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**Exploring *Creative Learning*  
Processes of Refugee Children and  
their Peers—A Case Study**

This dissertation in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy 2011

*This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination, which has led to the award of a degree.*

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*Signed:*

*Date:*

My skin is kind of sort of brownish  
Pinkish yellowish white.  
My eyes are greyish blueish green,  
But I'm told they look orange in the night.  
My hair is reddish blondish brown,  
But it's silver when it's wet.  
And all the colors I am inside  
Have not been invented yet.

Shel Silverstein

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Geri Smyth and Dr Gillian Inglis for their guidance, support and patience.

My gratitude goes to the research participants and gatekeepers for sharing their stories, and time, and permitting me to observe and participate in their learning experiences.

My gratitude also goes to my family and my husband for patience, love, care packages, freshly baked bread and the space dragon.

Further I would like to thank friends, colleagues and fellow PhD students for motivation, exchange of ideas, advice, and shared time over copious amounts of coffee.



## Abstract

This ethnographic case study investigates the access refugee children have to *creative learning* in a high school in Glasgow as well as the impact of social capital on the scholarly development and inclusion of this group of children.

Research on refugee children in Scottish school settings has primarily focused on provisions such as language support and well-being (e.g. Green, 2006; Hopkins & Hill, 2006; Netto & Fraser, 2009). However, there is hardly any research that explores the actual learning processes and daily social interactions of this group within schools (e.g. Dobson, McCulloch, & Sime, 2008; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009).

The present study addressed this research gap by conducting an ethnographic case study using qualitative means including participant observation, field notes, participants' photography, group discussions, interviews, conversations and open-ended questionnaires. The collected data was analysed by means of the analytical software NVivo™, research diaries, and manual coding of field notes.

My findings demonstrated strong indicators for social capital and their impact on positive learning experiences. The refugee pupils displayed strong cultural competences; monolingual peers in contrast displayed selective social competences depending on the relevance of a situation. The findings, which were interpreted within a conceptual framework that was developed as part of this research, showed the relevance of *space* in its physical and metaphorical properties to create *creative learning* strategies. Although access to these strategies was facilitated in all the three classroom spaces, the English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit appeared to be the most conducive environment. These findings highlight the niche position of the EAL Unit as a non-mainstream space in school, which seemed to provide

more freedom for creating learning spaces, as a result of not having to adhere to the curriculum framework (5–14 Curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence).

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## Introduction

My PhD project builds on the findings of the *Creative Learning* and Student Perspectives (CLASP) research undertaken by Dr Geri Smyth for the Scottish part of the European CLASP project. Smyth (2006a) had found some indicators for the use of social capital by her research participants, and suggested further research was needed. Smyth had focused her research on refugee children, a group whose education is notoriously under-researched (Blanco & Takemoto, 2006; Closs, Stead, Arshad, & Norris, 2000; Dobson, B. McCulloch, & D. Sime, 2008a; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Reynolds, 2008; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009), and a group I was particularly interested in due to my previous work experiences in multicultural community projects.

I aimed to exploring Smyth's (2006a) findings further; elaborating on the impact social capital has for scholarly success of children from refugee and asylum-seeking families. Social capital was only one aspect I wanted to explore. The lack of research in education about this specific group of children set my main focus on the access this group has to *creative learning* strategies. I decided to use the term *creative learning* as opposed to just learning, because there is no comprehensive and conceptual definition about the term learning in the UK (Laewen & Andres, 2002, Papert & Harel, 1991). Yet, for the research project, I needed characteristics of learning that were observable in a day-to-day school environment. Subsequently more cognitive or neuroscientific concepts would not have sufficed. The concept of *creative learning* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) that was explored in the CLASP studies provides comprehensive analytical help in exploring learning processes. While I have an axiomatic problem with the label *creative learning* as a tautology—and consider that learning is always creative (Claxton, 2009; Garner, 2007; Kösel, 2002)—the concept offers a holistic approach to learning and teaching. I will write this term in italics throughout the thesis to exemplify its conceptual status.

Contributing towards filling the knowledge gap in research on learning of refugee children was the main purpose of my study. Most research undertaken in this area focused on provisions, such as accommodation and well-being and not on learning itself (Blanco & Takemoto, 2006; Closs, Stead, Arshad, & Norris, 2000; Dobson, McCulloch, & Sime, 2008; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Reynolds, 2008; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). The primary aim of the research project was to explore which *creative learning* strategies refugee children had access to in a day-to-day school environment. Further, I wanted to explore how these strategies help their scholarly progress and inclusion, focusing on the role social capital played within learning and teaching situations and therefore influences identity negotiations of the refugee children.

The research took place in a secondary school in Glasgow. The research site was located in a socially deprived area and had an English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit. This unit provided support for bilingual students and helped their gradual inclusion into mainstream classrooms. Besides my access to this EAL Unit I was able to negotiate access to two mainstream classrooms: an English and a Maths class.

The key findings of the research were that the refugee pupils had comprehensive access to *creative learning* strategies in the English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit. This unit held an extra position within the school, being more independent from the curriculum framework than the mainstream classes had to adhere to. This extra position permitted the teachers to provide more space for *creative learning* and have a stronger ownership of their pedagogy than in mainstream classrooms.

There were strong indicators for the utilization of social capital to support scholarly development and also to enhance well-being between the refugee pupils in the EAL Unit. Due to access restrictions I was not able to follow up on the transferability of this social capital into other mainstream classrooms.

The refugee pupils appeared to have strong cultural competences and a distinct control and focus on success in school for their life planning. In this



point they differed from the monolingual pupils (these are children whose first language is English) I had access to in both the mainstream classrooms. Here the social class of the monolingual pupils seems the key factor for displaying behaviour patterns of disempowerment within and a rejection of the school as learning space that would help them to access cultural capital (here in form of finishing school successfully). However asking the pupils directly about the disempowerment they demonstrated awareness of school as a means to access cultural capital.

In the mainstream classrooms I observed something I labelled selective social competence. The selectivity seems to refer to the relevance a situation had for the pupils. The pupils chose to use their social competences when 'real-life' context emerged within a classroom space or when classmates needed support. In situations that appeared irrelevant to the pupils they would misbehave and tease each other.

The creation of space was another significant element in all three classrooms. Teachers used their pedagogy to create learning spaces for the pupils, the pupils created learning spaces for themselves.

The study's main limitation was restriction in access, only providing an insight into three different classroom spaces of the research site. There were some methodological limitations, based on these access restrictions. Albeit the main gate-keeper and I were not able to negotiate further access within the research site, I gathered significant amount of data to answer the main research question of my project exploring *creative learning* processes of refugee children. I also found strong indicators for the utilization and impact of social capital, yet could not follow up on these beyond the three classroom spaces. Nevertheless, this is a valuable case study in that it answers the key questions of the research.

Before introducing the structure, I would like to discuss labels I have applied throughout, my thesis. Independent youth cultures are complete cultures, because children and young adults are complete human beings with their own rights (Zacharias, 2001). Within the urban environment in particular,

these cultures come with specific time structures, roles and behavioural patterns (Zacharias, 2001). Therefore, labelling the research participants as children, teenagers or young adults implies their rights, and possibly different characteristics in culture to those which the adults of their families possess. Using terms such as pupil, refugee pupil or children of refugees or asylum-seekers, assigns more specific roles to the participants, introducing cultural differences between home and school and within peer groups.

Depending on the context within the research project some participants inherit a various number of these labels. The labels are temporal and spatial conditions, that means they apply under certain circumstances and within certain time periods, depending on factors such as social networks, class time and break times, the teacher, or the subject. The issues arising with assigning labels are that these labels are not comprehensive and limit the labelled person. Also the labelling in itself is an ambivalent exercise: on one hand it can help understanding of particular issues occurring in reference to the specific role certain labels adhere to, on the other hand it can restrict the epistemological process, inducing assumptive discussion and limiting the analysis to a certain range. The general label I use in my project is that of **research participant** because this label includes all the other possible labels referring to legal status or different roles. It also communicates that at any point in conducting the research there is interaction between the researcher and the participants, which inevitably influences both sides. However, discussion and analysis of fieldwork necessitates differentiating between the research participants.

Avoiding labels like white, black and indigenous for establishing ethnical and racial differences prevents racialising refugees and asylum-seekers (Bhavnani, Mirza, & Meetoo, 2005). These labels misrepresent and limit the actual identities of the people involved to those two attributes. Further, the complex history of tribal movement and settlement in the British Isles renders the term indigenous difficult. It would be nearly impossible to establish the boundaries for the term indigenous.

I will use the term **refugee pupil** for pupils from refugee or asylum-seeking families, using the United Nations definition of refugee (UNHCR, 2009) rather than assigning the legal definition to the label asylum-seeker. Only when necessary will I refer to asylum-seeker this might be to emphasise the legal difference in some situations. I decided to use the term **other bilinguals**, to refer to participants who have an unknown number of generations living in the UK since migration. This also permits the inclusion of European migrants. **Monolingual** refers to children without migration background and/or whose only language is English.

The structure of this thesis is as follows:

The Literature Review clarifies terminology, explores issues of concern for refugee children, beginning with issues of forced migration and the situation for refugees and asylum-seekers in the UK with focus on Scotland. The Literature Review further discusses concepts of learning and establishes parts of the conceptual framework that correspond with the topics of the Literature Review.

The Methodology chapter discusses research planning and design, and also presents the findings of the pilot study. During the pilot study I was involved with the Applied Educational Research Scheme's (AERS) Schools and Social Capital Network, as research fellow. This involvement supported my understanding of social capital theory and in the exchange with experienced researchers my work was scrutinized and discussed in the context of the project. Ethical discussion is situated within the *Methodology* chapter, focusing on issues of consent and transparency.

The Presentation and Analysis of Evidence—Analysis and Discussion chapter encompasses analysis and discussion in one chapter. The chapter begins with the discussion of *Making Sense of my Data—Coding and Categorizing*, which aims to enlighten the process of data analysis and includes a discussion of the final categories used for data analysis and interpretation. The next part of this chapter *Analysis of Findings* discusses the research site and learning spaces to set the scene for further analysis.

*Answering the Research Questions* follows this section and is divided into three parts each covering one of the research questions. The Analysis and Discussion chapter concludes with *Summary of the Main Findings*.

*Integrating Findings into Wider Context* is a theorizing exercise in which I summarize my research findings in two models. Therefore this chapter is situated between *Discussion and Analysis* and *Conclusion*. The models are based on the research findings of my particular study, suggesting one approach in theorizing.

In the final chapter *Conclusions* I summarise the thesis, describe the limitations of the study, offer a summary of the main findings and discuss implications and recommendations.

## Literature Review

My research project aims to explore *creative learning* processes refugee children utilise in school. School, as an institution that can provide access to cultural capital (McGonigal et al., 2007) and foster inclusion of children of marginalised groups, is a crucial place on which to focus research. I studied how refugee children make use of *creative learning* processes, and how this learning helps their inclusion. I further focus on how the utilization of social capital supports scholarly development and inclusion.

This review of the literature comprises six sections. The main issues affecting the key research participants are reflected in the three sections: Terminology; Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experience (including Issues of Discrimination), and Education and Learning. From the onset of this research project I utilized research paradigms as heuristic tools that helped scaffold the research process. These are represented in the three sections: Introducing the Paradigms, Social Capital, Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructivism. Each paradigm precedes its explanatory text, this means the three sections: Terminology, Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experience, and Education and Learning take up points that correspond with the paradigms discussed.

The section Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experiences explores the position of children of refugees and asylum-seekers in the UK, as the key participants of this study. Issues that impact the well-being and inclusion of this group, such as language, housing, destitution, and education (Avan & Bakshi, 2004; Candappa, Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet, & Gocmen, 2007; Green, 2006; Hopkins & Hill, 2006; Lewis, 2006; Lodge, 1998; Macaskill & Petrie, 2000; Netto & Fraser, 2009) are discussed. A particular focus lies on Scotland; albeit asylum-seeker legislation is determined by the government in Westminster, Scotland has some legislation considering discrimination, provision and education that differs from the UK-wide legislative framework.

This review of the literature is structured into six main parts. It aims to relate the exploration of the literature to the conceptual framework that supports this research's epistemology.

This conceptual framework had worked as a scaffold for my research project from the very beginning. Through the dialogical character of this ethnographic research process the conceptual framework as well as the research evolved and developed in correspondence with each other.

## *Terminology*

Encountering the English language is a process that almost parallels the bilinguals' and the researcher's development throughout this research project. It is a continuing challenge that forces the participants and the researcher to embrace perpetual renegotiation of meaning. This negotiation is different from the challenges native speakers would face in the same situation (Varonis & Gass, 1985). As a native German speaker, English terminology, particularly in academia, sometimes appears decontextualised and vague (Baker, 1996) in that, its unspecific use of terms (like education) can lead to misunderstandings of academic context. Furthermore, exploring literature for this part of the thesis revealed more distinct issues with terminology. These were: unclear boundaries of a word, a multitude of substitutions, or even words that simply do not exist in the other language. Therefore discussing terminology became a crucial part of the thesis. This section focuses on key terms used in the thesis.

**Inclusion** has been used in Germany for years with reference to all marginalised groups no matter the reason for their marginalisation. The term integration seems to focus only on the means of provision, and therefore provides scope for discrimination and *othering* of the persons involved. Allan (2008) describes integration as:

*... a continuation of the practices of singling out individuals who are different and offering them education that is different. (Allan, 2008, p. 702)*

Such an approach emphasises the experiences and insecure status of refugee children and negatively impacts on their academic achievements (Candappa, Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet, & Gocmen, 2007; Hopkins & Hill, 2008). Inclusion accepts that no pupil group is homogenous and therefore different needs, heterogeneity in personal preferences and abilities are components of daily school routine (Eurydice, 2004) and need to be addressed (Ofsted, 2005) without creating niches.

Blanco & Takemoto (2006) state that inclusion permits each individual to keep and develop their *cultural identity*. For my research inclusion becomes significant as maintenance of one's own *cultural identity*, featuring the ability of individuals to learn new cultures and include them within their identity discourse. Because this means a person does not have to be made 'integrated' in the sense of the new immigration legislation for example. In this act, volunteering seems to feature as an act of integration per se, rather than encouraging immigrants learning to understand and negotiate within the new culture, and not merely focus on language support (Candappa et al., 2007).

**Bilingualism** according to Cummins & Swain (1998) is generally not used in a coherent way; my thesis will utilize the definition provided by the Scottish Government it seems to summarize the various definitions listed by Cummins and Swain (1998). Additionally, this interpretation of bilingualism informs the school education for bilingual children in Scotland; therefore it underlies the approach to bilingualism at the research site. Bilingualism is defined as the daily use of at least two different languages, of which English is the second or additional language.

*The term 'bilingual' emphasises that learners already have one language and that English is a second or additional language. The term does not imply an equal or specified level of fluency in two or more languages. (Learning in 2(+) Languages, 2005, p. 3)*

Bilingualism does not differentiate between the levels of language comprehension in English, the mother tongue or any further language spoken by the bilingual. In doing so, the interpretation of bilingualism does also seem to offer support to children who might grow up with one parent's mother tongue being English while the other parent may speak a different mother tongue. In this case the child grows up with two languages on an equal level and the emphasis of already having one language may not suit. Newly arrived immigrant children may have none, or only basic English-comprehension when arriving in Britain.



Conversing in English as non-native speakers in an English native speaking country, implies not only using an unfamiliar language to negotiate within an unfamiliar culture but also navigating in a new cultural system with different power relations (Cummins, 2001). Language is therefore one of the main challenges for the non-native speaking participants. Negotiations of meaning become imperative, and are inevitably more complex in conversations that include non-native speakers than native speaker (Varonis & Gass, 1985). This is not only due to the use of a new language and insecurities with vocabulary, but more so due to different cultural contexts in which this second or other language is situated and the communication takes place (Varonis & Gass, 1985). Jeffrey (2004) defines meaning as the way experiences impact on identity negotiations. He states that meaning is how experiences feel, are comprehended and in the sense of symbolic interactionism reacted to, hence highlighting that negotiation of meaning reaches beyond linguistic boundaries.

Varonis and Gass's (1985) research established the reciprocity between language and culture. The authors argued that one cannot become bilingual without becoming bicultural, as Byram (1998) does. Refugee children, who need to be able to negotiate successfully within a new culture, have to become literate in the culture of the second or other language.

An additional hurdle to negotiate within an unfamiliar culture is learning local dialects. Asylum-seekers who are brought to Glasgow from England experience a different language: Scots, and very different dialects such as Glaswegian (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007). Kodish and Kodish (2001, p. 128) state that *the structure of our language influences how we experience the world*, this assumption makes dialects and jargons important for the people who use those. Therefore the next section reflects upon the relevance of Scots.

**Scots:** When conducting research in Scotland, one has to anticipate encountering Scots during fieldwork as a researcher. The location of the research indicates that the bilingual participants might have to learn Scots as

a third language, which is accompanied by learning to understand and negotiate within the particular culture that is implicit to this language (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007, p. 6). Thus, a brief excursion into the position of Scots within Scotland and its possible significance for the research is necessary.

The significance of Scots becomes clearer when exploring the history of its position within the education environment. Wilson (2002) states that during the Victorian era the Scots language began to be eradicated by the state, to enforce homogeneity in culture and language (Wilson, 2002). Until the early 1990s Scots was unacceptable within the school environment, with cases of corporal punishment till the late 1970s (LTS 2010; Wilson, 2002). There seems to be a lack of contemporary literature reflecting the significance of Scots in education. However, after a period of neglect if not prohibition, it found its place in schools again (LTS, 2010; Wilson, 2002) with the 5–14 Curriculum and The Curriculum for Excellence. Wilson (2002) states that this may have been triggered by the recognition of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by the British Government in 2001.

Scots is meanwhile recognised as a language in its own right (LTS, 2010; Scots Language Resource Centre, 2009; LTS 2002), because Scots has its own structure, words and culture and for the research participants learning and acquiring Scots may be like learning a completely different language next to English.

**Refugee and asylum-seeker** are terms that need initial clarification. The major difference is a legal one; whilst a refugee is a person who had to flee their country of origin for instance out of fear of persecution ("Convention relating to the Status of Refugees", 1951, p. Art. 1), an asylum-seeker is the status of someone who enters another country and asks for the right to be recognised as refugee and leave to remain (Thorpe & Jarvis, 2006).

This happens in the United Kingdom if the Home Office acknowledges that person's situation in accordance with the UN Conventions' (1951) definition

(UNHCR, 2009). In the United Kingdom, this means that on entry to the country a refugee becomes ipso facto an asylum-seeker, and has to declare the wish to apply for the right to asylum. Once the application process is successful, the person becomes a refugee again, this time recognised by society and with leave to remain.

Problems arise if the asylum-seeker came into the UK via another country; in this case the refugee unaware of British legislation has already broken the law by not entering the country directly. Further, if the asylum application is rejected the asylum-seeker can enter a caveat, will however, remain in a state of limbo—not able to work to start building a life for themselves and their family.

The following section introduces the paradigms used as heuristic devices for this research project. Exploring the significance of culture for the project, research participants and learning, it suggests utilizing capital theory as tangible concepts for application in the research project. This section will also establish the first step to the conceptual framework that evolved during the process of reviewing the literature.

## *Introducing the Paradigms*

Hammersley & Atkinson (2009) point out there is no stipulation in ethnography for when data analysis begins. The authors even go as far as to state that data analysis is already initiated during the explorative stages of a research project. It is for instance reflected in research diaries, interaction with literature, and it subsequently feeds into research planning and fieldwork (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009). This proposed dialectic of a research process was one of the main incentives for the structure of my literature review.

Developing the theoretical framework throughout the Literature Review aims to establish the relationship between the different concepts to the diverse issues in the literature. Initially I only wanted to refer to symbolic interactionism and social constructivism as a scaffold for me as a researcher helping to make sense out of the research process and experiences. Yet throughout the review of literature I realized the links between the concepts and the concept of social capital. As soon as my analysis began and categories emerged from my data it became clear that culture and learning were integral part of these concepts. Thus over the course of the research the theoretical framework developed into an analytical tool for my data and eventually from the data a new approach to understanding these concepts emerged. This is represented in the final model see section: Building the Scaffold (p. 287). The final model is placed after the Analysis and Discussion of my data to better reflect on the actual process of developing this framework.

The development of my theoretical framework was a dialogical process that lasted from the first day I opened a book to begin the literature review until the final stages of write up. While I present the first two steps of developing the theoretical framework (Introducing the Paradigms, p.24, Social capital, p.31, Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructivism, p.48) throughout the literature review, the final model, I developed was a result of reflections

about the literature, the experiences I gained throughout fieldwork and lastly my data analysis, I present after the analysis and discussion chapter. I gained more in depth knowledge of my data, the patterns emerging from the data and the insight gained from the elaborative analysis process.

In research where refugee and asylum-seekers are the key participants, it is inevitable culture is discussed at different stages of the research project. The overarching character of culture, and the understanding that one of the main concerns of the research participants is learning to navigate within new cultural contexts substantiates this focus on culture. Learning new cultural scripts can be part of this process, cultural scripts are behaviour patterns typical for certain situations such as buying a train ticket, eating in a restaurant (Lee, 2009; Roxas, 2010; Wierzbicka, 2002). Culture is implicit in learning and teaching as they carry the values, norms, ideals and knowledge of a specific education system (Bruner, 2003; Lindner, 2006b). Further, Wagner (2006) concludes that declaration of culture and the participation in culture as a human right by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) renders culturally relevant education a necessity.

*... culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes ... also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs ... (UNESCO, 1982, p. 1)*

Considering the UNESCO definition of culture and its complexity, culture becomes the overarching concept for my research project. I extend the definition above by Geertz (2000) *web of significances* or as Bruner (2003, p. 11) puts it *a system of values, rights, exchanges, obligations, opportunities [and] power*. It is the reference framework to which all the three concepts relate. This implies race, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality and class, which are all aspects of culture or create sub-cultures within a mainstream culture.

The refugee children who are taking part in this research will have to learn a new culture, both in school and other parts of their social environment

(Franson, 2007; McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007). Learning a new language and its context (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007), getting used to an unknown school system, and different peer groups with different interests and life experiences, are part of this learning. Culture impacts on the development of identities and determines education policies. Language cannot be fully comprehended without understanding the cultural context (Cummins, 2001; Keupp et al., 2006). Learning in school is cultural learning as well as subject related learning (Keupp et al., 2006).

I am going to construct a graphic that represents the conceptual framework which I developed during the process of this research project. The first and overarching part of this graphic is culture. Throughout the thesis I will refer to culture or cultural context. In doing so I refer to the definition established above, intentionally avoiding the term society as far as possible. Using the term society would marginalise the refugee children. Culture does imply values, norms and regulations (Bruner, 2003), but these are flexible; they shift depending on the social networks an individual is in. Therefore culture enables me to understand the research participants in different contexts, and not like society implies, as entities disturbing an existing structure. Culture acknowledges the ambivalence of human identities and relationships.

As part of culture, I will briefly describe cultural capital, considering that it is later significant for social capital. Although I am not fully content with using capital metaphors, they offer some advantages. The term capital implies something that is tradable, an exchangeable value for something else implying right from the onset a marginalisation of people who do not have *it*. Although the capital metaphor fails to acknowledge the possibilities other aspects in life could offer to substitute the particular capital, the metaphor of cultural capital brings tangibility to a concept that otherwise is very complex and abstract. Here the capital metaphor shows the links between identities, learning and intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003) more clearly.

Within the topic of identities and self-concepts lay issues of culture, which include race, ethnicity, gender, religion and power. Language as more than a

system of symbols (Bruner, 2003; Singh & Peccei, 2004) demonstrates the human ability of intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003). Intersubjectivity is not only used to create meaning and make sense but it could also be an instrument for negotiating identities and roles.

*It [intersubjectivity] is not just words that make this possible, but our capacity to grasp the role of the settings in which words, acts, and gestures occur. [...] It is this that permits us to "negotiate" meanings when words go astray. (Bruner, 2003, p. 20)*

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital appears in three dispositions: the state of institutionalism, the state of embodiment and the state of objectification. The state of institutionalism refers to class-related statuses, like educational degrees that ensure access to economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The state of embodiment is described as a constitution of mind and body. Bourdieu seems to imply identity work within this state. I come to this conclusion, because he refers for instance to *Bildung* as an accumulation of cultural capital, which determines the development of embodiment.

*Bildung* (education) stands for the result of learning, however, is neither a fixed, nor an end-result focused approach. *Bildung* (education) is in fact a complex state of abilities that is continuously re-negotiated, added onto, changed, and questioned—utilizing a flexible, critical mind that enables *Weltaneignung* (Laewen & Andres, 2002). *Weltaneignung* simply translated stands for ownership of the world, but it encompasses life-competences, control, relevance, ownership, and responsible engagement with the world. In other words *Bildung* (education) is the process of developing cultural competences to gain cultural capital. It is a comprehensive concept that understands the learner as actively engaged in, or as an agent for their learning and development (Laewen & Andres, 2002).

There are strong negative connotations in the terms *inculcation* and *assimilation* (Bourdieu, 1986), which he uses to describe this state of embodiment. Yet, the state of embodiment also means making sense out of the social environment, and learning norms and values. Here Bourdieu

emphasises not only the impact of the social environment but also the control and ownership an individual has over this learning process (Bourdieu, 1986).

*Objectified state* describes cultural goods like books and artefacts which seem to adhere to the definition of objects in Blumer's (1969) sense (See Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructivism). In further explanations Bourdieu states that this form of cultural capital creates a cultural coherence, not characterising culture as homogenous, but reproducing artefacts that inherit meaning. This meaning is understandable to those belonging to the culture. The divergence between individuals is for instance reflected in language (Bourdieu, 1986).

Oliver (2005) coins the term of *global signifiers*, which are cultural artefacts (these can be day to day objects as well as pieces of art) that get meaning attached in a globalized environment, so that cultures cannot insulate themselves against this influence. In my research project, some of these global signifiers or smallest common denominators will be transferable across culture, whilst others are specific to Britain, Scotland or even the particular research site.

Cultural capital and competence are part of culture. Cultural competence is a measure of the ability to access cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). With these terms Bourdieu (1986) draws culture into a tangible realm. Thus, I made use of cultural capital and competence as tools in fieldwork. The following Figure (Figure 1. 1<sup>st</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, Relationship between Cultural Competence and Cultural Capital) depicts the nexus between culture, cultural capital and cultural competence. The circle (demonstrating cultural competence) represents that in my understanding, cultural competence is a skill developing from interaction with culture. Cultural competence also enables access to cultural capital, which in turn increases cultural competence, enhancing negotiation within a culture.



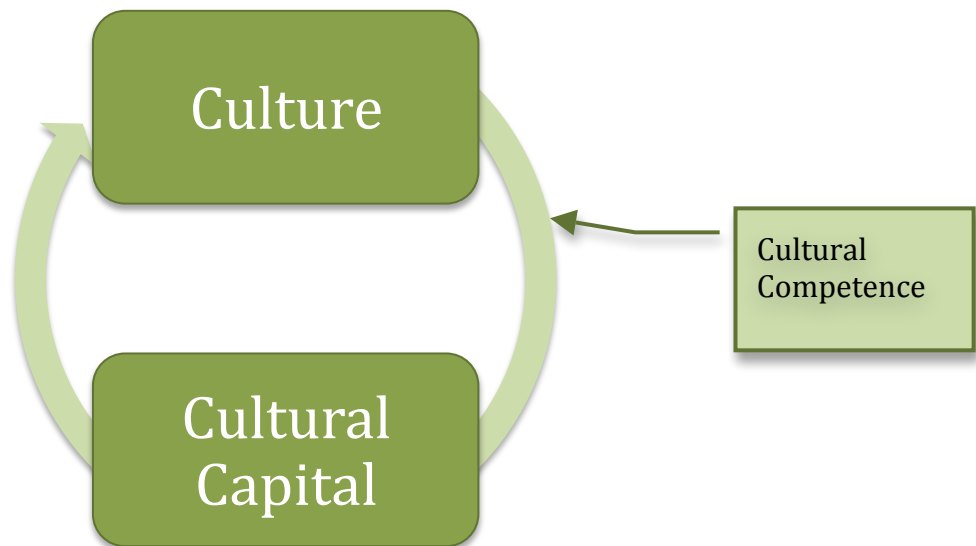


Figure 1. 1<sup>st</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, Relationship between Cultural Competence and Cultural Capital

To summarise this section I would like to extend the previous definition of culture, by adding that culture is a way of life (Zacharias, 2001), which encompasses norms, values, obligations and regulations (Bruner, 2003; UNESCO, 1982). Culture further takes on three forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The ability to learn, use and reproduce culture is cultural competence (Bourdieu, 1986), whereas Bourdieu (1986) defines *Bildung* as a form of cultural capital. In my opinion, *Bildung* is a cultural competence. The distinction between cultural capitals and cultural competence is that between a fixed object and ability. Cultural competence can be developed and applied, cultural capital is something people possess or make use of. *Bildung* is a continuous process that can provide access to cultural capital. Nasir, Hand and Taylor (2008) define culture:

*... as the "fabric" of knowing, where culture and activity are inseparable at the level of individual, group, and societal development. This means that the cultural practices that we engage in as we move across everyday, school, and professional contexts both shape and constitute our learning. (Nasir, Hand, & Taylor, 2008, p. 194)*

These cultural practices that are determined by the dialectic between language (intersubjectivity—Bruner (2003)) and culture are further discussed

by Bourdieu (1977), who describes linguistic competence as part of cultural competence. A *fundamental resource for cultural production* is language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 382). Language is understood as a system of symbols that is paramount to the creation of identities (Kroskrity, 2000). Language further constitutes a socio-cultural foundation (Kroskrity, 2000), that encompasses values and norms of the specific culture. This dialectical character of language might make it the most versatile and ubiquitous of symbolic resources used for the *cultural production of identity* (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004).

