minority languages' teachers. Furthermore, Mr Rakamo (Somali TA) alluded to 'the threat' facing some of these languages themselves, either due to exam board assessing them as finically unviable, or due to some universities failing to recognise community A levels among their admission criteria.

In a country where more than 300 languages are spoken in schools (Espinoza 2015), expert opinion seems more divided than ever. The same source reports

grievances about schools granting excessive and unnecessary attention to students for whom English is not a first language, corroborated by the Department for Education who confirm: 'many schools teach pupils whose first language is not English successfully. We have protected school funding to ensure they have the resources they need to meet the needs of all pupils, no matter what their background' (Department for Education 2014, p. 33). This, however, might not appeal to some teachers in the setting. Mrs Tenely, for instance, disapproves the local authority's reluctance to help 'because of' the multicultural fabric of the school:

> […] because this school is an anomaly really, this school with [another school] and [another school] have the most ethnically mixed population in Wales. So, because we are the anomaly, we're different. They don't see the need for support. I'd love to have resources to, for instance be able to put all our glossaries to do a multilingual glossary across all of the subjects (Mrs Tenely).

Earlier research supporting such a claims was conducted by Arnot et al. (2014) in a report by Anglia Ruskin and Cambridge universities. They stated that as of April 2013, local authority support services for EAL (English as an Additional Language) learners 'are either free only to state maintained primary schools and are chargeable to primary and secondary academies or in some local authority areas not available at all' (p. 21). Discussion about resources will be elaborated subsequently.

Therefore, the school under study is a space imbued with meanings, which foster sensibilities of diversity, belongingness and cultural identity. Linguistic variety is reported to emboss the social ecologies and experiences of its inhabitants, and assort them into a pleasantly complex socio-cultural fabric. However, indices inscribed by discursive variances raise thorny issues about mainstream instruction and potential curricular adjustments. The following section will scrape the surface of normality, which seems to frame most narratives, to address the participants' voiced conceptions regarding the outcomes of the context's diverse dialogues.

6.3 'Absolutely normal': questioning morality at the exercise of normality

Having served in the school for years has not reduced teachers' appreciation of the multi-lingual setting, where 27% of students speak English as a First Language (EFL), followed by 13% EFL Arabic speakers, 8.9% EFL Somali and 6.6% EFL Bengali speakers (school Strategic Equality Plan document 2016-2017). Indeed, many still passionately acclaim their students' multi-lingual abilities including Mrs Polrod: 'you hear all sorts of languages, different languages. I mean, it's amazing. Um, you get to learn so much everyday'. Mrs Tenely corroborates with a confirmation that such a conversational practice 'does happen all the time', while Mr Archer's account communicates admiration in relation to his quantitative estimation of the prodigious linguistic makeup:

Mr Archer: It is incredible, I mean the amount of languages. When I was

first trying to list them down I couldn't quite believe it. Listing

all these different languages down is just (.) 60 or 61? And, still

you come across ones you never heard of, um like Tigren, Tig

[short form]?

Interviewer: Sounds exciting!

Mr Archer: Yeah! Well. It's one of the African languages I didn't know it

existed before. There might be more in the coming years… I

was actually made aware that several other languages have not

been listed yet; have no idea why, but we might have one of the

highest levels of school diversity in the whole country [UK].

Being too acclimated to a highly polyglot environment, in fact, seems to divest teachers' narratives from allusions to potential motives beyond the multicultural nature of the setting, when expounding the phenomenon of native language speaking. This frames ethnic students' social experiences in school, and many presume its normality. Ms Perl argues: 'well you know, this is a multicultural school and the students, they're gonna be speaking to each other in their own languages. Um, I think it's absolutely normal'. This stance is widely advocated among many teachers and staff members, who tend to ground their logic in the natural gravitation of people towards those who are 'similar' to form 'groups of cultures' (Ms Netter). Yet, numerous references seem to invest in the positive and negative outcomes learners' multilingualism might, and does indeed, frequently engender.

Positively, a great sense of admiration marks the teachers and staff members' accounts regarding the dynamism mobilized by students' bilingualism. 'It is not just about using more than one language', many affirm, but more

importantly, the accomplished development and preservation of different language practices to varying degrees and styles, in respect to context. By extension, commending the switch among practices per se was made salient. A clear endorsement of this approach structures various sections in the schools' policy documents, notably where pupils' language, a crucial cultural component, is considered a 'protected characteristic', alongside genders, ethnicities and disabilities (Annual Equality Reports 2014/2015-2015/2016). The policy has taken into consideration the Disability Discrimination Act (2005), Equalities Act (2010), Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), and Social services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014). The school believes that safeguarding these categories is paramount for protecting the pupils' right to a supportive, caring and safe learning environment, without fear of harm to their individual or social well-being.

On the face of it, learners embark on complex discursive endeavours so the need to make sense of social life, communicate and coalesce with other language communities is fulfilled. However, once dispatched on this social survival mission, the young individuals are not just exploring the 'others'' rhetorical synergies, but also gratifying a latent avidity to enhance awareness of their own narrativity in connection to them. The Bidoon Kuwaiti and Jordanian students from the pilot focus group seemed amazed to find out that Urdu, the language of their Pakistani peers has a similar script to Arabic, with many common words, too. Mrs Tenely captured this more vividly:

There are some languages that are similar and it's nice to see when

the Portuguese and Spanish, or the Czech and Polish, kind of sneak

little words to each other, they're like 'that's in my language, that's in mine, you too say this about whatever thing!' It's very interesting to see this. There's some nice communications in different ways, very clever as well (Mrs Tenely).

Along the same line, code switching was jointly articulated among teachers referring to ethnic learners' use of complementary negotiation principles to operationalize and reify the relational import of their conversations. Most accounts observed the existence of the phenomenon, such as: '…I could only understand the words in English to be honest. None of the rest [laughs]' (Mr Ramko), while few invested in its attribution to certain communities rather than others, in addition to the normality and practicality underpinning it:

I don't think it's deliberate. It sounds very natural, and um, it definitely saves them time and the hassle of trying to remember the words from their languages, yeah, cause they might not even know them (Mr Preston).

Worth noting, though, is the fact that this paring up of languages has not proved to draw a binary variation of the native/mainstream pattern. In no other occasion has the ethnic/another ethnic pair been evoked across the whole data, despite evidence of children with a multilingual packages, such as the Moroccan students' mastery of Arabic, French and English (see section 3.2).

Although code switching is mainly regarded as an index of the speakers' use of conversational implicatures to arrive at the intended social purposes, its

fundamentals could also be entrenched in pedagogical grounds. Teachers emphasised the impact bi/multilingualism has on the students' learning styles, as their linguistic manoeuvres also construct their knowledge and impart their academic performances. Mrs Ismat appreciates how these learners 'listen or read in one language and then take notes, write, or discuss in another'. Then, soon, the individual learning strategy espouses a selective collaborative action involving only individuals having access to the same linguistic code:

> […] slowly, bit by bit, more students are drawn into that group. It does get a bit noisy at times but I don't usually interfere at this stage cause, you know, you can tell they are using their language for learning (Mr Gauge).

This two-way cross-language learning approach has apparently earned teachers' approval, as many commended the pedagogical validity of code switching and, in the same line, the advantages gained when different languages' boundaries leak into each other for the sake of improving the social realities of learners. As Mrs Tenely contends, 'there is a need for languages to be more open to each other', and most teachers advocated the view that languages are not hermetically sealed units and that collaboration among them could potentially bolster delivery on the assigned curricular. Even Mrs Lime (receptionist) who has little familiarity with the educational mechanisms, could notice a difference between this school and the couple of majority white schools she served in before, in that minority learners 'do learn differently here, and their languages are helping them a lot […]' (Research diary, 12/06/2015).

Code switching seems to be taking the social performance of its users to the next level. Besides their learning identity, language promotes ethnic students' status to become cultural connectors with newly arriving peers who lack sufficient English language proficiency. During the year 2014-2015, around a hundred students out of the whole study year cohort up to year 11 were new arrivals to the UK on entry to school, and 75% of pupils are from ethnic backgrounds other than British, with a first language different to English (Guide for Year 6 and Parents 2016). The code switching intercultural synergies arising from this phenomenon could, by way of illustration, be evidenced in the Roma students' focus group when Andrei (13) was helped by the rest of the group to communicate complex viewpoints. It seems to be a widespread practice among students, as Sinane (13 Arab boys' focus group), too, still recalls memories of himself and his sister performing this same 'mature' role since primary school. The young interpreters' role seems to be a one the ESOL department within school invests in to fill the serious chasm created by the inadequate language support and interpreting resources, a point that many teachers affirmed:

I think the resources that have been put for this kind of support I've seen them dwindling the ten years I've been here…we do rely on students speaking the same language sometimes to help new arrivals settle in […] (Mr Gauge).

There's already been cuts done last year, had like half an hour each take out off their time. Teachers are under huge pressure. Having a student to sit with those who are struggling with the language is so

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important because I'm only one person and I've got a class of twenty-seven, and then what? (Ms Maths)

In 2015-16, there was a five per cent reduction in the Ethnic Minority Achievement Services grant, awarded by the Welsh government and delegated by local authorities to help speakers of other languages progress in school. Mr Hayden (head teacher), among others, deprecates the government's economic austerity as 'everything is getting pinched', notably the funds schools used to get regularly for staff employment and training. Ms Perl condemned these measures too, as the TAs' pay and staff cuts are affecting the instructional mission dramatically. However, significant efforts were made by staff to locally identify strategies to handle financial impediments, such as putting in place local staff training and student support programmes.

Despite the positive attributes related above, the picture captured by teachers and staff members' disclosed unease, in respect to interethnic communication and discourse channels among different groups. Inter-group communicative challenges are frequently reported to be disrupting the serenity of the social collaborative atmosphere within the school. Verbal preferences could be adopted, whether deliberately or not, as a marked choice to negotiate a modulation in the social distance. Many are concerned that the multilingual makeup of the setting can hardly sustain harmonious peer relationships. Deliberate offensiveness originating from students' 'awareness' of cultural differences is reported to be driving a wedge through the school's social unison:

You know some languages tend to have close or similar words in script but with different meaning, like Russian and Polish, and students tend to use them in slightly inappropriate ways- sly like they say [laughs]. I mean sometimes. Unfortunately, whether on purpose or not some students do get seriously offended. Teachers tend to treat it like bullying, we have clear instructions about that (Ms Perl).

School bullying has always been considered as a type of violence that has to be efficiently dealt with, and should never be treated as a 'banter' or mere 'teasing'. The Strategic Equality Action Plan (2016-17) holds as a priority the reporting of 'a wider range of bullying' notably those triggered by physical or cultural prejudice, either inside or outside the school. However, the Policy Statements (2016-17) do not include bullying on the basis of 'different language' among the categories listed: racist, sexual, gender-based, sexual orientation, special educational needs, chronic illnesses and transphobic bullying, despite being clearly certified as a protected characteristic, as mentioned earlier. Stringent safeguarding measures are constantly put in place to combat bullying by the Inclusion and Wellbeing Office to address the ensued harm, while many believe this approach could be too costly and encumbering if applied to all intra-cultural disruptions. Unlike Ms Maths, though, Ms Polrod represents those for whom the issue pertains more to undeliberate and misinformed peer behaviour:

There was an issue with a girl who called another 'fat slug', and I said to her 'do you think this beautiful girl is a fat slug?' She said I

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didn't know what a fat slug is, not even what slug meant. I said do

you know what fat is? She said 'yes I did say that, I'm sorry'. I said

if you don't know a word you shouldn't be using it. Then I told her

what it meant, and she looked at the girl and told her 'I'm sorry I

didn't know what that word means'. Then once they've realised it

was just silly name calling they became friends again (Mrs Polrod).

While this incident might seem the epitome of a second/foreign language
(S/FL) speakers' natural stumbles, other narratives are more emblematic of
multilingual classroom discursive discord, which does sometimes amount to
exasperating frictions. Ms Perl and Mrs Polrod stated respectively:

Sometimes you do struggle with getting them just stop from talking

in the lesson, because they will be sitting next to each other or even

shouting across the classroom, and you can tell, like, there is an

argument or something going on, but you don't really understand

because you don't speak the language, and that kind of escalates

really quickly to something really serious. It does happen, yeah. It

could be a challenge. Definitely is a challenge. It is a good thing

[multilingualism] but it definitely got disadvantages (Ms Perl).

They do get themselves into trouble sometimes by using their

language, silly things really, by teaching other pupils swear words

for example, and those pupils would go around using them against

speakers of that language. We keep having loads of these incidents.

A lot of them (Mrs Polrod).

Although alternating between two or more languages was frequently blamed for sparking unrest and questioning morality among students, some teachers believe it is not to be strictly abridged to cultural manifestations. Being a shallow exhibition of a deeper matter is arguable, particularly at its occurrence during the lesson. The first and second language hybrid may, for instance, be harnessed for 'fear of being misinterpreted' (Mrs Ismat), which, on its turn, stems from the student's uncomprehensive agenda of prerequisites for a monolingual instruction. A reluctance to take part in classroom activities becomes inevitable, inviting guilt to procure its tenacious grip on incompetent English learners, as mainstream education is imbued with pressure prohibiting native language employment.

It is clear, then, that teachers in this multilingual school have more to deliver on than simply planning a lesson, adjusting instructional strategies or designing evaluation techniques. Navigating the convoluted social paths charted by ethnicity is a quotidian task. Despite undertaking training or qualifications in education, the teaching staff admit the need to know about the multicultural classroom's ecological pedagogies, the linguistic fabric essentially, to be able to subdue its plights. Employing native discourses for communication, learning or even social order infringement in this setting is a confirmation that code-switching is more than an expression of ethnic students' dual linguistic ability, as it is highly indexical of their identity, too. It could even amount to a manifestation of complex relations of power, as code switching is a process of exerting power and authority, when the varied social discourse employed to construct meaning seems to accord its users power and authority over other interlocutors, as many teachers and staff members assert. Therefore, observing

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this strategic availing of multiple semiotic resources to know and to socially relate the self might provide an insight into the intersectionality between literacy and social powers, in addition to the socio-political values attached to the linguistic varieties used in code switching.

In addition to teacher and staff members' individual endeavours to settle linguistic frictions, the school attempted to contain these issues through a domestically 'developed' restorative approach to repair the 'harm' (Mr Bales), in restorative meetings run by trained staff. Healing language wounds by language, the language used in these meetings is styled to reflect 'restorative principles', i.e. harmed/harmer or target/perpetrator instead of victim/bully' (source - schools' documents), and counselling is constantly assured by members of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Team, or the school's counsellor, if necessary.

Thus, teachers' perceptions about their classrooms' multilingual exercise were expressly characterised by themes of normality and consequentiality. Nevertheless, their students' voices seem to invest more in the potential causalities of their conversational propensities. In addition to accommodating the motives behind mobilising the native tongue, the reported narratives also unveiled some of their self-appraisals and harboured exasperations as the next section discusses.

6.4 Assorted converse: proud identities and pragmatic mettle

In the students' survey, the Czech Roma, Arab and Somali students aged 12 to 19 noted concerns about their sense of ethnic belonging, which according to them, often translates into social debility. For example, when asked 'what is

the reaction of the teacher when you use this language? (see Appendix 3), a Pakistani year seven male student answered: 'teachers don't care but some classmates basicly wite they don't stop laghing', while a Turkish year 9 girl commented: 'I never speak turkish in class I feel sorry for Ms Rogers [pseudonym] she is always mad at Czech boys they dont listen at all she wants to get them to speak more English they ruin all the classes' (script kept to original in both extracts). Despite being a source of pride, and sometimes pragmatism, identity constituents could at times become the strenuous complex challenging the communal integrity within school, especially when first language claims are foregrounded.

Although the majority are fluent speakers of English and are all enrolled in mainstream classes, discussions among students of different groups involved a significant amount of native language use, before and during the course of discussion. They all demonstrated a strong identification with their linguistic identities, and therefore cultural identities (Kramsch 1998; Wolf 2015) especially for those who, despite being born in Britain, can and do speak their community languages in their day-to-day conversations. This ability of language to reflect culture and influence thinking echoes Norton et al. (1997) findings that children defined themselves in terms of allegiance to their Mexican heritage, and that they all viewed bilingualism as a positive attribute. Bosher (1997) also highlighted that the majority of Hmong students prefer to speak native despite their functional level of proficiency, and that they 'felt it was important to maintain the Hmong language in order to maintain their culture' (p.599).

In Wales, young people's attitudes towards their native language seem to be progressing positively, despite early findings by Fishman (1991) and Baker (1992) suggesting a decline in its use, which lead them to conclude that young adolescents' use of and attachment to the Welsh language deteriorates with age. In light of this, and based on the later work urging for more attention to encourage the use of Welsh among its youth (Aitchison and Carter 1994; Gruffudd 1997), the newly devolved Welsh Government's plan to bring about a positive sense about the heritage language seemed to yield its fruits. Studying various locations in Wales, Scourfield (2006) highlighted the inclusive vision of Welsh identity among children aged eight to 11 who see both Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers as equally Welsh, while Hodges (2009) emphasised the role formal frameworks play in sustaining such a commitment. This positive sentiment was recently corroborated by Geraint (2016) who stressed the importance of native language's social development 'to survive as an active, thriving and vibrant language' (p 51).

Visiting these issues among the Roma community in Wales, and when asked about how much Czech they use in their daily life, an immediate collective answer among the Roma students was: 'a lot!' [all laugh], highlighting the regularity and commonality of their native language use, in so far as some of them would only substitute it for English 'when there is no Czech (Roma) around' (Vai 15). Nevertheless, they did acknowledge their occasional alternation between Roma and English:

Charani: We do mix up sometimes though…

Tsura: Yes, it's, like, we're like used to that. Everyone does that, I guess.

This seemingly ordinary bilingual exercise could indicate that interethnic group learners end up creating their own mutual satisfactory verbal codes (Karmiloff 2001), which, are inculcated with collective values, and enjoined by their urge to explore and practice the self. The considerable recurrence of native language use during students' focus groups and six formers' interviews confirms that their switch between the chosen/imposed linguistic dichotomy is more than a standard linguistic behaviour, as it might be deeply rooted in the intricate interplays between language and identity.

Core to human conversational endeavours is the tendency of language to abstract the world experiences into words (Edwards 2009). Based on this premise, the mother tongue is likely to take ethnic students beyond mere immersion in actual social experiences, to forming conceptions of the self in relation to who it can relate them to, and what they could perform within its perimeters. Indeed, Arabic seems to pattern the linguistic prevalence among Arab students, notably at home: 'I always speak Arabic with my friends, Miss' (Tariq 14), 'we don't speak English that much at home [...]' (Sinane 13). However, such a propensity was readily justified by these pupils, without being prompted, alluding to strong ties among language, family life and faith, and underlining a sensitive intersectionality across identity markers:

Mohammed: We speak Arabic more than English Miss…you know, like, to

keep reading the Qur'an, and the, like, um, like, to communicate

with my grandparents and stuff

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Sinane: Yeah, and you know in the holidays, you go back to your home

country and the family and all that

Hussam: Yeah [interrupting]

Sinane: You will miss out a lot if you don't understand what they say, like,

your friends there

(Mohammed 15, Sinane 13, Hussam 13, Arab boys' focus group)

No matter what the reason is, though, the boys' distinct justifications seem to concur when their native tongue reveals as 'willingly' prevailing in their conversations, unless the conditions prove unfavourable:

I used to speak Arabic in classroom but because, like, I used to have an Arabic friend with me in classroom but now he went to Iraq and now, yeah. I don't speak Arabic in class these days (Mohammed 15).

Interestingly, this category of students spares no effort in seeking resources to maintain their loyalty to their linguistic identity, such as Sana's (14. Arab girls' focus group) extension of her social circle of friendship to her older sister's, when her urge to talk native cannot be satisfied within her own: 'my older sister here, I speak Arabic to her. I speak Arabic with my sister's friends. My sister speaks Arabic with her friends'. Her perception, also, hints at a history of a native discursive legacy among minority young generations in school. Investing in the linguistic legacy is an illustration of Sana's realisation that the native tongue fosters her belonging to a linguistically unified community (Arab students) inside school. However, gender clearly marked

both teachers and students' impressions about using the Arabic language among Arab students, in that girls' adoption of native converse is reported to be noteworthy.

Whether in the survey or focus groups data, the students communicated a purposive commitment to associate native language speaking with ethnic identity, for the pride they find when connecting through the mother tongues. Sullivan (2007) noted that language-based interaction with others stimulate individuals' pride as their own sense of self develops, making them conscious of the relevant conceptual distinctions between them and others. Badria (15, girl, Somali group) feels 'very excited to hear friends around speaking Somali', and her exhilaration was too obvious to escape notice: 'Badria looks and sounds delighted. Not just her words acclaimed her thoughts, but also her chin lifted high, her smiles and open arms […]' (Research diary, May 12/20015). Others were also able to voice a similar consciousness through writing, such as the only Korean student (male, 14) in school (2015-2016), who reported in the survey that things would have been much better had a larger community of Korean peers been enrolled there. Some teachers have highlighted this phenomenon stressing that such a high level of heritage language exercise embodies a sense of attachment to students' own cultural group and its linguistic modalities, as Kramsch and Widdowson (1998) put it:

> Finally, language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their

social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social group and their culture. Thus, we can say that language symbolises cultural identity (p.3).