*Learning a language and becoming a bilingual is also about learning and living in different societies and cultures. It is not just about acquiring a new language, but also about understanding another culture, and developing another identity. (Franson, 2007)*

Cultural capital explores the tangibility of culture; social capital however focuses on quality and levels of correspondence of relationships. Rutter, Cooley, Reynolds and Sheldon (2007) established that social interaction within smaller as well as wider social circles ensured well-being. The dispersed networks of the refugee pupils might not become apparent in the actual fieldwork of my research. The dispersed networks, however, still might have an impact on the research participants. The researchers Ryan, Sales, Tilki & Siara (2008) found that support given personally by visiting friends or family members was crucial for the well-being of the migrants in their study. Therefore I plan investigating whether the research participants make use of social networks and social capital to gain support and foster inclusion. The exploration of social capital is mainly aimed at the school context. Hopkins and Hill (2006) for instance found that educational institutions not only provided education, but also constituted *a safe place for the children to be and learn* (Hopkins & Hill, 2006, p. 65).

This following section of the literature review aims to establish a definition of social capital that will make this concept a helpful tool for my research. It also discusses research findings about the impact of social networks and relationships for refugees and asylum-seekers in general.

## *Social capital*

Social capital encompasses attributes of social networks and quality of relationships, which can to some extent be measured or at least explored via attributes of social capital such as trust (Fine, 2001) reciprocity (Field, 2007; Putnam, 2000) and the different levels of strength in relationships—bonding, bridging and linking (Field, 2007).

Bonding social capital refers to relationships that are very strong and closely knit, like families, close friends or kin, it also can have an exclusive character as they are focusing inwards (Putnam, 2000). Bridging social capital is characterised as inclusive and outward looking (Putnam, 2000) as it literally builds bridges between different social networks and/or further away acquaintances (Field, 2007). The third characteristic linking social capital refers to relationships on an institutional level, which could include the access of individuals to institutional capital (Putnam, 2000). This can translate into access to support, to cultural capital or in reference to the refugees being able to navigate and negotiate within a new cultural environment; for instance knowing ways to access jobs, housing, schools, finance and other institutionalised parts of life.

Halpern (2005) states that social capital encompasses three aspects, which also feature the definition of culture: norms, values and expectancies. Culture is an integral part of social networks, and is reproduced in those (Bruner, 2003; Halpern, 2005). The values, norms and expectations find hold within certain social environments. Young people, for instance, are strongly dependent on their peer groups (Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991; Strohmeier, Nestler, & Spiel, 2006). The identity-creating narrative of an individual is anchored in social networks. The rules of these networks determine prescribed modules of communication and rules of narrative, Keupp et al. (2006) call this milieu-specific communication. This understanding refers to the cultural aspects of language and the significance of language in social relationships.

One of my research foci exploring the research participants' use of these networks for gaining support with their learning and inclusion necessitates the reflection about social capital. Intersubjectivity and language play as much of a role in understanding relational networks as the concept of social capital. Research indicates a significance of social networks for immigrants (Atfield, Brahmhatt, & O'Toole, 2007; Morrell, 2009) on educational success (Bloch, 2002; Field, 2007). For refugee children it is important to establish social capital, as they might have to learn new or different values for relationships. These relationships, however, may also improve the children's access to school. Bloch (2002) pointed out in her study that the social networks and the security they offer, played a significant role for refugees and asylum-seekers. The networks provided security and safety nets for the newly arrived people in her study; seventy per cent of the research participants (400 forced migrants) *attended groups or meetings for refugees* (Bloch, 2002, p. 2), indicating the need for support and belonging.

Ager and Strang (2004) explored the different understandings of integration refugees have, emphasising the quality of relationships as significant for a positive feeling of integration. The results show an emphasis on the importance of social networks for successful integration. Main aspects of the quality of relationships named in the study were the feeling of security, tolerance, *welcome and friendliness, belonging and having friends* (Ager & Strang, 2004, p. 3). One could argue that security and belonging is related to knowing the social environment and what forms of behaviour to display in certain situations. This knowledge is termed cultural scripts (Wierzbicka, 2002). Thus, cultural learning becomes part of inclusion or integration in the sense of Ager & Strang's (2004) research. The impact of the social environment and networks seems crucial in supporting inclusion and well-being.

*Social capital began as a comparatively simple concept, and it has evolved rapidly into a rather more complex account of people's relationships and their value. (Field, 2007, p. 136)*

Despite its vagueness, still developing theoretical coherence and hard to establish variables, social capital can be a valuable heuristic tool (Field, 2007; McGonigal et al., 2007) especially in combination with symbolic interactionism and social constructivism (Building the Scaffold).

The sources used in this research define social capital critically, comprising approaches from Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam. They reflect the contemporary discourse in the field in context of the Schools and Social Capital Network of the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS)<sup>1</sup>, and therefore are linked into the quest for establishing a coherent theoretical allocation of social capital in educational context. Social capital is inherent in relationships (Coleman, 1988) and an object to change due to the flexible nature of these relationships. This means that the quality of relationships, the strength of relationships and the characteristics of social capital like trust and reciprocity for instance are not stable factors. Like identities the social networks individuals inhabit are flexible, moving and changing.

Social capital is defined by two major characteristics, trust (Browning, Dietz, & Feinberg, 2000; Fine, 2001; Levi, 1996; McGonigal et al., 2007) and reciprocity (Field, 2007; Putnam, 2000). I suggest humour as another indicator for social capital, for it shows the strength of social relationships and indicates an individual's position within a network. Humour can demonstrate if an individual is included or excluded by a group (Lynch, 2010), in being able to share humour or being oblivious to, if not the object of, humour. Another reason for my suggestions of humour as indicator, derives from the following definition of social capital as *glue* (Fukuyama, 1999; Putnam, 2000) that

*... fosters rapport and intimacy and promotes friendship by reducing tensions, redesccribing differences, redrawing boundaries and appealing to common sentiments. (Basu, 1999, p. 394)*

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<sup>1</sup> AERS is a five year programme funded by the Scottish Executive Education Department and the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council. AERS aims to enhance educational research capability in Scottish HE institutions, and to use that capability to conduct high-quality research which will benefit school education in Scotland.

Adapting one's behaviour appropriately to situations within a social environment sustains social capital (McGonigal et al., 2007), which is sometimes described as the glue that keeps social networks together (Fukuyama, 1999; Putnam, 2000). Adaptation of behaviour, appropriate to one's network, is one aspect of reciprocity within the concept. Norms, values and rules are negotiated within social networks, but not outside the cultural context the members of the networks belong to. The behavioural adaptation therefore reproduces culture within the networks, as the behaviour reflects upon norms, values and regulations (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Social capital is understood as a means of access to cultural capital in Bourdieu's sense, that means for instance gaining education and degrees (McGonigal et al., 2005). However, if a group within a society is excluded from positive forms of social capital of this society, the group will, according to Print and Coleman (2003), show less or negative forms of social capital implying less trust, and less reciprocity. These negative aspects of social capital only occur in reference to the norms, values and regulations of the mainstream society. This viewpoint neglects the value of spatially diverse networks that offer social capital in different spaces, sometimes across several countries (Ryan et al., 2008).

To understand the situation of the research participants more clearly, the following section focuses on the experiences of asylum-seekers, refugees, and their families. The focus will be on the United Kingdom in general, with a more explicit exploration of the situation in Scotland and Glasgow. An issue I could not neglect within this following section is discrimination. This topic is interwoven with a variety of issues and a distressing yet common occurrence (Candappa et al., 2007; Lewis, 2006; McKechnie, 2007). Ascribing a section to it in the thesis will accentuate influences that grow out of discrimination and support the later analysis of problems relating to inclusion.

## *Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experiences*

Glasgow signed *dispersal contracts between the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) of the Home Office and the YMCA and Glasgow City Council (GCC)* beginning in April 2000 ending in March 2005 (The Scottish Government, 2003). Thus, from 2000 on Glasgow was receiving asylum-seekers. After a one-year extension Glasgow City Council signed new contracts in June 2007 (M. Walker, personal communication, August 17, 2007). Despite the increase of refugee pupils in Glasgow schools, which was a consequence of the dispersal contracts, there is a notable gap in research about the education and learning of this group of children in Scotland (Dobson et al., 2008; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Pinson & Arnot, 2007; Reynolds, 2008; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). Research such as the Scottish Executive's on the impact of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, and available services in Scotland (Barclay, Bowes, Ferguson, Sim, & Valenti, 2003), or Glasgow City Council's evaluation of services for children from asylum-seeking families (McKechnie, 2007) focuses mainly on available provisions for asylum-seekers and refugees.

The focus of my research is on *creative learning* processes and the utilization of social capital of refugee children. One issue that might impact my research participants' behaviour in school, is the pre-flight experiences. There is lack of research in this area yet some recent studies show that although the pre-flight experiences of refugees may vary, a high percentage experienced persecution directly related to them or their family. These experiences impact the children's health and academic success (Barclay et al., 2003; Hopkins & Hill, 2006; P. Hopkins & Hill, 2008; Rutter et al., 2007; Thomas, Thomas, Nafees, & Bhugra, 2004). A study conducted with unaccompanied minors, who came to the UK via different channels, shows that 32% of the research participants experienced rape and multiple rapes in their country of origin. Some of the children were trafficked, some sent by their families and some came on their own, fleeing persecution and violence (Thomas, Nafees, & Bhugra, 2004). Hart (2009) describes in his paper the impact traumatic

experiences can have on the refugee children's learning such as lack of focus and concentration. For a significant number of children these traumatic experiences add to the stresses of having missed long periods of education through war and flight (Rutter et al., 2007).

An additional hardship to such situations for the persons concerned was that at the outset of my research project, the United Kingdom objected to fully acknowledging The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) for asylum-seeking children (Macaskill & Petrie, 2000). By doing so, Britain not only denied children their human rights but also endangered one of the most vulnerable and disempowered groups of children. However, this approach was revised in 2008 and the United Kingdom is since working towards the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (BBC, 2008; Easton, 2008).

A further issue to trauma and destitution, is the negative public discourse that impacts immigrants in the UK (Kushner, 2003; Stratham, 2003). Not only the negative use of language in asylum-seeking and refugee policies (Sales, 2002) but also the mass media's depiction has an impact on the attitudes of British citizens towards the issue as some studies show (Bhavnani et al., 2005; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Kushner, 2003; Lewis, 2006; Stratham, 2003). The media influence for a negative or positive attitude towards people with migration background is significant, as it sometimes is the only source of information for individuals (Bhavnani et al., 2005).

*The terms of the mainstream political debate have been predicated on the notion that the majority of asylum-seekers are 'bogus' and therefore undeserving of entry to Britain and of social support. (Sales, 2002, p. 456)*

Stratham (2003) and Woolas (2009) discuss this in detail. In his article, Stratham (2003) points out that despite the perception of *mass asylum-seeking* in northern European countries from the early 1990s on, it cannot be spoken of as an *alien swamping*. Woolas's (2009) statistics support this argument. Stratham (2003) as well as Lewis (2006) found that anti-asylum attitudes within the population are enforced top to bottom; that means the negative



language and position of UK's politics are effecting societal discourse (Kushner, 2003).

The New Asylum Model, which was introduced in 2006 by The Home Office, aims to process asylum applications more quickly and thus improve the process for all involved. A recent study showed positive effects on asylum-seekers of this new regulation (Netto & Fraser, 2009), the positive results stand in contrast to the language that comes out of The Home Office. The aims of the New Asylum Model to have a *swifter decision making while those with unsuccessful claims will be removed more quickly* (The Home Office, 2006) are concerning formulations that seem to focus on removal rather than objective consideration. Further, the Border Agency picks up language that is similar to negative headlines of newspapers over the last years, stating on its homepage: *The UK has a proud tradition of providing a place of safety for genuine refugees* (Border Agency, 2009).

The addition of *genuine* before *refugee* implies that there is something like non-genuine refugees or "bogus asylum-seekers" as the more populist press in the UK re-interprets this term (Kushner, 2003). However, using this kind of formulation imprints negative connotation onto the terms of refugee and asylum-seekers, and renders them as the undeserving (Sales, 2002). A refugee by definition is always genuine or else he or she would not be a refugee. Implying the existence of non-genuine refugees means that all refugees are automatically in a position where they have to defend their legitimacy. It further implies the suspicion that any person with migration background is likely to be a fraud.

The Asylum and Immigration Act of 2004, sets out rules that make it difficult if not impossible for refugees to become asylum-seekers in a legal way. This impacts on the children of the refugee and asylum-seeking families, as parents are under stress and have to cope with poverty throughout the application process (Avan & Bakshi, 2004).

*(1) A person commits an offence if at a leave or asylum interview he does not have with him an immigration document which –  
(a) is in force, and  
(b) satisfactorily establishes his identity and nationality or citizenship  
(Asylum and Immigration Act 2004)*

Crawley (2010) states that there is not a legal way to enter the UK with the aim to apply for asylum. This is not only due to the fact that some refugees enter the UK via illegal ways and agents, which can be accompanied by false documents, or they came via other countries, which again does not comply with asylum regulations. In other circumstances the refugee arriving in the UK to claim asylum might not have any documents at all, which makes them criminals according to asylum regulations (Malloch & Stanley, 2005). This particular part of the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004, does not consider that someone having to flee their country might not be in the position to prove *identity and nationality or citizenship* (Asylum and Immigration Act, 2004). Further, the persons seeking asylum are obliged to prove they have valid reasons, if failing to show such a document (Malloch & Stanley, 2005).

This regulation gives rise to several problems. Persons in vulnerable positions may lack knowledge of this regulation (Crawley, 2010). Instantly upon arrival in the UK, these individuals are labelled criminals, who are obliged to defend themselves. Additionally, it might occur that the persons are not able to prove why they do not have documents with them. They may be in fear or mistrust of state employees/officers. The Refugee Council has similar concerns, stating that these measures infringe with the ideas of the refugee conventions (Refugee Council, 2004).

*The huge shake-up we have made to the immigration system is paying off. Our borders are tougher than ever before, asylum applications remain low, and we are removing record numbers of foreign law breakers. (International Work Permits. (n.d.))*

The law-breakers mentioned in the quotation above, appear in a different light as pictured by the Home Office. The New Asylum Model supposedly is

more humane, the intentions, however, seem questionable as long as the Home Office publishes press releases like the one above.

*The available evidence suggests this practice is associated with high levels of psychological distress, anxiety, affective and posttraumatic stress disorder, and deliberate self-harm.*(Hodes, 2010, p. 621)

Particularly traumatic for refugee children is being held in detention centres (Hodes, 2010). Detention, deportation and dispersal were originally used for exceptional situations, yet have become common practice in dealing with refugees and asylum-seekers in the UK (Bloch & Schuster, 2005). The authors state that there is no legal limit on how long detention can last. The latest report states that in Dungavel, Scotland's only detention centre, the duration of detention was between 7 and 181 days (Parliament Debate, 2010).

The ambivalence in the Labour policies was pointed out by Sales (2002). While the Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000 extends the anti-discrimination legislation into the public sector, it at the same time excludes immigration officers from its application. Thus, the people who make decisions about giving asylum do not need to adhere to this policy (Sales, 2002). Kushner (2003) also adds that immigration is the most significant topic during election, and, to win, Labour became *tough on immigration*, while on the other hand introducing strong anti-discrimination policies.

*Asylum-seekers have been cast as the 'undeserving', while denied the means (employment) by which to join the 'deserving'.* (Sales, 2002, p. 459)

The Scottish Government (previously Scottish Executive) has no decision power over immigration regulations, as these are reserved to Westminster. However the Scottish Government has an impact on the implementation and interpretation of these regulations, deciding about the key services immigration impacts, such as education and housing (Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). Thus, the next section explores the particular situation of asylum-seekers and refugees in Scotland.

To counter the negative picture of asylum-seekers and refugees, The Scottish Government initiated different campaigns to tackle issues of racism (Executive, 2006). Whilst the campaign was perceived successful (Executive, 2006), the national legislation and its implementation keep an anti-immigration emphasis. There is a strong political activism in Glasgow, such as Glasgow Girls<sup>2</sup>, demonstrations and sit-ins against deportation of asylum-seekers (often organised by their Scottish neighbours). Scotland is seemingly more accepting towards immigrants than England (Lewis, 2006). The picture in Scotland and Glasgow is ambivalent however. There are regular violent assaults on asylum-seekers, refugees, and British citizens with other migration background (Malloch & Stanley, 2005).

In addition to the traumatic experiences of forced migration, the immigration system in the United Kingdom renders asylum-seekers and refugees destitute. Destitution is one of the most significant issues for asylum-seekers and refugees (Netto & Fraser, 2009; PAiH, 2009). Asylum-seekers are not permitted to work during the application process and get housing revoked once they gained refugee status (Scottish Refugee Council, 2010). Further, the Scottish Government states that no one *who is subject to immigration control* can get *homelessness assistance* with some exemptions made under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (The Scottish Government, 2005).

Destitution remains one of the key factors impacting on children of asylum-seekers and refugee families in Scotland and the rest of the UK (McKechnie, 2007). As a political tool for reducing asylum-seeker numbers, destitution is a factor with which asylum-seekers have to cope (Scottish Refugee Council, 2007; Smart, 2009). This is accompanied by a range of problems, such as raised stress levels, aggression and changes in family dynamics (Avan & Bakshi, 2004). In their study about the experiences of families of asylum-seekers in Glasgow Avan and Bakshi (2004), as well as McKechnie (2007),

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<sup>2</sup> Glasgow Girls is a name of a group of young women, fighting against the ill treatment of failed asylum seekers in the UK. The seven women all went to Isengard Highschool, where their political involvement began triggered by the detention of one of their friends.

found that the whole process of application for leave to remain and the related insecurities can trigger mental health issues.

An accompanying factor to destitution is inappropriate housing. Although the situation in Glasgow is slowly improving (Netto & Fraser, 2009), there are still asylum-seekers (refugees) who spend months in overcrowded and inappropriate accommodation due to a lack of housing (Positive Action in Housing, 2009). Not only the unknown support system, but also the prohibition to work during the application process has a significant impact on the position and power within a society for refugees and asylum-seekers (Avan & Bakshi, 2004).

The prohibition to work prevents the asylum-seekers from saving money for rental down payments when looking for accommodation after a successful application. Thus, the families often rely on welfare or support from the voluntary sector, where resources are not always sufficient. This dependence further increases powerlessness over life decisions for the affected families. Therefore, it not only increases the stresses that accompany destitution, but also emphasises *othering* in public discourse.

*Destitution is a multi-faceted process and outcome. ... we argue that destitution arises from low and deteriorating stocks of – and access to – all types of material and intangible assets and “capitals”, at the community as well as the household levels. (Devereux, 2003, p. 21)*

As Devereux (2003) points out, destitution is a complex issues that reaches beyond the mere absence of financial means. Not only the actual inability to provide for housing and financial support of family, but also not being able to influence where to live, have negative impact on the overall situation of asylum-seeker and refugee families.

There are recurring incidences of racism in the areas of resettlement (Frondigoun et al., 2007; Lewis, 2006) although these incidents seem to differ according to the ethnicity of the children (Hopkins & Hill, 2006). This is mainly related to the fact that areas of resettlement tend to be in zones of highest destitution, where asylum-seekers and refugees, or immigrants in

general are perceived as a threat (Lewis, 2006; Wren, 2004). This leads to incidents of discrimination and racism towards asylum-seekers, refugees and their children. Lewis (2006) found that this perceived threat in many cases comes from confusing asylum-seekers with other migrant groups.

The problems found in previous research about asylum-seekers and refugees in Glasgow are not only linked to the political framework, they are also associated with the state of destitution in different areas of resettlement. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (The Scottish Government, 2009b), Glasgow remains the city with the highest destitution index in Scotland, particularly with reference to education and health. The situation in Glasgow needs to be taken into consideration when discussing problems asylum-seekers and refugees and their children might face.

My research focuses on refugee children, and the context of the project is Scotland with Glasgow in particular. Therefore, the cultural context of the social environment, education policies and specific Glasgow characteristics are significant. These are not only linguistic localisms but also socio-economic factors. Further, the monolingual or bilingual peer groups of the participants might be equally as important as the peer groups of other refugee children for the research participants. The significance of peer groups and social relationships not only for well-being (Ager & Strang, 2004; Keupp, 2006; Phelan, Davidson, Cao, 1991; Strohmeier, Nestler & Spiel, 2006) but also for the academic development and achievement, requires the discussion of issues of discrimination. Discrimination and the power-inequality that comes with it, impacts how and if relationships and subsequently social capital are formed.

## *Issues of Discrimination*

The reliance on only one form of strong bonding social capital (see Social capital) within a small group could be an explanation for the emergence of negative social capital. The Integrated Threat Theory states that one influencing factor that impacts the emergence of threat is that if the members of a group have a very strong identification with their group, they are more likely to feel threatened by other groups of non-group members (Rohmann, Florack, & Pionkowski, 2006; Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999). The feeling of threat increases if the knowledge about the other groups or non-group members is negligible (Rohmann, Florack, & Pionkowski, 2006). A group that belongs to the host country is labelled as 'in-group' and groups with different cultural backgrounds 'out-groups' (Stephan et al., 1999).

While Lewis (2006) states that there is strong evidence for more tolerance towards asylum-seekers in Scotland than in England, she qualifies this statement with two points. The first is that the polling evidence refers mainly to immigrants in general rather than asylum-seekers or refugees in particular. Secondly her research results indicate that particularly young people in Glasgow, and especially those from socially deprived areas are rather hostile towards asylum-seekers (Lewis, 2006).

A characteristic of these close relationships of in-groups might be that other groups are perceived as threat, because they 'threaten' change to this only stability life offers and therefore threaten life coherence. A coherence that derives out of identity negotiations, Keupp et al. (2006) call narrative identities (Keupp et al., 2006). Threat can come from a different narrative that does not conform to the milieu specific communication and its rules (Deuchar & Holligan, 2008; Keupp et al., 2006).

Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) explains that group dynamics find expression in discrimination or violent behaviour to counter the threat the 'in-group'

feels by the 'out-group' (Stephan et al., 1999). These fears and uninformed perceptions of the actual situation of asylum-seekers and refugees may have an impact on the relationships between the different groups of research participants. On top of the challenges of adapting to a new culture and language, the refugees might be faced with hostility in their new environment.

Interestingly, this mistrust not only effects the 'in-group' of UK citizens or Scottish people, but also the 'out-groups' can have inhibitions towards the new country as the following study shows. Ryan et al. (2008) established in their research that close social networks confine migrants into niches which magnify problems of exploitation, for instance. The amplifying of problems due to restriction to niches can in turn intensify the distrust and retreat into these niches (Ryan et al., 2008). These findings relate to the topic of social capital and quality of relationships—strong bonding could subsequently prevent the members within a strongly bonded network accessing bridging social capital and other networks.

The term race only began to focus on differences of geographical origin during the imperialist era in Victorian times. The term was previously used for economical, ethnical and social differences (Virdee & Cole, 2000). Despite this focus of race on geographical related differences, racial discrimination is not merely aimed at those differences. As Bhavnani et al. (2005) state, *new racism* does not focus on biological differences or inferiorities but it has at its core cultural differences. These cultural differences are used as reasons for marginalisation, exclusion and disadvantage.

Bhavnani et al. (2005) also point out that there is an interrelation between culture and racism, because cultural differences function as a source for establishing '*ethnic*' hierarchies not only racial ones. Considering the complexity of *otherness*, this thesis will not make use of the term racism, but discrimination in general; as it might be impossible to truly assess in a situation, if the discrimination occurs by reasons of race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion or a combination of these. Only if the differentiation is clear,



discrimination will be specified as, for instance, racial discrimination. This approach will be applied to avoid racialising asylum-seekers and refugees in the discourse of this research (Bhavnani et al., 2005). On one hand this is because racialising the research participants might lead to misinterpretation of their *otherness* in the context of the fieldwork and subsequent analysis, on the other hand it might draw attention to only one part of the identities the research participants inhabit, and thus lead a discussion which does not reflect upon the complexity of issues. Bhavnani et al. (2005) state that the focus of the discussion should be on the cultural differences which are at the core of racist behaviour instead of an increased racialisation and *othering* of asylum-seekers (Bhavnani et al., 2005).

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (n.d.) recognises four different types of race discrimination; direct and indirect race discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The government acknowledges that these four forms of discrimination relate to race as well as to ethnicity, gender, religion and colour to name only a few (Directgov, 2010). Pincus (2000), however, explains discrimination differently, naming its three forms: individual, institutional, and structural discrimination. The author points out that these forms of discrimination are based on race, ethnic and gender differences of groups within a society (Pincus, 2000). The group holding the power applies willingly or unwittingly discrimination to other groups.

Individual discrimination is the action single persons undertake to intentionally *other* or aggrieve another person on base of their race, ethnicity or gender differences (Pincus, 2000). Institutional discrimination describes policies and their implementation, including the action of members of institutions, which create and administer these policies that are designated to damage and *other* members of the above named groups. Structural discrimination describes that policies of these institutions, and the acts of the institutional members, are designed to be neutral, however become harmful or differential on the minority groups (Pincus, 2000). Sometimes the neutrality is exactly what turns into discrimination, because it does not

consider individual differences and the structures were set up focusing on the situation of the majority group or group in power.

There seems to be a general consensus in research that racism is less pronounced in Scotland when compared with England (Frondigoun et al., 2007; Lewis, 2006) although evidence is not always very clear. Frondigoun et al. (2007) for instance state that *many* of their participants experienced less racism in Scotland than in England. However, the researchers only had 12 minority group participants in their interview, thus the representation of this finding might be questioned. Lewis (2006) found in her research a general more positive attitude in Scotland, yet admits that this varies significantly depending on social class and the area in Scotland. Other studies though showed that a majority of participants experienced regular incidents of discrimination (Candappa et al., 2007; Malloch & Stanley, 2005; McKechnie, 2007).

Stratham (2003) points out that the top to bottom influence of discourse within a society could be countered by local groups, despite incidences of discrimination in areas of resettlement, and the negative language coming out of The Home Office. Stratham (2003) uses examples from England, showing the knowledge about the situations of the asylum-seekers and refugees, by British neighbours, built the bridge from rejection to acceptance. In Glasgow similar situation could be observed during recent years, when neighbours showed support to asylum-seeking families in their neighbourhood as they faced removal or detention. Several sleep-outs and demonstrations took place to express the concern of Scottish people about the treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees (BBC, 2006, 2007; Gray, 2006; Kemp, 2010; PAiH, 2006).

The hostility found by Lewis (2006) might be explained by feelings of threat and impact the participants' process of inclusion. Further, they might impact the negotiation of identity within the new environment, because the perception of the social environment has a significant influence on ones identities (Keupp et al., 2006). This is a point Bhabha (2007) challenges. He

suggests not differentiating between a 'them' and an 'us' but acknowledging the ambiguous position minorities, in the case of my research, refugees and asylum-seekers, hold within the space of a nation. Thus, not only the impact of the Scottish peer group but also the general social environment the research participants live in shapes their identity negotiations. The differences of culture, religion or gender and for example the similarities of for instance age, interests and hobbies, shape the discourse in which the refugee, bilingual and monolingual children are engaged. Therefore, the results of identity work might lead to inclusion, exclusion or a mix of both depending on a specific situation. The *negative stereotypes of Scottish behaviour impacts* on (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007, p. 103) not only the refugee children but also the monolingual children. Both groups are influenced by media representation as well as *personal experience* (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007).

A part of learning is to gain cultural competence; this is closely linked to identity negotiations but also to the social environment in which learning takes place. The values or ties that connect people need negotiation. These negotiations are based on the system of values and norms, of roles an individual can take on, which are defined by the social environment the individual is in. Symbolic interactionism and social constructivism focus not only on sense making and co-creating of meaning but also on values and norms within a culture.

## *Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructivism*

I am interested in how various levels of English proficiency impact on the negotiation of meaning, and meaning of symbols within classrooms. Symbolic interactionism and social constructivism try to explain and therefore support exploration, how meaning is created, how sense is made, and subsequently how identities are negotiated within the social environment. Pollard (1990) already suggests the combination of both concepts for research in education.

Solomon (1983) argues that persons from within a cultural system, should have significant congruencies in their understanding of symbols. The validation of these symbols derives from the socialization process. Solomon (1983) points out that symbols are important in creating social realities. Following this argument, language, as a system of symbols (Bruner, 2003) becomes significant for creating social realities, but also it is a tool with which the meaning of symbols is negotiated. Intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003) and language became important for my research, through their significance in creating meaning and understanding, negotiating and navigating within a culture symbolic interactionism and social constructivism.

Due to parallels in their core issues I am going to discuss the paradigms symbolic interactionism and social constructivism jointly in one section. In symbolic interactionism the interactions are taking place upon objects. Blumer (1969) defines these objects as other human beings and their categories, guiding ideas [norms, values] as well as daily life situations. Communication about these objects and creation of their meaning is established on the basis of symbols.

Social constructivism according to Berger and Luckmann (1991) takes on a similar approach to Blumer's (1969) *objects*, stating that the reality of everyday life is not only filled with *objectivations* but that reality is only

possible because of them. The authors describe objectivations as human activity and its catalogue of indicators, whereas human activity could be understood as objects in Blumer's (1969) sense and the catalogue of indicators as symbols.

Objectivation according to Berger and Luckmann (1991) implies symbolism in communication and understanding of life situations. They state that language anchors reference points within a social environment, and thus helps negotiating and defining the place of an individual within this social environment. Language further assigns meaning to objects and thus creates meaning in daily life. Gergen (1999) describes symbols as terms, which are established within the discourse of a culture. Hence language and communication become paramount for symbolic interactionism and social constructivism.

Mead (1934) states that each member of a group plays the roles of each other member of this group. The ability to understand each other's role is a precondition to reciprocity. He states that others only become part of the social environment of a person when each has played the role of the other, when the person acknowledges the different position of someone else and anticipates his or her reaction (Mead, 1934). In this sense intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003) is part of cultural competence. As a result of intersubjectivity an individual is able to decode culture-specific meanings of symbols, terms and objects and vice versa code ideas into communicable symbols.

Symbolic interactionism and social constructivism agree that intersubjectivity creates meaning and thus knowledge, depending on the culture in which it is negotiated. Further parallels between the concepts lay in the three premises for symbolic interactionism as defined by Blumer (1969) and the five premises Gergen (1994) summarises as the principles of social constructivism (Gergen, 1994; Hepburn, 2006). The premises are not exhaustive of the complexity of each concept, however serve to summarise the core issues. The first of Blumer's premises states that people act upon objects in reference to

the meaning these objects have to them. These objects are not only objects in the literal sense they are also

*... other human beings, such as a other or a store clerk; categories of human beings, such as friends or enemies; institutions, as a school or a government; guiding ideals, such as individual independence or honesty; activities of others, such as their commands or requests; and such situations as an individual encounters in his daily life. (Blumer, 1969, p. 2)*

Gergen's (1994) first premise is similar to Blumer's (1969) only he labels objects in Blumer's (1969) sense as *terms* stating that these are not restricted in their meaning by the actual item.

Both second premises focus on the meanings these objects possess, explaining that they are developed through social interaction. Gergen (1994) states that the creation of meaning can only take place *within the context of ongoing relationships* (Gergen, 1994, p. 49) using the term joint-action as also used by Blumer (1969). Both describe this term as the intersubjective (interindividual, Gergen, 1994) behaviour between individuals who identify the situation they are in and act upon the needs deriving out of this situation.

*The terms and forms by which we achieve understanding of the world and ourselves are social artefacts, products of historically and culturally situated interchanges among people. (Gergen, 1994, p. 49)*

Both concepts refer not only to interaction within the social environment but also attach a wider meaning to objects; terms are not bound to the objects they describe, but they imply further meaning. These meanings are established in the discourse of a culture, thus they comply with Bourdieu's definition of *symbolic power*. *Symbolic power* means the creation of understanding of a meaningful order, or life-coherence (Keupp et al., 2006; Michel-Peres, 2006).

*Symbolic power is a power of constructing reality, and one which tends to establish a **gnoseological** [emphasis of author] order: the immediate meaning of the world (and in particular of the social world) depends on what Durkheim calls **logical conformism** [emphasis of author], that is, 'a homogeneous*

*conception of time, space, number and cause, one which makes it possible for different intellects to reach agreement'. (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 166)*

This *symbolic power* refers to what I shall refer to as the smallest common denominator; that is the meaning, content of terms (objects) that can be negotiated intersubjectively. However, it does not include the deeper levels of awareness (Ehrenzweig, 1967); the internal processes of making sense of an individual of those terms (objects). Bourdieu (2005, p. 166) refers in his definition to Durkheim's *logical conformism*, which describes an agreement between individuals about concepts like time or space.

A similar notion, to the smallest common denominator and logical conformism, was instituted by Ehrenzweig (1967), who discussed different levels of awareness. According to him an object of art is a translation, through to the process of creation and interpretation, of the artists' deeper level of awareness, which are expressed in a restricted form—the artwork, and as such are not communicable. The observer of art, on the other hand, translates the work of art into her/his own understanding (deeper level of awareness), which goes beyond the shape of the artwork. The piece of art as object might have a different meaning to each observer though they can for instance agree upon shape, material, colour and characteristics even certain symbolism in reference to the culture it refers to. Blumer's definition summarises the significance of the communicable meaning of objects for intersubjectivity as follows:

*... response is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. (Blumer, 1969, p.79)*

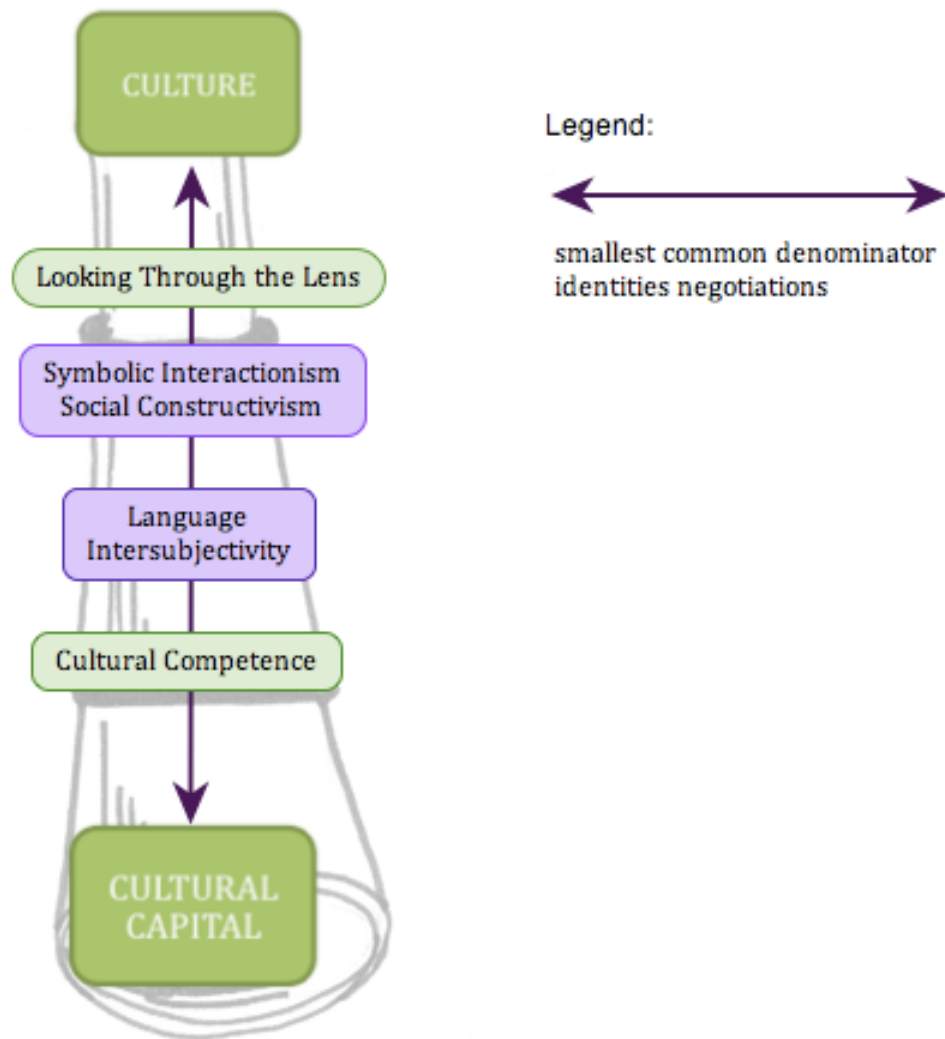


Figure 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, From Culture to Cultural Capital

The graphic demonstrates the interrelation between the cultural framework and the intersubjectivity/interaction of people within this cultural reference. It uses culture as a metaphorical lens through which an individual perceives the world, sense is made, but which is also reproduced, learned, and accessed through human ability of intersubjectivity using tools such as language. The arrow in the middle of the graphic is as described in the adjoined legend as the smallest common denominator, symbolizing here abilities for finding consensual validation about symbols. The arrow is further labelled with identities negotiations, because making sense, creating meaning and learning a new culture impacts on identities (Keupp et al., 2006; McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007). The concepts symbolic interactionism and social



constructivism explain how cultural competence develops and intersubjectivity influences this process. This model will be helpful for the analysis process of my data. It helps me to understand the different processes and aspects involved in the learning processes of refugee children. Its focus on cultural differences, language and intersubjectivity will help me make sense out of my data. It provides a possibility of approaching the data and offers a frame for reflection of possibilities of interpretation.

Blumer (1969) and Gergen's (1994) third premises correspond with each other about the significance of the social environment on the individual's understanding through interpretation. Gergen (1994) points out the fluid nature of the meaning adjunct to objects, implying possible changes and reinterpretations due to the alterable nature of the social environment—intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003). Blumer at this point describes the internalised interpretation process of an individual applying internal interpretation of meaning onto a situation s/he encounters.

Gergen (1994) introduces the significance of language, and its function *within patterns of relationship* (Gergen, 1994, p. 52), something Blumer (1969) describes with the term *transaction*. *Transaction* is intersubjectivity in Bruner's (2003) sense, an interaction between individuals that does rely on more than language; language, though, remains a significant part of this process. Language as well as *transaction* are culturally mediated (Lee, 2009; Wierzbicka, 2002); here Gergen (1994) and Blumer (1969) agree again. Blumer grants the individual a stronger influence on the meaning-making process, while Gergen focuses more on the impact the social environment has.

These different emphases offer the potential to demonstrate the dialogic character between the social and the individual that impacts on the creation of meaning. Meaning cannot be entirely co-constructed, there is always an internal reflective dimension (Blumer, 1969). Although reaching mutual understanding upon the meaning of objects is possible (smallest common denominator/logical conformism), there is no reassurance that this understanding progresses beyond the communicable notion of the

established discourse. Such is, for instance, the case with mnemonic objects, which can be ordinary day-to-day objects that derive their exceptional meaning through assignation by individual's experiences with these objects (Gauntlett, 2007). However, an outsider without the knowledge about the exceptional meaning, may not see the object beyond its conformist meaning (Bourdieu, 2005).

Meanings of objects (Blumer, 1969) derive from social interaction. In symbolic interactionism, objects are defined comprehensively beyond the notion of physical objects, which is also implied in Gergen's definition—objectivation. They are in principle everything human beings encounter and give meaning to. This approach helps me to scaffold the exploration of *creative learning* processes. Learning is a personal as well as a social process; combining both paradigms creates a helpful framework in exploring the different aspects of learning and teaching (Pollard, 1990).

I found symbolic interactionism and social constructivism helpful in reference to my research project, because the participants and I are in a cultural environment that is new to us. This new cultural environment is Scotland, and the Scottish education system, as well as the Glasgow secondary school the research took place in. Both concepts will help me focus on how the refugee children make sense of their daily life in school and also of the subject contents taught. The concepts will also help me as researcher to reflect upon my way to making sense of the data and the fieldwork. As Nasir et al. (2008) state in their research, knowledge is a cultural activity, and only acquired in context of the social environment.

The following section explores for finding a concept of learning that could also be used in a research context. The section further focuses on language and identities as significant factor of learning.

## *Education & Learning*

So far the review of the literature drew attention to problems refugee and asylum-seeker families encounter in the UK. Inappropriate housing and poor health, which play a role in Scotland as well as the rest of the UK render children of asylum-seeker families as particularly vulnerable (Avan & Bakshi, 2004; Green, 2006; Lewis, 2006; Macaskill & Petrie, 2000; Rutter, 2006). These challenges and the possibility that the children might be highly traumatized and experience marginalisation (Rutter, 2006; Sales, 2002) are only one part of the refugee child experience.

Children of these families are disadvantaged by a number of factors, including financial situation, unfamiliar culture, new forms of relationships, an unfamiliar school system, had they been in school beforehand at all (Lodge, 1998; McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007; Papageorgiou, 2005).

Not only the refugee children but also the service providers were faced with unknown challenges through the dispersal contracts. While Macaskill and Petrie (2000) still stated that the Scottish Refugee Council faced unknown issues and problems with the introduction of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the picture changed over the last ten years for the better (Netto & Fraser, 2009). Focusing on the education sector, not only provision evolved, but also initiatives and documents like *Learning in 2+ Languages* and *Evaluating Educational Provision for Bilingual Learners* (2005) offer support for education professionals who work with bilingual pupils. Glasgow City Schools employ 140 English as Additional Language teachers (McLean & Walker, 2009), and the first children of asylum-seeking families gained access to higher education institutions in Glasgow.

Despite the earlier mentioned perception of better treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers in Scotland than in England (Lewis, 2006; Dobson et al., 2008) in the access to education, Scotland and England have similar approaches. Local authorities in England have to provide nursery places, and

children between 5 and 16 have the right to attend school education, which becomes optional for 16 to 18 year olds (McKechnie, 2007). In Scotland all children under the age of 16 have the right to full-time education regardless of their status—although Glasgow City Council does not have sufficient provision for pre-school aged children, it promises to allocate places as soon as they become available (COSLA, 2007).

When reviewing the literature, the contemporary focus in research with refugee children seems to concentrate on the topics of provision, health and well being, destitution, and only marginally on education (Avan & Bakshi, 2004; Blanco & Takemoto, 2006; Closs et al., 2000 et al.; Dobson et al., 2008; Frondigoun et al., 2007; Reynolds, 2008; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). I found, as the authors above state, that most of the literature concerning actual learning by refugee children was based on practitioner discussion, yet not actual empirical research. Due to the lack of research into children of migrants in Scotland and learning of refugee children, this section of the literature review focuses on finding a definition of learning.

There is such a variety of concepts about learning and teaching methods that it can neither be the task nor is it possible to discuss those comprehensively in my dissertation. In my role as bilingual researcher I introduce two German terms *Bildung* (education) and *Erziehung* (education) because it is important for my research to differentiate between these both terms. English or other western European countries do not differentiate between *Bildung* and *Erziehung* (Laewen & Andres, 2002). In line with Bruner's (2003) explanation of the *internalist-externalist* dimension of education, *Bildung* is the *internalist* and *Erziehung* the *externalist* dimension. The internalist and externalist dimensions mean *Erziehung* is the section of pedagogy the educators have responsibility for and connects it with *Bildung* (Laewen & Andres, 2002). The two main tasks of *Erziehung* are defined as forming the environment for the learner and arranging interaction between adults and children. To fulfil these tasks it is crucial to establish dialogue within the learning environment. Laewen and Andres (2002) further point out that, choosing the dialogue as

form of interaction, offers a learning environment to which the children can contribute with their own knowledge and experiences (cf. Tasler, 2005).

Another reason to introduce the term of *Bildung* is its child centred and agentive view of the learner, understanding the need of education to be culturally relevant to create positive learning experiences. *Bildung* is a term that portrays a learner centred approach to education and implies the importance of culture, of a 'real life context' to the learning processes. The 'real life context' is defined further by Fuchs (2005b) who adds that reciprocal interlacing of the human and the world—intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003) is a crucial part of *Bildung*. A summary of *Bildung* can be found by Girardet, Brücher, & Sauder (2004) declaring *Bildung* as the knowledge and comprehension of culture and society or as Fuchs (2005a) defines it *life competence*.

This definition of culturally relevant education becomes especially significant in a research project which involves refugee children. Learning is partially a process of developing cultural competence (Bourdieu, 2005); it is figuring things out, creating meaning and understanding, and world-acquisition and ownership (*Weltaneignung*) (Laewen and Andres, 2002). For the most comprehensive discussion cognitive as well as social aspects of learning ought to be considered. The former seem to be situated within psychology and neurosciences (Cooper, 2003, Ekstrom, 2004, Edelman, 2005) whilst the latter are, for instance, explored by educational sociology or research-active practitioners (Craft, 2001, 2006, Jeffrey, 2004, 2006, Keupp, 2005, Cummins, 1998, 2001). I will not focus on psychological and neuroscientific aspects of learning in this dissertation because my interest lies with exploring social aspects within learning situations and day-to-day behaviour.

The best summary I have found so far which shows the complexity of a learning process is Claxton's (2006) *Thinking at the Edge*. He states that the knowing system, embodied in our biology, is actually *composed of four interwoven layers*. The first of these layers he calls the *gene-scape*, it describes the physical preconfigurations of an individual (Claxton, 2006). Further,

Claxton defines the *net-scape* as a *subliminal perception and unconscious registration* this is: unconscious mental processes, hereby Claxton touches arguments by Schäfer (2005) and Ekstrom (2004) that perception is already reality-creating—an interpretative process of our sensory system. On a conscious level Claxton (2006) names the *skill-scape* as the ability to recognise variations of *familiar scenarios* in new circumstances. *Skill-scape* is the basis for building on experiences, of relevance and 'real-life context'. With the final, the *word-scape*, Claxton refers to the ability for intersubjectivity and communication. The *word-scape* does introduce the social factors of learning and the significance of symbolism for meaning-making processes.

With the *gene-scape*, *net-scape* and *skill-scape* Claxton (2006) takes up points that reflect Dewey's (1966) statements that experiences live on in further experiences. Dewey (1966) concludes that therefore every experience made should support and prepare an individual for experiences to come. He concludes: *That is the very meaning of growth, continuity, reconstruction of experience* (Dewey, 1966, p.47). Dewey's conclusion seems to be supported by results from neurophysiological studies about learning and memory that found synapses change with new experiences and subsequently create new connections (Ekstrom, 2004). This is called adaptive plasticity—the *capacity of the brain to change at a neurophysiological level in response to changes in the cognitive environment* (Geake; Cooper; 2003, p14). The insights from neurosciences lead Ekstrom (2004) to the following conclusion:

*Stories are no longer conscious elaborations of experiences but the necessary cognitive structures for remembering and making meaning of otherwise lost experiences.* (Ekstrom, 2004, p.675)

An interesting aspect of this conclusion is that it connects making experiences and learning to processes of identity negotiation. However ambiguous single identities of an individual are, a main part of the creation of identities is striving for life coherence. This life coherence results in the feeling of having one stable identity. In life coherence individuals' link memories—the stories of their life—into one coherent flow (Hall, 1993). Hall calls this the *narrative of the self* (Hall, 1993). This narrative is not only an

internal process but it is influenced by the social environment an individual inhabits (Keupp et al., 2006).

Contributing to this coherence are the interpretative, creative processes of the sensory system Schäfer (2005). Therefore perception and sensual experiences are integral part of thinking and meaning making (Schäfer, 2005). Edelman (2005) calls this subconscious creation of meaning and creating a history of stories (Schäfer, 2005)—*remembering the presence*. Henceforth, learning and identity negotiations are inevitably linked with one another.

Learners are seen as the creators of their own world in *Bildung*. It is the self-initiated part of the learners' development, which leaves them with decision-making and responsibility (*Handlungskompetenz*) as well as ownership and control of the world surrounding (*Weltaneignung*) (H.-J. Laewen, 2002). *Bildung* then is a comprehensive description of self-initiated learning, and knowledge of the societal and cultural context.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) coins the term domains, which are cultural spaces within a social environment and are defined by systems of symbols. He states that such domains can be science, or literature for instance and that to gain insight and create novelty within a domain is only possible to the prepared mind. He thus picks up on Dewey's notion of experiences, which are only valuable when they build on previous experiences and therefore creating a history.

However ambiguous single identities of an individual are, a main part of the creation of identities is striving for life coherence. This life coherence results in the feeling of having one stable identity. Schäfer (2006) calls this phenomenon the history of stories. Jeffrey (2006) describes a need of belonging, a need for a social identity as crucial for successful learning. This need can be understood as part of this life coherence. In this individuals' link memories, the stories of their life, into one coherent flow (Hall, 1993). Hall calls this the *narrative of the self* (Hall, 1993, p.227). This narrative is not only

an internal process, but it is influenced by the social environment an individual inhabits (Keupp et al., 2006).

It becomes clear that identities cannot be discussed without considering cultural dimension (Cummins, 2001; Hall, 1993; Karsch, 2007; Keupp et al., 2006; Rohmann et al., 2006; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000). As Fuchs (2003) pointed out culture is the *way of life*, and describes not only the arts and literature but a complex system of values, beliefs, norms and traditions of a society. Thus, culture and identity are so interlinked with each other, that a forced partitioning of both throughout the discussion would inevitably be misleading.

One concept that incorporates, or at least provides space to incorporate the complexity of identities is Patchwork Identities (Keupp et al., 2006). The concept of Patchwork Identities has its roots in social psychologists' role behaviour and scripts (Lee, 2009; Roxas, 2010; Wierzbicka, 2002). These basal principals relate culture and identities inseparably. Identity work is accordingly a continuing process of perpetual negotiation and evaluation of the different identities in relation to the social environment (Cummins, 2001; Hall, 1993; Keupp et al., 2006).

I will use Patchwork Identities mostly in plural form; emphasising that at any given moment the identities are context-dependently scrutinized. The individual fulfils not only a variety of roles but also incorporates several identities, which indeed could even be controversial to each other. Identity work is the process of constructive self-allocation, with which fragments of experience have to be brought into a reasonable context – which is characterised as patchwork (Keupp, 2005).

*Any one social identity does not necessarily function in isolation from other identities within the overall identity-structure - it exists in a specific position relative to other aspects of identity, as well as the overall identity-structure. (Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000, p. 359)*

This statement links to social capital, in that an individual can inhabit several social networks with different or even contradicting cultures, without



incriminating identity coherence or here *overall identity-structure*. The impact of monolingual peers and social environment in general (neighbours, acquaintances, teachers) shapes the participants identity negotiations. The differences and similarities in culture, interests and hobbies shape the discourse in which the refugee and monolingual children are engaged. Therefore, the results of identity work could lead to inclusion, exclusion or a mix of both depending on a specific situation. McGonigal and Arizpe (2007) warn that:

*Immigrant and also Scottish children are influenced by negative stereotypes of Scottish behaviour, affected by media images as well as by personal experience.*  
(James McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007a, p. 103)

It is not clear how far this negative discourse will be apparent during the fieldwork or if indeed such effects show. An aspect that could be more obvious of the mutual influence within the identity discourse however is the usage of language. Language does not exist in a vacuum but implies cultural context (Eco, 2004). It seems that successful intersubjectivity necessitates common cultural ground between the individuals taking part in communication, because gestures and acts are culturally dependent. The concept of cultural scripts explains how different acts; gestures, noises or incidences vary in their meaning—context dependently. Cultural scripts epitomise norms and values of a society, finding their reflection also in its language (Lee, 2009; Wierzbicka, 2002).

*[...] among the many symbolic resources available for the cultural production of identity, language is the most flexible and pervasive.* (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 368)

Thus, intersubjectivity and cultural scripts write a subtext to language. This subtext implies expectations of behaviour (Lee, 2009), values and norms and covertly shape peer influence. It might play a significant part in bilingual students daily life at school and be one of the most challenging issues for teachers of *English as Second or Other Language* to convey within their teaching.

Language is an important factor of identity and learning to negotiate within a new culture (Rice, McGregor, Thomson, & Udagawa, 2004, Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore considering the linguistic needs of children within a learning environment, supports children's development of a social identity and inclusion within the education institution.

Research (Jeffrey, 2006; Cummins, 2001; Smyth, 2006a) suggests that a learning environment, which respects the learners and takes their real-life experiences into account relating them to the learning content, is crucial for successful learning experiences. Cummins (2001, p. 126) states that there is a *reciprocal relationship between cognitive engagement and identity investment*. He points out that pupils whose identities are not affirmed by their teachers, that is pupils who feel marginalised, not respected and not liked, are not willing to *invest their identities in the learning process* (Cummins, 2001, p. 126). According to Cummins (2001) I could assume that refugee children, disadvantaged by their English language competences, might have such weak learner identities because they are from a marginalised group.

Language as the main medium in school education does not only play a significant part in identity creation but also in acquiring academic knowledge and skills taught in school that are transferable to real life. Bourdieu (1977) describes language learning as a comprehensive process and subsequently physical as well as mental ability with which one can communicate one's relationship to and place in the social environment. With his contemplations Bourdieu defines language, as beyond the verbal system of symbols and linguistic practice as everyday social activity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004).

The latest pupil study in Scotland (The Scottish Government, 2009a) found that there are currently 138 languages spoken as the main language at home. The most common of these languages, after Polish, are Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic. This coincides with the languages that the majority of asylum-seekers and refugees from the different Asian countries speak (Dobson et al., 2008; Government, 2009a).

*Bilingual learners live throughout Scotland. They are not a homogeneous group. (HMIe, 2006, p. 1)*

The provision for this variety of bilinguals in Scottish schools takes place in the English as Additional Language (EAL) Units, yet there are only a few schools which have these units. In other schools, EAL teachers rotate and spread their support. EAL is the general support non-native English speaking children get throughout their school life with the aim of supporting access to the mainstream curriculum (Grant et al., 2010).

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) differs from English as Additional Language (EAL). ESOL is a qualification provided by the Scottish Qualification Authority (Grant et al., 2010) aimed mainly at pupils in the last two years of secondary school. The new curriculum framework in Scotland, The Curriculum for Excellence, places the significance of language at its centre. This new curriculum framework acknowledges the importance of language for personal, social and economical development (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009).

Language is an important factor of identity negotiations; considering the linguistic needs of children within a learning environment, will enable them to develop a social identity and supports their inclusion within the education institution (Cummins, 2001; Ofsted, 2005). Language as the main medium in school education not only plays a significant part in identity creation but also in acquiring academic knowledge and transferable skills taught in school. Bourdieu (1977) describes language learning as a comprehensive process and subsequently physical as well as mental ability with which one can communicate ones place in the social environment. With his contemplation Bourdieu defines language, as beyond the verbal system of symbols and linguistic practice as an everyday social activity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004).

Language as more than a system of symbols (Bruner, 2003; Singh & Peccei, 2004) demonstrates the human ability of intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003).

Intersubjectivity is not only used to create meaning and make sense but it can also be an instrument for negotiating identities and roles (Bruner, 2003).

Bucholtz and Hall (2004) state that language as symbolic resource can create culture. Cultural scripts influence the use of language. This influence implies expectations of behaviour (Lee, 2009), values and norms and therefore shapes peer influence. It might play a significant part in bilingual pupils' daily life at school and be one of the most challenging issues for teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages to convey within their teaching (Rice, McGregor, Thomson, & Udagawa, 2004). An Ofsted (2005) survey found that it is crucial for academic success that the teachers consider cultural background and language abilities of their pupils.

For bilingual speakers linguistic practices become more complex, because they need to combine different cultures. The earlier discussed differences in Native-Speaker/Non-Native-Speaker and Non-Native-Speaker/Non-Native-Speaker conversations show some of the complexity issues (Varonis & Gass, 1985). As a recent concept in bilingual education translanguaging is established as the space where this cultural transmission takes place, but translanguaging also creates space for these *multiple discursive practices* (García & Beardsmore, 2009; Wei, 2010).

Baker (2006) states that translanguaging may improve the pupils understanding of subject content, as long as they have a certain level of sufficiency in both languages (Baker, 2003). García (2009) emphasises the necessity to strengthen each language in its own right fostering literacy skills. She states that translanguaging as positive pedagogy reflects the linguistic habits of bilingual speakers. When the pupils understand subject content in two different languages this understanding is more comprehensive than that of monolinguals (Baker, 2006). The transfer of knowledge from one language to another necessitates a cultural reinterpretation of this knowledge (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Wei, 2010). This cultural reinterpretation takes place in the space translanguaging offers.

Creese and Blackledge (2010) argued that a pedagogy of translinguaging establishes connections for pupils to *the social, cultural, community, and linguistic domains of their lives* (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 112). Within this pedagogy lies an emphasize on combining instead of separating the language abilities of teachers and pupils (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Such teaching practices enrich the identity negotiations and depth of knowledge of the pupils.

Although not relating it to translinguaging, Walsh (2007) made use of the principles of it. He found that it is important to offer pupils other forms of semiotic systems besides language to express themselves, thus fostering more comprehensive forms of learning and understanding. This finding about a variety of semiotic systems is particularly significant in teaching bilingual pupils with different levels of language comprehension. It offers ways of expression and communication and enables collaboration, fostering the significance of intersubjectivity as part of a successful learning experience. One topic that emerged from Walsh's (2007) paper was that of the significance of the learning environment—*Erziehung*. Following I will reflect to some extent to the role of teachers and the learning environment.

While teaching and the teachers' professionalism are not a focus of my research project, I will not be able to divorce learning processes from the teaching that is provided. In reference to the previously defined *Erziehung* (p.56 ff) I understand the teachers' role as creating space for learning, scaffolding learning (Vygotsky, 1978, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) and incorporating different degrees of freedom, which the teachers can permit within their pedagogy. An example of such freedom is Walsh's (2007) action research about his teaching of bilingual pupils in New York's Chinatown.

The project focused on designing a webpage about migration, aiming to apply the literacy skills of the pupils. The author wrote that he intentionally created space for his pupils within the classroom setting in which they had time to draw upon their own resources of cultural capital. This empowered the pupils to collaborate, which the author describes as a *creative learning*

strategy as do Jeffrey and Woods (2009). McMahon (1997) suggests *a framework based upon co-operative learning and social negotiation* since it offers contextuality of learning and refers to the particular culture the learners are in.

Learning in school is learning in a controlled environment, in a space the institution school and its teachers create for the learner. Fuchs (2005b) suggests that although life brought into school is not life anymore it is pedagogically staged, it permits the children to learn without pressure and anxiety of *real-life failures*, which they can try out in a preserved environment (Fuchs, 2005b). He further states that school knowledge in general is de-contextualised knowledge. School is therefore a learning space where preparation for 'real life' can take part without the risks involved.

Continuing the thought of the learning environment, Kösel (2001) with his didactic of subjectivity, argues for a learning environment that considers the complex relationships between the *I*—identities of an individual; the *Objects* or subject content and the group (social networks) *We*; that make up the social environment. He emphasises the significance of identity negotiation within the learning process, as do Cummins (2001), Keupp (2005), Karsch (2007), and Jeffrey (2006). This learning environment necessitates the consideration of a variety of relationships: between the *I* and *Object*; the *I* and the group *We*; the group *We* and the *Object*; the group *We* and the single *I*; the relationships of all the single *I*; and the relationship of the *I* to itself.

Kösel (2001) suggests that the complex social relationships for the learner necessitates network competence in educators, describing it as the ability of an educator/ teacher to permit the negotiation and circulation of thought and ideas that are not in compliance with expected rules of a certain network or their own ideas of approaching a thought. This network competence could also be understood as the ability to overcome the normative restrictions of the more powerful group and thus permit the learner to take ownership and control instead of merely reproducing what is expected. With this network

competence behaviour could also be initiated in learners and enable them to be open towards difference without feeling threatened within their identities. This idea meets the previously discussed learning task of a positive attitude (Strohmeier et al., 2006) towards pluralism, and again points out the necessity of intersubjectivity within learning processes.

### *Creative Learning and Teaching*

Learning is the dichotomy of the sense making process between, socially mediated—extrinsic, and individual—intrinsic activity. This creative (Garner, 2007; Jeffrey & Woods, 2009), social (Vygotsky, 1978, Bruner, 2003, Bourdieu, 1977, 2005 et al. ), as well as personal (Schäfer, 2005 et al.) process can to a certain extent be mediated by the social environment, yet consists of internal processes whose direction might not be influenced, predictable or even understood (Claxton, 2009; Kösel, 2002). The following discussion draws on one of the most holistic understandings of learning to date, *creative learning* (Craft, 2001, Jeffrey, 2004, Jeffrey and Woods, 2009).

Creativity is not anymore understood for its association with artistic disciplines as clarified above (Claxton, 2006, Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, Gardner 1993, Gauntlett, 2007, NACCCE, 1999), yet as a *process that can be mobilized across much wider domains* (Facer & Williamson, 2002, p. 4, Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Some of the most significant strategies for creativity are collaboration with others, intersubjectivity, intent and purpose of activities, making use of knowledge in the domain of activity and the ability to draw on previous experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, Facer & Williamson, 2002, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009).