The self-conscious manifestation of pride and its association with social behaviour, whether verbal or otherwise, is also reinforced by the same source maintaining that accent, vocabulary, and discourse patterns serve as markers of membership to discourse communities, from which 'they draw personal strength and pride' (p.65). Although not significantly prevalent, allusions to the relationship between language and power emanating from 'cultural self-sufficiency' feelings were lucid, as some bilingual children's pride emanates markedly while managing their linguistic assets. The issue of claiming power agency through talking native was suggested by Mrs Netter: '[…] maybe they [Roma students] want to show they're hard, they stick together and speak their language all the time'. It's not just the Roma, it appears:

Maroua: most of us [ethnic students from different groups] speak our languages a lot. It's like we're fine on our own, but I think, most importantly we are, sort of, like, different [interrogative tone]

Interviewer: Is it fine for the others? I mean those who can't understand you?

Maroua: Um, to be honest, not always. But we don't really care, we're not doing any harm to anyone, are we?

(Maroua, girl 18, sixth form interview)

Yet, the native parlance's thriving business in the school is not wholly exhaustive. For some communities, this greater stature is often challenged by some perceived negative assumptions from other groups leading to stereotype and identity conflicts. Mr Gauge cannot recall instances of Welsh being spoken in school despite the vast majority of Welsh students, which might resonate with Scourfield (2006) who claims that instead of claiming power agency, some Welsh students tend to switch to speaking English rather than Welsh to fit within the mainstream language community. This negative association with the first language might commit its speakers to social withdrawal thwarted by in-group low-status perceptions as some researchers counted (Gruffudd 1997; Hodges 2009; Geraint 2016).

Hence, investing in linguistic identity is deeply bound up with social categorisation of people into groups perceived to share common perceptions of relating to one another. Consequently, individual identity, as a category that consists of the repertoires of these affiliations, is likely to react to the same burgeoning or deriding circumstances group identity may be subject to. Whatever hurts the collective identity inevitably troubles the individual's identity.

Unexpectedly, estrangement from both practice of native language use and its users is a potential strategy some ethnic students might resort to driven by pragmatic propensities. Indeed, pragmatism is an approach that evaluates ideological stands in terms of the success of their practical applications (Blumstein 1975), and when such a philosophy is to be applied to education, curricular designs and instructional methodologies need to be harnessed so

leaners' experiences are monitored in view of direct tangible interest to them (Elkjaer 2009; Lloyd-Jones and Hak 2004). In this respect, pragmatism's undeniable inspiration to education acknowledged John Dewey's observation of the students as being an experiencing organism able to harness their cognitive and affective abilities to solve problems (Peters 2010; Pring 2014). Such experiences, Dewey emphasises, become part of the students' determination of their individual system of preferences, and the future direction of their educational modes to this effect, while the same experiencing organism of the learner remains highly observant of all the meanings, values, and experiences shaping their persona (Garrison and Neiman 2003).

This might expound the fact that some ethnic students would at times dissent from their community's conventional verbal exercise, given the latter potential interference with aspired pedagogical ends. However, more knowledge is needed to nuance our understanding in this respect regarding the potential conflict between academic and cultural identities and which one is capable of tipping the pragmatic balance.

In fact, lending a pragmatic lens to education could amount to a heated politico-ideological debate (Heller 1992), and, consequently, might provide a good reason to shun the whole matter. However, practicality is more than a mere individual inclination in Ysamrywiol, and its eminence might suggest redacting pedagogical policies adequately. Many young participants across most groups pronounced compliance with calls for exclusive mainstream literacy in their incessant quest for standard performance. Here are some examples:

Interviewer: Would like to have any other Czech in the classroom with you?

Damian: No. They will try to talk to me all the time and won't let me learn

properly. It affects my English. I had, like, this experience in a

different school and it was annoying. If it's, like, a family

member then okay. But, like, it's hard to explain […]

(Damian, boy, 15, Roma students' focus group)

 [...] apart from you want to translate to someone, for me it is very

important to use English only in the lesson because you really came

to school to improve top three subjects English, maths and science.

If it is about translation, like, to help my friends, then minor. I'd do

that (Sinane 13, Arab boys' focus group).

Interviewer: So would you be happy to learn maths or science in Somali,

pretend your English is not very good and you're struggling to

learn things in the same way the others do?

Haydar: Um, like happy, like a bit disappointed, cause may be that person

wanted to learn in English and wanted to do that better, like to

do better in their grades. I prefer, like the way they teach us now

(Haydar 14, Somali focus group)

The point made these students evinces an instrumental motivation for learning

and using the second language (Gardner 1985), fostered by practical reasons

such as getting a job, or getting into college, besides study fulfilment, which

is a major incentive for such a category. Their emphasis on consequences that

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provide the foundation for their learning styles is striking. These young people believe that rationalising the use of the first language facilitates the mastery of the second, with a conspicuous common aspiration, achievement, whether to simply develop the three core subjects, or enhance learning in general.

This practical approach reflects a level of maturity, responsibility and commitment, which incites the boys to constantly do more in order to fulfil, but still with some readiness to 'break the rules' whenever group duty summons solidarity whether for social or educational purposes. Sinane, then, would be willing to translate to 'any' other Arab, a familiar exercise he recalls doing since his primary education, while Damian sees that only kinship can relent his strict adherence to English.

Tasneem (13, Arab girls focus group), too, flows with the pragmatic stream. However, her position appraises the family converse with conspicuous significance. She believes that her mum's Arabic Pharmacy degree would have been more valuable to her had she been articulate in English. Therefore, it is her belief that moderating Arabic and increasing English use at home might help reify this aspiration. Such a perception is corroborated by Mr Gauge, who stresses the differences among minority group individuals in this respect, concluding that some are too learning driven that they'll take teachers' advise seriously even if it means 'changing friendships to speak more English'.

In fact, this pragmatic stance might have the potential to enclave its young advocates, as it does not appeal to the majority of peers inside school. However, there is a reason, perhaps many, for them to rejoice outside, for the wide approval this issue seems to meet. For instance, the British Council (2013) commends English's strong competitive edge in diverse fields including diplomacy, media, commerce and academia, guaranteeing success and prosperity to its speakers. Similarly, Bailey and Osipova (2016) appreciate the serious sacrifice taken by parents who decide to give up their language and culture for the sake of their children's quick and efficient navigation of the world both in and outside school. However, this same stance, Rumbaut et al. (2006) warn, might foretell a short linguistic life expectancy for minority languages, referring to the rapid dying out of Spanish across generations in the United States.

Because social interaction is goal-directed, the above situation questions the relationship between speakers' goals and their chosen means for seeking them. Pragmatic students perform their identity in ways best suited to pursue their purposes, and this may sadly cause them to compromise part/s of it due to moral and/or material considerations. Serious concerns with the 'newly emerging' identity's incompatibility with both self and/or group's cognitive frames arise: 'not all my friends think like this, like some disagree but, like, I know, I love my language, but if you go and tell them speak less to learn, then like, you gonna be stormed, literally' (Sinane 13, Arab boys focus group). The little pragmatist, here, and in accordance with Elkjaer (2009)'s view, gets often criticised for his overt readiness and clear inclination to abandon group ideals in exchange for personal benefit. Potential in-group rejection and hostility is

an expensive price Sinane has to pay as a result of negative intergroup interactions when the loud argument strikes at the core of collective identity - the mother tongue. Nawata and Yamaguchi (2014) allude to the serious and long lasting sequelae self-esteem will endure in response to these tensions.

The mobilisation of language for educational, cultural and personal manoeuvres is but one aspect of the complex identity manifestations, which serve social affiliation in the study context. Therefore, students insist on talking native so the natural desire to 'healthily' fit and 'properly' function within their groups is fulfilled. This contemplation will be fostered in the next chapter, which observes the strong impact linguistic group membership has on ethnic students' perceptions of the 'self'.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter painted the complex picture of an educational setting encumbered by a reality that embodies the very essence of its charm, a cultural diversity that speaks a garland of tongues but voices a lot of concern. Ysamrywiol portrays a multilingual school environment where the presence and mobilisation of many languages in the same classroom is a common reality, and where ethnic students' academic and social experiences ease and strain at the notes stricken by their interaction with peers, teachers and staff, and even with the curriculum.

The chapter opened with a cultural tour around the school, highlighting the prominence of the physical and multilingual displays of multiculturalism, then proceeding with the valuable working and learning experiences the school

provides. However, this section also highlighted challenges incited by issues of ethnic identity and language legitimacy for suffering the lack of pedagogical recognition and resourcing. From there, the chapter proceeded with a depiction of the code-switching phenomenon, and the significant role it plays in the accomplished development and preservation of the different language practices, besides fostering learning styles among ethnic students.

Beneath the overt social and educational manifestations of the mother tongue, and in addition to nurturing the growth and development of emotions of pride and pragmatism amongst its young speakers, the switch between the chosen/imposed linguistic dichotomy might be deeply rooted in the intricate interplays between language and identity, the self and the other. Consequently, boundaries between pride and hostility frequently overlap to potentially compromise on both self-esteem and social stability. This concern will feed the arguments consolidating the next chapter through an assessment of the social pressures resulting from individuals' exposure to negative representations for their mother tongue's purport of their spiritual inclinations. It will illustrate the role of linguistic interactions in modelling intergroup connections and selfhood assessments.

7. Triangulating stigma: looking, speaking and believing 'ethnic'

7.1 Introduction

It is widely accepted that interactional processes are a powerful medium for enacting identification, and social affiliation, besides defining group processes, and hence sustaining a structural articulation of stereotypical and prejudicial syntheses in multicultural societies (Nieto 2002; Nikolas et al. 2005; Ng 2007; Omoniyi 2010). The multilingual setting of these societies tends to frequently stage the intricate acts of the language and communication nexus, which ultimately closes by alienating members of the least hegemonic and/or favoured tongue, and sectionalising its position in favour of stigma and selfhood jeopardy (Cummins 2005).

Hoping to contribute to the efforts seeking to reveal the role of ethnic conversational patterns in framing intergroup relations and individual self-perceptions, this chapter explores the interactional experiences among minority language groups in Ysamrywiol. It closely observes how the students' sense of who they are and what they can affiliate to unfolds at the mother tongue's intervention in their discursive exercise. It also evidences the vital role conversation palys in affirming and preserving cultural trends, social attitudes and subjectivities, in addition to selfhood and social categorisation. The first language's ineluctable engagement in identity construction and negotiation among individuals and groups will frame the debate around learners' endeavours to balance the desire for positive belongingness with their desperate quest for positivity, personal safety and social security. Drawing

mainly on ethnic, social and narrative identity theories, the chapter will unravel the underlying pressures of this process, notably at the self-esteem's sustained disadvantage in the grip of collective negative representations reared by labelling and group stigma.

7.2 Social stigma and self-esteem: disowning conversational customs and conventional appearances

Many accounts across this study's data reveal students' eagerness to belong to positively valued groups, reflecting an already latent feeling of in-group negativity. At the heart of social identity theory (SIT) are the prevailing explanations about the individual's location within a social network of interrelations between different groups (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Hogg and Abrams 1993), sectioning people's social worlds into own groups accommodating 'us', and the others' groups where 'them' reside. Feeling positive about one's group as an important source of pride and self-esteem is a core concern for SIT. However, most attention seems to be appropriated by the positive outcome of individuals' identification with their groups, a matter considered as the general root cause of in-group favouring behaviour (Mummendey and Otten 1998).

Thus, the opposite side of the issue requires more illumination; satisfaction with one's group is not a social warranty, and its absence might result in an unsatisfying identity. Unfortunately, this situation might trigger certain adaptive behaviours, especially among young people, linking to the Social Identity Theory (SIT), which suggests that individuals engage in social comparisons based on the 'us' and 'them' categories they themselves divide

the world into (Tajfel 1981). Accordingly, Maroua (girl, 18, British Moroccan sixth former) revealed that she prefers to wear the Islamic outfit when she visits Morocco, but dresses up like 'white girls' in the UK. 'I don't want to look different, then you'd kind of get segregated, you're seen inferior or, like, less than them. You get me?' she emphasised. Her voice echoes the Welsh youth's attitudes towards Britishness, a context arguably breeding their feelings of inferiority, and fostering their attempts to form and maintain a positive self-esteem (Gruffudd 1997; Nikolas et al. 2005; Geraint 2016).

According to Markstrom (1999), adolescence is a period when individuals become increasingly sensitive to how others view and treat them. That is why adolescents' understanding and valuing of identity and, by extension, all its constituents, might instruct their linkage to feelings of both group and self-worth. Drawing on SIT, Maroua's awareness of how others evaluate the 'self' and the adoption of those views could engender a negative self-concept. Her physical image, which reflects her affiliation to a group regarded negatively by others, is likely to incorporate these negative attitudes into the self-concept and, therefore, lower her self-esteem. Indeed, because self-esteem is the self-evaluative component of personal identity, its level remains dependent on the discrepancy between the self-image and the ideal self (Crocker et al. 1993); the higher the discrepancy is the lower self-esteem will get.

Maroua's account appeared to resonate with Atif (boy 18, Iraqi), who reacted to her account expressing his avoidance of 'too much looking Arab', fearing such an identification 'would not make me feel good you know (.) not comfortable, it's not like in Iraq or Syria, like you know (.) normal […]'.

Lawrence (1988) emphasised that school children are most likely to be at stages of accepting what they perceive as ideal images from the significant people around them, including peers, and strive to a greater degree towards their realisation. Nevertheless, the mission could entail some risks, as Maroua and Atif see this evaluative situation primarily as threatening of humiliation and failure to fit within mainstream modulations, a fact that gears their will towards self-protection and the tendency to avoid confirmation of the potential negative selves apprised by their group identities. Consequently, adjusting one's appearance to the dominant group's conventions of physical display becomes a necessary requirement for Maroua and Atif, whose self-esteem seems to be compromised at their expressed will to be accepted outside their cultural group. These internalised negative feelings, Brown (2000) argues, will continue to impact on young people's feelings of self-esteem.

While such a view outlines an individual versus out-group model, the following argument proffers a rather collective, in versus out-group approach, as to who people are and what they are worth. However, this time, the process of redefinition to gratify the other does not seem to be the option, putting in operation a key social identity theory's claim about the causal connection between intergroup discrimination and self-esteem (Hogg and Abrams 1993).

Despite their differences and sometimes discrepancies, most identity theories concur that the more vulnerable self-esteem is, the higher the sense of self-consciousness becomes, and that children's concern for positive self-presentation is strongly affected by social norms, such as intragroup attitudes. In the Roma focus group, Vai (girl, 15) and Damian (boy, 15) seemed deeply

disturbed at the other groups' overtly articulated taunt, as reported in the conversation below, which, from appearance to parlance, leaves little hope for the Roma students to show tolerance:

Interviewer: What's the reaction of your peers when they hear you speaking Czech?

Vai: Oh, miss, they are nasty. I mean, they laugh at us, they wind us up. But miss, the Pakistanis are the worst. They are <u>so</u> bad!

Interviewer: Why? What do they do?

Vai: They pick on anything they hear from us, like, they'd pick up words and, like make fun of them.

Interviewer: What do they find funny you think?

Vai: Um (.) I don't know miss, but (.) [Interrupted]

Damian: Miss, I don't think it's the language. They just hate us

Interviewer: Who do you mean by us?

All: The Czech [the Roma]

Lumas: But miss, they also laugh at our make-up and hairstyle

Tsura: But not as much

Interviewer: As much as what, sorry?

Tsura: Our language Miss. How we speak

Few: Yeah, yeah [together]

       (Damian, boy, 15, Lumas, girl, 15, Tsura, girl 14, and Vai girl 15)

Although ethnic identity is seen to be constant, and needs to be characterised by permanent traits, such as race, inconsistent and unstable attributes, such as clothing, language and age, remain appropriate indicators of ethnic identity

(Aboud 1988). Thus, these traits can form the basis for the Roma students' awareness of their ethnic identity, the affirmation of which has been suggested to be more salient among groups facing greater discrimination while striving to foster self-esteem. Here, boundaries are clearly drawn between the 'us' (Czech Roma), and 'them' (all the other groups, not just the White), and are constantly nourished by feelings of lowness in an affirmed intra-group hierarchy, structured by status and inculcated with prejudice. This, somehow, seems to place the Roma at significant disadvantage, although, socially speaking, there is little evidence that certain minority student groups are favoured against others within educational settings. Language is actively deployed as a chief cultural tool in this identity conflict, although clothing and make-up were invoked, too.

According to Akmajian (2001), it is fundamental for communicative activities to be held by cooperative agents in order to succeed, the Roma language is reported as incapable of leading its speakers to a common and safe social end along with other groups. It is not due to the others' unawareness of its concordance, it seems, but mostly to misinterpretations and prejudice. Damian explicitly associates language use with the sense of affiliation to the culture attributed to it, while Lumas invokes the outgroups' acrid criticism at the misfit of her cultural norms of physical attractiveness in theirs'. However, declining the standard norms of physical displays does not always mean the birth of a new 'fashion', notably when certified as 'a lack of adherence to the strict school uniform policy' (school policy documents 2016-17), and affirmed by many teachers as being a challenging issue when dealing with the Roma community (Mrs Travers, Mrs Tenely, Ms Perl, Mr Pavel, Ms Bloom). In both

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ways, whether articulated by words or fashioned by look, arguably, the engendered contempt is jeopardising the young people's identity construct.

In relation to the lack of appreciation targeting the Roma language, and despite the wide recognition of the Roma children's bilingualism (Kyuchukov 2007; Department for Children 2008; Kjaerum 2014a; Pauline et al. 2014; Dunajeva 2017), these students' linguistic skills remain hampered by 'the low status of the Romani language throughout the world' (O'Nions 2010, p. 88), and the negative stereotype associated with it (Etxeberria 2002; Kjaerum 2014a; Bhopal 2016). Notwithstanding calls for it to be 'accorded the same respect as regional languages and cultures of other minorities' (Bakker and Rooker 2001, p. 12), the large scale stigma seems to have mobilised even academic agents; teachers who essentially believe that the Roma language is deficient:

> these children speak in Gypsy during Hungarian classesand their linguistic disadvantage is huge, their language lacks proper grammar and that is why they can't follow Hungarian grammar classes and mathematics, since they can't think logically (Dunajeva 2017, p. 62).

Interestingly, and in spite of the point that there 'is little appreciation in mainstream education of the Roma culture or the Romani language' (Kyuchukov 2000, p. 273), the Roma students' assertiveness to exploit their language despite the associated stigma is impressive, considering the antagonistic atmosphere surrounding their interactional codes. This situation shows the extent to which these children's social identities are constructed by

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their structural contexts, and how far they can maintain these identities in the midst of prejudice. Their peers Hamza (boy, 16) and Abdul (boy, 15) from the Somali focus group attest:

Interviewer: Which groups do you think speak their language most?

Hamza: The Czechs Miss. The Czechs. Literally, they talk with their
language 24/7

Interviewer: What do you mean by 24/7? Inside classroom, too?

Hamza: Yeah, like, all the time (.) cause they have, like, teachers with them
[TAs]. But, even with teachers they, like, they don't even
respond. They either turn around and talk to their friends in
Czech or just don't respond (.) like, it's just them

Interviewer: Why do you think they don't respond?

Hamza: Um (.) impolite? [Interrupted by next speaker]

Abdul: Miss, when they are talking, you know, like, they don't hear or see
anything around them, just themselves (.) and, [interrupted by
next speaker]

Hamza: Yeah. That's what I was trying to say. They are disrespectful. In it?

But Ryma (14, Arab girls' focus group) had a slightly different perspective on the matter. Although she agrees that peers in school do react negatively to the Roma language, the issue, for her, is deeper than that: 'I swear if you think about it, yeah (.) then, like, there is nothing wrong with their language (.) it's them (.) people hate them'. The feelings of antipathy and aversion towards the Roma students are affecting these young people's self-esteem, because their group is crucial to their identity concept, the perception of who they are, and

hence their mental and social well-being. Worth highlighting in this respect is the school's dedicated policies and practices aimed at, among others, fairness, respect, and equity. A 100 per cent coursework Equality and Diversity qualification is offered in Ysamrywiol (2015-16). It is delivered through three taught units exploring life in diverse communities, and how work and learning ethics need to pursue the promotion of an equality and diversity agenda. Additionally, the Head of School Pupil Development and the Assistant Head have set up a pupil focus group on Anti-bullying, where racial and cultural matters were considered. Mr. Isles also commends the role played by peer mentors and students' own support groups in preventing and dealing with racial incidents.

Furthermore, because enhancing protective factors in the lives of young learners can protect them against behaviours that place them at risk for adverse health and educational outcomes, with which the Roma children seem to highly identify, the Heads of School Pupil Development and Inclusion led the local authority's Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) Roma project. Helped by Mr Pavel, the group arranged coffee mornings to meet with the Roma parents, who worked with their children on their customs and traditions, with the pupils translating their parents' contributions to English. Personal and Social Education (PSE) resources were created subsequently on 'Celebration of Culture' (school documents), in an attempt to promote tolerance and understanding of different cultures.

Moving from intercultural to intracultural work, the school's community framework adopts a comprehensive approach to cherishing diversity by

modelling social healthy behaviours inspired by the rapprochement between people from different groups. The Cultural Fair was an initiative taken for the first time in May 2016 (school documents), where food stalls, musical performances, multilingual speeches, craftwork and plenty of sign posting to support services were organised. A large number of pupils, parents and community representatives were hosted in the aim of understanding and respecting the other, in addition to inspiring the young generation towards realising tolerance and successful integration. Richards et al. (2007) appreciate the cultural responsiveness of such practices as, for them, effective learning and instruction only occur through a culturally-supported, learner-centred initiatives, which draw from and nurture diversity, while harnessing difference to promote achievement.

Despite this good work, however, it still seems too early to celebrate. Issues with cultural alienation, intolerance, and prejudice are still compelling, and continue to affect the young groups' integrational agenda. While insisting on talking Roma is clearly causing social friction with other student communities, none of the Roma students in the group seems alienated by this fact, nor do they seem to be keen on seeking relief outside their community perimeters. Emania (girl, 14) adopts a resilient attitude to melting into the mainstream parlance:

Interviewer: Would you ever relax your language? Even a bit to avoid

trouble then?

Emania: Hell <u>no</u>! [peers laugh]. Why don't <u>they</u> accept our language? Will

they speak Czech if you ask them to?

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Others: No:: [a few at once, interrupting]

Emania: Obviously not [not clear due to overlap] why us?

(Emania, girl 14, Roma students' focus group)

Emania's reaction suggests that loyalty to identity markers might be costly in that self-worth is judged negatively, leading to promoted hostility towards outsiders. An issue that might benefit from further research into language and selfhood conceptualisations, especially that the small scale of this study does not allow for conclusiveness. Nevertheless, reference could be drawn to the experimental findings in Abrams and Hogg (1988) suggesting that participants who discriminated showed a higher self-esteem than those who did not have the opportunity to do so (p. 334). However, as the social identity theory's axiomatic link between out-group negativity and in-group favouritism falls short of appreciating such individual dimensions, extending future research to reach individual conceptions of self seems important. The Roma children's accounts corroborated this binary as their voiced solidarity appeared to mitigate their joint ailments and sustain their unity. It might even be safeguarding the majority against the potential swings of solitude, which took grip of Cristina's fate. In response to my question on whether she was aware of any incidents where a certain student ethnic group resorted to rejecting any of their peer members due to the former's lack of identification, Mrs Polrod recounted:

[...] Christina is white [Roma are generally dark skinned (Mrs Tenely, Mrs Polrod)]; her mum is Russian. She would interpret to her [mum] in Russian on the EMTAS community day, speaks to

her mum in Russian, speaks to her dad in Roma. Um, she stays

away from the Roma group, which is pretty unusual, but she doesn't

have many friends out of that circle. You would notice she is

isolated. But [unclear] she could speak Roma. Not many of them

hide it.

Being a member in more than one social group is a natural phenomenon (Brown 2000), but not all groups are coherent enough to welcome such accommodation, and tailoring personal features to fit among the others might, then, be too costly. Indeed, compromising parts or aspects of one's belonging, might breed a 'multiple loyalties' phenomenon, which could result in potential rejection by fellow insiders (rest of the Roma students in this case), and hence, a consequent dilemma of inability to duly fit in any given group.

In resonance with Christina's, another unfortunate experience comes to reiterate the Roma students' ordeal at the unfavourable encounter between language and identity. A female Roma student's perceptions in the survey confirm that identification with identity symbols benefits materially, i.e. physical and social profits of group membership, but may not always engender psychological satisfaction. The 15 year old reproaches 'whoever' designed her people's cultural customs, and distinguished them with a heritage of ignominy:

honestly I hate my language not just me I think all the Czechs [Roma]

every one laugh at us in school   because it sounds funy

I find that many words sound indien but nobody

lafs at indiens or even Pakistanis

I never say I'm Czech outside the school […] (Roma girl, 15,

student survey) [Spelling and shape/form kept to original].

According to Tajfel and Turner (1986), identification with a particular group should foster one's positive group differentiation. Nonetheless, the girl has a negative attitude towards her group. This perplexity might explain her anticipation of being rejected outside her group, and therefore justifies her abstention from attempting reintegration. She is not only questioning her belonging, but also confirming her desperateness to obtain a positive social identity outside her community's perimeters. Sadly, in her case, her group is clearly associated with negative attributes, and given the others' reflected appraisals of her 'self' are negative, their internalization is so disturbing to the extent that her individual origin and group membership are impeached.

Roma students' stories are replete with testimonies that their feelings of group affiliation could also be equated with telling outgroup emotions, and that this in-group bias could get so endemic that it may lead to disparaging others, as a means of achieving group 'positiveness', and, consequently, bolstering self-esteem:

Lumas: the LRC (Learning Resources Centre) teacher called Go [boy

name] the other day, and [she] was, like, 'Go, go to pupil

reception. Ms Bloom needs to talk to you'. She was making fun

of his name and everyone started laughing

Daiena: Yeah, but at least, like, we're not, like, those Pakistanis. Are we?

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Interviewer: [interrupting] Why? What's wrong with Pakistanis?

Daiena: All Asian, Pakistanis, like, Bengalis, whatever. They try to be more like the white people cause, um, I don't know how to say it. They try to speak like them, like, 'Oh yeah my name is Aisha [/aiʃə/]' [softening her voice and changing facial expression. She meant the usual way of saying it is /iʃə/ instead of /aiʃə/]. I'm, like, 'Uh (.) excuse me, you don't speak like that!' They are <u>so</u>, <u>so</u> impressed by them [Asians impressed by whites]

<div align="right">(Daena, girl 15, Roma focus group)</div>

The bilingualism of the Roma seems to be a real issue at school. Their native language is either disparaged, or seen as a handicap, mostly for the little appreciation the whole culture bears, many non-Roma participants reflected. However, it is relatively unusual to notice that social identification with a stigmatised group provides a basis for social support, which serves as buffers against stigma and negative in-group prejudice. Unfortunately, this might also mean isolation, social withdrawal and underachievement (see Chapter Three, section 3.3.4). The matter constitutes a real challenge to teachers, who, according to Mr Bales, are struggling to implement the right strategies for school to become more interesting and liberating for the Roma. The 2014-2015 school year has witnessed a major breakthrough in the history of the school: 'one' Roma student was able to obtain sufficient GCSEs to 'merit' the six-form education (Mr. Bales), while a huge improvement made a year later meant four Roma 'girls' deserved ascension to the KS5 ranks (Ms Bloom).

What might be found intriguing, though, is that in a school accommodating over 54 ethnic groups, this community alone appropriates 'the first' third of the whole Strategic Equality Action Plan 2016-17 priorities. It is about reducing gaps in attainment and attendance between pupils from protected groups, although the different school documents and data resources do not seem to identify which groups are classified as protected, apart from the Czech/Slovak Roma, in the same way protected characteristics themselves are. Nevertheless, not just the attainment seems to be an issue, but the whole attitude towards learning, as attendance at 80 per cent, too, is a major concern when the school's minimum threshold is about a 13 per cent higher according to Ms Bloom.

When using a language, speakers are seen to represent particular identities, while at the same time actively constructing them (Edwards 2009). Nevertheless, this process's outcome remains far from declaiming all individuals equally, as contextual, social and cultural circumstances continue to fashion its action. Language is frequently referred to as a desiccated legacy by the Roma students, while it's appraisal among the Arab and Somali pupils is enunciating mixed messages. Although depicted as a thriving formula at times, it continues to smother self-esteem among minority students, insofar as the boundaries between pride and hostility suddenly become too blurred to accommodate social stability.

7.3 Cultural allegiances and self-fulfilling prophecies

Zina (Somali Girl 19, sixth formers' interview) has been to more than one primary, and had her high school and six-form education in two different institutions. She reflects on her long school experience as 'a lot of fun and little secrets'. Being a British citizen from birth has never curbed her desire to 'always' speak Somali with peers in and outside the classroom. The reason is '[…] I didn't want the teacher to know what I'm saying back in. This was back at the time of high school'. But, at sixth form, and as the girl grew older, her passion for talking native grew stronger: […] now I do it because I don't want to lose my language. I don't want my kids not to know Somali (.) um, and some Arabic as well. I want them to be good Muslims. You know.

Zina's words bear clear allusions to her pride to be Somali, a belonging determined by her loyalty to her language and her assertiveness to pass it down to the next generation. According to her, children, too, deserve to enjoy the exercise of their cultural agency. Her account corroborates Coleman (1999) who stresses the importance of adolescent understanding and perceiving their own agency in playing the appropriate roles in society and determine the exact nature of selfhood. Nevertheless, she makes a sensitive connection between language and identity, where not just the bonding matters but the hierarchy as well. For her, it appears that her linguistic loyalties are no more than an informed allegiance to a higher order, more epitomic identity constituent. It is religion. Observing constructional hierarchies in identity discourse has not yet succeeded to capture the scholarly gaze. The current

debate is mostly engrossed by contrasting and relating individual identities to national and mainstream ones (Scourfield 2006; Huddy and Khatib 2007; Hanson and Teff 2011), in addition to the role played by identity in framing the social aspects of social categorization and groups processes (Crocker et al. 1993; Druckman 1994; 1996; Brown 2000).

More specifically, research treating religion and language as two separate identity constituents has, for long, been restricted to the fundamental role language plays in the comprehension and presentation of religious texts, besides the furtherance of religious ideologies (Glinert and Yosseph 1991; Spolsky 2003). The hierarchy and interdependence among these identity symbols as a result of a collective in-group evaluation has not succeeded to appropriate serious attention yet. This conventional order is, in fact, so pertinent that it could suggest clear distinctions among groups.

When asked whether maintaining Arabic was a deliberate practice among them, Arab students' religiosity suddenly protrudes 'Um, yeah. For a lot of reasons one of them to, like, keep reading the Qur'an' (Ahmad 14, Arab boys' focus group), 'because we need to learn more Arabic because it helps to read Quran and stuff (.) um, like, know how to pray and all that' (Tariq 13, Arab boys' focus group). Others pointed at the regularity of the process and its standardized implementation among Arab families maintaining that this is achieved through 'every day in the evening apart from the weekend' classes (Tasneem 14, Arab girls' focus group). According to Markstorm (1999), religion plays an important role in adolescents' development, notably because it marks the onset of practical, operational and formal thoughts. Thus, at this

stage, abstract conceptions, such as existence, creation, and supreme power/s, are catalytic for the adolescents' perceived meaning of the self. It is, also, a reference to the significance religiosity could take in adolescents' life, and the way it nurtures feelings of self-worth. This is evidenced by Roberts et al. (1999) who maintain that ethnic identity, and by extension each of its constituents, relate positively to measures of psychological well-being such self-concept and self-esteem, and that all aspects of identity are of particular importance during adolescence.

Clearly, matters of spirituality do matter to these students, not just ideologically, but actual participation in formal practices is also a priority. 'They turn up in huge numbers to the Friday noon prayer upstairs in the upper hall […]' (Mr. English TA), 'the school is very open to cultural difference. You can see at this time of the year [Ramadan 2015] six form boys tend to wear Islamic dress and a hat, which is very unusual, um, may be unique to our school' (Mrs Tenely). This echoes Markstorm's argument that participating in rites and rituals is part of the teenagers' quest for positive distinction. It, not only promotes belongingness, but guards against alienation as one's feelings of importance and self-value in life are enhanced.

Lending claim to both extra-personal space and adjusting physical appearance to serve firmly held ideologies denotes the students' ascription and loyalty to their spirituality, and, by extension, the sense of who they are. Seul (1999) asserts that being content about their relationship with God assures individuals about their positivity and self-actualization, explaining the degree of loyalty that religion seems to engender. Yet, expressing loyalty through spatial

claiming or marking of territory can be no covenant against social controversies and inter-group tensions:

Midhat: The upper hall is ours on Friday, like, we clean it before Khutba.[12]

We put the Minbar[13] and all that and put the mats for everyone.

It is so annoying when other pupils, like, start walk on the clean

floor, mess around…but no one dare do that when Hamza

[another Muslim six former] is around. He:: is he::nch! We call

him the beast (.) [All laugh] cause, seriously (.) yeah, they don't

know what it means, how we feel. I don't think they will be

happy if we disrespect, like, church or something?

Zina: We'll be all over the news the next day

(Sixth formers, Midhat, boy, 18, Syrian, and Zina, girl, 19, British

Somali)

It is clear that Midhat is proud to claim property of the upper hall using the possessive pronoun 'ours', a standpoint guiding Muslim students' both emotions and actions, which appeared to be highly enjoined by cultural affiliation. For Hemming (2013, p. 76) emotions not only inform individuals' understanding of life contexts and experiences, but 'also actively form and constitute both self and environment'. This seems to create moot position where places become so salient to the self-concept that threats to spatial attachment may lead to social instability. Consequently, defending one's

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[12] Muslim Friday prayer speech that precedes the actual act of prayer

[13] A short flight of steps used as a platform by an Imam (Muslim preacher) in a mosque.

physical perimeters might imply inevitable groups' collision, as Hamza seems to be ready to deploy his physical strength to deter offenders. This does not support claims that religious commitment diminishes potential for inappropriate conduct (Kidwell 2009 ; King 2015), but does corroborate Sachdev and Bourhis (2005)'s finding that strong identification with a category's core values may compel members to engage in discriminatory behaviour. Here, then, is another substantiation that loyalty to group values might breed hostility towards other groups for its potential conversion into divisive stereotype.

Again, social division, still nurtured by loyalty, strikes in subversion, but this time swearing allegiance to the religious tongue. The unrest is stirred by the intersectionality between language and religiosity, in corroboration with Safran (2008) argument that 'religious identity is based on, and perpetuated in narratives expressed in a specific language' (p. 2). This is a clear indication that individuals' linguistic claims could often be based on marking and legitimating connections with language to the extent that their interplay starts to advise individuals' perceptions of both their group and self-worth appraisal. In addition to Arab students, Somalis' Muslimness is likely to entrain them into interactional challenges as they, too, proved to exalt the language of their faith.

In fact, students' commitment to the Arabic language seems to engender adverse effects on the way they perceive themselves, value 'others' and react to them. When asked if they would be eager to teach their language to other communities and learn theirs, Abdul (Somali students' focus groups) was

happy to implement the concept, but with teachers and staff members rather than out-group peers: 'students? No, no. May be teachers or like, staff may be'. His demur was resonant in all groups where positions range from: 'it would hardly work […]' (Zainab 13, Arab girls' focus group) to 'Um, why would they want to learn Arabic?' (Tasneem 14. Arab girls' focus group), and 'Will they speak Czech [Roma] if you ask them to? No' (Emania 14, Roma students' focus group). Although confining the significance of language to in-group perimeters and/or to its practicality, students' perceptions soon traverse the linguistic debate to become embraced by and imbued with faith.

Arguably, there is a consensus among the students that Arabic is not treated respectfully on the part of non-Muslims, communicating an experienced harm to their self-esteem, for its perceived holiness to them. For the standard Muslim community, Arabic's status emulates the sanctified religion itself as its words themselves are deeply inscribed with religious ideologies: '[…] and there is a problem, another problem. Um, some like, unfortunately some pupils use some Arabic words, like, in a bad way. It makes me sad' (Hassan 13. Arab boys' focus group). This is consistent with Rosenthal (1992) and Wheeler (2003) who maintains that language is the means to convey society's core beliefs and values, and that by virtue of its intrinsic linkage to Qur'an (Islam's holy book) and Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad's - Peace Be Upon Him- teachings), has a major impact on the lives and emotions of Muslims.

This concept is fostered by the language's 'merited' elevation as authenticated in the Qur'an: 'Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand' (Qur'an 620 AC), 'A Book whereof the verses are explained

in detail, a Qur'an in Arabic for people who know' (Qur'an 615 AC). Arabic is indexed in these messages as the language of Qur'an and avers its promotion irrespective of Muslims' ethnic backgrounds (Wheeler 2003). This divine testimony of the holiness of a language, that is by no means divine itself, partly justifies the affinity Muslim students have for their spiritual tongue, and the amount of emotional and psychological disturbance its disrespect might inflict on them.

Ethnic identity is claimed to be intrinsically connected to the language as spoken language is one of the most salient characteristics of ethnic groups (Kunschak and Giron 2013), and that loyalty to ethnic languages may lead to social divisiveness in multi-ethnic settings. The linguistic dimension of discrimination among cultural groups is also elucidated in the following quote:

> Language is a cultural repository of ideas for portraying particular out-groups… it encodes (embodies) discriminatory stereotypes and scripts. Racial (or ethnic) stereotypes, slurs, metaphors, and so forth are typical examples of the linguistic encoding of racial discrimination (Ng 2007, pp. 107-109).

This phenomenon becomes particularly conspicuous where language's link to spirituality is evident, given its linguistic and religious implications, which compose a scenario of connotations with social unrest, leading to a 'repression of language and those who associate with it' (Ahmed 2010, p. 197). Muslim students' awareness of their own worth may draw on their direct or indirect linkage to a Supreme Being. This Supreme Being for Muslims, 'Allah', is

being devalued by out-group prejudice through the means of language. Both Arab and non-Arab Muslims' pride of the Arabic language is roiled by the others' sullen demeanour:

Abdul: Miss, some (.) some non-Muslim pupils use, like, the word Allah

Akbar,[14] like, in a way it makes me angry. Not just me

Hibou: [interrupting] like terrorists do

Abdul: Yeah, they always say Allah Akbar and say after that we're gonna

bomb this school. Like, they try to be like ISIS

Hibou: In it?

Badria: Or (.) actually (.) say we [Muslim students] are like ISIS

(Abdul 15, Hibou 14, Badria 15; Somali students' focus group)

Such contempt about the socio-political climate Muslim students live in echoes many findings about similar experiences around the world, where Muslim students were subject to verbal or physical threat based on linguistic and/or ideological grounds (OSI 2005; CAIR 2015). The young participants discussed how islamophobia is jeopardising their identity and demonising their cultural symbols in the same way Jaspal and Cinnirella (2010b) deprecate the media for 'increasingly constructing them in terms of a hybridised threat to the ethno-national in-group, consisting of both symbolic and realistic aspects' (p. 289).

14'Allahu Akbar' is an Arabic phrase, which directly translates as 'Allah is Greater'. It is recited by Muslims and Arabic speaking Orthodox Christians as an expression of their faith, but often coined to Islam only. This religious term serves as a reminder to Muslims, that no matter the situation or emotion, God is always greater than any real or imaginary entity (Jassem 2012).

Sinane: And with Ms Terris (pseudonym for Welsh teacher) (.) we were

playing a game and (.) basically, she kept on passing us a bomb,

toy bomb [understood from the boys later that the toy was a

timer]

All: [laughing] Yeah. Yeah

Sinane: [resumes] and then you have to say stuff in Welsh and you pass it

on to the next one before it explodes, and then there is another

boy (.) yeah (.) and the boy got it. He threw it on the floor and

he was like 'Allah Akbar, run for your life'

Tariq: As if Muslims are only good at killing. We say Allah Akbar in other

things, like, we pray with Allah Akbar

Hassan: When we like something, too, we say it and (.) they call us

terrorists then say 'oh joking'

Tariq: And, like, Ms, like, in the boys' toilets someone wrote Jihad[15] (.) I

am sure it's Dickson (pseudonym for a friend) (.) his best friend

said it .He thinks it's funny, but we got detention that day

(Sinane 13, Tariq 14, Hassan 13, Arab boys' focus group)

The terrorism rhetoric has infiltrated the school environment and is

manifesting mainly as student bullying, especially following the Charlie

Hebdo incident[16], which occurred few weeks before the interviews and focus

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[15]Term used for fighting the enemy, nowadays mostly attributed to ISIS and similar Islamic organisations (Ostaeyen 2016).

[16] On 7 January 2015 two brothers, two men, believed to be Muslims, forced their way into the offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris. They were armed and killed 12 people and injured 11 others. Al-Qaeda's branch in Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack (Mulholland, R. and Burke, L. 2017).

groups meetings. Muslim students have been struggling for the assertion of their positiveness, and their perceptions are inculcated with persuasion that their language is used to marginalize and disempower them. The feeling soon internalises as negative stereotype, subduing their self-esteem to breed emotions of distress and of social alienation.

If identification with collective symbols promotes belongingness (Brown 2000), threatening them is said to often inflict disorder, as people who are confronted with potentially negative social identities, according to SIT, would have to react, sometimes aggressively (Liu and Hilton 2005; Garcia 2018). The Arab boys's position in this quote speaks to this view:

Interviewer: What is your reaction? What do you do?

Sinane: Oh miss, we fight. We always fight because of this

Ahmad: Miss (.) like last week my friend Bilal, he is Somali. He is in
another form. He, like, he punched a white boy, cause he saw
him writing Allah Akbar on the board when Ms Perl left the
room (.) like to scare people or something

Sinane: Yeah, and then blame it on us

Interviewer: Did they fight inside the classroom?

Ahmad: No. It was in break time. They both had detention after school

Interviewer: Did the teacher punish you [Muslim boys] for that?

Sinane and Ahmad: No, no

(Sinane 13, Ahmad 15, Arab boys' focus group)

Urged by their quest for positive distinctiveness, and attempting to face out-group derogation, the boys are clearly engaging in behavioural issues that often amount to corporal strife, as witnessed previously with six form Midhat and Hamza. This time, a concerted tone for striking back is evinced and inviting violence leads the boys' choices for championing belongingness, and satisfying the internal drive for positively distinct social identities. This drive is considered the general root cause of in-group favouring behaviour by SIT (Everett et al. 2015).

The situation seems to have a different impact on students though. What some teachers and staff participants perceive to be transient sensitivities is being confirmed as chronical negative stereotype among students. Here, Wilkins (1976), Crocker and Major (1989b) and Inzlicht and Kang (2010) warn of the stereotype threat, which is the anxiousness that one feels about confirming a negative stereotype. According to them, this can lead to its actual confirmation, affecting the cognitive, affective and behavioural actions, and resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy. First coined by Merton (1948), the self-fulfilling prophecy term stands for the strong connections between belief (prophecy) and behaviour. A strongly held belief, whether positive or negative, and which is commonly held as social truth, may sufficiently shape individuals' reactions to ultimately fulfil the false prophecy (Sternberg et al. 2011). Therefore, there is a concern that prolonged exposure to this stereotype in real life might apprise students' self-fulfilling prophecies: 'we must learn lessons from our religion and realise that by definition as Muslims we will always be struggling in this life one way or another' a school girl in a previous study sighed (Jeffery 2017).