Creativity is a complex and difficult concept to define, yet Gauntlett (2006, p.19) points out it is also *one of the most central aspects of being human*. For the purpose of my dissertation I will utilize the definition of creativity from the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 1999, p.6)

*Creativity is not simply a matter of letting go. Serious creative achievement relies on knowledge, control of materials and command of ideas. Creative education involves a balance between teaching knowledge and skills, and encouraging innovation. In these ways, creative development is directly related to cultural education.*

This definition of creativity is not comprehensive and in preparation for further discussion creativity needs to be divided into characteristics that are conceptual definition-points for creativity as well as strategies that are actions constituting creative behaviour. Two major differentiations made in the literature are between grand (Gauntlett, 2006) or Big C Creativity (Craft, 2001) and common-place (Gauntlett, 2006) or Little C Creativity (Craft, 2001). Grand creativity relates to significant contributions to society as studied by Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Gardner (1993). This form of creativity reflects extraordinary position and abilities of the creative persons involved. Little C creativity however refers to day-to-day creativity such as experimenting with new recipes to cook.

Creativity has characteristics such as innovation (Craft, 2001, Cropley, 2003), *novelty, effectiveness and ethicality* (Cropley, 2003). Novelty and innovation concern ideas or activities that are deviating from the familiar. Effectiveness in creativity means to *achieve some end* (Cropley, 2003) hereby, so Cropley (2003), the 'end' can be a strategy for problem solving, or the actual creation of something. The author states that the achievements can be tangible or intangible as long as a fulfilment or purpose is created (Cropley, 2003). Cropley's (2003) characteristic of ethical creativity refers to the understanding that creativity is generally used to describe producing something—a positive result (object, performance, insight, idea). Ethicality lies therefore in the creative process as the antonym of destruction.

Strategies of creative behaviour are for instance intentional, directed and purposeful activity, problem solving and interaction (Craft, 2001, Cropley, 2003). Gardner names three characteristics of creative persons *reflection, leveraging, framing* (Gardner, 1997), these characteristics however could also be seen as creative strategies. *Leveraging* for instance Gardner (1997)



describes as the ability to take no account of one's weaknesses but focus on strengths and act upon these strengths. Therefore I conclude that *leveraging* can be understood as a creative strategy, in the sense of making the best out of one's abilities and actualities. *Reflection* might seem more obvious as a creative strategy, because the term reflection implies making space to think, to analyse and consciously build new experiences within one's own knowledge framework. *Framing* is a creative strategy that is closely related to reflection, it is learning from hindsight, learning from mistakes. These creative strategies are all embedded in the identity discourse of an individual. Willis (1990) states that:

*... symbolic work and creativity place identities in larger wholes. Identities do not stand alone above history, beyond history.... memberships of race, class, gender, age and region are not only learned, they're lived and experimented with* (Willis, 1990, p.12)

Jeffrey (2006) too, found that *social identity* and *belonging* had a significant impact on positive learning identities. Cummins (2001) emphasises that only the assertion of pupil identities by teachers will ensure a successful negotiation of knowledge. The factors identity, language, and culture impact not only learning in general, but also successful identity negotiation, and inclusion (Bourdieu, 1977; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Identity work is a continuing process of perpetual negotiation and evaluation of the different identities in relation and reaction to the social environment (Cummins, 2001; Hall, 1993; Keupp et al., 2006).

A significant part of creative ability and activity was established as the perceptive and interpretative processes of the sensory system and the brain (Schäfer, 2005, Edelman, 2005). To link the concept of *creative learning* into the preceding discussion of creativity and learning and teaching, while acknowledging creativity's traditional relationship to art, I explore the term *aisthēsis*. *Aisthēsis* links the previously discussed complexities and interpretation processes of perception with experiences, creating meaning and learning.

*Aisthēsis [...] stands for general perception with all the senses, [and] the impression that the perceived leaves on the body. In the original meaning of the concept, tactile and visual perception constitutes a whole, and it was not until later [...] that his meaning was reduced to merely an eye that observes, without a body. (Bleeker, Belder, Debo, Dries, & Vanhoutte, 2002, p. v)*

The modern term of aesthetic developed only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Chantrell, 2004; Shelley, 2009) yet derives from the Greek term *aisthēsis* which means perception, experience—even feeling or *felt experience* (Chantrell, 2004; Faubion, 2000). It is not only perception with the sensory system but holistic experience that involves kinesthetic, sensory, emotional and rational experiences combined. I will when referring to aesthetic always mean the comprehensive and original understanding of *aisthēsis*.

This understanding of aesthetic includes the axiom that there is no *cognition without aesthetics* (Welsch, 1995). This axiom reflects previously discussed literature such as Claxton's scapes that connect physical and sensual experiences, Schäfer's (2006) history of stories which is strongly linked to an understanding of perception as an interpretative process of the sensory system, or Edelman's (2005) *remembering the presence*. Boal summarises these principles as a characteristic of aesthetic space:

*Knowledge is acquired here via the senses and not solely via the mind. [...] (Boal, 1995, p. 28)*

Having established the wider meaning of aesthetics the following explores the possibilities of aesthetic space for the classroom. Boal (1995) describes one characteristic of aesthetic space as the dichotomy between the space of the theatre audience and the actors on stage while sharing the same general space they are in two different realities. Translated into a classroom environment that would be the dichotomy between learning (*Bildung*) and teaching (*Erziehung*). Imagination is the place where everything is possible while memory is restricted by experience, yet imagination is not possible without memory (Boal, 1995). Lastly Boal (1995) gives aesthetic space the ability to change distance, room, time, perspective, and enable imagination to overcome physical boundaries.

In the process of learning the object (subject matter), is negotiated on higher levels of awareness through shape, language, characteristic of the object into an internal understanding of it by the learner, this negotiation might take place with the object itself or due to mediation, social interaction with the teacher or person who aims to scaffold the learners process of making meaning (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009, Vygotsky, 1978). This process of translation or negotiation between internal and external processes gives the learner ownership and control over the learning process. Aesthetic space can therefore translate into learning space.

A concept of learning that enables to merge the above discussed points of learning is *creative learning*. The physical, cognitive and social processes that meet in a learning experience are reflected in this concept. In consideration of exploring learning processes of refugee children on a day-to-day basis, I sought a concept of learning that could be instrumentalized in my fieldwork. I decided to utilize the concept of *creative learning* not only because creativity is such a significant topic within the educational context (Claxton, 2006, 2009, Craft, 2001, Craft, Gardner & Claxton, 2008, Jeffrey, 2004, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009 et al.) but also because I was looking for a concept of learning that was comprehensively considering aspects such as the social environment, identity negotiations, language and culture within learning situations.

There are authors who consider social constructivist and symbolic interactionist approaches to education, and/or realize cultural context of learning, offering child centered agentive views of pedagogy beginning with Rousseau and Pestalozzi, over Durkheim, Vygotsky, via Freire and Dewey (Smith & Knapp, 2011) to more contemporary texts in culture education in Germany (Keupp, 2006, Fuchs, 2005, Lindner, 2006) or Cummins (2001) and Baker's (2006) focus on bilingual children's needs in educational settings. However, I was looking for a concept that not only comprehensively, but foremost contemporarily—recognizes recent developments within the education sector in the UK and implements latest research findings. I found that *creative learning* offers these possibilities accompanied by a clear list of

strategies assigned to the different characteristics of *creative learning*, which provides me with tools for fieldwork and analysis.

Literature reports that in the 1980s there was an almost annihilation of creativity in national education strategy, which the authors understand as directly linked to a devastating Ofsted report about increased stress, dissatisfaction and even bullying within the teacher profession (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009). The NACCCE (1999) report emphasises the significance of creativity within school education subsequently creativity experienced a renaissance in school context, if still within the framework established in the 1980s (Craft, 2001, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009).

Extensive research in the 1990s explored creative teaching (Jeffrey, 2004). In a paper for the ECER conference Jeffrey (2004) provides a comprehensive list of characteristics and strategies of creative teaching, deriving from the research of the previous decade. The characteristics and strategies reach from *being child oriented over sharing puzzlement, motivation by scaffolding* to *considering pupil identity and supporting cultural and bi-lingual relevance* (ibid. p.3).

I will draw on the experiences from the CLASP project for orientation. The CLASP project was a comprehensive research project that Europe wide explored *creative learning* practices. Smyth (2006) was the only researcher focusing her research on the learning practices of refugee children in Scotland. In the final report Jeffrey (2006) wrote that:

*There is obviously much more research that could and should be carried out to add more character to these findings, to add more features and to take advantage of the comparative aspect to sharpen and test these findings in new situations. (Jeffrey, 2006, p. 412)*

In the following I will discuss the four characteristics of *creative learning* and the learning and teaching strategies that are related to each of the characteristics.

The concept of *creative learning* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) is the starting point of the discussion towards an understanding of learning. Reviewing the literature failed to unveil a comprehensive definition of learning. Papert & Harel (1991) state that there is no coherent and concise definition or concept of learning that could be understood as 'the right way' to learn. I found *creative learning* the most comprehensive approach towards an understanding of learning and subsequently chose this for my research.

The four characteristics Jeffrey & Woods (2009) established, are very helpful in exploring learning processes and they give a tangible framework to use in fieldwork. These four characteristics are *relevance*, *control*, *ownership* and *innovation* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009). In the referred book these strategies are described as creative teaching strategies, however, Jeffrey & Craft (2006) published the same characteristics for *creative learning*. The difference is in that the teachers make use of these strategies to inform their pedagogy (*Erziehung*), providing a learning environment in which the learners can experience *creative learning* strategies, utilize those for their personal development. Whilst the concept initially seemed concise and accessible, it appears to become more convoluted, in their latest book (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009), where each of the four points became more complex and comprehensive. This appears to be symptomatic for a quest in establishing a concept of learning and teaching.

### *Creative Learning Characteristics and their Strategies*

*Control* extends this relevance further. Here Jeffrey and Woods (2009) relate to Seneca's 'non scholae, sed vitae discimus'. The emphasis with this characteristic is on the learners' intrinsic motivation; their understanding of the relevance of learning for their own life. It also means that the learners have choices to proceed with the learning the way that suits them most (Jeffrey & Craft, 2006).

*Ownership of knowledge* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) seems to derive out of relevance and control of the learning process. That is, the learning process becomes personalised by and makes sense to the learner. Thus, the *relevance* of the learning content becomes internalised and meaningful to the learner. Again, culture and identities play a role in this process. The negotiation with learning contents, the learning environment, and the individual learner aims to create this ownership.

*Innovation* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) does not necessarily refer to ground-breaking new findings; it is more the process of change through learning. Being able to apply the newly learned knowledge or skills. The personal change described by Jeffrey & Woods (2009) goes hand in hand with continually re-inventing the learner's self. Re—establishing identities and ones own position within the world surrounding, as new skills, and knowledge are mastered. Therefore, invention is part of innovation and might be easier to observe in the fieldwork than is innovation.

This understanding of *creative learning* relates to social constructivism and social interactionism. It demonstrates the significance of the learning environment and the dialectic between the individual and his or her environment that constitutes the sense-making processes, or creation of meaning. *Creative learning* supports suggestions such as Nasir et al. (2008) that pupils are more involved in learning processes, if they see a purpose in the learning and the learning content makes sense to them, having relevance to their lives. Following I am introducing strategies related to the different characteristics of *creative learning* (a more comprehensive list is in Appendix Appendix A.1). I make reference to Jeffrey & Woods (2009) for this is the latest publication about *creative teaching* and learning and therefore is safe to assume the most mature and developed writing about this concept to date.

Jeffrey, & Woods (2009) established 4 Characteristics for *creative learning* discussed above (pages): relevance, ownership, control and innovation. Each of these characteristics comes with a set of strategies (which I will refer to as *creative learning* strategies). These strategies vary between different

publications; therefore I am referring to the latest publication under the assumption that this is a more 'mature' state of the concept of *creative learning* than earlier publications, as it has been under research and development during the last almost 20 years (Craft 2001, Jeffrey, 2004, Jeffrey & Woods 2009).

I begin with discussing *creative learning* strategies that were ascribed to *relevance*. *Positive social relations*: described by Jeffrey & Woods (2009) as trust pupils have in their teachers and the teachers' commitment to their pupils, links into the significance of exploring social capital when researching learning. The authors highlight the importance of emotional involvement not only between teachers and their pupils but also emotional involvement in the learning process. Jeffrey (2004) writes that *meaningfulness [...] involves visceral experience*. Visceral experience, relates to deep intrinsic feelings (Oxford English Dictionary) that accompany an experience, therefore linking this strategy of *creative learning* to aesthetics as explained above.

*Engaging Interest*: Under engaging interest the authors explain that although the term 'fun' is used ubiquitously to describe positive learning experiences, that does not mean activities described as 'fun' are not work or challenging. The core of a 'fun' activity, is what I described earlier as 'real life context' the authors describe it as 'real events' and purposeful directed activity used by (Craft, 2001, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) to define creativity. These 'real events' relate to aesthetics they imply experiences that are meaningful and engaging for the learner (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009).

The 'fun' part in learning could also be explained with the Interest Deprivation Model. This model becomes especially interesting when considering the cultural differences and challenges refugee children can experience within institutional education settings in the UK. Litman (2005) states the Interest Deprivation Model conceptualises curiosity as *reflecting experiences, which* are qualitatively and quantitatively specific although they can be overlapping. These reflecting experiences are directed towards an

*interest in learning something new (CFI) and the feeling of knowledge-deprivation due to uncertainty (CFD).* (Litman, 2005, p.809)

Two points can be taken; the necessity of acquiring knowledge emerges out of the rather negative feeling of deprivation (knowledge gap) or out of a positive feeling of sheer interest. Both rationales rely on neuronal concepts of wanting and liking which are two different neuronal systems and incentives of action. However, the interest deprivation model supports the idea that bafflement (cognitive crisis) initiates learning as knowledge gap closure (Litman, 2005).

I could argue that the cognitive crises or feeling of 'missing out' becomes particularly apparent in children whose' cultural and linguistic background derives significantly from that within a school setting. Reynolds and Trehan (2001) state in their discussion of education of differences, that differences can actually be valuable sources for learning and the *basis for understanding, confrontation and change, both within educational programmes and as a consequence in other, wider, social settings* (Reynolds, Trehan, 2001, p.357).

*[...] homogeneity is itself a contested ideological achievement that seeks to erase crucial differences in identity.* (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 370)

Classrooms are heterogenic entities; the pupils within have different needs, experiences, abilities and expectations, the more so, if their cultural background differs from the one of the educational system (Pollard & Filer, 1999). The topic of heterogeneity and learning significance of cultural differences leads to the next characteristic of *creative learning: Ownership*. The first strategy of ownership I will discuss is *Social Learning*. Similar to the strategy of positive relationships, social learning emphasises the relationships within a learning situation although here focussing on participative strategies (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) such as *Co-participation* as interaction between teacher and learner), *Collaborative Participation* (interaction between learners), *Collective Participation* (when interactively engaged as a whole class).



In a previous study Smyth (2006) found that refugee children benefited from participatory strategies used by their teachers. She also discovered some indicators for the significance of social capital in supporting the children's success in school. This is demonstrated in her findings that collaboration between pupils and teachers, and the trust the teachers give the pupils in letting them take ownership and control of the learning processes, became what she calls a *multilingual conference* (Smyth, 2006b).

Ladson-Billings (2006) discussion about cultural competence in teaching incorporates positive social relationships, engaging interest and participatory strategies of the *creative learning* concept. The author emphasizes the need for the teacher to establish reciprocity, a dialogue, between the life in school and the 'real-life' of their pupils to ensure culturally competent teaching. This culturally competent teaching might help towards providing learning chances for developing the mentioned positive attitudes. In the quote below Ladson-Billings (2006) relates to an aspect of social capital as means of access to cultural capital (reference page) with establishing that cultural competence directly impacting on socio-economic status.

*My sense of cultural competence refers to helping pupils to recognize and honor their own cultural beliefs and practices while acquiring access to the wider culture, where they are likely to have a chance of improving their socioeconomic status and making informed decisions about the lives they wish to lead. (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 36)*

Culturally competent teaching is thus relevant teaching, because it establishes a real-life context for the pupils and provides access to cultural capital—here mentioned as improvement of the *socioeconomic status* (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Further Reynolds & Trehan (2001) discuss in their pedagogy of difference, another aspect of culturally competent teaching, in promoting recognition and acceptance of the heterogeneity of a classroom and take up the differences between the various pupils as a relevant and valid source for learning, instead of glossing over the differences.

As Strohmeier, Nestler, & Spiel (2006) point out in their paper, challenges of

growing up within a pluralistic society and a positive attitude towards cultural diversity have become new developmental tasks for children. A task further acknowledged by the Scottish Government (Eurydice, 2004).

*Social learning is both the source of creative learning and a result of it* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009, p. 79), the authors state that interpersonal skills of learners are enhanced within a *creative learning* situation, where room for participation is created. Within social learning reciprocity and intersubjectivity are significant strategies of creativity (Gauntlett, 2007). Social learning includes therefore reciprocity, trust and participatory strategies. It is not only an indicator for *creative learning* but also for the use of social capital, for which trust and reciprocity are characteristics (Field, 2007).

Next I am going to discuss strategies of *Ownership* such as *Developing Ownership* and *Identity and Playing with Identities*. Pollard and Filer (1999) point out that the main reference groups for a learner in school context are the teachers and the learners' peers. However, they also point out that the societal discourse of pupil roles has an impact on the identity negotiations of the learner within the school context. I have established this argument earlier in the literature review (p.35ff, p.55ff). Jeffrey and Woods (2009) differentiate between aspects of identity negotiation such as social identity, which is *imputed to people, the expectations, characterizations and stereotypes laid upon people* (Jeffrey, 2004, p.4). Jeffrey & Woods (2009, p.53) state that these social identities were *crucial to the development of a positive relationship between self and learning*. Social identities as part of the patchwork therefore reflect the interaction with the social environment. Learner identities are about development of confidence in learning, experimenting with social interactions, and experience competence in achievement. To develop a positive learner identity the learners need a secure space within which they can experiment, experience and gain the ownership over the learning processes (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009).

The next section focusses on *Control* and its strategies. *Familiarisation—Scaffolded engagement* is based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development,

which is the space between the actual state of ability /knowledge of a learner and the potential ability/knowledge the learner can reach with help of a teacher or More Knowledgeable Other (Vygotsky, 1978). A knowledgeable other can be a peer or parent, someone who is not an educational professional, who knows more about the topic to be learned than the learner. The reference to the More Knowledgeable Others establishes a reference to the strategies of social learning, such as co-participation, collaboration and participation, and good relationships where not only engagement with one another in the learning process but also emotional support from the teachers and peers are significant for a positive learning experience and strategies within *creative learning*. This reference to *creative learning* also establishes that scaffolding here does not mean *facilitation but co-participation* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) therefore understands learners as agents (Bruner, 2003) of their learning experience who utilize the offered scaffold proactively in the most suitable way for each learner.

Scaffolding also offers space to the learners to gain control over their learning and experiences. The authors (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) state that scaffolding is a phase followed by *mediating* the phase of gaining control in which the learner brings more of their own ideas into the learning process, gaining more control of their learning experience. This control is applied in what Jeffrey and Woods (2009) call the *developmental phase or moulding and crafting* here the learner produces a product of their previous experiences. However, it does not become clear if this also refers to the development of new understanding and ideas. The examples given by the authors all have practical connotations, building something or performing a dance. I would suggest that this idea of a *peak experience as product of their* [the learners] *exertion* (ibid. p.44) is indeed transferable (and intended to be so) to new knowledge in all its facets; this can be new cognitive abilities or language skills or insights gains, just as the given physical examples.

The last characteristic I am going to discuss is *Innovation*, strategies related to Innovation are: *Acquisition of new knowledge, Acquisition of new skills* such as cognitive, technical and social skills (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009). Developing

cognitive skills such as creative thinking. One of the most significant characters of critical thinking for Innovation is that learners who experiences *creative learning* have the ability to take more risks and try out new ideas (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009). This can be reflected in the gaining of technical skills where the learners become more able and willing to manipulate *resources, ideas and concepts*, while being able to use scenario techniques predicting possible outcomes and consequences of their actions. Other strategies that characterise innovation in *creative learning* are the willingness to take risks and experiment as well as applying problem solving strategies.

*Social skills*: as strategy of innovation is making use of intersubjectivity and social competences within co-participatory, collaboratory, and co-operative situations. For instance using negotiation skills, developing personal identities in interaction within a group but also inclusion and democracy were used to describe social skills' strategies.

The result of *creative learning* is not only the acquisition of new factual knowledge but it is *personal development*. *Creative learning [...] can lead to moments of profound insight, which in turn leads to new knowledge of the self and radical self-development* (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009, p.75). Not only insights into subjects but also into relationships and ones own understanding of the world are aims and outcomes of this concept.

The preceding discussion of strategies and characteristics of *creative learning* establishes the concepts comprehensive approach towards discourse in education. Ideas from across the educational sector such as synaptic plasticity, the interest deprivation model, *Bildung* and *Erziehung*, identity negotiations as immanent part of learning and the significance of culture and learning within positive educational environments are reflected in *creative learning*. Further, the strategies discussed provide some focus points for fieldwork and observation, as they clarify more in detail the behaviour patterns underlying the fours characteristics of ownership, control, relevance and innovation.

My research focuses not only on the actual learning processes of the pupils, but also has to incorporate the provision offered in this particular school. Paying some attention to the teachers' pedagogy in reference to the school structure. As I understand from exploring the literature, the best learning environment is established by effective co-operation (interrelationship) between school, teachers and pupils.

In her research about second language acquisitions of adult migrants, Papageorgiou (2005) states that the social environment, the real-life situation of the learners, plays a significant part in the classroom environment. She suggested that this particular finding is transferable to other educational situations because of the social aspects of learning. Smyth's (2006a) findings show similar results, she states that relevant teaching takes up the learners' experiences and incorporates them within the teaching process.

The social aspects of learning, in relation to the discussion under Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructivism, necessitate some considerations of the position of language in learning situations. This requires emphasis on cultural dimensions of language, intersubjectivity and some specifics in learning of bilinguals.

To summarise, an understanding of learning is to say: Learning is the dichotomy of the sense-making process between, socially mediated—extrinsic, and individual—intrinsic, activity; whereas mystification establishes incentives for learning. This creative (Garner, 2007; Jeffrey & Woods, 2009), social, as well as personal process can to a certain extent be mediated by the social environment, yet consists also of internal processes whose direction might not be influenced, predictable or even understood (Claxton, 2009; Kösel, 2002). I found Jeffrey and Woods (2009) concept of *creative learning* helpful and it establishes a good tool for coming fieldwork.

For my research focus and interests, the social aspects of learning and significance of culture, are paramount; thus *creative learning* provides the most appropriate conceptualisation of learning for this research project. It

also enables me to reflect on my conceptual framework, because it considers the implications of values and norms, and the cultural background of the pupils. *Relevance of learning relates to a broad range of accepted social values* (Jeffrey & Craft, 2006, p. 47)—that means it operates according to the culture of the social environment. Yet, it also considers *pupils' identities and cultures* (Jeffrey & Craft, 2006, p. 47), thus establishing a 'real-life context' of the learning situation.

My research aims to contribute to the understanding of how learning takes place on a daily base in school. My focus on refugee children is to gain more understanding of the significance of culture in learning situations, exploring how the previously discussed strategies of establishing positive relationships, utilizing intersubjectivity, and negotiate meaning help to overcome an initially disadvantaged position.

## *Summary Literature Review*

The literature review first explored the situation of refugee and asylum-seekers and their children in the UK, with a particular focus on Scotland. The picture emerging out of this review is ambivalent, while there is exclusive legislation rendering asylum-seekers and refugees as a group of undeserving (Sales, 2002), there is also strong local support, charity provisions and antidiscrimination campaigns.

The review of the literature revealed that refugee children had specific experiences that impact on their families and themselves. These experiences translate into the school context with specific needs such as language support, but also pastoral care, considering that mental health issues can present a problem for these children. There was, however little literature about the actual learning of refugee children in Scotland.

I established in a more general discussion that teachers and schools have a responsibility to support the identity negotiations of their pupils (Fuchs, 2005b; Kösel, 2002; Rasmussen, 2008). Identities are only one aspect of learning though, the complexity of learning makes it almost impossible to discuss comprehensively. The most exhaustive research about learning I found was done within the frame of the CLASP project and the emerging framework that *creative learning* offers, if not an all-encompassing concept, a tangible and realistic framework to use as reference point for the practical part of my research.

The gap in literature concerning the education of refugee children, with a focus on how learning actually takes place, and supports these children with their inclusion in a new environment raised several questions. Based on Smyth's (2006a) study I aimed to explore, if *creative learning* strategies were available to refugee children in a secondary school environment. Considering the marginalised position of refugee children, I further aimed to

explore if these creative strategies, help the pupils with their inclusion. This decision is based on Cummins (2001) and Keupp's (2005, 2006) emphasis on the significance of identity work in a learning context, and the need for a positive identity development for scholarly success. These focus points constitute the core interest of my research. Further, the involvement with the AERS case study influenced my interest in exploring the role social capital plays for refugee children in school.

The literature review revealed the significance of peer influence and support networks for refugees and asylum-seekers and their children. In a school context I aimed to find out how utilizing social capital would support the refugee pupils' inclusion and learning processes. I sought to explore if social capital has impact on identity negotiations. Subsequently my research questions emerged: 1. Which *creative learning* strategies, can refugee children access, and how are these strategies helping to support their scholarly development and inclusion? 2. What role is social capital playing in school context, particularly with the emphasis on support and inclusion? 3. In context of learning and teaching does social capital influence identity constructions and understanding of the refugee learners?



## Methodology

The Methodology chapter explores key issues of my research's proceedings. Firstly I introduce core points of ethnography and thus lie out my decision for choosing an ethnographic research approach. After introducing the research approach I itemize my fieldwork schedule and acquaint the reader with the research participants listed in a table (Table 6. Pupil Participants). Some of the participants, who were comfortable sharing more about their lives I introduce more in detail.

Subsequently I introduce the methods I choose for my data collection. The Methods section is split into the time before the pilot and after the pilot study, because the initial analysis of my pilot impacted on introducing methods that I had not initially planned. Reflecting on ethical issues of my research project and finally making a point for the reliability of my ethnographic research project follow the discussion of methods.

This research project is based on dialectic between epistemology and ontology. My research aims to explore what forms of *creative learning* are accessible to the pupils and how, and if, social capital impacts on inclusion and learning (ontology). The research project as an entity is an epistemological process. In engaging with the research foci, making sense of the data and contemplating the significance of the research and its results, the project becomes an epistemological journey for the researcher (Riain, 2009; Woods, 1996).

The two main and opposing approaches to research are positivism and interpretivism. Interpretivism (or naturalism (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2003; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009)), encompasses the idea that there is a distinction between a natural reality and a social reality (Cohen et al., 2003; Gray, 2004). Meaning that social phenomena can only be understood from the viewpoint of the actors within this social environment (Cohen et al., 2003). This point of view necessitates different approaches and methods to

undertaking research than positivist inquiry uses. Some of these approaches are ethnography and case study (Cohen et al., 2003; Gray, 2004; Somekh & Lewin, 2005; Troman, 2006; Woods, 1996).

Positivism, however, focuses more on ontology than on epistemology. Positivism claims that empiricism should explain phenomena and the relationships, deducing laws from this observation and subsequently predicting future events (Giddens & Sutton, 2009). Positivist research tends to make use of experimental research designs and quantitative methods.

The research questions determine the methods used. Methods are sometimes associated with certain theories or research approaches. In general terms, positivism is related to quantitative and interpretivism, to qualitative methods—although such a strong dichotomy is not necessarily a reality in actual research. Here the use of methods depends strongly on the research aims, and mixed method approaches are sometimes the best research strategy (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

Inductive research approaches, the want or need to explore a phenomenon within its context, tend to require qualitative methods. Deductive research approaches, the validation of hypotheses, focuses more on quantitative or standardised tests, including or excluding variables, which may impact upon the phenomenon (Cohen et al., 2003; Flick, 2006). The explorative nature of my research questions requires an inductive approach to research such as ethnography.

### *Learning by Doing—Ethnography*

This section will give a brief overview of ethnography and make an argument for it as the most appropriate, and thus ethical, approach for my research project. Small (2009) found that ethnography is commonly used in research about equality and immigration. I needed an approach for my

project that would permit multiple methods, but also give the participants and the researcher time to form relationships and establish an environment of trust (Troman, 2007). This environment needed to permit the researcher time to reflect, step back from the situations and not impose her curiosity and the need to gather data onto the participants.

Ethnography has various facets (Walford, 2008) and each journal article or book tells a different tale about it. There is a wide-ranging discussion about the nature of ethnography, which, for a novice researcher, makes the matter difficult to navigate (Conteh, 2005 et al.; Delamont, 2009; Hammersley, 1992, 2003; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009). During an introductory ethnography seminar I was confronted with the following statement:

*The prime ethnographic skills cannot be communicated or learned in the seminar room or out of the textbook. Students can be prepared, forewarned, or educated in ethnography, but the only way to learn it is to do it. (Ball, 1990, pp. 157-158)*

Troman and Jeffrey (2006, pp. 34–35) suggest the following three principles of ethnography firstly fieldwork needs to take place over a period of time so that contradictory situations can emerge. Secondly, the research has to take into account the cultural context of the research site and the position the participants hold in this context. Thirdly, the research ought to include *theoretical perspectives* during research and analysis.

The main points I take out from this are to permit enough time at the research site to encounter ambivalent patterns of behaviour. Acknowledging the process of data collection, and rewriting as analytical process that establishes the dialectic between the researcher, the data, and the field. Considering the context of the research site and participants is the next point. Eventually the *theoretical perspectives* (Troman & Jeffrey, 2006) allow the researcher to examine the data from different levels and scrutinize theories.