Hence, and by virtue of their cultural membership, Muslim students are vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination, while the internalisation of the engendered labelling causes stigma to tighten its grip around them, as discussed in the following section.

7.4 Labelling and the internalisation of stigma

The labels which Muslin students are associated with seem to be playing a crucial role in the construction and development of their identities and self-concepts. It is due to the ability of the discriminatory and prejudicing messages to advise one's appraisals of the self (Crocker and Major 1989b,2003), and even induce strategies for fulfilling the expectations of the label (Woodgate et al. 2017). This position seems to be endorsed by Tasneem (15, Arab girls' focus group) based on her belief that constant indicting might advise people's quest for identification with the socially promoted models: '…it's just too much, like you start asking yourself I'm probably like this [when accused of being terrorists], I mean (.) especially boys (.) I feel so sorry for them…'. The labelling practices, according to both teachers and Muslim students, are progressively appropriating a significant part of the school's daily experiences, notably 'in the wake of recent terror attacks in London' (Mr. Somali), to the extent that they have increasingly become part of all students', Muslims or non-Muslims, mutual construction of social reality ever since. This statement translates Mrs Ismat's judgement originally put as follows: ' اصبحت جزء مهم من الواقع المعاش اللّى الكل مساهم فيه الصراحة مسلم و غير مسلم.'

Numerous accounts throughout the data (see previous section, for example) made overt expressions of Muslims students' endurance following constant

name-calling, verbal and physical threats for their ideologies and physical displays, in addition to persistent association with ISIS. Mr Isles alluded to the fact that such incidents are common in school following relevant social events, propaganda, and the biased media narratives. Thus, and in accordance with the Labelling Theory's appreciation that:

> Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying these rules to particular people and labelling them as outsiders. …The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label (Becker 2008, p. 9).

This situation appears to be enforcing negative labelling, and portrayals of deviance against the Muslim community in school. Similarly, Hargreaves et al. (2012) warn of the sense of stigma threatening the bearers of the discreditable depiction, and the likelihood for them to be estimated and treated as untrustworthy by others. According to Corrigan and Rao (2012), escaping the negative label might prove difficult, seeing the inevitability of partially recognising the self through the other's assessment. Being labelled deviant, therefore, could result in deviance amplification, which could become individuals' master status, frame their self-concept, and introduce them to deviant careers (Bernburg and Krohn 2003). Badria's account goes some way in corroborating these observations:

Bardria: Basically (.) the history teacher was asking us 'what do you want

to be in future?' and before Jalal [Muslim male name, but not

necessarily Arab] even spoke Dixon was like 'yo, you will be a

terrorist' and all laughed (.) literally all the class (.) then Jalal

jumped on his table, and was like 'yeah so I kill you' he

mercked[17] him so:: hard

(Badria 15, girl, Somali students' focus group)

Apparently accepted by Jalal, the stigmatising terrorist label seems to have already worked its way to internalisation, inciting a verbal and physical behaviour that bears the full traits of deviance seeing its instant amplification. However, it is worth noting that despite the long legacy of research investigating deviant behaviour in schools, attention has been mainly directed towards practitioners, mostly teachers, constantly labelling students as deviant (Woods 1980; Agbenyega 2003; Hornstra et al. 2010; Goode 2016; Mannay et al. 2017). There is no evidence of research addressing the phenomenon when the labeller is a 'peer' except in the way of treating it as bullying, a gap that might benefit from further exploration, notably if the label structure rests upon group prejudice rather than individual's non-conformist behaviour.

The Muslim community's alleged violation of the taken-for-granted rules of normative mainstream cultural and social standards have clearly engendered the labelling processes targeting ethnic Mulsims in Ysamrywiol. Their

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[17] To murder, kill, or otherwise destroy. Derived from the word 'mercenary'. (Urban dictionary)

identification with their cultures' spiritual ideologies is forcing them into experiences that seem to be closely associated with stigma seeing Goffman's Stigma Theory's association of the social construction of a deviant peer with feelings of stigma (Goffman 1990). Drawing on Goffman's work on stigma, the divisive socio-political discourses infiltrating the school contexts proved to beset the Muslim community in Ysamrywiol with a 'discreditable' social identity (Goffman 2009, p. 33). As result of this, Mr Isles's consciousness of several incidents of bullying nurtured by Islamophobia, Mrs Ismat's description of the 'full dooming package' of Islam, Mr Rakamo's struggle with the terrorist depictions (see Chapter Seven), and the relevant student stories related in this chapter suggest feelings of Muslims' disqualification from school's full social acceptance. Internalising stigmatising negative appraisals has acted against this community's will to fit within idealized, normative categories and roles.

To this effect, too, it might be important to highlight that I have not seen any of the Muslim teachers or staff members using the 'teachers' and staff' common room at break and lunch times during the time I served in the school, as I used to sit there regularly, and occasionally use its adjacent computer room as well. However, on the day I Interviewed Mrs Ismat, I was escorted to a room outside the main building, to a subordinate smaller establishment where two other Muslim teachers were sitting. I was made aware during a short greeting conversation with them that they generally prefer to use this classroom to rest and socialise. The kettle, biscuits, and the coffee and tea utensils truly gave the educational room an extra social feel. Although the situation does not support definite assertions of social isolation due to stigma,

the evidence presented so far does bear allusions to the potential implication of religious identity in this matter, and clearly deserves a deeper consideration.

Although identification with an ethnic group or some of its cultural symbols is not always salient, threats to the self and group concepts remain imminent. For instance, members of the Muslim community are not always physically distinguishable from others (more than half of the interviewed Muslim girls do not wear the headscarf), but there is a chance that their undesired difference remains subject to potential exposure, hence an ongoing burden of worry (Droogsma 2007; Alsultany 2012). In this respect, it is worth reiterating some of Maroua's (British Moroccan girl, 18, sixth formers' interview) words regarding her avoidance of the Islamic dress in the UK: 'I don't want to look different, then you'd kind of get segregated, you're seen inferior or, like, less than them […]' (see section 7.2), and the Roma students' aversion of her native conversational practice due to similar concerns (see section 7.2): 'Honestly I hate my language not just me I think all the Czech. I never say I'm Czech outside the school […]'.

It is widely accepted in social research, notably by the social identity theory, that social stigma has negative effects on self-esteem (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Abrahams 1996). This argument is corroborated by social psychologists who appreciate the impact of group's belonging on the determination of individuals' self- esteem, connecting person's feelings of worth to their group's social evaluations (Tajfel 1981; Crocker et al. 1993; Hogg et al. 2004; Hogg 2016). This indicates that ethnic students' feelings of worthlessness are

likely to originate from affiliation to underprivileged or outcast groups. In line with this, Erik Erikson reports 'ample evidence in relation to inferiority feelings and morbid self-hate in all minority groups', according to Crocker and Major (1989a, p. 611), while Leary and Tangney (2011) note the ability of group oppression to affect the integrity of the ego and jeopardise its natural pride.

Living with a concealable identity due to anticipated stigma is a relatively recent debate, which has not yet succeeded to draw significant attention. This could be due to visibility issues given the difficulty to externally identify relevant individuals, and hence, as Quinn and Chaudoir (2009) contend, there are concerns about difficulties and delays in reporting on affected populations suffering the engendered psychological and physical distress. Accordingly, bearing the stigma of ethnic belonging despite shunning its epitomic physical, linguistic or ideological modulations in Ysamrywiol calls for more attention. This becomes particularly significant knowing that internalized stigma is deemed to be disadvantageous to the self and general well-being, with increased interference with cognitive and psychological functioning (Corrigan et al. 2006).

At accommodating such experiences within the educational settings, Cokley et al. (2015) allude to the impact of internalised stigma on stigmatised students' attitudes towards school, their behaviour, and their overall educational achievement (see Chapters Two and Three for more details). Inevitably, then, internalising visible or concealed stigmatised identity disturbances can leave harmful and long-lasting effects on both perceived

self-worth and life performances. Similar observations were made by Taras and Potts-Datema (2005) who maintain that being overweight and obese are associated with poorer levels of academic achievement, and by research linking together stigma consciousness in women and their diminished performance (Brown and Pinel 2003; Nguyen and Ryan 2008; Christy and Fox 2014).

Certainly, underachievement in Ysamrywiol is an issue stressed by teachers and students alike (see Chapter Six). Unfortunately, it is not the only one. As a result of exposure to negative representations, the social pressures on the study's participants, particualrly students, are certainly inducing coping strategies; breaking away from mainstream crowds in pursuit of the peace they are constantly accused to steal:

Ryma: You want to avoid it yeah [Islam related topics], but trust, it keeps coming up, like out of nowhere. Say like the other day, do you remember Barak Obama [addressing her peers]?

The rest: Yeah, yeah

Ryma: We were taking about American presidents and we were talking about Barack Obama, someone shouted like 'some say Barack Obama himself is a Muslim' and the rest, Emily, Leah, Jason [pseudonyms] started laughing and shouting. It had absolutely nothing to do with Islam. Then Leah said 'so I'd hate him more', and then all you hear is I hate Muslims so much, and the teacher was like 'it's not fair, not all Muslims are bad' like she herself sounded kinda like with them. She was having proper go

at them but I don't think she had to say that either, but me and my other Muslim friend, like us, we felt so so offended like excluded and that.

Farah: Yeah we stay together anyways, we have our own squad, just fed up really, keep giving excuses [meaning justifications] about Islam, what you believe is (.) is like (.) it's not like what other people think and, they look down at you and treat you differently, like you've done all these bad things [terror attacks], that sort of thing. So what's the point [the point of mixing with others when they are constantly required to defend Islam]?

(Ryma, 14, Farah 14, arab girls focus group)

These words are an indication that the Muslim community in Ysamrywiol has been stigmatised by a uniquely hostile structural and interpersonal discrimination, and that their social withdrawal customisation could link with the labelling theorists' conclusion that internalising negative stereotype results in the deviant groups becoming progressively isolated from conventional society (Fisher 1972; Goffman 1990; Scull 2014; Woodgate et al. 2017; Becker 2018).

7.5 Conclusion

The narratives in this chapter were fraught with emotions of hopelessness and yearning aspirations for social stability, which minority school children would not aspire to unless their eagerness to positively belong is satisfied. The Roma children feel ostracized at their unconventional norms of physical

display, and their mother tongue's unsuccessful performance in the identity game. However, while feelings of stigma and antipathy are taking their toll on them, assertiveness to speak, look and behave Romani still champions their resolve to be no one else but themselves. Similar concerns seem to actuate Muslim students' disturbances following their exposure to negative representations. Social division strikes again nurtured by loyalty to their religious tongue, Arabic, which seems to engender adverse effects on the way Arab students perceive themselves, appraise others and react to them. For both groups, internalising stigmatising perceptions is clearly affecting both perceived self-worth, social relationships and life performances, a fact underlining the sensitive hierarchy and strong interdependence among the various identity symbols. Lacking appreciation of the disparate cultural belonging will continue to disturb ethnic identity's disposition in the following chapter, which describes the Roma student community's social and educational estrangement.

8. Snowballing educational disadvantage among the Roma

8.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I investigated some ethnic minority representations in Ysamrywiol and discussed a set of conventional and innovative multilingual practices and social interactions among Somali, Arab and Roma student groups. Some perceptions conveyed by professionals and students from different communities regarding local and worldwide social, cultural and academic challenges facing the Roma pupils will structure discussion in this chapter.

With dreams and realities often seeming unobtainable in the student's accounts, a Roma's life can resemble a snowball accumulating snow and dirt while rolling downhill. To trace the 'snowballing' journey of the Roma students' academic disadvantage, I will visit five stations in their customary struggles, whereby each appends a new layer of vulnerability and uncertainty about the future. With a focus on my participants and references to similar cases internationally, I will offer an insight into the social and academic consequences of disclosing the Roma identity within schools in layer one, followed with an environmental approach exposing the community's barriers to literacy and hostility towards edification and knowledge acquisition in the second layer. Layers three and four will debate presumed materialistic, cultural, and self-representation embroilments in the Roma's educational misfortune, to conclude with layer five, which observes how engendered

ramifications of an absent trust consciousness in academic and labour organisations can further sequester their yearning for standard prerogatives.

8.2 Layer one: Discrimination and assumed intellectual deficiency

The despondent discourse around the Roma in the literature has, for decades, continued to manifest researchers' struggles to access, engage and retain participants from this socially disadvantaged group (Zawacki 2017; European Dialogue 2009). This 'loud' but 'lone' community, many Ysamrywiol professionals confirm, has mostly been accessed through organisations directly accommodating its members and/or serving them, as corroborated in (Fényes et al. 1999). For instance, approaching primary and high school Roma could, with some negotiation with gatekeepers, be achieved through school organisations. However, post GCSE pupils remained almost impossible to meet because of their customary departures from conventional routes designed by a maturity, responsibility and self-sufficiency trilogy (Department for Children 2008). Consequently, my resolute quest for meeting post-16 Roma students was unsuccessful in Ysamrywiol (no Roma in six form, school officials/documents), and other local colleges, gypsy and traveller project charities and organisations, either did not reply to my emails, or were unable to assist with the research.

My difficulties with accessing the Roma group confirmed the uncertainties of Ysamrywiol's Deputy Head over potential recruitment of this category. However, eventually meeting the students, in the last week of June 2016, offered an opportunity for this marginalised group to have a voice in the study. Traditionally associated with disadvantage and disenfranchisement from

cultural constancy (Cahn et al. 1998; Bhopal and Myers 2009), the Roma group, boys and girls equally, seem prone to isolation, not at least a strong intergroup coalescence compared to the rest of the communities within Ysamrywiol, as previously discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. Many teachers and non-Roma students corroborate this fact highlighting this community's hard and slow integration, while attributing this lack of integration to their strong in-group social bonds, and lack of faith beyond their communal boundaries.

I felt a sense of this social unease on the day of the meeting as, to my fortune perhaps, a relative change in the schedule of school events that day implied the session's displacement to the deputy head's office where the three students were sat, to the nearest science room few steps down the main corridor. They looked uncomfortable as I was leading them to the room, and they could clearly not wait until we arrive at the science room to obtain clarifications. Suddenly, everyone stopped in the middle of the way when Daena prompted me with questions about myself, where I was taking them and why they were initially taken to the Deputy Head's office when they 'have done nothing wrong'. After a brief introduction about myself, and my research role in school, I learnt from their few nods that they feel safe to proceed, and so did I. These couple of minutes felt like ages, and my researcher's responsibility for reassuring vulnerable subjects about safety and protection from feelings of fear and/or threat put my researcher skills to a real test.

Once inside the room, I headed towards the low tables and invited them to do so, but the students sat tight behind the high lab table, keeping some distance

away from me. I faced them on the other side and started reiterating my apologies, reminding them about their consent to take part in my research. I elaborated more on research objectives and the importance of their contribution, and made sure they still agree to be recorded. I clearly and carefully emphasised the relevant ethical considerations including their right to withdraw participation, with Miroslav being constantly included by interpretation provided by his peers.[18]

I, also, highlighted that they are not the only group to undergo this experience, and that many of their peers described it as enjoyable. Although restoring the students' trust took longer than expected, it could be seen as not only relieving their countenance, but also slowly steering their conversations away from being too Roma language dominated, to a more inclusive interaction conducted mostly in English.

The Roma may be the only group I addressed based on pre-requisite concepts raised in previous meetings with both student and professional participants. Their recruitment was not only based on the survey's results like their peers from other groups, but concurring convictions among teachers and peers regarding the Roma's eccentric attitudes and social demeanour. Such perceptions revealed a range of factors suggesting a Roma proneness to be especially vulnerable and exposed, inter alia, low academic achievement, poor attendance rates, and an integrational dilemma arguably accentuated by

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[18]Despite that only students with good ability to speak English were invited to take part in the FG sessions, Miroslav took part after insisting. Permission from deputy head was obtained promptly and consent form signed.

profound allegiances to cultural value systems and symbolic representations. Allusion were made to the community's stark bearing on affirming identity through distinctive modes of and attitudes to learning, which fostered by their cultural embodiment and strategic social exclusion (Dunajeva 2017), would do nothing but cumber their school-life experiences with hostility and deficiency.

The literature is replete with evidence that most societal customs and mainstream policies around the world continue to fail this community (Fényes et al. 1999; European Roma Rights Center 2003; Ivanova 2013; Humphris 2016), and serious appeals were launched to address their discrimination and condemn forms of 'acceptable racism' (Fényes et al. 1999, p. 55). Indeed, many participants acknowledge the Roma's dilemma in the research site, alluding to discourses of estrangement from meaningful social and educational school agencies, and problematizing the community as deficient in terms of their cultural provenance, mental abilities and emotional wellbeing. Copious accounts bore assertions of these phenomena, confirming that these students' ill-treatment, labelling as 'Czechies' and 'Gypsies', in addition to state institutions' inability to foster their cultural belonging are permanent and prominent. Some teachers discussed these concerns as 'deeply disturbing' (Mr Archer), socially alienating and academically debilitating (Mrs Polrod; Mrs Netter). Here is how the Roma students put it themselves:

Interviewer: What's your dream school then?

Damian: Um (.) hard to answer cause everyone is different and like

different things. Better school is like there is no much racism no

more like bullying and fights. There's too much fight around

here (.) like we fight a lot

Interviewer: Does that mean you fight more and get into trouble more than

anybody else do?

Tsura: We don't really get involved [interrupted by next speaker]

Vai: Like if they don't start on us we won't start? [Interrogative tone]

Tsura: If they're starting on us and they call us Czechies or Gypsy

Damian: We only defend ourselves

[Overlap]

Tsura: Or winding us up like then we start

Interviewer: What's the most annoying thing that makes you start on others?

Tsura: When they call us Czechies

Interviewer: Why is this? What's wrong with being Czechies?

Many: Racist [some of them together]

Tsura: And nobody do nothing. Like everywhere in school. In class.

Everywhere

Interviewer: But (.) what does Czechy mean to you?

Damina: Like we are the most terrible people (.) we're bad (.) cause they

hate us

Tsura: Like we do whatever we want

[Question referred to Miroslav about what triggers his anger most. His

answer, Gypsy, Czechies]

Interviewer: So do you guys report these incidents to anyone in school?

Vai: No we fix them ourselves [interrupted by next speaker]

Damian: Like they're gonna do anything to them. I never tried, but like I

know others did but [did not finish the sentence]

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(Tsura, girl 15; Damina boy 15; Vai, girl 15, Roma students Focus group)

In this respect, and while debating the costly bids of homogenising minority groups within mainstream instructional institutions, Dunajeva (2017) retraces the rampant disadvantages faced by Roma students stemming from deficient inclusion duties, concomitant with the othering practices still commonplace in European schools. This, Department for Children (2008) argues, has resulted in an inherited mistrust of authority in its various representations, insofar as the Roma students find it constantly difficult to learn for fear of being exposed as Gypsy/Roma, and deal with its ramifications. The issue of trust will be revisited later in section 8.6.

Debating the students' identity was intractable and Mr. Roma's position, 'if I tell you that Gypsy is really not the name we would like to hear by the majority of people' corroborates this argument. My Roma participants seemed to evade open discussion about their ethnicity, while mostly optimising geographical genesis for situating their racial provenance. Given that they 'can't explain' (Charani), and find it 'hard to explain' (Vai) it, seeking reference to countries of descent, Czechs, Slovak or Czech Slovak proved easier and probably safer. Overt identification with Roma or Gypsy categories was absent, but the students accepted them at my mention. This, on the face of it, fosters some field experts' argument that some Roma will not openly discuss their ethnicity for fear of discrimination (Matras 2005; Department for Children 2008), while many also bear allusions to in-group feelings of inferiority (Fényes et al. 1999; Kyuchukov 2000; Foley 2010; Lane et al. 2014). Although the latter thought is nurtured by students' frequent references (see Chapter Seven, sections 7.2

and 7.3), it seems to be soliciting heed from social identity theory, which remains engrossed in the advantageous rhetoric of in-group favouritism, bias and positivity.

Whilst the extract above does not seem to reflect feelings of fear as much as frustration and hostility, it is well documented that the victims of bullying often fear school, in which case, the educational messages could not profess consummate delivery on safety and happiness. Lane et al. (2014) assert that 'the most common reason for the reluctance to send gypsy, traveller and Roma children to school is the prevalence of racial abuse', and that nearly two thirds of this student category have been bullied or physically attacked (p.31). Some staff and Roma students transcended this debate to condemn the instructional reluctance to implement 'enough differentiation in their teaching strategies' (Ms Bloom), and display appropriate levels of understanding, fairness and sensibility. Others started deprecating racism and bullying for crippling socio-educational policies within schools, leaving little choice for many parents and carers over home schooling their children (Coy 2003). This solution, although deemed suitable for many, Roma children can hardly be amongst them owing to their allegedly unsuitable adult literacy and overall cultural materialism as the following two sections illustrate.

Indeed, while the young Roma's safety is jeopardized by schools' thwarting social morality, it has been argued that their academically deficient parenting (Poole and Adamson 2008; Bhopal and Myers 2009; Humphris 2016; Safdar 2017) remains, not only, unwilling to 'push their children' (Ms. Bloom), but also far from able to extend them intellectual integrity. The following section

expands on why the Roma's parenting quality is perceived as discordant with standard educational propensities.

8.3 Layer two: Incongruent parenting and the bequest of cognitive hostility

The Roma parents' scant academic consciousness permeated most participants' conceptions about this community, not only admonishing their critically low levels of English language mastery, 'Czech Roma they speak Czech and mostly Roma language, and the parents don't speak English. So, there is no English at home' (Ms Perl), but also their inadequate general intellectual standards. Mrs Netter contends that 'in the Roma culture, there isn't a culture of education. It's hard to find an educated person within that culture', corroborated by Mr Pavel who posits:

> [...] some of the parents never went to school back home unfortunately. So a lot of parents and grandparents missed educational or basic skills because they never ever could go to school because in our country education is totally neglected (Mr Pavel).