The generic principles by Troman & Jeffrey (2006) help to understand the gist of ethnographic research. The summary of *features of educational ethnography* offered by Walford (2008, pp. 7–11) seemed to provide a more hands-on help

with planning and understanding my fieldwork. According to this, ethnography is *a study of culture that utilizes multiple methods, diverse forms of data, engagement, acknowledges the researcher as instrument and where participant accounts have high status.*

My research project is not only about the questions of *What does it mean to be a member of this group?* and *What makes someone an insider or an outsider here?* (Walford, 2008, p. 7) it is further about questions like: Who has the power within the group?; Who has the power in the field settings?; What are the rights of the research participants, within their group, within societal context and within the research as such? and What obligations do I have as a researcher? I shall add the perspective these questions provide for reflection and analysis to the discussion.

The second feature of *multiple methods, diverse forms of data* Walford (2008, p. 8) was accompanied by a variety of issues. Besides the timetable and the schedule of the school year, gatekeepers influenced the choice of fieldwork times and spaces within the field strictly. I was able to observe different spaces at different times at the field, but was to some extent also restricted to those pre-negotiated access spaces. This, however, did not impact upon the variety of methods that I could use and adapt depending on the needs of the participants and the fieldwork.

Under the feature *engagement* Walford (2008) points out the necessity of spending a substantial amount of time in the field. Most authors fail to give the novice ethnographer an actual time frame, or the meaning of the term 'a substantial amount of time'. The smallest common denominator seemed to be a year (Delamont, 2002; Walford, 2008). An approach to time that was very helpful and fitted within the restrictions of undertaking ethnography in a school was the *selective intermittent time mode* offered by Troman and Jeffrey (2006, p. 28). Here, the authors give a time frame between three months at minimum up to two years, helpful is the authors' suggestion that the number and regularity of field visits can be flexible and concur with the circumstances of the research site.

Due to the scheduling of a school year (Walford, 2008) and its partially counter rotation to an academic year, as well as other issues of access planning, my site visits were a constant struggle. I realised during the pilot that the secret of a 'substantial amount of time' might not lie within the amount of hours spent at one field visit, but with the regularity of visits and the establishment of trust between the researcher and the participants, and also, time spent with key informants (Troman & Jeffrey, 2006). Time and space were always strongly related (Laroche & Roth, 2009; Tilley, 2008).

Walford's (2008) characteristics for ethnographic research: *researcher as instrument* and giving *participant accounts a high status* go hand in hand because they require open-mindedness of the ethnographer. Whether this relates to judging what is happening in the field and the best way to present this data, or keeping an open mind to culturally mediated expectations (Walford, 2008).

Although ethnography is a diverse field (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2008; Giddens & Sutton, 2009; Hobbs, 2006), for me ethnography is more than a way of undertaking fieldwork, it is a mindset and approach to research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009). Ethnography aims to understand peoples or cultures (Denscombe, 2007) not only through merging into the field, but also through preparing the research, engaging with the relating research topics, culture and texts (Denscombe, 2007; Faubion, 2008; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009; Lavie & Swedenburg, 1996). I therefore agree with Woods (1996) and Riain (2009) that ethnography is personal and the researcher an instrument.

I chose an ethnographic approach for my research because of the possibilities ethnography carried in my understanding. Exploring literature on research approaches led to my appreciation of ethnography as a methodology—a *philosophy of methods* (Sapsford, 2006, p.175). I came to understand ethnography as permitting space for reflection, acknowledging research as an epistemological process, which creates dialectic between the research

matter, participants, tools and concepts. Having academically grown up in a strong positivist environment, I was intrigued by the depth and texture ethnographic research offered (Smyth, 2006a/2006b).

Unfamiliar with the Scottish school system I wanted to explore, to see what happened on a daily basis in the school environment. I had no hypotheses about the research area. My research questions necessitated an explorative research approach, an approach that would permit flexibility to the needs of the field, and the research participants.

Ethnography not only frames a set of possible methods that helped explore my questions but also permitted me, as researcher, to enter the field open minded, to ask questions and explore. Related methods such as participant observation, field notes, conversations, photography and group discussions were appropriate in conducting my research (Atkinson et al., 2008; Troman, 2007; Walford, 2008). These methods allowed the experience of day-to-day life within different learning spaces. The variety of these methods provided the possibility of method triangulation, adding verification to the research. This dialectic provides for a dynamic research process that would not have been possible with other research approaches.

As established in the Literature Review, language is a symbolic resource (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004) that characterises human intersubjectivity (Bruner, 2003) and creates culture (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Considering the position language has in my research project, an approach to research I could have used instead of ethnography is discourse analysis. Starks and Trinidad (2007, p. 1372) claim that it analyzes the way in which language is utilized for accomplishing *personal, social, and political projects*. Discourse Analysis understands that language carries cultural contexts and symbolism (Gee, 1999; Wooffitt, 2005). It focuses on the way in which words are used and stories are told (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). For my research this would be an interesting approach, as a next step. The focus of my research however were general issues like the accessibility to *creative learning* and the utilization of social capital, discourse analysis would delve more into the 'how' of these

questions, an appropriate next step after the explorative approach my research constitutes.

### *An Ethnographic Case Study?*

Cohen et al. (2003) state that case studies are specific instances, which draw on real-life context and can provide thick data and vivid description of this instance. This summary makes sense for my research. Cohen et al. (2003) come up with a long list of what a case study compiles, this list could be a list of characteristics to ethnography and qualitative research methods in general. Subsequently it might be characteristic for conducting a case study, however, it does not define the term case study as such.

Stark and Torrance (2005) give a definition of case study, which implies the creation of '*social reality*' through symbolic interaction and social constructivism. The first step of a case study is description and identification of issues followed by analysis and theorizing (Stark & Torrance, 2005). This definition concurs with the ideas established in the conceptual framework (Building the Scaffold).

Despite some authors considering the definition of case study an easy one, such as, *one case ... will be studied in detail, using whatever methods seem appropriate*. (Punch, 1998, p.150), others have more problems with the clarification of this term. VanWynsberghe & Khan (2007) warn in their paper not to confuse the case with units of analysis. According to the authors a case study circumscribes units of analysis by itemized descriptions from fieldwork, which was limited by time and space, through regular engagement with the case and the units of analysis. My case are the refugee children from the EAL Unit in this particular school.

Considering this definition, my research project is a case study, seeking to provide elaborate details of the learning spaces encountered. The research is inevitably linked to conditions of time and space. This necessitates the

dialogue between the units of analysis, which are the distinct phenomena that are investigated (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007), and the context of the research environment. For my study, this means the focal points help explore the phenomena I set out to understand. I refer to the units of analysis generally as the different learning spaces, within a Scottish secondary school, including their timeframes. The case study itself is also temporarily and spatially bound to a certain period of time in which I, as the researcher, was present and gathered information about the units of analysis.

I sought to understand the possibilities for *creative learning* processes and the possible impact of social capital onto these processes. Thus, I needed a methodology that focused and supported a process-oriented approach and is coherent with the conceptual framework I established above. I have previously established ethnography as my methodology. Whilst *schools themselves are not naturalistic settings* (Gregory, 2005, p. xxi) ethnography seeks to study not only peoples but also cultures (Denscombe, 2007). School or the classroom environments are cultures to be explored. I would argue that my research is an ethnographic case study, because it was conducted over an extended time period (Troman & Jeffrey, 2006), a variety of explorative methods were used (Walford, 2008), I focused on description and identification before the analysis and theorizing. Further '*social reality*' was understood as based on intersubjectivity and cultural context (Stark & Torrance, 2005).

### ***Fieldwork Structure and Participants***

The research took place in a Glasgow secondary school with 602 pupils (2008) enrolled. The school had long-standing experience with refugee children. In reference to the Literature Review and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) study (The Scottish Government, 2009b) the area this research took place in belongs to one of the most deprived in Scotland. Throughout the thesis I will refer to the area as Isengard and the school as Isengard High School. The tables below (Table 1- Field Visit Log



Pilot Study, *Table 2- Log Field Visits Main Project*) provide an overview of the timeline, participants, and content of each field visit.

## LOG OF FIELDWORK OF PILOT

| Number Field Visits | Who                     | When       | Where              | What                                                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                   | Supervisor & Researcher | 12.11.2007 | EAL Unit           | Introducing the research<br>Getting to know teacher gatekeepers            |
| 2                   | Researcher              | 27.11.2007 | EAL Unit           | Lunchtime Photoclub, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils                        |
| 3                   | Researcher              | 29.01.2008 | EAL Unit           | Lunchtime Photoclub, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils                        |
| 4                   | Researcher              | 05.02.2008 | EAL Unit           | Negotiation with Mr Gee, Meeting Headteacher                               |
| 5                   | Researcher              | 21.02.2008 | EAL Unit           | Negotiating access to mainstream classrooms with Mr Gee and other teachers |
| 6                   | Researcher              | 26.02.2008 | English/ Math      | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Monolingual Pupils              |
| 7                   | Researcher              | 29.02.2008 | English/ Math/ EAL | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils  |
| 8                   | Researcher              | 04.03.2008 | English/ Math/ EAL | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils  |
| 9                   | Researcher              | 07.03.2008 | English/ Math/ EAL | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils  |

SPRING-BREAK

*Table 1- Field Visit Log Pilot Study*

# BEGIN MAIN PROJECT

|    |            |            |                    |                                                                                       |
|----|------------|------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Researcher | 29.04.2008 | English/ Math      | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Monolingual Pupils                         |
| 11 | Researcher | 02.05.2008 | English/ Math/ EAL | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils             |
| 12 | Researcher | 06.05.2008 | English/ Math/ EAL | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils             |
| 13 | Researcher | 13.05.2008 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils             |
| 14 | Researcher | 16.05.2008 | English/ Math      | Focus Groups, Monolingual Pupils                                                      |
| 15 | Researcher | 27.05.2008 | Assembly Hall      | Exam Day bits'n'pieces, Bilingual & Monolingual Pupils, Mr Gee                        |
| 16 | Researcher | 17.06.2008 | Tron Theatre       | Refugee Week, YDance, Bilingual Pupils, Mr Gee                                        |
| 17 | Researcher | 18.06.2008 | Tron Theatre,      | Show, Bilingual Pupils                                                                |
| 18 | Researcher | 24.06.2008 | EAL Unit           | Talks about Pictures, Bilingual Pupils                                                |
| 19 | Researcher | 10.11.2008 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual Pupils                           |
| 20 | Researcher | 17.11.2008 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Bilingual Pupils                           |
| 21 | Researcher | 20.02.2009 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations (Migraine), Bilingual Pupils                |
| 22 | Researcher | 02.03.2009 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Learning Style Exercises, Bilingual Pupils |
| 23 | Researcher | 03.03.2009 | EAL Unit           | Regular Fieldwork, Classroom Observations, Learning Style Exercises, Bilingual Pupils |
| 24 | Researcher | 19.05.2009 | EAL Unit           | Teacher Group Discussion                                                              |

*Table 2- Log Field Visits Main Project*

The research took place in three learning spaces: the English as Additional Language Unit, a spacious room in the school's language corridor; the English classroom, of similar size on the same corridor, and a spacious Maths classroom on the school's ground floor. This particular class consisted of underachieving maths pupils, three of whom had refugee or asylum-seeker background. I conducted some observation in the entrance hall, which has a stage and also serves as dining hall. I observed the refugee participants outside the school, during the West End Festival, and at an event during refugee week.

It was necessary to undertake research over an extended period of time. The research focus of refugee children led me expect fluctuation in research participants due to families sent to detention centres, being deported or moving away once receiving leave to remain in the UK. Further, expected language barriers in the research process to require a multi-method research approach to ensure that the participants' voice was heard.

The school had an English as Additional Language (EAL) unit initially with three EAL teachers. It was chosen within the frame of the pilot project, which simultaneously was a case study research for the Schools and Social Capital Network of the Applied Educational Research Scheme. The site was known to co-operate in research projects and the case study leader had previous research experience there. The initial aim of following up pupils from a primary school of the CLASP project (Smyth, 2006a) was a major factor for choosing the site, apart from its reputation for being an inclusive school.

I undertook 24 field visits in the period from 12th November 2007 to 19th May 2009. The field visits were scheduled according to the school year and success of access negotiations. The first 9 visits constituted the pilot study and paralleled as part of the Applied Educational Research Scheme's (AERS), Case Study 3.3.

The deputy head teacher had introduced the research leader of the AERS case study team and me during the initial meeting. After this I was alone in the field and Mr Gee (an EAL teacher) negotiated all access to the school and became my primary gatekeeper. The table below (Table 1. Teacher Participants) shows the participating teachers.

| Teacher Participants | Subject         | Other Information                                                    |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ms Ferry             | EAL Teacher     | From Iran<br>Left school before the research finished                |
| Mr Gee               | EAL Teacher     | From Glasgow<br>Primary Gatekeeper to EAL Unit<br>Political Activist |
| Ms Lee               | Maths Teacher   | From Glasgow<br>Gatekeeper Maths Class                               |
| Red Flash            | English Teacher | From Canada<br>Gatekeeper English Class                              |

*Table 3. Teacher Participants*

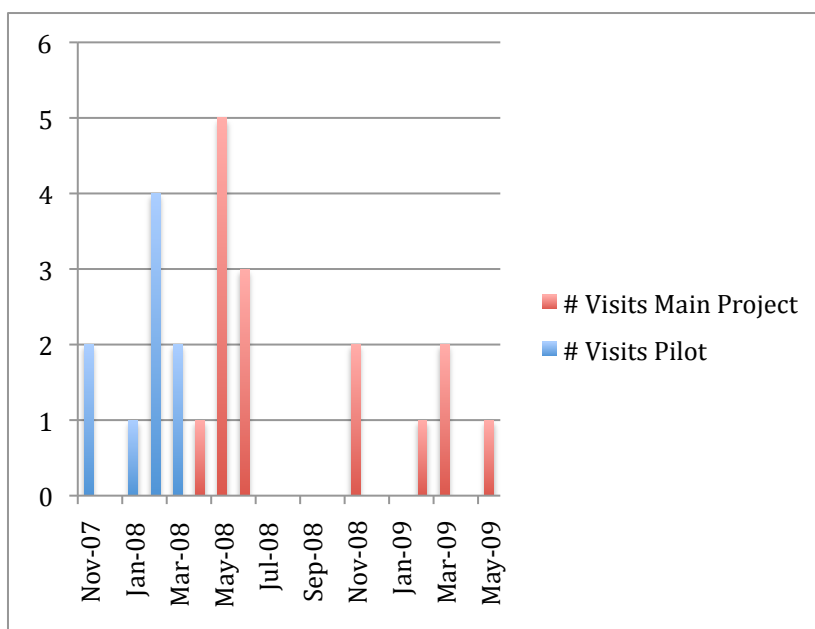
I began my fieldwork with the lunchtime photo-club, this way the pupils had a chance to get to know me before I followed the observations and conversations up in their classrooms. A fluctuating number of about 10 pupils participated in the lunchtime photo club. I obtained 168 pictures from Kibby, Linda, Emily and Hilary. The other participants of the lunchtime photo club did not consent to participate in the research project, this reflects that access negotiation to the actual pupil participants was as challenging as to the classrooms.

The initial classroom observations were restricted to the EAL Unit due to ongoing access negotiations. I decided to observe children in the Math's and English classrooms because these were the only two mainstream classrooms I could negotiate access to attended by some of the bilingual children from the EAL Unit.

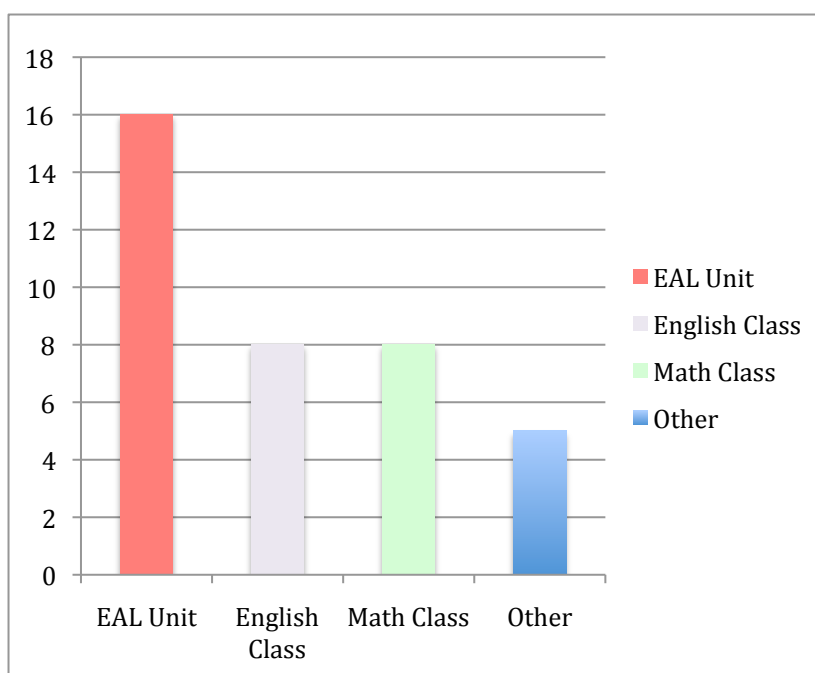
Mr Gee encouraged conducting research during the Tron Theatre event. The dance project took place as part to Glasgow's refugee week and most children from the EAL Unit took part. For my research this was a valuable decision as the children experienced me outwith the school context. I therefore could observe their social interactions in a different context and they opened up to me more throughout the process. One of the girls, who up to this point had not talked to me at all, even took me aside and spoke to me for half an hour providing valuable inside to her experiences in school and with peers.

The observation foci of the different field visits were determined by my previous field visits and questions that arose from those. Here my research diaries and the reflections about the research process I wrote about and analysed provided direction and focus within the fieldwork.

The following tables provide an overview of the number of field visits. Table 4 shows numbers for the pilot study and the main part of my research. In Table 5 the numbers for the different classrooms I conducted research in are listed, whereas *Other* refers to extra-scholar activities such as the Tron Theatre visit or my observation in the assembly hall, when I had arranged to come to school and the teacher forgot about our arrangement.



*Table 4 Number of Field Visits Pilot and Main Project*



*Table 5 Number of Field Visits Learning Spaces*

The table below (Table 6. Pupil Participants) shows the student participants: the left column the refugee and the right column the monolingual or other bilingual participants. Some participants chose their own aliases for me to use in the research. An exercise I used as icebreaker when beginning my fieldwork. The other code names I assigned to the participants.

| Refugee Participants | Monolingual Participants |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Kibby             | 1. Aline                 |
| 2. LilMo             | 2. Derian                |
| 3. Linda             | 3. Dr Doolittle          |
| 4. Gulliver          | 4. Mr Mojo               |
| 5. Eloise            | 5. Dragonsniffer         |
| 6. Amon              | 6. Ladies Man            |
| 7. Kathryn           | 7. Duncan                |
| 8. Sandro            | 8. 6666                  |
| 9. Marco             | 9. 1279                  |
| 10. Martha           | 10. True Scottish Man    |
| 11. Ralph            | 11. Lorna                |
| 12. Norman           | 12. Vikki                |
| 13. Mara             | 13. Df                   |
| 14. Amelie           | 14. GC                   |
| 15. Alfred           | 15. Jonny                |
| 16. Adam             | 16. J-Jay                |
| 17. Katja            | 17. Emily                |
| 18. Sultan           | 18. Hilary               |
| 19. Big Bear         | 19. Julia                |
| 20. Franka           | 20. Grant                |
| 21. Zula             | 21. Anna                 |
| 22. Carol            | 22. Dougal               |
| 23.                  | 23. Mary                 |
| 24.                  | 24. Bill                 |
| 25.                  | 25. Anja                 |
| 26.                  | 26. Nina                 |
| 27.                  | 27. Cindy                |

*Table 6. Pupil Participants*



I obtained consent from all but two pupils; in all three classrooms this meant there were 49 pupil (22 refugee and 27 monolingual) participants. The names in the table above (Table 6. Pupil Participants) will not all reoccur during the analysis and discussion of the fieldwork. The main reason for this is that although all these pupils signed consent forms and agreed to participate in the research, during fieldwork they would not actively engage with me.

I was able to build a relationship of trust with most of the pupil participants, and they actively engaged with my presence in the field. Yet, some of the participants where withdrawn and avoided interaction during my field visits.

For the following participants I give some background information that did not emerge naturally in the analysis and discussion, yet provides for a better understanding of these participants.

**Kathryn** was the youngest pupil in the EAL Unit, she and her brother, **Amon**, arrived during the main phase of the fieldwork, from Yemen. Mr Gee told me that the parents showed paperwork claiming her age 12 and her brother 14. Both looked significantly younger, and the teachers doubted their true age.

**LilMo** was one of the refugee participants. He had attended an EAL Unit during his primary school, but since he came to secondary school, he only attended mainstream classrooms, of which he was very proud. Subsequently I would only meet him in the English classroom. LilMo appeared to insist strongly on his Scottish identity when he was in school, he would even regularly use Scots in the English classroom.

... LilMo ... is from Algeria, [he] came to Britain in 2003 and during primary school was in an EAL unit but is it not in Isengard. He said he was in an EAL unit in primary school and he referred to this rather derogatively. I did not understand why he would be upset when asked to be in the EAL unit. But maybe it is because it was in primary school and he is grown up now or maybe he did not want to be *othered*. (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008, p.3)

**Gulliver** and **Alfred** were both refugee pupils, yet I only saw them in the Math class. Gulliver told me that his family had moved around before settling in the UK and he was not in the EAL unit anymore. Alfred was very withdrawn and quiet; I could not gain any further information on him.

**Kibby**, although signing the consent form, refused any interaction with me, until the day of the dance performance, more than half a year into the fieldwork. She and her family were detained during my time in the field. Through engagement of the teacher and lawyers the family was released after three weeks detention and Kibby came back to school.

**Linda** took part in the lunchtime photo club, yet I had no access to any of the other classrooms she attended.

## *Methods*

Above (Learning by Doing—Ethnography) I made the case for using ethnography as research approach for my study. Ethnography utilises a variety of methods the most common are participant observation, fieldnotes and conversations. Subsequently, Cohen et al. (2003) describe the ethnographer as *methodological omnivore*. I decided to use Fieldnotes, Research Diaries, Participant Observation, Participant Photography, Conversations, Group Discussion, Questionnaires, and Teacher Interviews.

The rationale for choosing my research methods are that to answer my research questions I had to utilise methods that were explorative, would gather the right data, and would also work within the demands of my particular research site. So necessitates the quest for the role of social capital (Question 2, p.104) participant observation and conversations to explore the interactions and relationships of the participants as well as gathering the participants' points of view to triangulate my observations. Participant photography provided an incentive for conversations and more in depth information about the participants' view of school and their social environments. Field notes and Research Diaries were not only methods for gathering data but also for reflection and analysis. They influenced decisions about further fieldwork and focus within the research. (Atkinson et al., 2008; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2008; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2009; Pink, 2007; Troman, 2002; Van Maanen, 1988; Walford, 2008; Woods, 1996). The decisions for using questionnaires and group discussions derived out of preliminary analysis of the pilot data from the pilot study. Here questions emerged that could not be answered with the initially planned methods.

Research Questions:

1. Which *creative learning* strategies, can refugee children access, and how are these strategies helping to support their scholarly development and inclusion?
2. What role is social capital playing in school context, particularly with the emphasis on support and inclusion?
3. In context of learning and teaching does social capital influence identity constructions and understanding of the refugee learners?

I decided to split the discussion of methods into before the pilot, reflections on the pilot study and after the pilot. This provides the reader not only with a chronological presentation of the decision and research process but the reflections on the pilot study are needed to clarify the additional methods I chose after preliminary analysis of the pilot's data.

In the following I will discuss at first the methods chosen before undertaking the pilot study. Then I provide reflections on the pilot study, focussing on issues that impacted my further research design and conduct such as access and the issues that necessitated further exploration and thusly methods. This section is followed by the methods emerging from the analyses of the pilot data.

Subsequently the structure of this chapter is as follows, initially planned methods Participant Observation, Photography as Research Tool, Field Notes, Reflections on the Pilot Study and Conversations and Group Discussions. The chapter closes with the section Ethics, followed by Validity, Reliability and Verification.

### ***Participant Observation***

I set out to understand how *creative learning and teaching* takes place within school culture. I wanted to understand and see how pupils and teachers act and interact, aiming to grasp details of this interaction, listening to authentic voices and see how the understanding of the pupils (and the teachers) about themselves impacted the learning and teaching processes. Thus, it is only

logical to apply participant observation as one of the main research tools in my project.

Thus I dismissed the use of structured observations. When planning observation and taking an observation plan into the field, the preset ideas inhibit the researcher keeping an open mind to the situation and seeing the unexpected. It would not be ethnographic because structured observation would create a wall—hindering access to the field, instead of *being-in-the-world* (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). However my presence would influence the situation (Gregory, 2005). As Ball (1990) suggests there is no such thing as non-participant observation. Once I entered the research site I was subject to the curiosity of the pupils, and their reactions towards me, as the pilot study clearly demonstrated.

After being in the field some time, trust was established between the research participants and me. Informal interviews or conversations happened more often, and occurred naturally depending on the dynamics within each situation. I further found that these conversations were more ethical than structured interviews with a group of particularly vulnerable participants. It empowered the participants to approach me once they were ready and felt comfortable to share experiences. They were aware of my usage of this information as they saw me taking notes and sometimes inquired to see these notes, or I used the voice recorder with the participants' permission.

Taking field notes and trying to keep up with the transcription of conversations throughout the fieldwork was as crucial as it was difficult. But I realised that within these informal interviews or conversations lay the key to understand more in depth what I observed. At some point during fieldwork my contact teacher told the children that I just got married. So I had to promise to bring my laptop along the next time and show the participants some of my wedding pictures. The conversations about this made the participants share about their own families and I gained a better understanding of the significance of family networks through this reciprocity. In a structured interview, this would not happen: I would have

put myself into a power position of an inquirer, interrogating and scrutinising personal space of the interviewee instead of sharing and developing a mutual space for conversation (Ellis & Early, 2006).

The reciprocity of perspectives is a crucial point in gaining understanding, as discussed under symbolic interactionism and social constructivism. This is because sense-making, and understanding are always dialogic (Bakhtin, 1986). Informal conversations were a strategy to balance power-inequalities within the field. I built relationships of trust with the participants, sometimes through sharing my own experiences, sometimes by showing my field notes and repeatedly explaining what I was doing, and other times building trust through engaging in sharing participants' experiences. This permanent awareness of my position within the field permitted a high reflectivity during participant observation. It enabled me to adapt during fieldwork, for instance change methods when necessary or withdraw from a situation.

## ***Photography as Research Tool***

*Something is 'visible' if it can or could be seen, whether or not anyone notices or cares about it. 'Visual', on the other hand, refers to an attribute, dimension or mode of sense perception, not to objects per se. (Wagner, 2006, p. 55)*

Wagner's (2006) differentiation between *visible* and *visual* seems to be symptomatic for conducting ethnographic research. Using the metaphors of visibility and visualising Wagner (2006) reflects on being in the field. Questioning what I as ethnographic researcher chose to make visible, to focus on, while undertaking fieldwork. Wagner (2006) defines the *visible* as objects independent if they are noticeable, *visual* is when such objects gain meaning as described by Blumer (1969) & Gergen (1994/1999). A part of ethnographic work is to make the visible into something visual as researcher in the field. This process explores which of the phenomena encountered in the field are differing from the norm (Wolfinger, 2002) the main responsibility for this interpretation lies with the ethnographer. For me as a stranger to the Scottish school system, several *visible* phenomena became *visual*; similar might be applicable to my research participants, because the diverse cultural backgrounds off-set what in the mainstream classrooms, belongs to common knowledge.

Handing out cameras to research participants shifted not only the power over the discourse in data collection from the researcher to the research participants, it also provided a unique chance to make phenomena *visual* to the researcher from the perspective of the research participants. A main feature for undertaking ethical research, Rose (2007) suggests, is collaborative research, recognising the research participants' knowledge and implementing this in research planning and interpretation. The author suggests that photography, as method, is already collaborative through the mutual agreement of producing the pictures and negotiating their content.

To use participant photography was a joint decision of the case study team 3.3 of the AERS' Schools and Social Capital Network. Where my participation as research fellow doubled with being a PhD pupil undertaking a pilot study for my research project. It was next to participant observation and field notes, the only initially planned method for the pilot project (cum case study). We provided digital cameras instead of disposable cameras to give the research participants more control over the photos they had taken. This way they could delete pictures they did not want to share with us or each other (Smyth, Catts, & Allan, 2007). Further, engaging children in the data collection was crucial as they are the agents of their experiences (Bruner, 2003; Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2006; Rudduck & Flutter, 2000; Smyth et al., 2007).

Another aspect of this way of data collection which I was in particular focusing on was to get pictures of mnemonic objects (Gauntlett, 2007) as indicators for the social networks and the quality of relationships the research participants inhabit. Mnemonic objects are objects that are assigned a personal meaning beyond their general function as object. This meaning derives from the giver of the object or the significance this object has to a certain event in the life of a person (Gauntlett, 2007). I thought when the pupil participants take pictures of mnemonic objects; these can be incentives during conversations later on. These pictures should help to explore not only the kind of relationships, but also the quality of relationships the pupil participants have. This again could help me to understand the social capital the children accessed in school, because mnemonic objects are linked to significant relationships (Research Diary, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2007).

For exploring the relational networks of the research participants I could also have used network maps (Hawe & Ghali, 2008; Porteous, 2009). However, supervisory and shared experiences with colleagues from the Schools and Social Capital Network demonstrated various forms and interpretations of these network maps (Research Diary, 23rd June 2007, Saturday, 15th November 2007). Other researchers from the Schools and Social Capital Network have demonstrated the difficulties in explaining the meaning of the



relational maps to the research participants during seminars (Research Diary, Thursday, 27th October 2008). The need to explain a prescribed form of relational maps would have constituted a significant hindrance in applying this method with my participants. Not only language barriers but also the cultural differences in relationships would have invalidated those maps as a research tool. It would have presumed a certain understanding of relationships and positions of people within this map. A presumption that instead of being explorative would have tried to force the participants into a certain, and probably unfamiliar, way of thinking, thus defeating the object of ethnographic research. Sociometry was not an option either, because only a small number of the pupils in the school took part in the research, and the relational maps gained, would not give an insight about the quality of the relationships.

Taking photographs is as much an ubiquitous as personal language (Pink, 2007; Wagner, 2006), combining photography with informal interviews turns the *visible* into the *visual* (Wagner, 2006). This method reflects the significance of places, objects and people in the participants' lives. It further shows where differences in perception between participants and researcher lies.

The gate-keeping teachers found it necessary to undertake this photography project in a structured form. This should ensure us getting the cameras back and minimizing the danger of inappropriate and unethical pictures. Therefore, one of the teachers suggested and agreed to lead a lunchtime photo club. It was planned to be held every week focusing on a different topic, about which the pupil participants took pictures. Setting up the lunchtime photo club ensured the teachers and I knew which of the participants had cameras. The participants went through an instruction session, making sure they were aware that photographs of friends and schoolmates should only be taken with their consent.

Initially one of the EAL teachers agreed to run a lunchtime photo club during which the pupils were handed cameras to keep for a week. Each week I asked the children to take certain pictures, which would subsequently help

me to understand how they experience spaces in school and also show mnemonic objects that would indicate their relational networks and quality of relationships.

I developed a list of focus points for the research participants. Each of these points constituted the topic for one week of photography. The first three topics were realised within the pilot of my research.

On the way to school—what is typical for Scotland, Glasgow or of somewhere else I have lived or visited?

Objects at home and school, which I like, dislike or am not sure about.

Objects at home and school which remind me of my friends or family in country of origin or whom I do not see very often or who live far away.

Objects at home and school, which remind me of my Scottish friends or family in Scotland or of my friends and family here in Glasgow.

Activities in school.

Things and places in school of significance.

Staff members of significance.

What else do I want to tell—write a (picture) story (about the school, friends or family)

Photographs are a rich textual source of information that offers much room for interpretation and further exploration. Hence, I held informal interviews with the participants who permitted the use of their photographs. In these informal interviews I explored more in depth the incentives of taking each picture and the meaning of the pictures' content.

Another possibility would have been to let the research participants video-record school days, people or learning that were most significant to them. However, even using the tape recorder occasionally changed the dynamic in a conversation, it became staged and sometimes awkward. Using a video camera, either by myself or by the participants, would have influenced the data collection similar to using a structured observation frame. It would have literally put a lens over the observation, and defeated the object of the researcher being *in-the-world* (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994).

There is no spontaneous way to video-record in the field, as Pink (2007) puts it: *people in a video are always 'people in a video'* (Pink, 2007, p. 98). Besides the

danger of 'staging' the research participants when using video recording, the complexity of this activity might have infringed upon ethical precautions. Whilst the photographs as stable objects can easily be deleted and controlled by the participants directly on the camera, to reach a similar control over the videos all research participants concerned would have had to have training in manipulating videos on the computer. Another child accidentally or unwillingly photographed could not just delete the appropriate picture but would have to download the video and manipulate it with appropriate computer programmes. Thus, the control given through photographs would be restricted again, giving power only to the participants able to use video cutting software.

There was an average of ten participants taking part in the lunchtime photo-club, yet only four of them were prepared to share their pictures. Unfortunately, the photo had to be discontinued due to health issues of the organising teacher, and so after only a couple of sessions I could not obtain more photographs.

The four participants (two refugee and two monolingual girls) took 168 pictures, of which the most taken single object was the tower blocks, with 24 pictures; and the second most frequent was the sky with clouds, 14 times. During the interviews it became clear that a lot of pictures, which initially looked like some mishaps to me, were taken because the children found the objects pretty or significant.

The other kinds of pictures taken, 39 in school and 41 at home contained objects which had more specific meanings and were often related to friends or environments with which the children felt comfortable. As the access restriction prohibited me from following these friendships throughout school I have no other data on it than the photographs and the interviews about these photographs. They are not significant for this research project but will be used in further publications.

The pictures that have been taken within school were focusing on favourite subject rooms, the EAL unit and hallways or surroundings of the school. None of the children took a photograph of the official common areas in school where the children have to gather during break time.

After initially evaluating the photographs, I found I had to further explore the meaning of these photos with the children, as some of the pictures were inconclusive to me. Subsequently, I interviewed the children who permitted their pictures to be used. After having both the pictures and the interviews, I analysed both in NVivo™. This programme has a function which supported coding whole pictures or certain parts of a picture. That particular function enabled me to link the interviews the children had given me about their pictures to the particular picture or part of the picture. While this function was useful for more in depth analysis, I missed out another aspect, which I only came across after finally receiving the print outs of the pictures. They arrived from the photo company not anymore in the order the participants took them in. Therefore I began to sort the photographs topic related and realised that some of the objects occurred more often than others.

The photographs the participants took within the school, gave an insight about the significance of different learning places. One of the major points emerging in the analysis of these pictures was that when asked to take pictures of significant places in school the refugee participants took pictures from the EAL Unit, while the monolingual participants took pictures of the classrooms of their most favourite subjects. Further, all the participants took pictures of the broken window at the front of the school building that was smashed in an act of vandalism (*Spaces in School and the School as Space*).

## *Field Notes, the Notebooks, Research Diary—the Writing Tools*

Lavie & Swedenburg (1996, p. 154) state that *fieldwork becomes 'homework'* they argue that writing field notes differentiates between the researcher and the researched, creating the dialectic between data and theory. Writing constitutes an instrument of sense-making, for words reinforce form, they coerce shape and commitment to that shape. I realized the field notes had to become the most important research tool, which helped documenting the process of building trust with the research participants and the research progress.

Thus, in situations when I faced an overwhelming amount of data or information, I began processing them into text. The text itself in the first instance does not yet stand for any results or insights, but writing was the first step of this epistemological process. Subsequently rewriting and rearranging text into diverse patterns and forms helped to create meaning and understanding, utilizing writing as a *way of knowing* and *analysis* (Richardson, 1994, p. 516).

The main issue I had with writing field notes at the beginning of the project was that I tried to tell the story of the fieldwork but was too overwhelmed with the amount of information, thus most of the first research diary entries were disjointed and cluttered not to speak about phrasing and grammatical incidences. So much was important that I could not decide what to write down, what not to write down and how to write it.

Wolfinger (2002) describes different methods of approaching fieldwork and taking notes therein. He offers two main strategies for note-taking, one is *the salience hierarchy* and the other *comprehensive note-taking* (Wolfinger, 2002, p.89). The first form he defines as taking notes of only deviant occurrences in the field, letting tacit knowledge decide which phenomena are noteworthy. He states that these deviant examples lead to salient data (Wolfinger, 2002).

Comprehensive note-taking encompasses systematic and thorough description of all occurrences within the field (Wolfinger, 2002). He suggests different strategies for achieving such extensive description like preparing different lists of focus points. Trying either approach in the fieldwork left me mixing these approaches. During quieter times in a classroom I had time to focus on describing the room, the seating arrangements, posters on the walls and body language of the research participants; whilst engaged in conversations, or throughout a very active and engaging session, I could only take note of the (for me and my research focus) most significant occurrences. I would also not make lists of things to observe but would occasionally make a note to focus on one or the other participant or phenomena or other more closely.

Richardson (1994) states: writing is a *method of inquiry*; she introduces four categories which I found helpful to apply to my field notes. Initially unaware of Richardson's (1994) text, I had used most of her categories for arranging my field notes. The notes I took for describing my experience of a situation, as accurately as possible, Richardson (1994) calls *observation notes*. *Methodological notes* she refers to as *messages to myself* (Richardson, 1994). In my field notes I would put down such messages, recommendations for further reading, or possibilities for different research methods, reflecting on of whom to ask further questions. The category *theoretical notes* (Richardson, 1994) contains:

*... hunches, hypotheses ... critiques of what I am doing/thinking/seeing. ... they open up my text ... to alternative interpretations and a critical epistemological stance. It is a way of keeping me from being hooked on my "take" on reality. (Richardson, 1994, p. 526)*

I used these *theoretical notes* in a similar way, they helped me to put myself outside the situation, retain or regain marginality (Troman, 2007) and realise the different influence factors not only within the situation but also through my personal impact.

The last category, *personal notes*, Richardson (1994) describes as *feeling statements*, she characterises them as uncensored notes. I used this form of notes for writing about all my anxieties, prejudices, worries and feelings. These notes, intertwined with observational notes, helped me to understand better where my judgement of a situation came from, and thus permitted more transparency during my analysis. I wrote these personal notes down directly in the field or right afterwards when transcribing the field notes, so that my initial thoughts and feelings which coloured the perception of the situation became clear. Memory changes our understanding and perception of a situation, therefore implementing this form of notes timeously is a measurement to avoid the 'voice over' of memory which perpetually tries to create coherent stories of our experiences (Ekstrom, 2004).

Richardson's (1994) categories gave me confidence in my use of field notes, because I had started out writing different forms of field notes, coding them in colour or different fonts. Some of the notes I put into the Research Diaries; these were the more reflective notes, others I left in the actual field note documents.

To explore the point of view of the research participants' experiences of learning processes, and particularly of their social relationships in more depth, I could have asked them to write personal diaries. This would however have affected the research participants whose language comprehension was not good enough to express in written form. I would further have feared that this might have been too intrusive for this particularly vulnerable group of pupils, as filling in a diary at home without me present might have made it easier for the pupils to reveal information they otherwise would have inhibitions. The last point of ethical consideration with this approach would be a possible 'data waste'. As I am looking into whole classrooms as entities, I would have had to ask all research participants to fill in these diaries; I could not have evaluated this amount of data within the timeframe given. Choosing only a handful of pupils to become research participants would have falsified the picture because these would have been pupils with very good language comprehension, who were

in Scotland for a longer amount of time and who were older.

The conglomerate of photographic evidence, interviews and conversations, questionnaires, interviews and field notes can appropriately be described as rich data. Rich data requires that the researcher was directly engaged in the field and had face-to-face contact with the location and the issues (Lofland & Lofland, 1984), both of which applies to my research.

Data collection with qualitative research methods is rich text. The term rich text is also used in computing sciences (Richards, 1999). Richards (1999) states that both term are strongly related, as rich data is usually represented in rich text. This means descriptive data is represented through colour coding, different fonts and font sizes, linking documents, and owing to analysis software like NVivo™, pictures, audio as well as video files.

The best way to approach rich text was using the data-analysis software NVivo™. The programme enables coding and categorising rich texts, audio and video files, and it permits the attachment of comments to coded sections, which are called Nodes. There are two ways of categorising data in NVivo™: Free Nodes—list categories or codes, without showing hierarchies or relationships; Tree Nodes—permit the ascribing of subcategories or sub-codes and interrelationships to the different categories or codes. The programme permits to handle documents as dynamic records (Richards, 1999).

NVivo™ enabled me to keep the text in the form used in Microsoft Word, I could use italics for transcribed conversations, as well as highlights, and coloured text. I understand pictures and audio files as rich text. NVivo™ permitted the coding of audio recordings and pictures, highlighting parts of the photographs the participants had taken and adding comments to those as well as to the audio files. The programme enabled the linking of interview transcriptions to the appropriate photographs.



The voice recordings were uploaded into the programme and transcribed into sections. This permitted to split photographs and interviews into topical parts, and enabled the focus on different parts of the conversations as needed.

## ***Reflections on the Pilot Study***

*Look at them as if you are to draw these young girls. Not what you know of them, how you think they go, but how do they appear? Caspar has taught her the lesson of the Master: Don't approach something to draw as if you know what it is; approach it as if you've never experienced it before. Apprehend it by surprise. Startle it into liveliness. (Maguire, 1999, p.304)*

The quotation above, mirrors my first understanding of ethnography. Undertaking my first ethnographic research made me feel like the painter in the story—drawing the picture of a particular field, circumstances, time and people. Approaching the setting, the research site, required looking anew; it required questioning the ordinary and estranging the familiar (Delamont, 2002).

My initial reading about the approach of ethnographic fieldwork followed this notion. Oran (1998) suggests in her chapter on *Travelling Light* leaving the *usual identities* aside when packing for the field. With packing she meant the preparation for the fieldwork and used the picture of preparing for a journey. Initially I found this picture very helpful, as I did the notion of deliberately leaving *clutter of thoughts* behind (Oran, 1998, p. 26), and not dressing in a manner that would identify me as an outsider to the field.

However, when I set out to the field during the pilot, I discovered that I was not able to leave this backpack of my identities and thoughts outside the field. When I reread the field notes of my first visit at the site, I realised that I had to look for other instruments to ensure the transparency of my impact on the data gathering. The following excerpt of the first visit to the research site shows this impact. Unaware, my interpretation of life in Britain found its way into the writing of the field notes, with formulations such as *typical British houses* and the critique of its architecture.

Eventually we reached the road to the school, passing a row of typical British houses. This is; clones of each other, as if the architects couldn't be bothered with some creativity. (Fieldnotes, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007)

*What earlier research does, in effect, is to establish the preconditions for a later understanding that could never have been anticipated at the time (Rock, 2008, p. 35). The result of this reflection was my understanding of the researcher as main research instrument in ethnography (Ball, 1990; Troman, 2002; Walford, 2008) and the impact on data collection and representation. I realised that constant awareness and transparency of the collection process and the data interpretation were the most crucial tools to verify my research (Morse et al., 2002).*

Some of the main issues I encountered during the pilot study were related to access, not only access to the site but also access to gatekeepers and the classroom spaces. These issues had some impact on the research planning, due to the redistribution of pupils into other schools; I was not able to follow up on the pupils from the CLASP study (Smyth, 2006b); so I could not explore transition issues as initially planned. Further initial plans for field visits were restricted due to the situation in school; the gatekeepers wanted me in school during Christmas time to show all the activities but at the end were too busy to agree on some dates with me. The gatekeepers further refused to make plans for January because a new headteacher was due to arrive (Fieldnotes, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007), and they were insecure about the future of their work.

The access issues restricted me initially to only the English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit. Subsequently I could not experience citizenship education in a way that would have given me an understanding of how the school applied these programmes. Eventually the access issues became so predominant that I reached a state where I believed I had to change the research site (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008).

Fortunately, I had strong support from one of the gatekeepers, an EAL teacher who was very keen on taking part in the research project. Due to his mediation I eventually was able to negotiate access to one mainstream Maths and one English class in addition to attending sessions in the EAL Unit. The

mainstream classrooms were also frequented by some of the pupils from the EAL Unit (Fieldnotes, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008).

My vulnerability as a bilingual researcher became obvious throughout the first visits at the research site. In the Maths class in particular the participants used heavy Glaswegian. I think that during this first visit this was used to exclude me from the discussion and test boundaries, because this behaviour was withdrawn from in subsequent sessions. The teacher in this class, if wanting to bond with the children fell into her Glaswegian accent, while she spoke 'high' English (without an obvious dialect) when she wanted to induce discipline and distinguish herself from the class. Thus, I concluded that the bilingual participants might undergo similar experiences when in mainstream classrooms. Subsequently I paid particular focus to the way the bilingual participants used language within the mainstream classrooms. For conversing with the bilingual participants I sometimes engaged friends and classmates as translators, and would repeat what pupils told me back to them in other words to ensure I understood them right.

During undertaking the pilot study I became more acquainted with the meaning of conducting ethnographic research. My research aims and some of the methods changed, or were added—influenced by the dialectic between the realities of the research site, my initial analysis of data and possibilities of methods. The overall topic of the research project, which is reflected in my research questions, focusing on social capital and *creative learning* processes remained. The access issues in particular influenced the shift of focus from looking at what the school provides, towards what the children can access in certain situations.

## *Conversations and Group Discussions*

The pilot study suggested differences between the three classrooms levels of consciousness about the participants' role in their own learning processes. This first analysis outcome impacted on the subsequent research design. My research focus on *creative learning* processes implies characteristics such as ownership and control in learning. Therefore, it became crucial to understand if the participants really felt as detached from their learning experiences as indicated in the reflections on the pilot study. To triangulate my observation and gauge the pupils' voices I decided to use questionnaire (Appendix ) to have the participants reflect about learning issues and personal learning preferences before addressing these in a group discussion. The group discussions were following up on the answers from the questionnaire; here I used the same questions, going more into detail.

I also hoped to gain from the questionnaire an overview of issues behind the apparent rejection of learning and school, particularly within the mainstream classrooms. This rejection materialised in discipline issues, and conversations with pupils and was brought up by the class teachers. It was an important topic for my research as *creative learning* focuses on issues of control, relevance and ownership; an obvious rejection of learning was an indicator of missing ownership, control and relevance, in learning situations. There seemed to be different learning cultures between the EAL Unit and the mainstream classrooms. With learning culture, I here refer to the values that seemed assigned to learning and learning content, behavioural issues and diverse norms for behaviour expected by the different teachers in the different learning spaces. This was particularly intriguing as some of the research participants were in all three learning spaces, yet the group dynamics were very different in each of the three. In the EAL Unit there was a strong focus on academic success and peer support throughout learning situations. The mainstream classrooms seemed to focus on disciplinary issues and getting through learning content.

The questionnaire provided open-ended questions for gauging the pupil voices. The questionnaire was not standardised with Likert scales or other forms of closed questions because this would have been counter productive to an explorative approach of understanding where the underlying issues were, or even if that phenomenon was an actuality and not just my perception. The questions derived from the initial analysis of the pilot fieldwork. I discussed the questions with Mr Gee and Red Flash, asking for their opinion regarding formulations to avoid failure in communication.

In the EAL and the Maths class I asked the pupils if they would partake in filling in the questionnaires. In the English class the teacher took on this role. I handed out the questionnaires and the participants had time in each class to answer the questions on their own. The pupils used their previously chosen codenames on the questionnaires for identification. The questionnaires constituted one step of the meaning-making process of this research project, in that they reflected the participants' opinion without direct peer impact.

I used the questionnaire and group discussion to gather data and also monitoring peer influence. Should there be response differences between the questionnaires and group discussions it would strongly indicate peer influence on the answers. I also wished to observe the peer negotiations about the questions during the group discussions. This again was why I did not chose an interview which has small numbers (Flick, 2006) but group discussions. The underlying idea for using a *real group* (Flick, 2006) was to understand better the dynamic within the different classrooms. A *real group* after Flick (2006) is a group that occurs naturally within a setting, such as a class in a school. I wanted to use the complete classes to be able to observe the dynamics within these. Further selecting a certain number of participants of each class would have stigmatized these participants and falsified the group interactions, which impact on the creation of meaning and learning within a class.

The interviewer in a group discussion acts upon the understanding s/he gained through previous fieldwork. The preceding participant observations

helped me to gain understanding of the culture of the three classroom spaces and thus permitted an appropriate follow up to the questionnaire answers provided by the participants (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005).

Organising interviews from each class was inappropriate and impossible. Not to stigmatize any of the participants and include everyone from each class I would have required a minimum of three interviews per class. Considering the access issues encountered, this approach would hardly have become a research reality. Since the pilot study a new aim was to explore how, or if, the different learning cultures of each classroom impacted the refuting of learning and school. I needed to see the negotiation of the answers to my questions within the larger group, and therefore chose group discussion.

I anticipated problems regarding the extent to which information could be shared. So as not to become excessively cautious (Hammersley, 2003) I had to remind myself that the smallest common denominator is the interface for communication. I wanted to gauge the opinions of the pupils with the questionnaires and group discussions, there is, however, a possibility that the information gained is biased. It might be influenced by what the pupils think I want to hear or the pupils' own agendas about their frustrations with school and school staff. However, exactly these possible biases can be authentic to the social environment and give indications about the sources of the issues I aimed to explore (Hammersley, 2003). Further, these two instruments are not the only ones I used for the research, thus the holistic picture derives out of the combination of research methods.

The group discussions and interviews I imported into an NVivo™ database, adding their transcription to the audio files in the database. When encountering problems in understanding the group discussion of the Maths class, I sought help from a native English speaking transcriber from Glasgow, for this particular group discussion. The transcriber however was not able to transcribe the group discussion because the Scots of the

participants in combination with several participants speaking at the same time made the transcription nearly impossible. I managed however to recreate the majority of the group discussion with help of the extensive notes I had taken during the session. The group discussions from the EAL Unit and the English class were not as problematic to transcribe as the participants there used to wait their queues to speak and their Scots was not as strong or in the case of the EAL Unit they did not speak Scots.

Next, for group discussions and questionnaires, I used in situ interviews or conversations as a method to gauge the participants' voice. In these situations I either took notes during conversations or used the voice recorder if the participants fell into a monologue and permitted it. Taking out the voice recorder in ad hoc conversations or interviews would sometimes have interrupted the natural flow of the relationships between the participants and me. It further would have dissuaded the participants from sharing information with me.

Two of the pupil participants took part in one-on-one informal interviews about their pictures. I held further informal interviews with three monolingual pupils who otherwise did not participate in the research. I held ad hoc interviews with two monolingual pupils from the Maths classroom. Throughout the fieldwork there were several conversations in the different classroom spaces.

I held three teacher interviews: an interview with Mr Gee and Ms Ferry from the EAL Unit, and another with a maths teacher who previously had work experiences with bilingual pupils.

I held group discussions with both mainstream classes and the ESOL class from the EAL unit, as well as an interview with two of the gate-keeping teachers. During the teacher interview, another teacher who just begun to work at the school, joined in the conversation for about 15 minutes. He did not take part in any other part of the research. Ms Lee the teacher from the Maths class had no time to attend the teacher interview.



## *The Researcher*

Referring to Ely, Vinz, Anzul, & Downing (1997) I understand transparency of the research process as necessary for ethical and verified research (Morse et al., 2002). I set out as Ball (1990) described it, on my own, armed with pen and notebook, and a lot of enthusiasm for my research project. As research fellow for the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS), I was able to draw on the support of experienced researchers during my pilot study. However, all co-construction of knowledge can only be about the smallest common denominator. The process of making the project my own and coming to terms with ethnography was challenging and as Ball has written *can only be learned enactively* (1990, p. 157).

Despite the support network, I struggled to find my research voice. Influenced by my prior German education, I often got caught in an antagonism of writing narrative, creating a story that makes sense, and falling back into the impersonal realm of positivism. Language issues and hurdles of gaining access to key informants, multiplied my problems of settling into the role of an educational ethnographer. Initial reading on the subject contributed to the process of my role as observer.

While more recent writing accepts the *observer's paradox* (Gregory, 2005), Oran (1998) still suggested adapting one's language not to stand out within the field. Language, of all my differences would have been the main downfall for my blending in. Even if I had known how to dress for the field so as not to stand out, opening my mouth and talking with a German accent would have defeated this stratagem right away.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2009), however, state that while the representation dress code, language and demeanour do have an impact on the field, and may require some adaptation, it is not necessary to synchronize oneself with the participants and the field. The authors suggest leaving this

up to the different situations and the necessity or desire to adapt to the research environment. This depends on the need to establish or lower boundaries between the researcher and the participants.

Once I realised that blending in was not the purpose of a participant researcher, I could settle into my fieldwork more confidently. Yet, I still had to make myself aware of my role as participant observer in the field on a regular basis. Having worked in a variety of educational contexts since my teenage years I regularly encountered situations in which my role as pedagogue would surface and conflict with my role as researcher. These conflicts of *maintaining marginality* (Troman, 2007) created significant learning-inducements for my research. That means the reflection about such situations supported my understanding of my position in the field and its impact on the data. It enticed me to ask more questions about the teachers' actions, the pupils' reactions and analyse it from different viewpoints.

Another aspect of my role as a bilingual researcher undertaking research with bilingual children was how negotiation of meaning involved more than language. If a participant wanted to explain something, but lacked the language skills they would seek help from peers, or use hand signs and mime to overcome language obstacles. The teachers in the EAL Unit encouraged the children to use drawings helping to communicate and overcome language barriers. While initially afraid that language barriers might impact on the understanding of the research participants, I found during the pilot study that stronger emphasis on co-creation of meaning within conversations enabled a better and more in depth understanding of what the participants wanted to communicate. However, the bigger effort that went into such communication may have prevented some participants from sharing their views or engaging in communication.

## *Ethics*

Ethical consideration in undertaking research with refugee children focuses on the particular vulnerability of these participants. The situation within these families can be very stressful and disturbing for the children (Avan & Bakshi, 2004). The authors suggest that the families might have experienced trauma, problems with new role division in families, and financial hardship (see Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experiences). Depending on the cultural background of the research participants, it is justified to assume that there is different understanding of what is ethical and what is non-ethical behaviour. Therefore I cannot assume that gaining informed consent from the research participants means an ethical insurance. I will have to adapt behaviour, possibly even methods according to the reactions of the participants to my fieldwork. Another issue that was of concern was the potential suffering from power imbalances as marginalised groups in the new country (Cummins, 2001; Sales, 2002). The other group of research participants were monolingual children who attended mainstream classrooms. These children came from socially marginalised groups, as established earlier, from an environment that is most likely to feel threatened by immigrants in general, and are the least informed about it (Lewis, 2006; Wren, 2004).

Two issues that need closer consideration accompany this situation. Firstly, there was potential for hostilities or at least friction between the monolingual and refugee participants background (Lewis, 2006). Secondly, the poverty most of the monolingual participants experienced rendered those vulnerable in a similar way to the refugee participants, as they as well might experience disempowerment and marginalisation (Devereux, 2003; Menter, Hulme, Lowden, & Hall, April 2010).

The cultural and socio-economic context of the pupil participants left two other parties involved in the research vulnerable, the teachers and the researcher. There was always the possibility that the children of asylum–

seeker families did not show up in school through having been taken into a detention centre. The personal and family histories of the individual child (refugee as well as monolingual) might be very dramatic and of ongoing concern. The impact this had on the teachers, peers and the researcher needed careful consideration.

Ethical concerns in research with children, particularly refugee children as particularly vulnerable groups, determine research planning and design. Whilst there is no law in the UK about research ethics (Alderson & Morrow, 2004), each university has ethical guidelines to comply with undertaking research ("Code of Practice," 2009). Consequently the research plan for the pilot as well as the main research project underwent strict scrutiny of the departmental research committee (Appendix E.1 Ethics Approval). Ethical approval was obtained and regulations adhered to throughout the research, such as anonymity of the participants. Alderson and Morrow (2004) suggest that ethical considerations begin with two basic questions:

*Is this work worth doing? And, Can the investigators explain the project clearly enough so that any potential participant can give informed consent or refusal? (Alderson & Morrow, 2004, p. 21)*

Whilst the worth of the research was established in the rational and Literature Review, which clearly indicated gaps in research, this section aims to clarify the validity and reliability of this research project. The explanation of the methodology and methods used, demonstrate the appropriateness of the tools used.

Ethical research considers the topic and its necessity. Wrongly asked or unnecessary questions are as unethical as unsuitable methods, since these can lead to incorrect answers and be therefore *misleading* or even support *harmful policies* (Alderson & Morrow, 2004). Alderson and Morrow (2004) define three frameworks under which to evaluate research projects: *Duties*, *Rights*, and *Utilitarianism*. *Duties* discuss that the research aims and methods are fair, do no harm, and make sense *Rights* looks into participant-rights; and

*Utilitarianism* is concerned with analyzing the research effects. This is to minimize possible harm and increase benefits (Alderson & Morrow, 2004).

Gabriel (2000) defines a concept, which extends these issues; he describes *five kinds of danger* implied in undertaking research: *representation*, which includes *silencing, patronising, or normalizing ethnicities* that means ignoring the different needs of diverse cultures. *Professional dangers* (Gabriel, 2000, p. 168), *consequences and uses of research, direct physical danger, and unreliable knowledge* (Gabriel, 2000, p. 169).

*Representation* as a danger for Gabriel (2000) focuses on who is designing and selecting the research problems. Within this lies the danger of *silencing, patronising, or normalizing ethnicities* (Gabriel, 2000, p.168). In this sense as a novice researcher, it is necessary to reflect upon intentions, aims, biases, and give clarification about standpoints. I did this partially during the literature review by introducing and justifying terminology and establishing the need for this research. The reflection on the pilot study aims to clarify how the research design was intended and how the field influenced a change in this design. Representation, however, is also an issue concerning access to the research site, the gatekeepers influenced whom and when the researcher had access to. This inevitably shaped the data collection.

The second Gabriel (2000) names *professional dangers*, whose extreme is the adaptation of research to the pleasing of funding bodies or institutions. Yet, this particular danger can further inherit an influence from general trend in contemporary research, within the working field. This is true to some extent, and as a PhD student the power inequality towards supervision, exam committees, sponsoring body or peer influence can constitute a struggle. The process of making this research my own, understanding ethnography and finding, during the pilot, the best and most unobtrusive methods for my particular case study and group of research participants counter these possible influences.

*Consequences and uses of research* (Gabriel, 2000, p. 169) as third danger, describes risks for the researcher as well as the researched, with the warning that *research can feed systems of control* (Gabriel, 2000, p. 169). Acting within a cultural system comes with certain norms, values and regulations that impact the research process as well as the handling of the research outcomes. However, my taking a critical approach towards issues of power, institutionalised and structural discrimination and public discourse draws the attention towards this danger. These topics were explored in the Literature Review, with the aim of avoiding stereotyping of research participants and issues throughout the fieldwork and data analysis.

An *actual physical danger* (Gabriel, 2000, p. 168) as number four of the five dangers, is relating to fieldwork, particularly with certain radical groups. I expect no danger of physical harm at this research site. However I would argue that the vulnerability of a researcher lies also within vulnerability of mental health and well-being not only the physical dangers. Such was occasionally demonstrated, when my identity in relation to social class and nationality was challenged by the teacher and the pupil participants, or experiencing one of the participant's absence due to detention, or one teacher's shock about a case of discrimination. Although aware of the reciprocal nature of ethnographic fieldwork, I had neither expected a scrutiny of my identity negotiation by the research participants, nor the strong concernment for participants' in vulnerable positions. Subsequently I would add this further dimension and for my specific research substitute *actual physical danger* with danger for mental health and well-being.

The last point *unreliable knowledge* encompasses issues influencing research results, such as researcher impact; *political correctness* or *cynical responses* of the participants may falsify the results (Gabriel, 2000). I do not agree with some of the characteristics of this form of danger. While the researcher factor certainly impacts the field, I would not understand cynical responses or political 'incorrectness' of the research participants as falsifying the results. These kinds of responses can be valuable indicators for further exploration in the field, and help to gain a deeper understanding of the situation.

## *Informed Consent*

It was important to enable my research participants to give informed consent. With informed consent I ensured that the research participants understood what the research was about, how far their involvement in it was, and that participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any moment (Emanuel, Wendler, & Grady, 2000).