Adult Roma's illiteracy or low education, besides their limited understanding of school systems, have for long been of interest to academics (Fényes et al. 1999; Bhopal and Myers 2009; Ivanova 2013). These sources also bolster Mr. Roma's position in indicting home countries' instructional authorities for negative provisions and experiences in ghetto-schools, setting the foundation for a culture of early and long lasting educational desertion.

Ms Bloom, who is a school-community coordinator, reflected on her several years' experience in dealing with this category with a strong description: 'I am constantly in contact with them. I know them personally. I can never imagine one of the Czech parents would have gone to uni or gone back to study, or go to English classes'. Although considerable attention was drawn to this phenomenon (European Roma Rights Center 2003), it is worth underlining the survey data collected from eleven European countries by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) quantifying the dilemma of the outstanding numbers of illiterate adult Roma in several member states, despite evidence of progress.

Kjaerum (2014b) revealed that the proportion of Roma aged 16–24 who say that they cannot read or write is 10 per cent in Bulgaria and Portugal, 14 per cent in France, 22 per cent in Romania and a stark 35 per cent in Greece. In addition, the proportion of Roma aged 25–44 who say they cannot read or write is very high in Greece (47 per cent), Romania (34 per cent) and Portugal (31 per cent)'(European Roma Rights Center 2003). This already bleak picture is even more wretched as such surveys tend to measure self-perceived literacies, which usually 'produce higher rates than standardised assessment studies' (European Roma Rights Center 2003p. 25). Hence, as educational portrayals among adult Roma prove problematic, the negative reports about the indigent literacy among younger generations would not arise to the level of mystery. What seems mysterious, though, is how to root this phenomenon in a ground, which is solid and conceivable enough to uphold literacy structures within the Roma community.

In this respect, teachers and even Roma students' perceptions split among those who impute the Roma's educational struggles to the historically deficient integrational policies in Europe, and those depicting the Roma gypsy's cultural patrimony as pedagogically asymmetrical with mainstream instruction and intellect. Ms Perl, a Polish citizen who moved to the UK six years ago and speaks few languages herself, including Czech (Roma's second language), belongs to the first pole and seems well versed about the historical displays of exclusionary policies against the Roma throughout Europe:

> Well (.) I know about how Roma people get treated back home in the Czech Republic and continental Europe in general. They kind of like second category citizens, so the kids wouldn't go to school and no one would really do nothing about this (Ms Perl).

Her allusions to the implicated European mainstream social and educational agencies were by no means isolated as they resonate in many other teachers' accounts, such as:

> The Roma people are educated in special schools; automatically they're not given access to mainstream schools. So a lot of our students come here and they've never been in a mainstream school…but quite often a lot of them have had this experience where they haven't been to school at all, or they've been in a special unit where they just, they're not expected to do well, they're not expected to achieve. Um, the education service provided to Czech

Romas is very different to people living in the Czech Republic. The persecution they've suffered back home so that, quite often people haven't been to school before (Mrs Netter).

Whether reporting on the times of the travelling Gypsy nation or the slightly more settled Roma community now, instructional organisations have been widely rebuked for partial intervention in the lives of these people (Cahn et al. 1998; Angell et al. 2009; Bhopal and Myers 2009). Cahn et al. (1998) document the historically troubled relationship between Roma and their educational systems, such as abuse from teachers, non-Roma pupils and their parents, including physical, verbal and/or emotional abuse. This practice was considered standard and widely accepted by society, and school authorities have been approached for being continuously inadequate in dealing with the related incidents. For example, a survey conducted as late as 1997 demonstrated high levels of flagrant practices targeting the Roma students in different counties around Europe. They range from low level individual incidents of discrimination, insults, name calling and even hitting by teachers and non Roma peers, to an institutional denial and complicity on the part of both justice and education government departments denounced for unsuccessfully monitoring relevant cases or fairly acting upon them (Etxeberria 2002).

The second pole resonates with Mrs Tenely's warning against undermining 'the real battle with this community', and the need to skilfully weave and nurture their attachment to enhance feelings of belongingness rather than subordination, as many of her colleagues believe. Experiencing the

consecutive setbacks of current pedagogies in promoting cognition among the Roma could, for this group, be addressed through customising instructional institutions to diversity rather than attempting to customise subgroups to dominant contexts.

Mr. Pavel posits: 'Roma families are hard to assimilate. School for them is not suitable, at least at teenage onwards […]', and proceeds stressing their fear for their progeny to become imbued by foreign value systems, in which case adults are likely to harness their paternal authority for vetoing their children's right to schooling. This is also consistent with Ms. Bloom's stance, who, by virtue of working 'constantly with them. I know them and their parents in person', appreciates this community's pride in their symbolic representations as 'they are proud to be Roma, certainly parents are'. However, according to her, this makes it 'difficult to hold conversations with the Czech parents, 'cause you have to convince them, sometimes negotiate with them about the importance of school'.

This suggests that the Roma's hostility towards knowledge assimilation is traditionally enjoined by a cultural code that disparages mainstream instructional systems, which, according to Dunajeva (2017) revokes their parenthood for being a threat to their children's success. Even when the Welsh Assembly Government (2011) acclaimed most Gypsy and traveller parents for recognising the benefits of acquiring a functional literacy and numeracy levels, it still reports their short lived ambitions, which rarely exceed key stage three (KS3) levels (up to year 9 – age 14). Similarly, while criticizing the 'very little research on the educational experiences of Roma in the UK',

Lane et al. (2014, p. 31) contrasted the parents' regard to education with their children's poor and constantly declining performance in the national expectation tests in English and Maths.

Some Ysamrywiol teachers allude to the parents' intransigence to education, arguing that it is also imparting the young generation's appraisal of the schooling concept insofar as any positive change rhetoric seems relatively premature. 'I do not think things will change greatly with this generation either. You can tell when you meet the parents they are just like mini versions of them', Mrs Tenely proclaims, upholding Mr. Roma's assertion: 'it's going through generations mainly, it's a generational problem'. Commensurate revelations imbued the Roma students' narratives to the Save the Children Consultation elsewhere in Wales: 'Whatever was good enough for my parents is good enough for me' or 'my mum stopped school when she was 11. They had to do as their parents did' (Welsh Assembly Government 2011). These narratives voice the young peoples' determination to reify the 'like father, like son' proverb, and simply trace their parents' steps away from education. Morris (2016) realises that where literacy services are made available to non-English language speakers in Derby, Sheffield and Manchester, uptake of these classes among the Roma remains very low, akin to their presence in the adults' English classes at the study site (Mrs Trevnoc). Considered a thwarting model for learning, the Roma adult agency, based on Mrs. Tech, might even inspire their youngsters' withdrawal-based approach to social life as a whole:

I live in Roath and if you're talking about Czech Romas you see

even the adults don't mix, they're always together and the children

are learning that from the adults, not just that everything really (Mrs

Netter).

The evidence presented so far could justify educational withdrawal of any community's offspring torn between deficient instructional policies and parental resistance to secondary education. However, the Romaniness package appears to destine its group to further injustices, according to the second pole, having at its core, a culture mostly associated with 'social disadvantage and norm deviance' (Cahn et al. 1998). Despite allusions to the noncompliance of the Roma culture with mainstream's evolution of acquisition and transfer of knowledge, the barriers it allegedly set between community and education sectioned the second pole further into financial and status discourses.

8.4 Layer three: Materialism and social hierarchies

8.4.1 Instant profit

Some embrace a purely economic approach in denouncing the materialistic agenda of the Roma, when perceived as wrongly instructing their life priorities. Ms Bloom believes these students might not see the need to achieve academically as long as 'they see their parents, um, probably not working and still getting by fine. They still come in nice trainers. They do nice things […]'. Other teachers insist that many Roma parents do no appreciate the need for a lengthy learning process, but, conversely, would like schooling to engender immediate effects. Mr Pavel expounds the Roma's tendency to favour simple

manual and free jobs, such as handling horses, collecting scrap metal or even raising revenues from street dance and music performances as 'a life style […] and they've been making money, good money from those jobs, from simple jobs you know and that's what they want really'. For Mr Pavel, they 'just look for the bottom of the things really, make a living, make family, afford for the family', which might, again, uphold the wider assumption about the Roma's traditional disinterest in education, not least the adult generation (Knesebec 2011), for valuing instant proceeds more than intellectual creeds. To fulfil these tangible prospects, it seems crucial for parents to equip their offspring with a labour ideology. It is a view apprised by clear-cut professional responsibilities mainly characterised by simplicity, efficiency and swift profitability to fight the perpetual poverty that has been chasing them invariably (Kjaerum 2014b). Drawing material profits presides life priorities and focusing on survival champions their demeanour even vis-à-vis school.

However, the European Union (2013) offers a different perception on the Roma's pragmatic disposal blaming 'poverty and extreme poverty' (p. 13) for their premature coercive introduction to the labour market. Instead of assumptions about deliberate renouncement of academic agendas to promote professional propensities, Roma's stringent economic dimension is reported to hinder access to educational costs and facilities. The marginal, insecure, or low qualified occupations, Mr Pavel refers to, may not support participants' materialistic claims, neither do their self-trade preferences. The resulting intermittent and slender income (Mulcahy et al. 2017) is likely to trigger desertion from compulsory school in order to lift the family's financial toll rather than pursuing pecuniary advantages. Thus, gaining insight into the

community's economic propensities might generate systematic and structural inferences for managing conduct, attainment and attitude to school, notably as 'truanting, missing lessons or even days of school […]' (Mr Archer) remain significant identifiers among this category.

8.4.2 Identity and social status

Others construe the Roma educational dilemma as the product of one's belongingness to a certain Roma group rather than another, and hence allude to the complex embroilments of identity, social rules and hierarchies. Kurek et al. (2012) emphasize the structural hierarchy within the Roma society fashioned by a system of rules designed by Romanipen, their orally transmitted code of life. Here, higher-ranking categories tend to show more compliance with Romanipen, to which Mundy (1997) anchors significant divisions among groups and tribes. It is worth noticing that while the scientific rhetoric around the fundamentals of social organisations, their hierarchies and patterns of relationships is mostly confined to the boundaries of sedentary nations and their classificatory structures, it also seems to be able to settle in the legacy of the roving communities.

In fact, at the heart of Romanipen is a purposeful arrangement of a set of organising rules and protocols structuring an integration of philosophy, social law, religion and culture. It is a paradigm instilled with a fervent contrast of values and blemishes, such as, honour versus shame, purity versus contamination, and bravery versus retreat, while oracy is historically inducted for the transfer of the stateless literacy and cultural legacy (Carmona 2010).

This paradigm concurs with Ganguly (2017) whose model defines social organisations in terms of the active control over human relations using a system of rules governing individuals' affairs to reach particular ends.

In the case of the Roma, the end-goal would be cohesion, fairness and the preservation of distinctiveness (Kyuchukov 2000). It is a framework characterised by identity and status discourses (Burns 1987) as adherence to rules and their realisation is seen to be connected to social agents' identity, position and the desire to represent the self through commitment to these rules. Abiding by the Romanipen's institutional customs seems to have not only contributed to devise the Roma identity, but also resulted in a rich diverse culture, which Mr. Roma asserts differs from group to other according to location and hierarchy.

The simple life-style Mr. Roma described and many teachers highlighted could be an indication that our Roma community might be seeking nobility through simplicity. Marushiakova and Popov (2016) emphasize that the higher-ranking groups are the most able to observe Romanipen for preserving the Roma purity and, hence, shield themselves from forces of change. The varied adherence to Romanipen produces hierarchies that incite in-group individuals to obtain higher ranks for emotional, material and safety needs to be fulfilled. Thanks to Romanipen, then, the roaming nation has been able to harness powerful stratagems to precariousness and chaos for centuries, sustaining uniformity and social stability in the heart of geographical uncertainty. However, seeking in-group status and recognition through abiding by its rules system might come at the infringement of universal

concordances, even those relating to learning styles and intellectual preferences.

In the Romanipen's curriculum, the core subjects revolve around family, where one learns to become a distinctive Roma, learning experientially by doing things through a collective instruction delivered by community's wise elders (Etxeberria 2002). Assimilation processes and training experiences are expected to yield such achievement criteria as, social respect, expressing allegiance, and the ability to perform lucrative labour, as Mr. Pavel posited earlier. Enjoining all these principles, however, is the imperious necessity that total assimilation with non-Roma is not envisaged, which Weyrauch and Bell (1993, p. 342) agree, is 'crucial to their survival as a separate population'.

Accordingly, primary schooling is perceived to be sufficient to build the Roma's functional intellect, and the children's encouragement to skip school to show their loyalty to their family is a form of consecration to Romanipen that warrants benediction. Smith (1999b) confirms that most parents terminate their children's schooling before they reach puberty, a familiar fact, it seems, for some of Ysamrywiol's professionals who expressed awareness of this category's breach of the up-to-18 mandatory education law, which Fényes et al. (1999) warn, is being violated, not least by the community's long travels. The Roma students elaborated on their short-term educational prospects substantiating early life responsibilities, while Mr. Roma emphasized the conflicting prioritisation of conventional early marriages and pregnancies with the schooling protocol. This is how these young people seem to consider their educational future:

Charani: […] most of us like don't [have a university degree]. I do want to,

        (.) but like us [interrupted]

Vai: Like you can't stay in school for too long as in like you have to work

        and stuff

Charani: Marry, make a family

All: [laugh]

Interviewer: How about you boys? Are you planning to go to uni? Can you

        please translate to Miroslav?

[Girls translating the question to Miroslav]

Damian: I don't know, like my dad, my family they want me to have a good

        job, but like, like they're like to me 'you don't need to waste

        your life in school to earn loads'. My dad makes bare[19] money

        from fixing cars. Nothing wrong with that.

Daena: True, true

All: [laugh]

Charani: But Miss, like to be honest, you can't do whatever you want

Interviewer: How? What do you mean?

Charani: Like us [Roma] you have to do certain things. Like you have to

        stop going to school when say you're like 16 ish

(Charani, girl, 14, Vai, girl 15, Damian, boy 15, Daena, girl 15, Roma focus

        group)

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[19] A lot of; very; an exclamation used in disbelief.
The woman had bare cats; I was bare tired; 'I have a new car!' 'Bare!' (Urban dictionary)

The Roma have, in fact, always lived in lasting and continuous coherence as well as economic, social and cultural symbiosis with the non-Roma, without whom they cannot trade or realize the products of their labour (Marushiakova and Popov 2016). However, the bigger the compromise on Romanipen is, the lower the social ranking would be. It is a philosophy of coordinated discrimination across levels, which according to Social Domination Theory, fosters hierarchal representations in favour of dominant groups over subordinates, by consensually shared social ideologies (Pratto et al. 2006), one of which addresses the dilemma of learning. Unfortunate Bergita group, for instance, have for long bottomed the Romani social scale in Poland, where their presence engenders profound dissatisfaction among dominant groups. Stung by poverty and ostracized in disrespect, Bergita's yearning for sublimity and purity appears to be subdued by their long-established sedentary lifestyle, which most Roma lead nowadays (Kyuchukov 2000; Matras 2005). This means greater social openness, and, most importantly, developing mainstream educational inclinations.

Therefore, and contrary to mainstream conception, social grandeur and the insatiable lust for extended learning might be dissonant in Roma culture. Educated Roma, or at least those with a decent position and life-style, as Marushiakova and Popov (2016) posit, are considered not genuine and cannot be real representatives of their community, 'the most true Roma are those marginalized sections of the community who live in landfills and make a living from collecting waste' (p.53). Romanipen, then, appears to hold nobleness and classroom knowledge at the furthest opposite ends of the social continuum,

where attempting to hold the stick from the middle would simply mean low positioning and jeopardized affiliation.

Therefore, Roma culture's culpability for its people's unrefined wisdom is, no doubt, troublesome, but its pedagogical observation might be remedial. Many researchers voice Mr. Roma's plea to indoctrinate mainstream curricula with cultural magnets for Roma people's investment in education to be nurtured (Cahn et al. 1998; Smith 1999b; European Roma Rights Center 2003; Dunajeva 2017). References to Roma culture's educational aversion, then, seem copious, but hardly any endeavours were made to question them as the next layer explores.

8.5 Layer four: Self-representations and learning styles' incompatibility with hegemonic rendition

> Because it's a part of their life style the attendance to school is not important, learning is different really. I think they're doing this because they are forced to or the government says 'sorry your kids need to go to school'. That's more of a cultural problem to be honest, and now because there's new rules, obligations for the kids to be educated, they take it as life style and send their kids to school and when they go to school most of them have special educational needs and feel frustrated about the school [….] (Mr. Pavel)

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Here is the historical dilemma of a traditionally misunderstood community reduced to few words, amongst which 'forced' may reveal crucial. There are huge demands on the ambulant culture to remodel its main approach to supply moral uplift and edification to its community, every time its members seek/are to get them beyond temporary borders. Irrespective of the group or class they come form in the world today, the traditional Roma education contrasts considerably with mainstream instructional designs and curricular (European Roma Rights Center 2003; Dunajeva 2017), and attempting reconciliation of both paradigms might compromise on individual learning approaches and attitudes.

The striking recurrent expression in Mr. Roma's revelations, 'free life-style', could simply mean that the enclosed classroom environment might not be the ideal setting for learning experiences to take place. Although the free-life style approach to learning has historically been mostly ascribed to the nomadic Gypsy and traveller populations, research corroborates Mr. Roma's portrayal of sedentary groups, such as Cardiff's, as still analogous (Fényes et al. 1999; Etxeberria 2002; Humphris 2016). According to these authors, the Roma child would spend most of the day at home, or accompanying an adult member of the family on a job, where interaction with non-Roma people or environment might not occur. Through this process, they learn by watching, listening, and a lot of practical handling. This is the way the economic, social, linguistic, political and moral codes necessary for the life of a Roma are transferred, the discernment of which is doomed necessary by Ms Bloom:

I suppose may be teachers don't differentiate enough in the classroom. I think we need to find out as a school how they learn best, or may be, I don't know how we do it as school but, there's obviously a reason why they're not engaging well in lessons. How, what tasks, what learning styles, and then applying that throughout the school, cause you know we have a massive amount of Czech pupils in every year group in every class. So, there is a way they learn better (Ms. Bloom).

Therefore, mainstream classroom settings for them, by comparison, would, not only mean little learning, but also a lot of confinement among foreigners, and little active contribution in pedagogical practices and material delivery. Remaining seated in a closed environment, and abiding by the standard rules of attentiveness, discussion and behaviour might often prove too challenging (Smith 1999b), and hence counterproductive. Nevertheless, learning styles' exclusive consideration could seem too shallow at the rise of identity talk, which harnesses discourses of social dichotomisation between mainstream societies and their Roma groups, and where the latter conception of and adherence to their distinct affiliation is reported to be roiling their academic prospects.

Many consider public schools to be key state institutions where population's homogenization might take place, seeing that mass education has for long been a chief mechanism for building nations (Scourfield 2006; Alesina and Reich 2013; Oriana et al. 2015). Consequently, different identities' construction and individual learning processes might not be recognised as active processes through which learners constitute and sustain their self-identity. Instead,

instilling them with standard unified symbolic and functional representations seems to be at the core of educational policies (Oriana et al. 2015) building constant pressure for homogeneous endeavours across the educational board. For Okely (1983), this could be a hard measure for the Roma whose cultural values and social norms are inculcated with the need to remain separate and perform differently, while maintaining daily contact with the other groups. Etxeberria (2002) concurs emphasising this community's tendency 'to become integrated into society while retaining one's identity' (p. 295).

Although heading to school most days of the week, staying in most of the day, and even enrolling in bigger numbers every year are progress aspects that cannot be disregarded in Ysamrywiol, commitment levels and learning attitudes among the Roma in this study are reported by most professionals there to be still failing this community. Nevertheless, Ms Trevnoc noted that:

> Roma children don't lack knowledge I guess, they might know so much more about life that most of the other children, it is just that their interests are connected to life outside school everyday life. I believe we need to respect this in order to help them make the most of their schooling (Mrs Trevnoc).

This account highlights Mrs Trevnoc's awareness that the student population in Ysamrywiol is not homogeneous and that an integrated-cultures' curriculum rather than a culturally responsive one might not be the best solution. This aligns with Mr Pavel's position that Roma culture is still awaiting instructional attention and representation, which would allow the community 'to feel more

welcome at school'. For these views, it appears, understanding identity construction among the student population is a necessity for successful education, a goal to be reified through exploring the processes of meaning making and lifestyle choices imparted by young people's value systems. This resonates with social identity theory when considering the students' value systems underlining their feelings of not belonging to the mainstream school community as a result of stronger alternative system of values (Kelly 2008), which Mrs Trevnoc alluded to in her account.

A burgeoning wave of literature supports this stance with rich evidence from many European countries (Cahn et al. 1998; Rona and Lee 2001; Department for Children 2008; Bhopal and Myers 2009). For them, the current instructional curricula's lacklustre approach to Roma's education stems from the slanted pedagogical policies, which are imbued with messages about this community' presumed cognitive deficiencies and denial of their distinctive acquisition strategies. Angered by educational systems and workers scolding the Roma children for Gypsyfying mainstream schoolmates, and for not fitting in the social frames of immaculateness and idiosyncrasy, some maintain that such learning environments would only apprise the Roma with isolation and group negativity, instead of fostering their academic prospects (Dunajeva 2017). Hence, attaining standard performance could only be realised when safe bridges between group identity and mainstream directives are constructed, especially where boundaries between groups are recognised and efficiently invested.