During the pilot I had decided to get informed consent from the participating children age 12 to 16, yet not their parents. This was influenced by the decision of the Schools and Social Capital Network case study team. The team consented on an understanding of *children as highly informed experts on their daily life at home and school ... or being a refugee* (Alderson and Morrow, 2004, p.4).

The main reason for the decision to ask the participants for parent-independent consent was to empower the children. Letting them know that they were the ones who were not only 'in the know' but also in charge of the situation. The aim was to avoid parents instrumentalizing their children, influencing their behaviour or prohibit participation when asked to sign consent for their children. The parents of the research participants had potentially insecure status of leave, possible experiences with institutional arbitrariness and violence. Alderson and Morrow (2004) caution that not enough attention is paid to the over-protection and silencing of the children, when they are excluded from research.

As the topic is the children and their learning behaviour and social networks at school, the case study team wanted to empower the children to make their own decisions. However, at my research site, the deputy head teacher, who was acting head teacher when I began the pilot, said she would inform the parents via the school newsletter that research is going on in school. The

school informed the parents because the law about research is vague (Alderson & Morrow, 2004) and the school aimed to safeguard its position.

To ensure that the children could give well informed consent, I designed child-appropriate information leaflets (Appendix C.1 Pupil Information). Clarifying in detail why I am in school and what exactly is expected of the children. I pointed out that partaking is voluntary and withdrawal possible at any time without giving reason.

During the pilot I introduced myself with the support of the teachers to the children, and started out with a question and answer session. Throughout the research, more children would agree to participate, after having observed me, undertaking fieldwork and establishing a relationship of trust with the children. Only if they were fully aware of what would go on in the classroom and with the data, they signed the consent forms. I answered questions and sometimes children with better English abilities would translate questions and answers and ask more in detail about the research for their peers, a practice used in other research projects and practice (Sánchez & Orellana, 2006; Smyth, 2006b).

Influential to gaining access to the research site and research participants were the gatekeepers. The primary gatekeeper, Mr Gee, had initially agreed to act as mediator within school and help negotiate access to different classroom spaces. He negotiated access to the mainstream Maths and English classrooms.

The photographs taken by the research participants were shared in the weekly lunchtime photo club. The teacher and I held an initial training session with the participants making them aware of concerns about photographing other pupils in school, and that this should only happen with the consent of these pupils. The weekly meetings provided space for reflection on the photographs and the process of taking them. In these meetings I also negotiated with the participants, which photos they would like to share.



Subsequently the negotiation of access to space, participants and data was an ongoing process throughout my research project. The signing of the consent forms did not reflect the actual involvement the participants granted me in the field. As Smyth et al. (2007) have indicated, informed consent is a significant challenge, particularly with young people considered at risk. I found access to the participants a continuing process, not guaranteed by signing of a form. Some pupils only became actively involved in the research process and interaction with me during the last two field visits of 2007/2008 and I would not see them again in 2008/2009. Other pupils who had signed the consent form would reject any reciprocity for the duration of the research process. These informed consent issues demonstrate that ethical guidelines and adhering to collecting of signatures may not be ethical or sensitive towards the needs of the research participants (Ellis & Early, 2006). Adaptability and empathy towards the needs and wishes of the participants in the field were crucial for an ethical conduction of my fieldwork.

## *Validity, Reliability, and Verification*

The section Validity, Reliability, and Triangulation explores how my project equates to good research, which in itself is a term difficult to establish. I understand *good research* as: authentic, transparent, reflective, dialogical, and ethical. Establishing a relationship of trust with the research participants, to empower their participation and negotiation of the data collection (Pink, 2007; Smyth et al., 2007) I understand as crucial aspects of good research. It is about justifying the project and its methods, justifying my position as researcher, (as THE research tool (Woods, 1996)) as well as discussing validity and reliability of my ethnographic work.

In the following I will refer to some definitions of British and European research writing (Cohen et al., 2003; Flick, 2006; Jupp, 2006b) establishing some ground for a definition of validity, and reliability. I will subsequently use the concept of Morse et al. (2002) as the most appropriate for my research.

### *Validity*

*The extent to which an indicator or variable adequately measures the theoretical concept it purports to measure. (Sapsford, 2006, p. 314)*

Given the definition above, validity is not an appropriate concept for ethnographic research, as such research does not work with variables as measures for a theoretical concept. However, some aspects of exercising validity could translate into ethnography. Jupp (2006a) and Cohen et al. (2003) describe validity as a gradual measure, rather than a given fact, with triangulation as a method to ensure validity. There are different forms of triangulation such as data triangulation, theory triangulation, investigator triangulation, time and space triangulation (Cohen et al., 2003; Flick, 2006; Jupp, 2006a et al.). I will refer to data (or methodological) triangulation, as

this is a form of triangulation that is transferable to ethnographic research. Data triangulation (or methodological triangulation) assumes that a combination of different methods in the same space or time cancel out inadequacies of each other (Silverman, 1999).

It has to be considered though, that data triangulation is a matter of degree, not presuming it to cancel all inadequacies of measurement. Silverman (1999) argues that sometimes methods for establishing validity are inappropriate to the research. Not every bit of information gained in the field can appropriately be gained several times by using different methods, without infringing on the research participants. However, while Silverman (1999) is generally critical of this approach, he suggests that a combination of different methods, for instance interview and fieldwork, can show the context of the data and thus offer a more comprehensive picture of the gathering process.

My research used different methods to be able to place the collected data better into its context. Further using a combination of observation, questionnaires, photography, conversations and group discussions gained information about similar questions in different situations, hence offering a more in depth insight into the data.

### ***Reliability***

There is an ethical need, as pointed out by Morse et al (2002), to scrutinize qualitative research and ensure its reliability. Silverman (1999) discusses the three forms of reliability by Kirk and Miller (1986). *Diachronic reliability*, which describes correspondence of field-data (observation) through time. For my project, that would be correspondence between data gathered during the pilot and main part of my study.

*Synchronic reliability* (Silverman, 1999), describes correspondence of field-data (observation) within the same time period. I could not apply different methods at the same time to ensure this form of suggested reliability, but the

author further suggests method triangulation as compensation. Something I can ensure with different methods I used for instance in the field triangulating teacher conversations with pupil group discussion and questionnaire answers.

*Quixotic reliability* (Silverman, 1999) does not seem to apply to my research. It describes a single method that is used repeatedly with yielding the same results each time (Silverman, 1999). My research is an explorative study void of hypotheses testing; therefore *quixotic reliability* is not appropriate for my research. I set out to gain understanding and explore my research questions aiming not to measure the extent of social capital or the cognitive changes throughout the research. Reliability is ensured by triangulating methods and through verification discussed next.

### ***Verification***

Morse et al. (2002) suggest verification as the technique for ensuring validity and reliability. They do so by asking the researcher to be flexible and adaptive towards the needs of the data—something that is intrinsic to ethnographic research. The authors (Morse et al., 2002) ask for a constant correspondence between data gathering and analysis—because the results emerging out of analysis might necessitate an adaptation of the methods used in fieldwork. Again this was a method I applied in writing field notes and research diaries, using writing and reflection as continuing analytical process. This process was supported by the use of NVivo™ data analysis software, and Curio™ a project management and mind mapping software; it enabled a structured yet flexible approach to the research process.

The authors put all the responsibility for verification onto the shoulders of the researcher instead of solely relying on a construct like triangulation. Ensuring transparency and reflection leading the reader through the steps of the research process and making them aware of obstacles creates trust in data. The ongoing dialectic between data gathering and analysis supports the

prevention of researcher bias, as the researcher is constantly forced to justify the analysis with methods of gathering and vice versa.

In the following I discuss the *Verification strategies* (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, pp. 4-15) used for research validity and reliability, as well as the significance and possible applicability for my research project. With *methodological coherence* (Morse et al., 2002), I justify the methods I used to answer the questions asked and the appropriateness of questions and methods. Morse et al. (2002) state that methods may need modification throughout the research process.

The next point the authors suggest to use for working towards validity and reliability is that the *sample must be appropriate* (Morse et al., 2002). This means that the research participants whom I asked to partake in the research are representative to the research issues and thus also possess knowledge about them. I not only asked refugee children to participate in the research but also monolingual and bilingual children. This was to avoid stigmatizing the refugee children as the odd ones out, who need researching, and also ensuring a better understanding of the context of the research issues; extending the case into the wider context (Small, 2009).

*Collecting and analyzing data concurrently* (Morse et al., 2002, p. 12) as the third suggested strategy asks for an *iterative interaction between data and analysis* (Morse et al., 2002, p. 12). The authors describe this interaction as the most important strategy for achieving validity and reliability. Writing and rewriting of field notes, and writing the research diaries adhered to this strategy. Writing is an analytical process, an exercise in sense making, as established earlier on. I further spent nine months categorising and coding while continuing to collect my data, this added a further dimension to the dialogical character.

The last two strategies *thinking theoretically and theory development* (Morse et al., 2002, p. 11) are the most difficult ones to adhere to. I understand the opportunity, and indeed need, for *thinking theoretically*, created a conceptual

framework for reflection and scaffolding of the research process and the data analysis. Further, two concepts emerged out of the data analysis process creating an incentive for further theorizing and application in my field.

## Presentation and Analysis of Evidence—Analysis and Discussion

### Research Questions:

Which *creative learning* strategies, can refugee children access, and how are these strategies helping to support their scholarly development and inclusion?

What role is social capital playing in school context, particularly with the emphasis on support and inclusion?

In the context of learning and teaching does social capital influence identity constructions and understanding of the refugee learners?

My research sought to explore the access refugee children have to *creative learning* strategies; and the utilization and impact of social capital upon learning and inclusion. Focus was placed on gaining a deeper understanding of daily life in school seeking to find the spaces (time, place, interaction) within different classrooms in which *creative learning* took place. Aiming to gauge if social capital was utilized despite or because of the prevailing school culture. How far social capital had an impact on learning and inclusion of the pupils was a further research interest.

This chapter is structured as follows. Initially I am discussing Making Sense of my Data—Coding and Categorizing, describing the struggles of the coding and categorizing process in the first part of the section and defining the final categories with corresponding codes in the second part of this section. Analysis of Findings follows the coding section. Here the opening part evaluates Spaces in School and the School as Space, drawing on the space metaphor, which I involuntarily used throughout the analysis process. When beginning the final write up of my thesis I realised the prevalence of space in my discussion and analysis, and therefore assigned one section to this topic. The three sections following the discussion and analysis of space, feature discussion and analysis of data corresponding with each of the three research questions. Hereby, a strong focus on answering the first research

questions becomes apparent. While there is a reoccurring focus on data that could also feature under the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Question, I decided to use the data for answering the 1<sup>st</sup> Question more comprehensively.

This decision resulted from long consideration and several significant restructures of the Analysis of Findings section. I concluded that my main focus for the research was the learning and trying to understand what access refugee children had to *creative learning* strategies and how these strategies were applied to support their scholarly development and inclusion. This is reasoned in the access issues I had. Not being able to follow the participants from the EAL Unit into more than the English and the Maths classroom, inhibited me to observe their relationships and interaction with their peers outwith this narrow context. My decision to focus on learning also meant that I put a strong emphasis on discussing issues related to the first research question.

A section about Issues of Discrimination then follows the three question sections. I assigned an extra position to these issues partially because the data gathered thus, come from the participants' point of view only. Another reason for this extra position is to assign an emphasis to the ambivalent nature of discrimination. Discrimination was a reoccurring topic during my fieldwork, also an intangible topic, difficult to substantiate, subject to personal perceptions of the parties involved, values and understanding of situations for instance: Red Flash said that at some point every pupil feels 'picked on', the children from the EAL Unit group discussion had an argument about an incident where the girl involved said it was nothing but the boys insisted it was discrimination. Giving it this particular position in the Analysis and Discussion chapter reflects the opinion I formed of the position of discrimination throughout my research. It is prevalent and does not sit well in the general picture, yet it is visual and present.

The Chapter will conclude with a summary section. Before proceeding to the Conclusions chapter, I inserted a small chapter Integrating Findings into Wider Context. Here I undertake conceptualisation of my findings;



introducing two ideas that aim to initiate *theory development* (Morse et al., 2002) from my research. Therefore I decided to place those outside the Analysis and Discussion chapter, as the next step of my research process.

## *Making Sense of my Data—Coding and Categorizing*

The following section gives an overview and reflection about the coding process. It aims to make this process explicit to the reader, adding to my research's credibility (Boulton & Hammersley, 1996). Explaining the categories I derived out of the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

*Coding should be thought of as essentially heuristic, providing ways of interacting with and thinking about the data. (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 30)*

Corbin and Strauss (2008) state that there are two major analytical tools most researchers, using qualitative approaches, make use of. The first is asking questions and the second is making comparisons (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). For me asking questions instantaneously meant a measure for estranging the familiar (Delamont, 2002), because questioning the data, takes them out of the context and enables approaches to them from different view points. Corbin and Strauss (2008) call this probing the data and thinking outside the box. They suggested two further uses of questioning: to develop provisional answers, and become acquainted with the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Parallel to the pilot I undertook initial coding exercises experimenting with categorising the data. While the field notes were an instrument mainly for reflection and narrative, codes develop concepts from data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Interaction with the data enabled me to discover patterns, repetitions, and contradictions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The list in Appendix D.1 (Appendix D.1 Initial List of Patterns and Codes) demonstrates initial patterns and topics emerging from first data analysis and reflection on field notes and research diary.

Categorising and Coding my data took nine months. It was a laborious and complex process, in the following I will discuss the main steps I have undertaken to establish categories and code my data. The List (Appendix D.1 Initial List of Patterns and Codes) only shows the first themes emerging from initial analysis of my data that aimed to find patterns surfacing from my

data. Before I fed this list into the NVivo™ software I began testing the program with the category Access. I used the category Access for testing NVivo™, because it was the most obvious one to begin with at this stage of the research. Access was the main topic on my mind during initial fieldwork.

After this I went on scrutinizing themes and patterns that reoccurred in the data. Under consideration of the list (Appendix D.1 Initial List of Patterns and Codes), the first codes (Appendix D.2. First Coding Exercise) emerged during the initial analysis of the photographs, the pilot field notes, and the work conducted so far on the literature review in NVivo™.

The procedural insights from initial coding were the following. The complexity of the focus points was not diminished, an aspect NVivo™ was supposed to support. Literature seems to treat coding as logical smooth process (Atkinson et al., 2008; Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Yet, for me it was overcoming the ambiguity between the realities of the research data, the restrictions of the observable, the sufficiency of the field notes and, filtering the researcher's influence from the authentic voices of the participants. The process of simplifying and accumulating data into sets of meaning, revealed a wide range of possible approaches to their analysis rendering the coding exercise as data complication (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 29).

Using NVivo™ only increased the complexity of the categories, with an increasing number of subcategories. Subsequently this decontextualised the data, dismantling the narrative of the field notes. Whilst the programme assisted in understanding and exploring the aspect of my data comprehensively, it lured me into decontextualising it (Appendix D.3. Exported NVivo™ Table). So, I used the categories established in NVivo™, printed out all my field notes, and applied the traditional paper, scissors and highlighters technique for reconceptualising the data, narrowing them down to the following table (Table 7. Categories and Codes after Paper, Highlighter and Scissors Coding).

After establishing these categories I created a new NVivo™ database, with the data, new categories and codes. Subsequently, I began recoding all field notes under these aspects (Table 7. Categories and Codes after Paper, Highlighter and Scissors Coding—Appendix A.1). During the process of recoding, the categories changed again—yet only slightly this time (Appendix A.2).

I sent the description of my final categories and codes and some excerpts from my field notes to a fellow PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Aberdeen. Her coding exercise agreed mostly with my coding, although possibly influenced by her own research, she placed a stronger emphasis on power relations in the different situations.

One of the main insights from coding data; was that I was able to observe subtle and internal forms of learning in fieldwork. I realised that some strategies of this were indeed observable such as ‘Pondering and Scratching’, which refer to Claxton’s (2006) thinking at the edge definition of creativity:

*The body can give intimations of a cognitive process—that is, an activity that involves ‘knowing’ and ‘interpretation’—in the absence of, or in advance of, the ability of the ‘mind’ to come up with clear depictions or justifications of what is going on. (Claxton, 2006, p. 355)*

Other *creative learning* strategies I was able to observe such as identity negotiations, positive relationships determined by display of trust, reciprocity, concern, co-operation. The coding process helped me further realise that using social capital to understand the relationships of the research participants and their impact on learning situations was not sufficient. The codes under the category ‘Relationships’ reflect not only on aspects of social capital but also on symbolic interactionism and social constructivism. So are reciprocity and compromise conditioned in intersubjectivity and being able to understand another person’s position as well as react upon this understanding (Blumer, 1969).

The following features the definition including corresponding codes of the categories. The labels of the categories divide this section into different parts, beginning with Learning Strategies, followed by Teacher and Teaching, Negotiations and Identities, and closing this section is Relationships.

## *Categories*

### *Learning Strategies*

The codes for the category Learning Strategies are: Practical Learning, Academic Learning, Social Learning, Cultural Learning—which includes Norms, Values, Regulations—Scripts, Role Behaviour, *Creative Learning*, Ownership, Control, Relevance, Innovation, 'Pondering & Scratching', Eureka Events, As-if Activities, Application of Knowledge, Learning Initiated, Self-Initiated, Peer-Initiated, Teacher-Initiated. These codes derive out of the data analysis in correspondence with the literature review.

The code: Academic Learning is oriented on academic achievements in school with the purpose of following a subsequent higher education career. Practical Learning refers not only to hands on learning but also to learning that was perceived to have a 'real-life' context and therefore is one of the strategies of *creative learning's* relevance.

*Creative Learning* embodies the four characteristics: ownership, control, relevance and innovation (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009) and their accompanying strategies (Appendix A.1, p.344). Within the coding and analysing process of data I added some other strategies to this concept. One of these strategies I call Pondering and Scratching—the immanent creative processes (Claxton, 2006), eureka events and as-if activities. As-if activities are also a strategy of ownership 'playing with identities' for instance, because with such the learner takes on and tries out different roles making those his or her own (Blumer, 1969, Jeffrey & Woods, 2009).

Social Learning as strategy of *creative learning* is the learning that relates to role-behaviour and learning the respective values, norms and regulations of a social environment or culture (Bandura, 1969). It is the kind of learning that helps the learner to negotiate not only within the school environment but also within different peer or other groups and networks (see strategies of

social learning such as co-participation, see: *Creative Learning and Teaching* & Appendix A.1). Social Learning describes also learning life scripts according to the particular culture (Smith & Berge, 2009). Part of Social Learning is: Values, Norms and Regulations, encompassing situations in school not only where these became apparent but also where values, norms and regulations of different cultures meet and initiate debates. Thus, a category belonging to Social Learning is Cultural Learning. With Cultural Learning I refer to learning that is either not necessarily related to subject contents or that overlaps with real-life issues. Cultural learning here also focuses on norms and values that reach beyond the learning situation and are examples for cultural reproduction or negotiation of the values and norms.

### ***Teacher and Teaching***

The category Teacher and Teaching encompasses all activity that is teacher initiated, focussing on *creative teaching* strategies as discussed in (*Creative Learning and Teaching*). These activities describe the teachers' influence and the opportunities for learning the teacher creates on a daily basis; however, it also encompasses the power discourse the teacher and class are in or extra-curricula activities teachers might initiate, my observations of teacher outwith the classroom, and the teaching situation. This category was originally part of the category Learning because teaching and the opportunities teachers provide in class is entwined with the learning processes. I decided to present it as a category of its own in reference to my earlier differentiation between *Erziehung* and *Bildung* (Education & Learning) to highlight that there are indeed strategies focussing on the teacher rather than the learner.

### ***Negotiations and Identities***

Negotiations and Identities I chose as a comprehensive category, because both factors are so entwined that it rendered impossible to code them

without each other. Also in *creative learning* strategies that encompass negotiation and identities as for instance collaboration, engaging interest, playing with identities. Furthermore, this category is significant within all categories, because negotiation and identities seemed to be omnipresent matters in learning situations as well as other forms of interaction.

Negotiating Identities as a subcategory encompasses codes that look at how learner identities or other facets of identity become apparent within learning or other situations in school. Role behaviour is not only part of Social Learning but also belongs into Negotiating Identities, as roles are part of identity work. This shows again the difficulty in differentiating between the diverse categories. At this place it refers to roles pupils or teachers take on in a learning related form, for instance mimicking and trying out different roles, or when it coincides with identity negotiations.

Race, ethnicity and gender are identity issues which played a role within the learning environments. I did not code ethnicity different from race, as it was difficult to distinguish issues occurring as race or ethnicity related. Occasionally I found that neither played a role as incentive for discrimination rather than the fact of being a refugee. Similar issues occurred in relation to gender roles. These issues are implied in the general coding of Negotiating Identities, my method of data gathering did not permit the distinguishing, in most of the cases, of which parts of identities were predominant in situations.

The only exemption I made was for obvious racist incidents, where discrimination and institutional discrimination clearly related to the status of the involved participants. However, even in these situations it rarely became clear if the trigger for the discriminating behaviour was race, ethnicity, religion, class, or the mere fact of the person being a refugee or foreigner in general.

Negotiating Meaning is the most significant strategy for learning; it implies cultural learning, and negotiating within new environments. It further



encompasses the co-construction of meaning in learning context: for instance, making sense out of words. It also describes the negotiation of sense or relevance of subject matters, tasks and exercises performed in school environment.

## ***Relationships***

Quality of Relationships is not only part of social capital but this category also comprises strategies of *creative learning* (such as establishing positive social relationships, collaboration, mediation, establishing trust between learner and teacher) that are related to the social interaction and peer support within learning situations. These were relationships between the pupils, between staff and pupils, as well as between members of staff. When I went through coding and categorising I had problems establishing in which way I would describe and analyse relationships: their interlink with identities made it almost too complex. The category Quality of Relationships emerged out of fieldwork, I used it for situations where in situ the way relationships were build in school had a positive or negative impact on the learning situation or the well-being of the children.

Quality of Relationships is more than Social Capital. It uses some indicators for social capital like Humour, Trust and Reciprocity, and it expands this and implies indicators such as Compromise, which describe the willingness of actors to compromise in situation for the sake of another person.

Power becomes significant for this indicator because in some situations the willingness to compromise meant giving up a power position for the sake of the relationship or respect of the other person (persons). It further means an understanding of the needs and wishes of the other person (persons) and thus shows reflexivity and reciprocity of behaviour. Willingness to compromise, aimed at avoiding upsetting people and or provide help. This was based on insisting on power positions or giving them up. Power is an omnipresent topic within most of the categories. I chose power as an

indicator for the quality of relationships. It supported the exploration of the way teachers and children built their relationships. In this context Humour was another indicator for the quality of relationships. It could be, and was, used to exclude or include peers; it is thus a strong indicator for the quality of relationships. Humour further characterised the respect or lack thereof for the other.

## *Analysis & Discussion of Findings*

In June 2008 the research site had 90 bilingual pupils, of whom the research participants were between 12 and 16 years old. By 2009 this number decreased to 60 pupils, along with a reduction of English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers, from an original three to only one—Mr Gee. He told me the decrease was mostly due to children receiving leave to remain, leaving only 10 in families of asylum-seeking status. Mr Gee also told me that the EAL Units were to close and the teachers dispersed to schools throughout Glasgow (Field notes Main Project, 17th June 2008).

During the fieldwork I transcribed conversations verbatim. The participants filled in the questionnaires without help from their teachers. I will not correct spelling mistakes of the participants throughout the following data representation and discussion. This is to keep the voices authentic, not giving a voice-over to the language use and ability of the participants. Any other way of presenting the data would misrepresent the participants' linguistic identities and falsify the data.

This section of the Analysis and Discussion Chapter begins with a discussion on the school as space, utilizing space as metaphor. Three sections, each discussing issues of one of the research questions, follow the 'Spaces in School' section. Due to the complexity of interdependencies of learning characteristics, there is a strong overlap of topics between the three questions. Social capital, identities and their relations to learning and inclusion are so strongly entwined with the topic of *creative learning* that question one features these topics and takes up the biggest section of this part of the analysis. I included the discussion of power in this section, because I found that the power discourse in school was based on missing relevance and control over learning situations and therefore became an integral part of *creative learning*.

The section 2<sup>nd</sup> Question (p.252) focuses on teachers' as mediators for social capital as well as the pupil participants' view on peer relationships. The section is 3<sup>rd</sup> Question (p.259) features discussion about identity constructions. The focus here is not so much on learning situations where identity negotiations were implicit, but more on conversations and group discussions about the topic of identities. The Section is then concluded by Issues of Discrimination, discussing some incidents that occurred during my time in the field as well as experiences of discrimination or perceived discrimination the pupil participants wanted to share.

## *Spaces in School and the School as Space*

The cultural dependence of language as discussed in the Literature Review plays a significant role in my research project and particularly in this section of the Analysis and Discussion Chapter. A feature of language is the use of metaphors, which are *culturally relative and historically determined* (Tilley, 2008, p. 262). Conducting an ethnographic research project, within a multilingual environment, explores questions at the peripheries of several cultures, *decod[ing] one culture while re-coding it for another* (Van Maanen, 1988, p. 4). As a non-native speaking ethnographer in a multilingual field, I was looking through at least two different cultural lenses (Figure 21. From I). My awareness of difficulties in translating metaphors triggered my avoidance of them during fieldwork; I could however not avoid the participants using metaphors with me in conversations.

I avoided metaphors during fieldwork, but make use of metaphors during the analysis. A recurring metaphor is that of space. Space determines much of my data analysis. It is a conceptual metaphor that means it reaches beyond linguistic representation of meaning (Casasanto, 2009). Deriving from the interpretation of my data and in reference to Kolb & Kolb's (2005) description of learning space I conceptualize the metaphor space as physical room, but also as room for abilities, such as the ability to act, or the ability to take control, ownership or experience relevance. Space becomes more intangible when I add another dimension to it—possibilities. With possibilities I refer to the different learning spaces each of the three classrooms constitutes. Their differences imply various possibilities for intersubjectivity, for physical seating arrangements, for a permissible range of movement and intersubjectivity within the learning space; they also contain different learning incentives, materials and what I refer to as learning culture. A learning culture is implicit within a learning space; it carries as the definition of culture (Introducing the Paradigms) refers to norms, values and regulations, and also attitudes towards the activity of learning. Learning

spaces are inevitably reciprocal; their physical and normative arrangements impact onto the behaviour within the space, while the behaviour within the space also can impact on its physical and normative arrangements.

Considering the significance I assigned to space throughout the analysis, the following section sets the scene with focus on the school and as a space. This setting of the scene will utilize photographs of the pupil participants and accompanying interviews, as well as the teacher conversation and my field notes, triangulating the different data for the most comprehensive picture. I will briefly introduce the area of the research site, followed by the perspectives of the teachers and the participants. I will make use of some photographs the participants took about significant spaces within the school and the surroundings of it. This section will further discuss metaphors the participants used to bring their points across.

In 2003 Glasgow City Council began a redevelopment project in the area of the research site, aiming to counter the social, educational and economic problems (Glasgow City Council, 2003). When I began with the research project, this redevelopment was already realised, and a new school building replaced the former structure, leading to an initial positive interpretation of the area. The literature review already discussed that housing is a major problem for refugees and asylum-seekers and their families (Netto & Fraser, 2009). The negative perception of this particular dispersal area, was emphasized in the teacher conversation (Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009).

‘When you talk to people from Isengard, [the ones who] are very proud to [have] come from here, are the ones that have escaped Isengard. They don’t live here anymore. This is a place to escape from, if you can.’  
(Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

When I took photographs of the area surrounding the research site, I began to focus on the gray high-rise buildings (Figure 3. Highrise Tower, Researcher’s Picture). These tower blocks serve as accommodation for asylum-seekers and refugees, their dark and worn appearance emphasised for me the negative aspects of this form of accommodation (Research Diary,

18th June 2008). The teachers take the negative impact of the tower blocks further; they perceived the whole area as very negative to live in.

‘... you have a Google map from 50 years ago this society looks like a cancerous cell, physical geographically this place has been destroyed the place where has been industry in Isengard has been destroyed there is nothing’. (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Mr Gee takes the argument up stating that there is nothing in this area, ‘*nothing but soggy grassland*’ (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009). He also said that the reason for education being perceived as disempowering lies in the understanding of the school space as a middle-class institution that the people from the area look at suspiciously and full of mistrust. He thinks this is due to the majority of the pupils coming from families who in: ‘*second or third generation never held their own decent paid job*’ (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009). When I brought up the disparities in attitudes towards school and learning that I observed within the different spaces in school by some monolingual participants during the teachers’ interview, Mr Gee answered:

‘There are people in this community who have aspirations and good parental involvement, but the rest is left to slowly rot.’ (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

The teachers’ perception of forlornness stands in strong contrast to the description from Glasgow City Council, my initial positive interpretation of the research site, and the later discussed perception of the research participants. The report by The Scottish Government (April 2010) highlighted the deprivation of the area, stating that in 2007/2008 half of the pupils received free school meals. Social class seems to impact attitudes towards education (Menter et al., April 2010). This means that, for some participants, school is a negative space or has negative spaces within. Yet, the teachers indicated that negative aspects could be overcome by parents’ involvement.

The ambivalent character of the area is best presented in the pictures below (Figure 4. The Research Site and Surroundings, Researcher’s Picture; Figure 3. Highrise Tower, Researcher’s Picture). Figure 6 shows one of the high-rise

towers, I could see when standing in front of the school. I took the picture on an overcast day, which made the buildings even more oppressing than they were when I saw them for the first time. Figure 7 shows the school and some of the area when approaching the school from the back. Seeing the area from top of the hill it looked rather idyllic, one can see the hills and trees; the houses are recently built and clean. I had time and again problems associating it with the data from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (The Scottish Government, 2009b) rendering this area as one of the most deprived in Scotland.

The disparity between outward appearance and data collected from the research participants emphasised the dichotomies that went through the whole research project.