The Roma's boundaries demarcated by their symbolic value systems remain key to their intellectual drive and academic wellbeing, as their consideration would mean enhancing self-esteem and fostering integration within school community. Kyuchukov (2000) reproaches syllabi designers for their reluctance to observe the Roma's learning styles and implement their identity markers, such as language, culture or history content, in textbooks ignoring their merited worldwide contributions to literature, music and arts.

Others appreciate the fact that young Roma are torn between two socially and academically disparate life schemes. According to Smith (1999b), part of the Roma children's identity formation processes is to assume social responsibilities from a young age. Mimicking adults and developing precocious attitudes makes it hard for them to conform to standard predetermined psychological, academic and developmental criteria delivered on by modern pedagogies. In this respect, Dunajeva (2017) pays attention to the valuable educational caring duties attributed to some children (for younger children, weak, elderly and pets), while playing might seem valueless, as in Smith (1999b) words 'Roma children do not know how to play' (p.9). In fact, the role of ethnic and cultural traits in defining work-related perceptions and prioritising commitment to the labour agency was also documented among individuals from other socio-cultural backgrounds such as the Chinese (Cheng and Stockdale 2003; Liu and Cohen 2010). However, the view of Lincoln and Kalleberg (1992) transcends standard descriptions of management styles and efficient organisational mechanisms to highlight that the Japanese community's devotion to work is entrenched in an inveterate community tradition fostering individuals' immersion in the collectivity.

In the focus group, Charani discussed how she enjoyed looking after her disabled little sister confirming that 'she comes first' and that she (Charani) is 'learning […] and yeah I feel stronger every day', a duty put at the forefront of her priorities even during exam times, or even in her parents' presence. This attitude seems omnipresent in Italy and Brazil, where Pivetti et al. (2017) confirm 'Roma women start taking on adult-caring roles from the age of 11' (p. 13). Vai, Lumas and Miroslav, too, seemed contented with their economic participation during school time, fully participating in their parents' small beauty, dressmaking and mechanics businesses. When children from other communities might be gratified at the exhaustion of the family budget during school breaks, the Roma's leisure and entertainment are yet to be decreed by their cultural agenda, which outlines their early and compulsory mature identity, besides contributing to finance and services. As such, regular attendance at school might not be as axiomatic as pedagogical policies and field practitioners might approximate, and intellect can freely thrive beyond school walls. At around 80 per cent, the Roma students' attendance rate in Ysamrywiol is still far below the 93% minimum requirement (Teachers and School Report 2015), and genuine remedial strategies might need to confer with identity discourses to avoid undeliberate exclusion.

As young people's self-identities evolve, a value system emerges, imparted by rules and laws inextricably attached to native culture's values. So, teens will ultimately challenge dissenting code systems mainstream schools aim to instil them with (Muuss 1990). The number of values incorporated in the Roma socio-educational system, which delivers on maintaining social

cohesion and bolstering human, family and kinship values to guarantee wellbeing, simply do not add up to mainstream estimations, and, hence, would inevitably warrant conventional contestation. Interestingly, although some classes could be portrayed as Roma enclaves, 'loads of cousins in one form' (Mrs Polrod), Lumas (Girl, 15) insists some still make long trips, which may take weeks or even months every year to visit relatives outside the UK. The group's excitement about adventures and family reunion, and the centrality of productive socialisation, are articulated in this account:

Lumas: You see, like, little ones who've grown up loads. I get to see my

     nan and   my cousins. They talk about the schools they go to,

     very few do though

Emania: Their schools are hard [interrupted by next speaker]

Daena: And bad and racist

Emania: Yeah. If you, like, do bad you have to make the year up again

Lumas: Yeah, we talk a lot about school, but like they do a lot of family

     parties and that. It's fun. Can't wait to go

Emania: But I hate the cleaning bit. Girls do lot of cleaning and cooking

     every day. [Rest laugh] Hardly any one of them go to school my

     age

Vai: They don't, but they make nice things really, like, they do needle

     work, like

Emanina: Embroidery and that. We all have to learn stuff like that here as

     well, don't we? And we cook and we clean everyday

Girls: Yeah [laughing]

Interviewer: And you boys?

Damian: Um (.) yeah, we do mechanic, like we do a lot of (.) like buy stuff

and sell them again and stuff

Miroslav: (interpreted by Charani) I do mechanic. All my family do. My

dad can fix anything with a motor. He also does electricity

(Lumas girl, 14, Emania, girl, 14, Charani, girl, 14 Damian, boy, 15 and

Miroslav, boy 13, Roma focus groups)

In mainstream environments, Roma children are unlikely to acquire similar skills at this age, nor develop the same sense of self-sufficiency and confidence associated with their valuable role in society. This, in fact, renders any endeavours to convene contrasting ideologies for a concerted guidance between mainstream pedagogies and traditional Roma education rather difficult. The family and community-oriented learning environment represents a crucial aspect of a Roma educational system nurturing self-representations, personal independence, and exalting social bonds. Similar experiences were observed by Bhopal and Myers (2009), who suggest that Australian Aboriginal children's loss of interest in school in the late primary and early secondary school years is due to its little relevance to personal and social orders outside it. This might advocate some teachers' observation that this community's behavioural issues as deliberately violating school rules to end up in the link,[20] in order to 'band together' (Mrs Tenely; Ms Bloom) with the rest of their community. Although, Smith (1999b) justifies that spending more time with the family, engaging in social services, and maintaining frequent contact with

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20 Link. According to Ms Bloom, it is a section accommodating students with extreme behavioural issues, where they receive special instructional attention, and that the vast majority of its inhabitants are Roma. Charani and Vai confirmed they have been studying there for over a year.

community members provide these children with a sense of secure self-concept, permanency and confidence, Ms. Bloom further imputes their 'reluctance to work and bad attendance' to a cultural complicity. Schooling the Roma for her is 'a real battle'.

Despite proclaiming the Roma's adherence to a deviant socio-educational sagacity, a few researchers attempted to claim remit through substantiating trust as a reasonable ground for this community's educational attitudes. In this respect, identification with one's social group will be examined at its alleged interference with individual's perceptions of trust.

8.6 Layer five: In the trust of the untrusted

8.6.1 Educational authorities

While exploring issues about social integration of his community in Ysamrywiol, and whether the school is committed to standard provisions in terms of linguistic and social services, discussion with Mr Pavel took an unexpected turn. He highlighted the need for school organizations to be structured around mutual perceptions of trust for genuine, comprehensive and efficient delivery on intellectual consciousness. Indeed, positive partnership between learners and education professionals has consistently been identified as decisive in determining quality instruction, while Angell et al. (2009) centred trust components in the heart of this equation. Mr. Pavel contends:

Interpreters? They [Roma students] say that they do not trust them

because um (.) to be honest, they don't trust them because they

come from a majority of the Czech Republic and they don't accept

them. They found out that they don't interpret what they want to

say so they stopped trusting them. But they trust me and I never

done something wrong. I've got wonderful trust by the school now

and I'm glad I've had a place in the school as I had a great

opportunity to show the people how best to work, obviously and

you know and I'm glad we put it in practice now (Mr Pavel).

Mr. Pavel's perception ascribes school professionals with a power position, which he recommends harnessing to bolster students' endeavours to become their best selves. For him, this depends on authenticating human resources, such as interpreters and teacher assistants to address student anxiety, maladjustment and confusion. Lee (2007) imputes secondary school students' non-constructive attitudes to school and underachievement to disturbed teacher-student relationships. Therefore, and knowing that giving little credence to education systems may lead to distrust of school practitioners and create a demand for private schooling and tutoring (Rich 2002; Dunajeva 2017), the Roma's lack of these alternatives is exacerbating their educational disadvantage.

During my volunteering service in the new arrivals ESOL classes in Ysamrywiol, I went through few relevant experiences that, only after interviewing Ysamrywiol practitioners, revealed close connections to trust. It was in the KS3 English classes of three different forms, where 12 to 16 year olds were grouped according to English language proficiency levels. After

reaching Entry 3 Level,[21] successful students are fully or partially dispersed to mainstream classes delivered exclusively though the medium of English. Mrs Polrod believes the Czech Roma students are, not only the largest population of this department, but the longest dwelling, and the hardest to handle:

> They've been recently transferred from a totally different cultural setting, you need a long time to customise them to the school system. We get a lot of refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan and as you may have noticed they're doing well and they usually stay for a few months only, but the Czech take a lot longer to move up, way longer (Mrs Polrod).

Based on first-hand experience in these classes, the Roma were the last students to embark on instructional tasks, and are usually the last to achieve completion on rare engagement occasions. Interestingly, though, they seem a lot less keen to request help from teachers or non-Roma peers, or even accept it at offer, as initially shown in the first quote of this chapter. At my several attempts to approach them with advice, I was faced with the standard reactions of either irresponsiveness while looking away, talking to other Roma peers as if I were invisible, or simply capitulate to inappropriate reactions:

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[21] Entry 3 level: Present information using appropriate verbal and written structures for given purposes, and contribute constructively to discussion on straightforward topics. Gain meaning from and distinguish purpose of text and display relevant level of grammatical mastery (Trinity College London 2013)

Today I tried to help Danior who, as always, never seemed to attach importance to the teacher's presence since the start of the lesson, even at the teacher's repeated calls when doing the register. Thank God, I am not a real teacher! This is so frustrating. Danior was playing music on his phone intermittently, and did not seriously respond to Mrs Loom's requests to stop it and start working. I somehow collected my courage, took a deep breath, and approached him quietly in the middle of the lesson trying to convince him to do some work. He was very resilient. I ended up asking 'why would you come to school if you don't want to do work'? He answered shrugging his shoulders 'chillax. Problem?'. I froze for a moment. I reckon it would sound so funny if it were on a comedy show. But, it does not feel good at all when you actually get such a reaction yourself. Anyway, Danior's book, again remained untouched, and again I had to tidy up his space at the end of the class (Diary notes 26th January 2015).

By then, the Roma students' behavioural issues had started to make a pattern; hostility, resistance and insulation against the other non-Roma. It was a consistent attitude even in lessons where another assistant, white Czech Slovak, served alongside me. Although she speaks Czech, a language most of them can understand and speak to varied levels, breaking into the Roma zone remained unattainable. Free books, pens and school meals might not, on their own, ameliorate achievement propensities among the Roma, unless instructional organisations are ready to promote a culturally responsive recruitment agenda. Mrs. Lose believes this social aloofness can only be

breached at the presence of Mr Pavel as 'he is Roma himself, he speaks Roma, so basically he is one of them. He is the only Roma assistant unfortunately […]'. This suggests that this community's strong group identification might conceivably disadvantage their intra-group perceptions of trustworthiness, as evidenced in Tanis and Postmes (2005) who argue that affective responses to other social groups are powerfully shaped by the strength of individual members' inter-group identification.

The situation in Ysamrywiol does not seem too isolated from the rest of the schools with a Roma student concentration, at least in the UK. The affective construct has been debated in many studies in relation to trust as an emotional variable associated with the wellbeing, achievement and integration of the Roma within educational settings (Bhopal and Myers 2009; Lane et al. 2014). The role of feelings in framing cognitive processes and gauging assimilationist efficiencies among learners was formally considered as early as the 1980's. In his theories of learning, Stephen Krashen disapproved unsafe and non-affirming environments for lowering learners' self-esteem and raising their affective filter to form a mental block that curbs instructional material from being safely and efficiently acquired (Krashen 1981; Schinke-Llano and Vicars 1993; Horwitz 2010).

This concern has been raised by many teachers and professionals in Ysamrywiol. They identified the Roma community's previous experiences with authority figures and institutions in their home country as negative, characterized by basic human rights denial, open hostility and discrimination. Morris (2016) lays extensive evidence about the longstanding and ongoing

persecution against Roma in Western and Eastern Europe and asserts their accountability for the deep mistrust among this community towards authorities and individuals representing them.

These revelations jointly endorse restoring families' trust in educational intuitions and their professional bodies as key to the Roma's functional, permanent and dynamic participation in school life. Relevant research, however, has been limited to exploring trust issues among the parents' community through suggesting special attractional strategies, such as: inviting parents to their children's lessons and informal coffee mornings, besides encouraging Roma representation on school council/governing bodies (Rona and Lee 2001; Millward and Softley 2009). A common thread of research exhorts educational institutions to appoint Roma community liaison officers, such as Mr Pavel, who observes priorities considering students' trust as not only paramount, but worth independent unconventional consideration from their families':

> […] you hardly find any Roma teachers or staff…and they want the kids to achieve GCSE levels in year 11 and get future jobs have they achieved these levels, so they need to get kids' trust. We've got kids frustrated by the Czech assistants. I'm not being racist to them. It's the background, the history, for a lot of stuff (Mr Pavel).

This account suggests that success and integration within mainstream education can be achieved whilst preserving cultural identity, and implementing authentic instructional provisions, particularly native human

resources, is the solution. Only then, reconciling strong in-group identification with social collaboration between dominant and sub-groups might occur. Therefore, and by extension, adequate authentic resourcing might mean rethinking the placement of an Arab and/or white Czech assistant in majority Roma classroom.

Ms. Bloom also further describes the unwillingness of Roma pupils to discuss the problems they experience in school with non-Roma teaching staff:

> It is more likely that I would get one of the Arab girls to come and say 'oh I'm having an issue with somebody in my class, um, she's upset me we've had an argument. The Czech wouldn't come to us. They sort things out themselves and it would get brought to us because it's happened in school. I don't think they'd come to us and get advice and ask to get helped and sort stuff out, whereas other communities would' (Ms Bloom).

A cursory read of this account might evoke a sense of power among Roma students, but Kurek et al. (2012), again, hold Romanipen accountable for prohibiting its people from referring disputes to foreigners, even to teachers. Nevertheless, once providing the right reference, the whole community reaps the fruit of trust, according to Mr Pavel, who demonstrates how tackling trust issues within schools would better be a bottom-up approach, since reassuring children appears to redeem their parents' faith:

They feel much safer now, especially with me. Now any problem they come to me or I direct them to people who can help. So they're much surer now. I don't have that many upset parents now from the community because they know more about the school about the progress in the school, they know their kids are understood in the school you know […] (Mr Pavel).

This level of integrational success in Ysamrywiol deserves appreciation, professionals claim (Estyn 2014), but sustaining it might be the next challenge:

That is the reason why I've been employed really. To get trust, to build up respect between the families and the school. We just built up a bridge between parents and the school. A bridge that helps us communicate and help each other really. There is not enough of the things now at the moment. I would say UK would need more Roma professionals to be educated and have some educational staff with some levels, educational levels you know (Mr Pavel).

Unfortunately, this remains a pressing concern in most countries not just the UK, as neither teacher training colleges, nor universities seem to produce Roma bilingual professionals. However, while previous research reports that 'there are no Roma teacher assistants in West European or North American classrooms' (Kyuchukov 2000, p. 277), Ysamrywiol's Roma are fortunate to have one, and could be among the fewest of their group in Wales to enjoy assistance from staff member of the same cultural origin.

Based on this and similar endeavours, the Welsh Government was credited in Lane et al. (2014) for the 2011 practical 'Action and Delivery Plan' focusing on policy areas that impact on the lives of Gypsy and travellers regarding accommodation, education, health, social care and integration, but not employment (p. 11-12). Securing a job remains a thorny concern, even for pre-employment-age Roma, as distrust appears resolved to apprehend their occupational ambitions, too.

8.6.2 Labour market

Alongside learning challenges, Roma students in the UK should expect to suffer from poor outcomes on a number of key measures of social exclusion, including employment. Although the teenage years are said to be the age of bright dreams (Muuss 1990), it seems to have spared the Roma the faintest shades. The slender labour market opportunities seem to be already taking their toll on Damian (boy, 15), and diminishing his innocent hopes to earn self-respect in his quest to earn a living. His self-concept, imbued with awareness of his cultural affiliation, remains incarcerated within his symbolic ethnic perimeters blocking every headway to deliverance:

> Them, they won't take you in. Dad never got any interview he had.
> My uncles neither. He has good experience and that, um, yeah, but
> like when they meet you, you're like done. They say they'd call you
> but don't, like never bother waiting they never call a gypsy again.

I'd stand by him in his business. Doing six form (.) um (.) college?

Nah! I'd work with him that's it.[22]

Shared symbols generate a shared sense of belonging (Tajfel and Turner

1986), and hence shared perceptions and expectations. Damian's despair

inheres in the sense of

threat of social exclusion, when systematically denied access to opportunities

and resources which constitute a standard provision to members of mainstream

groups with whom he shares little identification. Damian's stance might

arguably forge an alignment with the traditional frame, where the general

tendency is to proffer to the Gypsy's labour history as self-employed, seasonal

workers, and unskilled labourers who have been trading both inside and

outside their communities for centuries (2011; Pauline et al. 2014). This

position also bolsters classical discourses of linguistic and educational deficit

among the Roma forcing them to economic exploitation by unregulated

economic sectors and non-statutory agencies.

Nevertheless, Damian's take on this issue suggests an institutional complicity

aimed at denying the Roma race labour market opportunities, as documented

in Lane et al. (2014), who contributes to the limited research on the

employment of this group in the UK, and reports some of their infuriated voices

despising discrimination. Unfortunately, some of these belong to individuals

with standard educational levels, for whom academic devotion is unlikely to

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[22] In all EU Member States, less than 2 % of all Roma children of compulsory school
age were not currently attending school because they were reported to be working
(Post 2017).

intercede with labour illegitimate practices (Ivanova 2013). The following quotes illustrate the issues found in this earlier work by Lane et al (2014):

> When I come to agency they told me don't get now job, because it's very quiet. When they go in office, come back, and they tell you there's no job – you come back in two weeks. You know, because looking at my colour, you know that's for no work (p. 38).

> I am working at M&S warehouse packing and labelling clothes, it's Ok, but I want to be in administration; office worm. It's really hard to find. I am better than many Roma people I got 5 GCSEs, and business level 1&2. I have been here for nearly 10 years, but I am unusual (P. 39).

Thus, the 'mini version' analogy observed by Ms Bloom (see section 8.3) and indirectly conveyed by many other participants, is not always fostered by the conscious volition of children wanting to end-up like their parents. It does in fact implicate other parties, such as employment agencies, in manipulating this will, and by extension, enervating education systems' share in deciding about people's welfare. Poole and Adamson (2008) condemn the Roma workers' exploitation and the low-paid wage system within the informal economy, and feature the racial manifestations while reporting this community's feelings of discrimination stirred by ethnic belonging. Pauline et al. (2014) also seem dismayed at the UK's consistent failure in establishing and monitoring mechanisms for Roma integration (p. 5), leaving their experiences of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination subject to invisibility to both local and

national authorities. Yet, tangible evidence of positive change remains rimmed with aspirations.

8.7 Conclusion

Discussion with and about the Roma children in Ysamrywiol, was is in a large part driven by deep distress and frustration. This chapter considered multiple facets of this community's struggles to acquire social decency, notably through education. It illustrated a structured accumulation of inadequacies, for which mainstream policies have not yet provided a resolution. Barriers include the low level of Roam family's formal education and literacy, as well as their economic position, and also arise from culturally instilled negative ascriptions for a socially incompatible identity that has been awaiting recognition for generations.

Roma's disadvantage snowball becomes bigger and faster, picking up more and more despair and wretchedness as it rolls down their life-slope. Since the early ages and stages in their lives, the Roma are enshrouded in a layer of estrangement from meaningful social and educational agencies, and problematized as culturally and mentally deficient. Going down the hill-side, the ball is magnified by adult Roma critically low education levels and limited understanding of school systems, to later get more encased in contentious assumptions about deliberate renouncement of academic agendas and promotion of materialistic propensities. The ball later gains even more mass and surface at the disturbed relationships between the Roma and mainstream educational and economic organisations, which are thought to deny them access to standard provisions and life opportunities. Thus, their

educational journey remains disproportionally afflicted with disadvantage, and social institutions' failure to procure their trust exacerbates their misfortune. A summary of these findings is reported in the following chapter, alongside the main the study's literary and other empirical findings, its limitations, and implications for policy and practice.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

Overall, this study established that claiming right to the 'different' selfhood agency is fraught with challenges given its clear cognitive and behavioural diversion from the essential embodiment of mainstream portrayals, particularly within school perimeters.

The complex academic and social experiences of ethnic students therein vividly evidence the coexistence of struggle and survival in a vastly multifaceted and dynamic ambience nurtured by cultural discrepancies. Linguistic affiliation and interactional processes in Ysamrywiol channelled the research pathways leading to this understanding. Based on this research, recognising the criss-crossing pathways through which language and other cultural markers, such as ideology, faith, physical displays, operate to valorise identity, design social groups and trace their borders is necessary in order to

preserve the integrity of each of these constituents and the coherence and harmony amongst them all.

Guided by the interactional patterns and the immanent linguistic propensities among minority ethnic students in a multi-ethnic high school in Wales, this thesis set out to investigate the development, management, and performance of identity among this cohort, and the attendant social, educational and political discourses. This overarching theme was pursued through three main research questions, restated in Section 9.2, which were addressed inter-relatedly because of the intersecting dimensions of the theoretical observations and the empirical findings. The latter provided a backdrop for addressing the study's concerns, which were also anchored in the broad psychology and social science literature.

This chapter reminds the reader of the main aim and research questions of the study in an account communicating the relevant key empirical findings, and relating to the theoretical issues raised by this study. It then proceeds with a consideration of some implications for policy and practice, to subsequently acknowledge the aspects and conditions which limited certain methodological decisions and actions. Finally, the study's potential implications on policy and future research will be outlined.

9.2 Summary of main findings

Discourses around ethnic minority students' school experiences have long been characterised by unequal educational opportunities, mainly appraising the modality, scope, and content of the current instructional policies and practices (Archer 2008; May 2012b; Lee 2015). While such an assessment remains

crucial for addressing school engagement, performance and integration among ethnic learners, this thesis advances evidence that their experiences of belonging, with all the inherent intra-group dynamics, collective representations, and symbolic evaluations, significantly determine the quality of their academic lives. The social encounters in such contexts involve high levels of identity negotiations, where multilingual practices acclaim mother languages' ability to provision individual and group identity processes. This thesis furthers Miller's (2000) understanding that language use is a form of identity representation, a view implying that the physical, ideological and social values attached to it are thereupon called into play. The thesis has explored linguistic minority students' incessant strive to achieve self-representation within mainstream educational contexts, enacting their mother tongues to accrue not only academic assets, but also social and psychological wellbeing.

The evidence presented in Chapters Six to Eight suggests that students' everyday experiences within multi-ethnic schools are interwoven with the complex tangle of cultural survival. This life mode is particularly challenging when negotiating identities as some cultural options, such as language, religion, and standard norms of conduct and physical displays, are more valued than others, leading individuals and/or groups to potentially embrace or reject them amid struggles to claim acknowledged identities and resist imposed ones.

Aiming to explore ethnic language practices and attitudes, and their bearing on identity manifestations in multi-ethnic educational settings, this study posed the following main research questions:

1- What are the different aspects and levels of linguistic and cultural identification in a multi-ethnic high school in Wales?

2- How are linguistic and religious symbols viewed and negotiated in this context?

3- How could language ascription inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self?

Findings yielded by investing these issues are summarised in the following three sub-sections.

9.2.1 Identity construction and processes in multi-ethnic schools

In attending to the first research question- 'What are the different aspects and levels of linguistic and cultural identification in a multi-ethnic high school in Wales?' this thesis pictured aspects of the social and psychological challenges ensued from harbouring ethnically distinct groups within the same educational institution. Managing interactions, negotiating selfhood and attempting to reconcile the 'us' with the 'other' proved to juxtapose safety and threat, when differences and inequalities both enlighten and bemuse identification judgements. The findings demonstrated that ethnic identities do matter for students at Ysamrywiol, and that their pride in their affiliation to their cultural groups can both be fostered and constrained within the multi-ethnic school context. Here, students underwent significant psychological and social changes and challenges, notably at abrasive proximities with the 'others'' cultural borders.

In their interviews, the Roma, Somali, and Arab students expressed different levels of acculturation and native culture identification, while for all, being in an environment hosting a mosaic of physical and ideological articulations triggered processes of interrelated and interdependent self-definitions and judgements. For instance, ethnic students constantly strove to devise compromises through adopting functional identities. This was highlighted by Muslim male sixth formers' Ramadan guise, male dress and a hat, and in Maroua's different adaptations of her dress code to mainstream and home settings alternately. Similarly, and in the survey, a 14-year-old Roma girl admitted disowning the native parlance among non-Roma evading a 'cursing' mother tongue that evokes discourse of her disdained cultural provenance (Chapter Eight, section 8.4). This is in line with the literature's identification of social networks, gender, class, language, physical appearances and family experiences as factors influencing identify formation (Erikson 1971; Carrington et al. 2001; Christian and Robert 2002; Phinney and Ong 2007; Hammack 2008; Devich-Navarro 2010; Nakamura 2013; Banks 2015; Hogg 2016; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017). Thus, enacting variant identity constituents in Ysamrywiol brings a level of self-consciousness that frequently entails adaptive or withdrawal behaviours, seeing that the predominating social orientation among its ethnic students is consistent with their observance of the public aspects of their culture, their identification with reference groups, and their awareness of the tone these strike among others.

The impact Ysamrywiol has on the social, psychological, and academic experiences of the learner population was established in both students' and professionals' perceptions documented in this study. The students' accounts

indicated that they filter most of their inter and intragroup interactions through the cultural prism, which breaks the 'other's' profile into constituents that could be juxtaposed and compared to their own, reflects on the different selves, then polarises them according to distinct physical and ideological lines. Such a mechanism has been evidenced through the salience of ethnic identities in most situations, whether those I observed or the ones my participants reflected on, and which were affected by four main conditions.

First is the perceived persistent prejudice and negative stereotyping that impacted on the Roma students' everyday school experiences when both their language and dress were viewed as problematic (Chapters Six and Eight). The second is the Muslim students' status, whether Arab or not, who remain trapped in perpetuated negative tropes about the assumed 'necessary' associations between Islam and extreme social behaviour (Chapter Seven, sections three and four). The third condition is the propensity to socialise and consort with the same ethnic group individuals, which seems to enable the Arab girls and the Roma students to safely enact their cultural identities, and enjoy their groups' harmony. Fourth is the value ethnic students in Ysamrywiol placed on their cultural membership and the relevant 'toolkit' (for example, language, religion, and physical displays) deployed for cherishing their sense of belonging and bolstering inter-group connection.

Ysamrywiol represents an ideal atmosphere for nurturing ethnic self-consciousness, and where these adolescents' need to belong, in accordance with Erikson (1971, 1994), often apprises their interactional practices with those perceived to have similar characteristics (Abrahams 1996; Schwartz et

al. 2013a). This becomes more exigent and complex when considering the sizeable diversity of cultural representations in the school. However, it seems, to some extent, common for secondary school students to grapple with self and identity associated structures and conjectures (Phinney and Devich-Navarro 1997; Devich-Navarro 2010), as reviewed in Chapter Three. This awareness occurs in this unsympathetic phase and world of secondary school (Shah 2017), where the prevailing ideologies, practices and even the relevance to national curricular are subject to constant consultation and challenge. Adding a multi-ethnic character to educational settings has subjected the ethnic youth in Ysamrywiol to even more intense identity examination and interrogation operationalised by a widened scope of competing notions and discourses. Hence, the expected confusion facing adolescents seeking to identify themselves and their social entourage bears more complexities for ethnic students, for whom the developmental task of acceptance at this age (Erikson 1968; McLeod 2013; Rivas-Drake et al. 2014) is hampered by the dilemma of being in a multicultural context that requires laborious social and psychological interactional processes.

This study has demonstrated that despite their apparent volition, the ways ethnic students negotiated their identity might simply be short of personal choice. Being different seems to be an imposed category, which also implies the necessity of bearing with the relevant political and pedagogical inefficiencies of the British education system, notably within multi-ethnic schools. The analysis of the data indicated that even British-born ethnic students or those who arrived to the country in early infancy still have to negotiate their identity based on their 'seemingly' imported ethnic culture, to

which they may have little connection but are still required to adjust to the culturally harmonious ethos of the curriculum and social life in Ysamrywiol. Ethnic students' daily sense-making about school life experiences mediate the social transaction between their ethnic identity and the multi-ethnic learning environment. I argue that Yasmrywiol's mission extends beyond being a mere multicultural learning space accommodating diverse students to representing a sociocultural workshop manufacturing a specific schooling culture that fosters the quest for an increasingly distorted self-image. It apprises ethnic students' development of an identity type that although enhancing the status of their groups, it attests a disturbed sense of relating to both mainstream and other ethnic communities in and outside school. Language's role in these manifestations has been substantial.

9.2.2 Language, social affiliation and wellbeing

In relation to research questions two and three – 'how are linguistic and religious symbols viewed and negotiated in this context?' - and 'how could language ascription inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self?' - the main claim advanced by this study accentuates the need to pay interactional practices among ethnic student cohorts a greater attention. It bears a clear departure from the long-established tradition of observing the journey to mainstream language proficiency and its impact on the social and emotional adjustment of minority ethnic children (Auer 2005; Arnot et al. 2014; Schotte et al. 2017). The latter argument holds that a sense of mastery in the majority parlance is catalytic for boosting integrational processes, and increasing self-esteem among this group. In light

of this, achieving the desired proficiency is meant to bring ethnic students' academic and social struggles to a peaceful closure. This study established that ethnic minority students' adherence to the native code is equally important for their well-being given their perceived significance of cultural identification for an assessment (positive or negative) of self-concept. This finding provides new insights into the subjective well-being based on different types of belonging practices that are enacted implicitly or explicitly through language.

Indeed, Arab and Muslim students in Ysamrywiol reported high levels of affiliation to their ethnic groups and cultural communities by means of a joint interactional code that allows its masters identification with whoever possesses a similar linguistic access, and could by extension associate with relevant ethnic and national symbols. Messages of unity, shared purpose and emotional resourcing were conveyed (see Chapter Six, sections Three and Four, and Chapter Seven, sections Two, Three and Four) confirming the extent to which mother tongue practices could foster social ties, and affect an individual's disposition and sense of well-being. The ability to more fully contribute in one's community facilitated by language knowledge presents a key developmental factor in these young people's social, psychological, and academic lives, albeit still not immune to inconveniences. Adherence to cultural values proved to occasion potential threats to social harmony when breaching intra-group codes, and therefore increasing the likelihood for behavioural issues. For example, Chapter Seven (section four) reported Arabic language's alleged associations with extreme social conduct, and its adverse effects on its speakers in and outside school.

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From a different, yet equally important perspective, ethnic language continues to animate the social and psychological realties of Ysamrywiol students, not necessarily for being a mother tongue though, but for seemingly swearing allegiance to a higher order, more epitomic identity symbol; religion. To this day, the interdependence, structural organisation of identity markers, and their levels of significance and relevance to individuals have not always been received sufficient attention in the academic literature. Nevertheless, this is not to deny the few comparative efforts observing the denotative entities of language and the performative functions of religion, or the norms of conduct relating to sexuality, appearance and behaviour (Weitz and Kwan 1998; Goetz et al. 2003; Keane 2004; Brass 2005; Walther et al. 2008).

Underlining Muslim (Somali and Arab) students' choice of switching to and learning Arabic is, apparently, an ideological choice profoundly decreed by religious adherence. These students, as illustrated in Chapter Seven, section four, make sensitive connections between language, religion and identity, where not just the bonding between identity constituents matters but the hierarchy amongst them as well. Arabic language is a common link joining these (and other) diverse Muslim communities, and acts as a unifying element that ensures religious membership is claimed and facilitated through the linguistic agency. It is an indication that individuals' linguistic claims could often be based on marking and legitimating connections with religion/ideology insofar as their interplay starts to advise individuals' both group and self-worth appraisals. Therefore, and in this context, passing juxtaposition of identity

constituents as independent and separate entities might not be conductive to an efficient discernment of identification processes among ethnic youth, as much as their interaction could be.

It seems that language in Ysamrywiol, does not only swear allegiance to faith, but also to shame and stigma, through an oath whereby language itself, regardless of any potential form of comparing or contrasting, may inflict deleterious effects on its speakers' community, jeopardising the sense of self and occasioning social alienation. Language is actively deployed as a chief cultural tool in the identity conflict the Roma students endure, through a process of de-valorisation that disrupts the community's security and confidence, and impedes the development of their social relationships, communication with others and feelings of belonging. The criticism and derision the Roma language meets in Ysamrywiol obstructs its speakers' pathway to a common and safe social end along with other groups. A persistent theme in the Roma interviews was that their language signals contempt and worthlessness, in accordance with Kaufman (2004) who argues that speakers of non-standard varieties can be subject to frequent denigration, particularly migrants. The Roma students explicitly associated language use with the sense of affiliation to the culture attributed to it, while also invoking the out-group's acrid criticism at the misfit of their cultural norms of verbal articulation among the surrounding conversational modes.

Nevertheless, and despite instances of cultural oppression (see Chapter Eight), loyalty and pride still substantiated centrality in the despondent debate, as most Roma participants seemed to compel observance of the mother tongue, and

take pride in doing so. As has been previously reported in academic literature, ethnic pride is considered as a manifestation of dignity, affection and self-respect (Smith and Tyler 1997; Herrera and Kraus 2016), a necessary combination for the Roma students' observation of their cultural affiliation. For them, expressing ethnic pride is an acknowledgement of their identity, which champions the loyal endorsement of its constituents be it language, styled physicality or boisterous behaviour.

I have taken the perspective in this thesis that the conventional actuation of mother tongues in ethnic students' communication cannot but adjoin a constantly active evaluative exercise of the social and cultural frameworks designed and substantiated by language. Perceptions of selfhood and otherness both negotiated and reconciled through differences brace the identity construct with affective, physical, agential, and moral structures that tie the diverse student groups inhabiting academia. From here, and given that both mainstream and ethnic languages are indexical of individual and collective identity; endorsing official recognition and operation of one would ideally imply a similar pattern for the other, not least by means of social justice.

9.2.3 Language and social justice

Still in relation to the research questions two and three – 'how are linguistic and religious symbols viewed and negotiated in this context?' - and 'how could language ascription inform behaviour and group attachment, and affect individuals' perceptions of self?' - this thesis has made the case for issues of identity and language legitimacy. Such matters appear to be subverting the

stability of minority learners' academic progress in Ysamrywiol, preventing them from aspiring the same ambitions mainstream students aim to pursue. The feeling that minority languages are being ostracized instead of recognised has been a striking theme among ethnic students, notably mature ones (over 16 years old) whose late arrival denied them accommodation within national exams' classes (GCSEs and A levels). The high levels of frustration expressed by this category evidenced sheer distrust in the educational policies and statutory recommendation for meeting the country's cultural pluralism obligations.

As detailed in Chapter Five, section Two, new arrivals to Ysamrywiol, for whom English is an additional language, are enrolled in the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) department to improve their English literacy to an Entry Level 3 for those performing under this level on admission literacy assessments. Students' disapproval of the phase's name connotations advance allusions that this section of school emulates admittance to a hospital seeking a cure from a disease, and once dependence on mother tongue is reduced and on English is improved, the student is safe to be discharged to normal learning life, characterised by mainstream classes, albeit gradually. The duration of the language therapy and its intensity remain incumbent on individual ability and determination to heal, while the experience has unfortunately instilled many with contempt against an 'unequal' system that put them at evident disadvantage (see Chapter Six, section 6.2).

In fact, it is this same system that was called 'multiculturalism', decades ago, and was implemented to varying degrees in Western nation-states historically

perceived as 'immigration societies' (May 2012a). Britain is one of them, and its multicultural education discourse has long recognised that the disadvantages faced by minorities are not wholly individual as much a systemic issue, a declaration that bears witness to the historical role British education has played in the institutionalised devaluation of and discrimination against minorities.

Throughout Chapter Six, both students and teachers confirmed that the instructional system's key determinates are inculcated with ideologies and structures aimed at legitimating, operationalizing and generating linguistic inequalities. This phenomenon seems to have led some teachers in this study to doubt the integrity of the British educational system for its alleged reluctance to officially admit minority languages into curriculum, and hence hindering ethnic students' swift and smooth learning progress, which affects their confidence and self-esteem. It is worth in this occasion to reiterate Mrs Trevnoc's impression about the educational system, which she believes tends 'to undermine, not to say to "eliminate" [whispered the quoted word] native languages. It is the educational system of the country as it is, very monolingual' (see full quote in section 6.2). The lacklustre and deficient handling of minority languages in educational settings was an omnipresent both teachers and student participants who contended that better educational outcomes could be reached if schools built on students' first languages instead of marginalising them.

Thus, the purported social justice, which requires action to de-marginalise individuals oppressed due to their race, ethnicity, gender, social class and

other differences (Nieto 2002) is still awaiting justice itself. Its central premise of fostering positive conceptions about social and cultural background to guarantee greater success in all fields, notably education, is yet to substantiate. As early as 1982, the British School Council (BSC) argued:

> In a society which believes in cultural pluralism…all pupils need to acquire knowledge and sensitivity towards other groups through a curriculum which offers opportunities to study other religions, languages and cultures…at all stages this may enhance pupils' attitudes and performance at school through development of identity and self-esteem (BCS 1982, quoted in May (2001, p. 174).

Almost two decades later, Chapters Two and Seven demonstrate that these tenets, and many similar ones, have come to be regarded by critics as illusory, an unfairness stemming from the emphasis on life styles instead of opportunities and skills. Sixth former new arrivals in Chapter Seven saw their aspirations and childhood dreams collide with a system that overstates the importance of cultural acknowledgement, while understating the impact of structural discrimination on minority students' lives, whether ideological or linguistic. The previous quote highlights the need for social identity to be protected by social justice, a position Nieto (2002) concurs affirming that social justice within education systems needs to draw on the talents and capacities ethnic students bring with them, rather than regarding the latter as a deficit, a malfunction that needs repairing on the way to mainstreamness. A sensitive and constructive educational methodology appreciating minorities' cultural contexts strikes in the core of fair pedagogies, ideally delineating

measurable expected results and indicators guiding all progress monitoring processes (Sánchez-Casal and Macdonald 2009; Mulcahy et al. 2017). This perspective only could treat all learners' categories, not just mainstream ones, as having resources each of which is necessary for establishing solid infrastructures for their academic construction supported by language, culture, and social experiences as its main pillars.

Under the cultural resourcing perspective, Chapter Two established that according the native tongue an institutional word within education is an argument that has been disparaged by the policies and practices endorsing a territorial language principle (May 2001). This approach reinforces official maintenance of a non-national language in terms of geographical concentration of its speakers, such as Welsh in Wales, and Irish in Ireland. Chapter Two indicated that limitation could conversely be abated by a language personality scheme emphasising the linguistic status of the persons concerned through legislations granting the right of services in speakers' mother tongue regardless of territory. Where new arrivals in Ysamrywiol reproach the monolingual curriculum for miring their academic performances (Chapter Six, Section Two), caution must be exercised regarding the social and psychological conflicts potentially occasioned by the lack of linguistic rights, a situation generally conductive to unequal capitalising on power and resources along linguistic and ethnic lines. This can be related to Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNESCO's Convention against Discrimination in Education, both emphasising children's rights to exercise and enjoy their cultural agency, specifically protecting the educational rights of national

minorities' use of and efficient access to instruction in both native and mainstream languages.

Furthermore, in Chapter Six, both students and teachers confirmed that the instructional system's key determinates are inculcated with ideologies and structures aimed at legitimating, operationalizing and generating linguistic inequalities. Several references were made to the hegemony of English, being the language of power and awarded legitimacy, while heritage languages are struggling to acquire similar rights despite their potential social and academic disadvantages. Indeed, in Section 6.2, teachers' accounts highlighted the native languages' sufferance of the lack of pedagogical recognition and resourcing. Additionally, the feeling that minority languages are being ostracized instead of recognised was a striking theme among both secondary (11 to 16 years old) and sixth form students (17 to18).

The findings presented in this thesis suggest that, regrettably, schools like Ysamrywiol are left without clear and efficient approaches to address the challenges of linguistic diversity, and governmental action on relevant obligations remain pending. In Chapter Six, sections two, three and four, the data voiced an appeal to stop forcing minority languages to fit into mainstream moulds, which risks denying new arriving students' appropriate accommodation of their academic, social and psychological needs. Various teachers and students' perceptions therein disapproved the little relevance, stimulation and practicality of the curriculum regarding approaches for addressing students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (see section 6.3). Therefore, safeguarding children from experiencing

discrimination for using their mother tongue through legislations and practices that dissuade social exclusion and educational disadvantage continue to be the shadows of a dream justice that could get anywhere but near to reality.

9.3 Implications for policy and practice

This research has gone some way towards modulating standard conceptions about constructing and performing ethnic identity, illustrating its highly socialised structure and complex negotiation processes. It observes the significance of positive self-concept for ethnic adolescents' life experiences in and outside school, and its conclusiveness for their intellectual freedom and ability to focus on the need to achieve. The qualitative findings strongly connect ethnic students' conceptualisations of their group belonging and the role of their ethnic identity to their overarching influence in shaping their world views, friendship circles, and academic experiences. I suggest, then, that enabling them to form, sustain and safely enact their approved cultural models could provide further opportunities for them to positively develop, present and perceive their social, psychological and academic personas.

Although this study was not aimed at investigating pedagogical strategies for schooling ethnic minority students, it warrants a consideration of educational methods that value their ethnic belonging by drawing on their community values and practices. This could be achieved through devising plans for harnessing minority languages, cultures and knowledge, in parallel with facilitating access to mainstream substance. Such an approach, this study suggests, could boost personally meaningful developmental processes that help all young people, whether an ethnic minority or not, build the resources

necessary to engage effectively with and benefit from both immediate communities and the wider world. Therefore, exposure to diverse models of cultural personification and disposal can illuminate about the 'other', while simultaneously bolstering perceptions about the self. A foremost engagement would, then, be to ensure commitment to the ethnic self through providing curricular and extra-curricular events, which dispel stereotypes, and present bilingual abilities and culturally patterned characters as advantageous.

In fact, there is evidence that government and other agencies have already been responsive to such concerns. 'Aiming High', a government's 10 year plan to raise the achievement of African Caribbean pupils (Tikly et al. 2006), Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) aimed at raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils in deprived areas (Tikly et al. 2005), and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) project that extends online assistance recommending policies and guidelines for schools and teachers to value diversity and challenge racism inside schools (Deeson 2011), are good examples. These models should be acclaimed for setting the foundation for a responsive multicultural pedagogy, but the relevant activities still need to plan positive ethnic encounters among peer and family communities demonstrating merit and emphasising recognition for expertise in multiple ethnic cultures' fields. This will help all adolescent student groups, ethnic and mainstream, deconstruct stereotypes and unfavourable deductions, and ascribe equal statuses across all community groups, notably when encouraging dialogues that appreciate otherness regardless of its origin.

In light of this, integrating ethnic students in the school community without compromising on their identity seems worth considering, notwithstanding the fact that some groups might require a little more consideration, such as the Roma in Ysamrywiol. This 'difficult to handle' community's 'free education and life style' (Chapter Eight) contrasts sharply with mainstream instructional designs and curricular (European Roma Rights Center 2003; Dunajeva 2017), and attempting reconciliation of both paradigms might compromise on individual learning approaches and attitudes. Chapter Two revealed that public school's homogenisation policies do not seem to square with the unconventional identities' construction and their distinctive instructional norms. This could be a hard measure for the Roma whose cultural values and social norms are inculcated with the need to remain separate and perform differently, while maintaining daily contact with the other communities. Instead, instilling them (and all other ethnic groups) with standard unified symbolic and functional representations remains at the core of educational policies (Oriana et al. 2015), building constant pressure for homogeneous instruction across the educational board.

The findings in this study reflected low commitment levels and negative learning attitudes among the Roma, which was reported by most interviewed professionals to have contributed to the school failing this community. Many Ysamrywiol professionals asserted that their student population is not homogeneous and that an integrated-cultures' curriculum rather than a culturally responsive one can simply not be the best solution. This culture, then, is still awaiting the appropriate instructional attention and representation, which would allow the community to feel freer and more welcome at school.

For these views, it appears, understanding identity construction among the student population and advising curricular approaches and contents consequently is a necessity for successful education; a goal to be only reified through exploring the processes of meaning making and lifestyle choices imparted by these young people's value systems.

In light of this, the overarching assertion made by this thesis addresses the significance of ethnic schools' sense of community. Sustained by both theory and empirical findings, it advocates approaching educational strategies and processes socially rather than individualistically. Students would function better when their interpersonal needs are met, an aim, Pugh and Girod (2007) assert, that remains incumbent on the mechanisms deployed for designing and implementing communal activities appealing to and including all social groups. A homogeneous multi-ethnic school community can only work when recognising heterogeneity, turning the cultural borders separating the different groups into common spaces for social cohesion. Herein, differences will conform towards the wellbeing of all seeing that the terms for individual and group social participation are improved when disadvantaged communities are able to take advantage of available opportunities while affiliation is still encouraged and their trust promoted.

As Luthar et al. (2000) observe, efficient empirical actions are based on theoretical work. This research, then, may transcend its academic scope to apprise the development of useful interventions for certain ethnic categories in Ysamrywiol and corresponding institutions and contexts. The identity paradigm drawn on in this study can guide and support social and

psychological interventions in multi-ethnic schools that reflect on ethnic minority students' interaction and socialisation skills, and their conceptualisation of identity. Chapters Six and Eight have, for example, not only pointed at the lack of teaching assistants (TAs) who speak the students' languages, but also highlighted that some communities, such as the Roma, would shun non-Roma TAs despite their fluency in the Roma language due to the absence of trust. Thus, acknowledging the need for positive partnership between learners and education professionals necessitates authenticating human resources, a strategy that according to Angell et al. (2009), could address student anxiety, maladjustment and confusion among diverse communities.

Similar concerns also apply to Muslim students whose quest for a positive identity through ascription and loyalty to, not only language but also spirituality, seems to fashion their adjustment of behavioural articulations, and feed their claims to extra-personal space, in order to serve their firmly held ideologies. Chapter Seven suggests that strong identification with a category's core values may compel members to engage in discriminatory behaviour, and hence calls for a judicious assistance with group loyalties that might breed social hostility, and may potentially be converted into divisive stereotypes. Such assistance needs to consider using context and time specific methods to compose extreme conceptions through social and psychological support. This measure seems to be missing in Ysamrywiol, an absence that set the stage for acts performed by culturally informed coping mechanisms, which often proved unsafe. Therefore, counselling and human service provision in Ysamrywiol and similar school settings can highly benefit from considering identity

conceptualisation and manifestations among adolescent multi-ethnic students for improving all aspects of educational, psychological and social wellbeing.

9.4 Limitations and directions for future research

Despite my understanding that there are important implications for understanding ethnic minority students' identity development and manifestations through their interactional processes, there are limitations and challenges in what I have achieved in this study. These could warrant further consideration for an expanded study in this area, therefore it is useful to reflect on these key limitations.

Even though this single case study provided a rigorous approach for collecting and analysing data, a multiple/combined case study of at least two multi-ethnic high schools in Wales, would have imparted a cross-case analysis for the important influences emerging from contrasting the different settings' differences and similarities. In terms of the appropriateness of the fieldwork techniques, although interviews yielded insightful accounts, in retrospect the study could benefit from teachers' focus group meetings if I were undertaking this study again. As in the case of Hjardemaal (2016) and Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010), direct face-to-face reflection among professionals have often yielded important findings, and therefore following the same approach with teachers who belong to diverse cultures and institutional positions themselves could represent a different perspective, and hence potentially generate different appraisals of students' selfhood processes. Similarly, hearing from policy makers in the Welsh Government might also inform future research initiatives in this area.

This study could also benefit from contemplating identity processes among student communities reported to use their native languages the least in school, such as Korean, Nepalis, or Welsh students. Despite frequent encounters with some of them during the events I attended and helped run (see Chapter Five), in addition to conversations held with and about them, very little about these meetings is reported here. Such a knowledge could have restructured priorities and reframed discourses around language and cultural affiliation. My determination to meet the Roma over-16s did not square with my unintentionally insufficient endeavour to recruit them, and I might have had more chance contacting local colleges delivering their favourite short courses on mechanics, electrical and Materials Building Technology as communicated in Chapter Eight. Based on my literature review, it was not possible to identify any existing literature that addressed these issues, or have been able to directly hear form this cohort whose perceptions are key to understanding and hence supporting with concerns around identification.

While all my findings were geared by discursive propensities among EAL students, I frequently felt restricted for lacking conversational skills in some of my student participants' mother tongues. During focus groups, the Somali and Roma students' frequent code-switching to their native languages revealed my inability to bridge the language barrier between us for my lack of cross-language qualitative research skills (Tsai et al. 2004). Such conversational stopgaps certainly embodied valuable insights into the socio-psychological aspects of bilingualism. I also need to acknowledge that, by extension, being unable to read and interpret material written in these languages was also

limiting. These disadvantages were, however, disguising the blessing of a double positionality, a state very few researchers could enjoy in relation to combining both cultural 'insider and outsider' statuses (Song and Parker 1995; Zempi 2016). Being familiar with the language and ideologies of some student groups raised my awareness of the social and psychological subtleties informing their perceptions, while my unfamiliarity with other groups' equivalent symbolic paradigm did not allow me such insights. In both cases however, the process continued to be not a value free one seeing the natural tendency to involve one's beliefs and interpretations (Milner 2007; Giwa 2015).

This research explored ethnic minority students' identity conceptualisations in one school in Wales. However, the knowledge produced is hoped to advance social, psychological, and educational research on minority students across all learning categories and educational settings, in not only Wales, but also other parts of the UK and countries known for accommodating substantial ethnic demographics. Comparisons among these contexts could demonstrate how different settings, social structures, politics, and educational systems and policies affect accordingly. Understanding how selfhood and otherness approvals function through the distinct verbal exercise and branching ideologies is a finding that can be investigated further to expand its theoretical premises within psychological research. Therefore, future studies may be interested in applying this approach in different geographic contexts or working across multiple countries.

However, it is also worth perusing the gender-based allusions implicitly reflected throughout the analysis in relation to culturally gender-defined roles and responsibilities among both students and professionals in Ysamrywiol. It would be interesting to examine masculine and feminine selves draped among the multiple folds of the ethnic identity fabric, and how mainstream narratives, policies and practices may jeopardise either construct. Such a debate may specifically address equality of educational/professional opportunity, inter and intra-gender interaction, male/female student interaction with male/female professionals, and whether ethnic-gender roles and responsibilities are presented as gender stereotype in the curriculum, and the educational system at large. Future research unfolding the ethnic construct could also reveal the reality of a category laden with socially debilitating concerns. Poverty, disability, and/or living in care or in disintegrated families are further struggles many minority children could be grappling with, but their ethnicity would be too dense to allow notice of finer categories. The ethnic social binary could, then, provide another perspective from which ethnic identity is considered and allow for a different comprehension of the educational experiences of ethnic minority children.

9.5 Final thoughts

This concluding chapter has assembled the main arguments established in this thesis. I emphasised that ethnic minority learners' school experiences in Ysamrywiol transcended the pressures of academic engagement and success to additionally bear the burden of the different belonging, with its emblematic appraisals and collective representations persistently framing conceptions of the self and the other. The cultural politics in this multi-ethnic school were

conditioned by contentious interactions fomented by multilingual exercises evidencing native languages' ability to resource individual and group identity processes. Consequently, the physical, ideological and social values attached to the mother tongue become embroiled in the quest for self-appreciation and representation, as the multi-ethnic school becomes an auction where some cultural options are more valued than others. Identifying with the 'least favourite' traits, this thesis demonstrates, places ethnic students (individuals and groups) not only outside the margins of acceptance, but also inside the grip of a low self-esteem. These grievances have been inefficiently handled within the Welsh educational system, and strong relationships between education and personal and social identities evidenced in this research have left some student communities contending with a structured accumulation of cultural, social and political inadequacies, disproportionately afflicting their educational journey with uncertainty and disadvantage.

This study feeds into the growing interest in the social and psychological functioning of ethnic communities (Nieto 2002; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004; Aspinall and Hashem 2011; Knifton 2012; Mac an Ghaill et al. 2017), which remains fragmented and inconclusive regarding how identity is defined and conceptualized within schools, and the challenging processes these mechanisms imply. It concludes that ethnic students are in constant negotiation of the sense of self through the perceived similarities with and differences from other cultural groups. These negotiation processes are generally occasioned by the 'otherness' expereinces ethnic students are constantly subjected to for fostering different cultural embodiments enacted through linguistic, ideological (mostly religious) and physical customs. My research on a state

comprehensive multi-ethnic school in Wales illustrates that exploring the communal displays of interaction in this context helps establishing strong connections between social interaction, ascription by others, self-impression and boundary maintenance. It, also, highlighted the significance of fair, efficient, and culturally inclusive curricular and educational policies for the psychological wellbeing and educational progress of ethnic students. Thinking, looking, and talking native seem to be the synthesis for a healthily, fit and properly functioning ethnic student community within and outside educational institutions, and hence requires official endorsement wherever possible.

This study represents an outlet from which voices of and about ethnic minority students are communicated through conscious processes of reflection and knowledge production. The literature about diversity in educational settings has often targeted single groups, and individuals, intermittently considering aspects of socio-cultural discordance, or discourses around their lack of ingenuity and expertise (Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Gomolla 2006; Bhopal and Myers 2009; Bhopal 2016). This study attempted to fill this gap venturing through the diverse realm, jointly addressing multiple communities and observing the impact of their interactional experiences on individuals' social and psychological development. It aimed to scrupulously attend to the twisted tangle of ethnic identity when individuals' cognition of their selfhood observes the chemistry among all the elements of the ethnic compound. Considering that ethnicity remains a core trait for its possessors, more needs to be done to demystify the fixed notions around occupying this aspect through considering the multiple resources individuals could draw on to construct their identity, whether ethnic, national, cultural, historical, locality, gender, class and/or

sexual orientation. Acknowledging and combining all aspects of human reality, I argue, is the essence for individual wellbeing, community coherence and social fairness.

Appendix 1: Information for Parents– Focus Groups

Cardiff School of Social Sciences

Cardiff University

Glamorgan Building

King Edward VII Avenue

Cardiff

CF10 3WT

Information for Parents– Focus Groups

Project about language and ethnic identity.

Your child is invited to take part in a research study which will explores communication patterns in the multi-ethnic classroom. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me further if you wish.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to identify the patterns of communication in the multi-ethnic classroom where pupils speak other languages than English. This will involve interviews with teachers and students, student questionnaires and focus groups, in addition to observing some classroom and school time. The findings of the study will benefit both children and teachers through raising

their awareness about how important classroom conversation is, in order to achieve the maximum benefit from it. This information sheet is only in relation to your child taking part in one aspect of the study – FOCUS GROUPS

Does your child have to take part?

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether you want your child to take part. Please fill in the attached consent form and hand it to the school reception office or ask your child to return it to the school reception office on your behalf. Your child is free to withdraw from the project at any time and you do not have to provide any reason for that.

What will your child have to do?

If selected for the focus group, your child will be with peers of the same year group discussing issues about classroom interaction. It will be held twice inside the school   premises and would last less than an hour. Your consent is need for that.

 What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Your child is free to skip any question he/she does not wish to answer during the focus group. Every care will be taken to ensure your child is comfortable with the procedure.

Who will have the information?

All information obtained from your child is confidential and will be treated following strict ethical rules. No one except me, the researcher, and my supervisors will have access to the focus group details which will only be used in relation to this project. If any are published, all participants and institutions' names will be changed. In accordance with the Data Protection

Act, this information will be retained for at least five years or two years after publication. However, you can request to see a summary of findings at the end of the study.

What if there is a problem?

Any concern you may have about the way your child has been dealt with during the study will be addressed. You can raise your concerns to school staff or to me using the contact details below.

Contact details

Researcher: Hayat Graoui.

Email: benkorichigraouiH@cardiff.ac.uk

Supervisor:

Dr. Raya Jones

Email: JonesRA9@ cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the study, please contact the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee:

Professor Adam Hedgecoe

Cardiff School of Social Sciences

Glamorgan Building

King Edward VII Avenue

Cardiff

CF10 3WT

Appendix 2: Student Project Information-Focus Group

Cardiff School of Social Sciences

Cardiff University

Glamorgan Building

King Edward VII Avenue

Cardiff

CF10 3WT

Student Project Information-Focus Group

You are being asked to take part in a research study about language and ethnic identity. We are asking you to take part because you belong to one of the dual language groups in your school. Please read the information carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about

The purpose of this study is to learn how students who can speak a language other than English interact with their peers and their teachers. I want to know when and why other languages than English could be used and what this might imply.

Taking part is voluntary

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer

What I will ask you to do

If you agree to be in this study, you will:

Take part in focus group discussions, where you will sit among few peers of the same year group to talk about the use of your native language in classroom, when do you use it and why?

Your answers will be confidential

The records of this study will be kept private. Your name and any information that will make it possible to identify you will be removed from any report. However, participants are reminded that they should only use information that they feel comfortable sharing with the researcher and their peers to avoid embarrassment or regret.

If you have questions

If you have any questions, you can ask me directly or send me an email at **benkorichigraouih@cardiff.ac.uk**.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records

Appendix 3: Student Questionnaire

Project about language and ethnic identity

Researcher: Hayat B. Graoui

School of Social Sciences- Cardiff University

Questionnaire to students

(To answer, please tick the empty box, or provide full answer in dotted spaces)

Section one: general information

Please, complete the following details:

Male ☐   Female ☐

Age ☐   Form ☐

Are you:

British (non-Welsh)	
British (Welsh)	
European - please specify	……………………………………
Caribbean - please specify	……………………………………
Asian - please specify	……………………………………
African - please specify	……………………………………
Other - please specify	……………………………………

Are you studying in an EMAS class now?

Yes [ ]   No   [ ]

If no,

Have you studied in EMAS classes before?

Yes [ ]   No   [ ]

If yes, when did you join main-stream classes?

………………………………………………………………………………

Section two: **language of communication**

1- **Do any of your friends speak another language?**

Yes   [ ]   No   [ ]

a- If yes, what is it/are they?

| ……………………………………………………………………………… |

b- Where do they use it?

	yes	no	Who do they use it with?
Playground			………………………………………………………………….
Classroom			……………………………………………………………........

c- How often do they use it?

Every lesson	Every play time	Every day	Once a week	Other
				………………………………………………………… .

d- What do you feel about it?

……

……

2- Do you speak a language other than English?

Yes ▢   No ▢

If yes,

a- What other language(s) do you speak? | ………………………………………………………………… |

b- How good do you think you speak this/these language(s)?

Understand it and speak it fluently	Can understand and express main ideas	Can understand and use only familiar everyday expressions

8

c- Do you speak it at **home**?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If   yes,   who   do   you   speak   it   with?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

d- Do you speak it in **classroom**?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If yes, who do you speak it with?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

e- Do you speak it in playground?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

f- If yes, who do you speak it with?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

g- Why do you speak it?

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

h- How often do you speak it in classroom?

	Every lesson	Every day	Once a week	Other
Classroom				…………………………………………………………… …….

Playground	Every day	Once a week	Other
			………………………………………………………

i- What is the reaction of the teacher when you use this language?

……

……

……

j- How do you feel when using this language?

……

……

…….

Thank you

Appendix 4: Data querying and exploring with NVivo

Query function: Text Search- Word (language) Tree
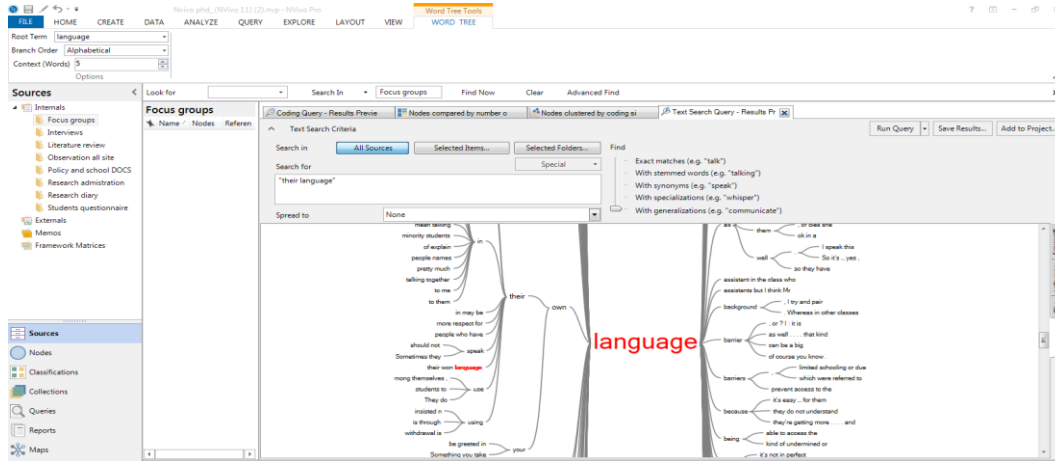
Query function: Text Search tool- Word frequeuncy
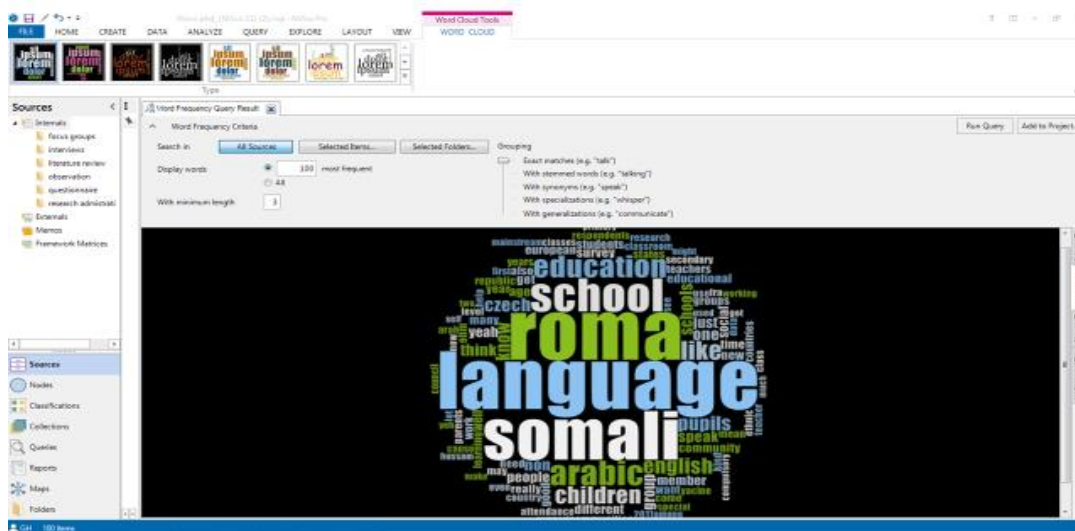
Explore function: Nodes compared by number of coding references
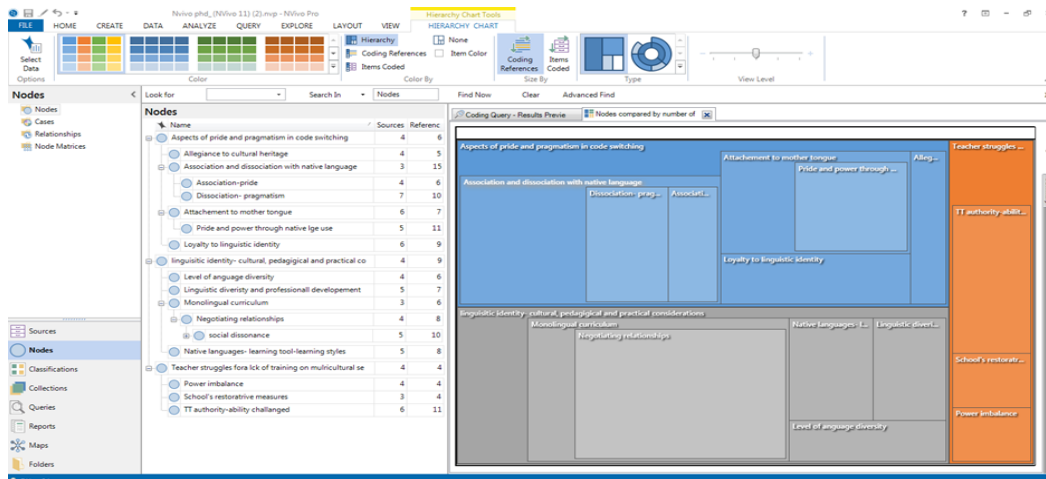
Appendix 5: Themes building, classification and hierarchies with NVivo

Data (text) coding into themes

Themes, classifications, sources and references

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