*Figure 3. Highrise Tower, Researcher's Picture*





*Figure 4. The Research Site and Surroundings, Researcher's Picture*

Glasgow City Council states, that the research area has very good bus links (Glasgow City Council, 2003). The teachers told me that the area is *almost a cul-de-sac, with very few roots out from which only a few people can escape* (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009). Initially I had taken this statement literally, by the time I undertook my research there were bus links into Isengard. I realised that the teachers description as cul-de-sac only partially referred to the restricted infrastructure, but, more so to the self-confinement of the people living here. An insight I only gained during the final data analysis, later supported by the report *Learning from Innovation* (Menter et al., April 2010).

Mr Gee and Red Flash suggested the need for a regular open door day in school and more time to liaise with the community, an important suggestion as research about home-school cooperation in the US (Cox, 2005) and UK (Feiler et al., 2008) shows, particularly considering the socio-economic

structure of the research area. Above all Mr Gee wished for a democratic instead of a 'feudal' structure within the school that would help to counter the 'vicious circle'. The teachers also said that the initiative for community involvement would have to come from the headteacher, because of the school structure. In the following statement the failing ownership and control of the community about its spaces becomes apparent. The teachers found that the school fostered a climate of hierarchy and, if not oppression, patronising.

'The headteacher never makes this happen and we as teacher could never make this happen. We as teachers are under so much pressure to get into lead table. We are stressed out to oblige to so much political stuff that we cannot do what easily could be done given the freedom the time and the finances but people might say I am cynical, but it is cheaper to have aspects of society failing for the greater good.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

For the teachers, the space—school and quality of learning and teaching seemed inevitably linked to the surrounding community and influenced by educational framework and structural hierarchies. While these two teachers wished for more involvement in the inclusion of all the pupils and the community, they felt constrained by administrative obligations, which they found time consuming and ineffective in supporting their pupils.

A closer examination of my initial misunderstanding of the cul-de-sac metaphor the teachers used, revealed a cluster of negative metaphors the teachers used during the interview to describe the area in which the research site is situated, as well as the school building itself. Next to 'cul-de-sac', there are 'a cancerous cell', 'place to escape from', and 'soggy grassland' for the area itself. Strong linguistic metaphors, which characterise the area as negative, desperate and even sickening—the latter is my interpretation of cancerous cell. Cancerous cell could also be associated with a feeling of disempowerment; maybe even helplessness towards the situation of this space. This feeling of disempowerment translates from the area-space into the school-space where the teachers feel the physical space is inappropriate to the needs of it as a learning space. With the metaphor of 'a 19<sup>th</sup> century

building that tries to cater for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching', Red Flash drew attention to an aspect of disempowerment of submitting to a situation the teacher felt unable to change. The frustration about this became clear when the teachers labelled the school space as a 'cheap and nasty building that is only good for a call centre' or even 'build box of shithole'. The description of the old building that was torn down and the comparison with colleges give more detailed information of what went awry in the teachers' opinion when the building was built.

Mr Gee: 'Children learn much better in different environment when they go to college they learn much better because they are kinaesthetic learners no practitioner was ever asked about the functioning of the building or the lay out the building does not cater for the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and we have a 19<sup>th</sup> century building that tries to cater for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and unfortunately there are still some teacher only doing talk and listen' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Red Flash: 'actually the buildings they tore down were 50s 60s buildings that where here before this new build box of shithole they had big drama stages pits backstage music things swimming pool they had all this stuff back in the 50s 60ies then we could not find the money to support them ... and then we get this cheap and nasty building that is only good for a call centre' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

The teachers felt that this new school was built without consideration of learning spaces. Not only did the teachers miss the former swimming pool and big stages of the old building, but they also stated that the school space does not provide possibilities for kinaesthetic learners. Red Flash mentioned later that in his home country, schools have workshops and garages where the pupils who need more hands on learning experiences can learn to repair cars or build things. The teachers, frustrated with the physical limitations the school as space provided, expressed that the area surrounding the school does not offer much either. Some of this negative perception transpired throughout fieldwork, in conversations between teachers and pupils, reinforcing the attitudes of disempowerment that accompanied the spaces school and the area the school is situated in.

The teachers also used a variety of metaphors to emphasise their disappointment with the outreach aspects of the school space. Mr Gee said change is not going to happen unless it comes from the community surrounding the school, he uses 'galvanising point' to indicate the change from within. Red Flesh turns even more cynical with his metaphors stating that the government accepts 'aspects of society failing for the greater good' and Mr Gee announces that people who are not involved in school and support learning are 'left to slowly rot'.

The teachers in their role felt that they are under too much pressure and the government does not appreciate their professionalism. Mr Gee even compared the quality assessments and hierarchies in the educational profession as a feudal system. Stating that the pressure they are under as teachers inhibits their actual involvement in pupil support because of the time they have to spend with the paperwork; he labels this a 'vicious circle'. Indicating that the quality insurance administration, they are obliged to undertake, is inhibiting their time for a good pedagogy.

#### *The pupils' perspective.*

The participants' photographs show interesting aspects in relation to the school and its surroundings. These aspects provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' viewpoint of the institution and the area they live in. Beginning with pictures of the school surrounding, which was one of the first tasks for the lunchtime photo club, the most common item on these pictures were the high-rise towers close to the school grounds (Figure 5. View from a Highrise Tower, Participant's Picture; Figure 7. Highrise Towers, Participant's Picture; Figure 8. Highrise Tower, Participant's Picture). The towers featured in the pictures of all participants in the lunchtime photo club, demonstrating the significance of these buildings in the area. Figure 8 for instance could have featured the city without the tower blocks but the participants chose to picture them.



*Figure 5. View from a Highrise Tower, Participant's Picture*

I was surprised by the completely different premise under which Linda, one of the refugee children, described these towers in the interview about her photos. As mentioned earlier I found these structures oppressingly dark and dull. When I asked the pupil why she had taken pictures of these towers, she told me: 'they are beautiful – they connect the sky with the earth' (Interview Linda, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2008). For this pupil and her sisters, as well as other refugee children, these towers meant home and a safe space far from my oppressive idea of them.

Thus, the teachers and my perception were very different. She also told me about the great views one can have from the towers (Figure 8). The opposite perception of these particular buildings derives out of the different life experiences of teacher participants, pupil participants and participating researcher. Considering the previously discussed pre-flight experiences of refugee children (Refugee and Asylum-seeker Experiences), a house that is physically safe appears in a different light. In further pictures Linda showed

me how she made the flat attractive. This involved inexpensive textile flowers, which she washed and cleaned and put into a vase on top of a pedestal presented by friends when moving in. Something that looks to the middle class researcher as shabby, in the eyes of the research participant, was beautiful, signifying a safe home.

During research planning I had not yet come across translanguaging, as form of using cultural context from the first language translating it into a different cultural context. Analysing the photographs I realised that these photographs created space for this cultural transmission. Depicting the participants understanding of their world, the photographs offered space for conversation, for translating the participants' culture into the researcher's culture. This translation became most apparent when I realised how surprised I was by some of the participants' interpretation of their photographs—helping me to see through two different lenses.





*Figure 6. Textile Flowers at Lina's Home, Participant's Picture*

The politically interested teachers understand these houses as symbols for exclusion and marginalisation of refugee and asylum-seeking families. The teachers are aware of the dispersal contracts and housing situation. I was too, so for myself the towers came with negative connotations.



*Figure 7. Highrise Towers, Participant's Picture*



*Figure 8. Highrise Tower, Participant's Picture*





*Figure 9. The EAL Unit, Participant's Picture*

Next to the surprising perception of the high-rise towers I found a strong differentiation in the focus of the participants' pictures from classroom spaces within school. The participants from mainstream classrooms had taken pictures of the rooms of their most favourite subjects. The EAL pupils, despite spending the majority of time in mainstream classrooms, had only taken pictures of the EAL Unit (Figure 9. The EAL Unit, Participant's Picture). The headline for this task was: Things and places in school of significance.



*Figure 10. Paint Shelf in the Arts Classroom, Participant's Picture*

The pupil group discussions resulted in my understanding that the participants saw certain areas for improvement of the school. In the EAL unit the pupil participants told me about the swimming pool that was in the old school, yet also their awareness of costs relating to keeping up such a building. Interestingly, these statements concurred with the statements from the teacher conversations.

Despite the disappointment of not finding the new building an improvement, the participants found spaces in school they liked, related either to their favourite subjects or for the refugee participants solely the EAL Unit. This focus on the EAL Unit related probably to the additional dimension of teaching that takes place there. This dimension features teachers working within a different frame of reference to the mainstream teachers, like Mrs Ferry stated: 'we are not only teacher' (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Real-life context and catering for the pupils' needs beyond the

mediation of knowledge (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008, EAL Group Discussion), impact on this positive perception of the EAL Unit in addition to its colourful decoration and informal lay out. A further aspect of this positive perception could also be the strong peer support; the mixed age groups and abilities of the children in the EAL Unit provided regular incentives for peer support and learning.

One issue the pupils were upset about was the broken window (Figure 13. Broken Front Window, From Inside the School, Participant's Picture) at the front of the school building, which featured in all the pupils' pictures. They did not know who had broken the front window or why it was broken. Further the rubbish other pupils left in school (Figure 12. Rubbish in School Corridor, Participant's Picture) or that was in the back of the school building (Figure 11. Rubbish Behind School Building, Participant's Picture), was an issue of disappointment. These markers of missing care for the school space seemed to me symptoms of the previously discussed negative aspects of the school and the area the school is situated in. The pupils' disappointment in this form of carelessness indicated their wish for a clean and harmonious learning space. That wish was emphasised in pictures that featured the most favourite spaces, colourful decorations and pupil made items.

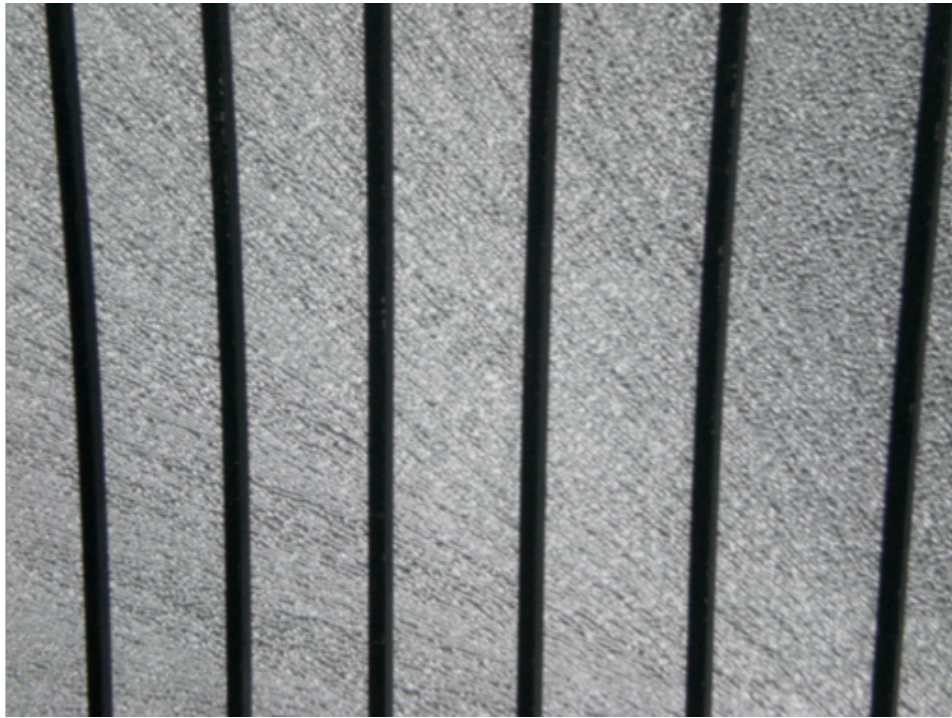


*Figure 11. Rubbish Behind School Building, Participant's Picture*



*Figure 12. Rubbish in School Corridor, Participant's Picture*





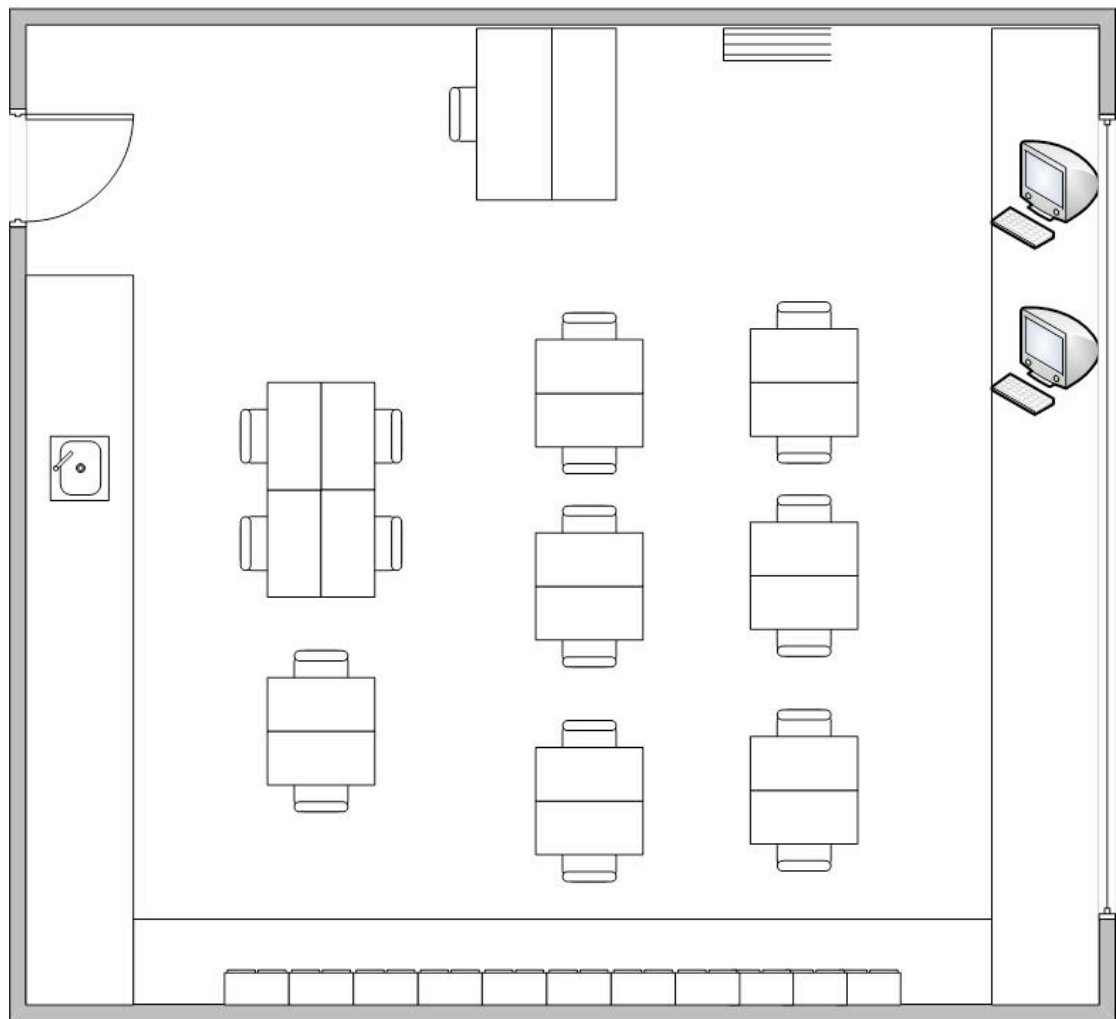
*Figure 13. Broken Front Window, From Inside the School, Participant's Picture*

I inserted my drawings of the three classroom spaces. Some of the most significant differences were that the tables in the EAL Unit were constantly re-arranged depending on the needs of the day or even of the particular lesson. The EAL Unit was also the only one of the three classrooms which had computers for the pupils in it. The EAL Unit's layout provided and invited the pupils to use the space as they needed. The computers were regularly used by the pupils for their homework or interacting with news or other virtual environments in their mother tongue. This particular learning space seemed to entice pupils to be proactive and take control and ownership of their learning processes. This is shown in the following section (*1<sup>st</sup> Question*) when pupils get up and take materials or books as they need them, invent games or collaborate despite working on different projects. There were shelves with dictionaries and textbooks the pupils could draw from at any time, a feature that I also found in the English classroom.

The arrangements in the English and Maths classroom were spatially restricted in comparison to the EAL Unit. The tables here remained the same throughout the fieldwork, only on one occasion were the tables in the last row in the English classroom put together in one long line. Pupils were not encouraged to get up, communicate and support each other on as regular a base as they were in the EAL Unit (e.g. Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008, ). This was clearly reflected in the layout and equipment of the classroom spaces.

This section of the analysis focused on issues of space, mainly the physical spaces the school, the classrooms and the area surrounding the school, whereby the teachers' negative picture of Isengard and its surrounding were juxtaposed by a positive perception the children held—although the children were also aware of shortcomings such as the trash or broken window. How strongly such perceptions are dependent on the life experiences and expectations of all the research participants emerged only in my analysis comparing the different sources.

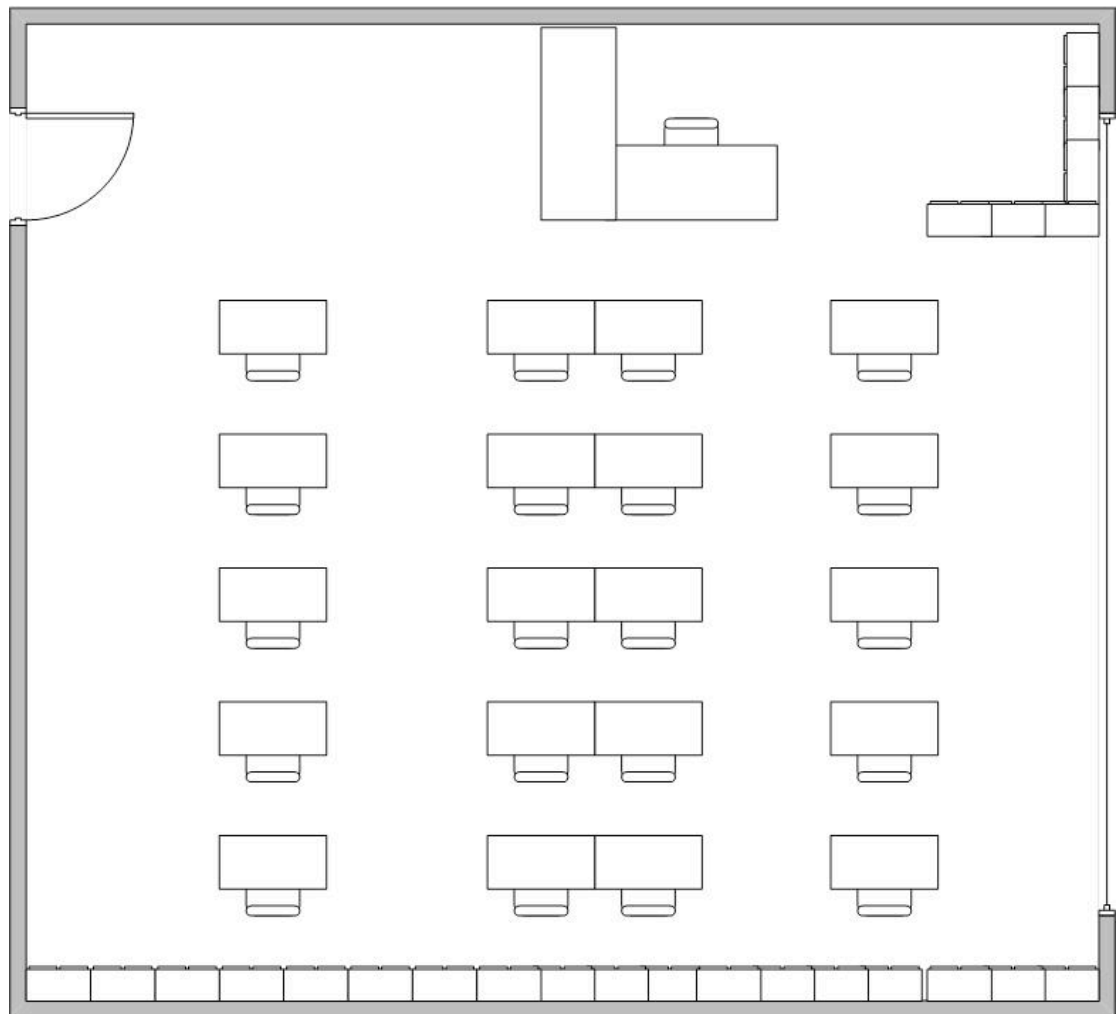
# EAL Unit



Not to Scale

*Figure 14. Outline EAL Unit, Researcher's Sketch*

# English Classroom

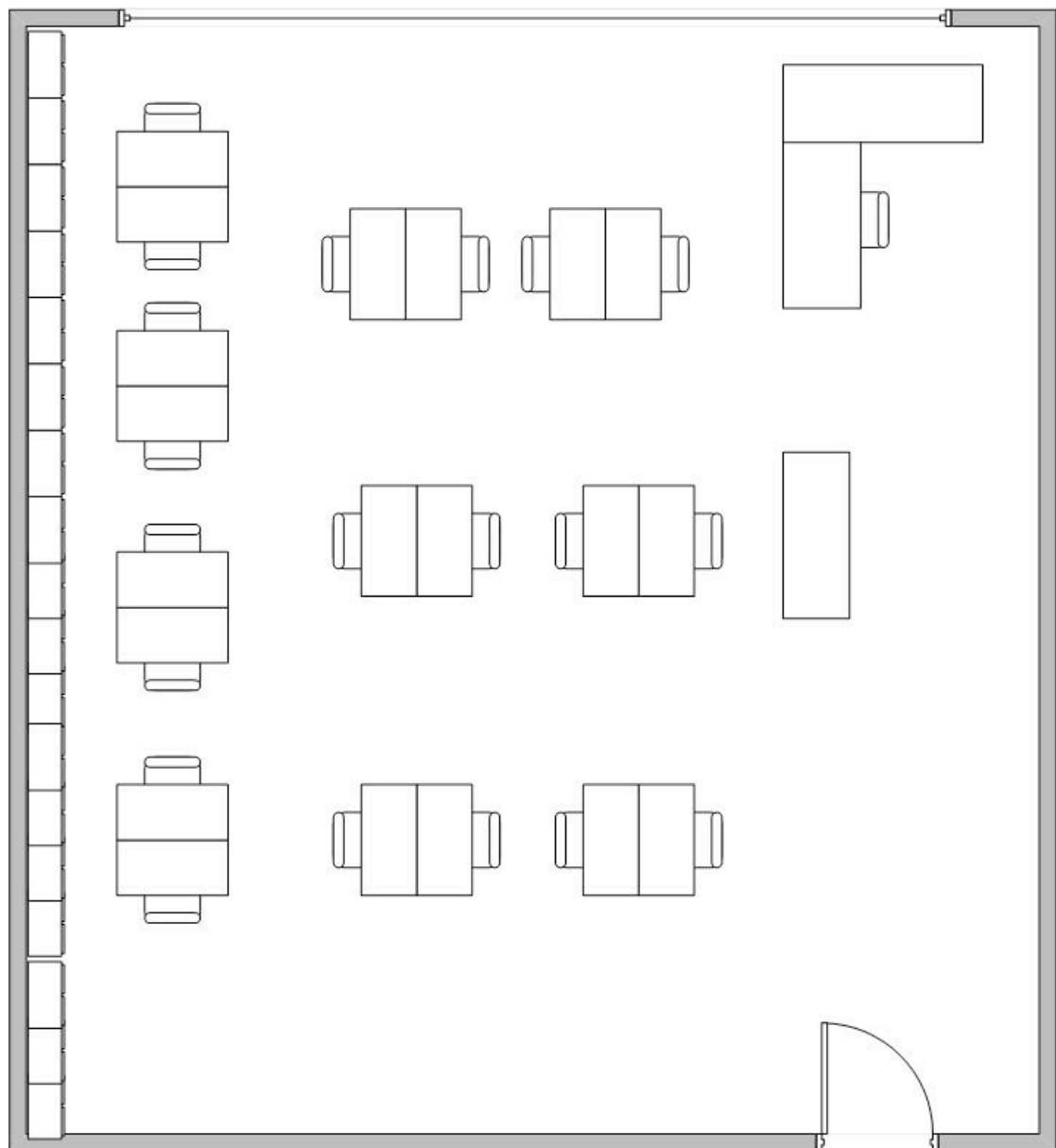


Not to Scale

*Figure 15. Outline English Classroom, Researcher's Sketch*



# Maths Classroom



Not to Scale

*Figure 16. Outline Maths Classroom, Researcher's Sketch*

## *Answering the Research Questions*

### *1<sup>st</sup> Question*

Which *creative learning* strategies, can refugee children access, and how are these strategies helping to support their scholarly development and inclusion?

This section focuses on *creative learning* strategies and usages available to the pupils. Different aspects of learning situations are explored in more detail; these aspects emerged as categories during the coding exercises (see section *Making Sense of my Data—Coding and Categorizing*). However the section is not structured according to the categories or codes, although I still use them for analysis and discussion. This is reasoned in the complexity of these learning situations. I decided to choose excerpts from fieldwork which were most useful in answering the research question. In answering the first research question I begin with Aspects of Social Learning, because Social Learning is one strategy of ownership in *creative learning*. Further, I focus on the significance of peer impact in learning situations, gauging pupils' voices about their learning preferences. In introducing the pupils' viewpoints of peer support in learning I prepare the following section Making Space for *Creative Learning* through Identity Negotiations.

Culture and Learning follows this section. There is a stronger emphasis on negotiation of meaning in this particular section. I discuss situations in which cultural learning and cultural difference between the learners became most obvious; again I will relate these discussions to the *creative learning* experience. The emphasis of the next section is on Relevance, Control and Ownership as three of the characteristics of *creative learning*. This section is followed by Teacher & Teaching. Under the title Teacher & Teaching I discuss some of the pedagogy that supported or inhibited *creative learning*. To bring the viewpoints of the teachers into my interpretation of pedagogy and also of the pupils' voices, I created the section Teachers' Voices. Here I discuss the outcomes of the teacher interview. 1<sup>st</sup> Question is concluded by

Relevance, Power and Discipline. The focus of this last section is issues of power in learning situations. These issues appeared to have a strong relation to missing relevance and were sometimes expressed by the pupils in discipline issues, hence the title of this final section.

Exploring relationships' impact on learning was based on the concept of learning as a social as well as personal process. Exploring the pupils' viewpoints promised to give a more in depth insight into the social learning situations and if, and how, pupils made use of social capital. Therefore, I handed the participants questionnaires and initiated group discussions to gauge their voices and viewpoints about school and learning.

Observing how the participants interacted within the group discussion was another way of exploring how meaning was negotiated within the different classrooms. I observed backchannel support or backchannel responses these are agreeing noises and utterances such as: 'yeah', 'hm', 'uhu', or non-verbal cues such as nodding (Geerts, Bouhuys & Bloem (1997), Dixon & Foster (1998), Gravano & Hirschberg (2009), Li, Cui, & Wang (2010), Ward & Bayyari (2010)).

The wording of the questionnaire question: *Do you like to learn on your own or together with friends?* gave the participants some issues, with answering. Several participants in the mainstream classes missed the differentiation of the word *or* in the sentence and only answered *yes*, which makes sense when reading the sentence with an *and* instead of an *or*. This leads to the conclusion that the participants prefer a mixture of learning alone and in groups. This conclusion was supported in the follow up group discussions. I asked the same question and the pupils emphasised their preferences for a mixture of group work and individual work. They made this dependent on the type of learning. Serious learning was named as learning one would like to undertake alone without distraction, other pupils emphasised that learning in a group is a source of support and help with difficult tasks. These contradictions show that the preferences were personal and that pupils both appreciated the peer support they got out of learning, as well as acknowledging that learning in a peer group can be distractive to the learning progress.

‘Because you discuss it you come across a problem your friend helps you when your friend comes across a problem you help him ... you share it ...’ (Group Discussion EAL, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

‘More brains ... some people know this others that. ... Different abilities ...’ (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The participants emphasised reciprocity as a factor for support within a learning situation, indicating that more people working on one tasks means balancing gaps in abilities and knowledge. One pupil even interjected ‘more brains’ as if numbers in brains made up for lacking knowledge or overcoming difficulties. Thus, the knowledge and awareness of reciprocity within group work was a first indicator of the role social capital can play in learning. Additional to the declarations of the pupils, I observed reciprocity throughout the group discussion. The pupils paid attention to one another’s statements and offered suggestions, sharing agreements or disagreements. Reciprocity and intersubjectivity became most apparent in this part of the conversation.

Vikki: ‘... I like to work on my own because in-group, somebody might not agree with my answer and I don’t like that’ (Interview English, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The fear of disapproval from peers indicates the importance of peer approval for self-esteem. This statement came from a pupil who was particularly shy in class and would flush every time she was addressed directly by the teacher or classmates. Yet pupils also indicated their appreciation of friends being able to correct mistakes and help to foster understanding. This indicates that part of learning preferences was the position of the learner within the group and the confidence the learner had on his or her position.

The pupils were further aware of the disadvantages constituted by the relationships in a learning situation. A warning to rely only on this reciprocity though came from a pupil who warned his classmate Zula when she said: ‘Sometimes you just can let your friend do it, if you don’t know the question your friend can do it’, with: ‘but then you don’t learn’ (Group

Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). The most significant insight came from a pupil who said that for group work she would pick people to work with who were not her friends, because then they would not start gossiping but focus on problem solving (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

Pupil 1: 'If it is your friend you gonna gossip' ...

Pupil 2: 'but sometimes it is better to work in a group cause you can sort of argue about it' ... [Researcher: 'You can support each other?'] ... 'uhu yeah'

'Is like working with friends more like when you need to relieve stress and the work is not that much important' ... ['or it is too much' – Pupil 3] ... 'uhu or it is too much you share you talk to your friend' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008)

The pupils differentiated their support needs according to the learning situation. What the pupils here label as sharing of work, arguing things out, talking to a friend, and stress relief were valuable for emotional well-being in learning situations. This is why I interpret these intersubjective strategies as support. To access cultural capital, the one pupil chose learning partners she did not particularly like to fulfil a learning task; using an initial excluding negative social capital and transforming it into selective positive social capital to gain learning aims and outcomes. The pupil knew that for her scholarly development and success she would need to fulfil requirements of group work. She knew however, that working with her friends, and utilizing her social capital, would have a negative impact onto the learning outcome. This was only the first occasion I encountered in which a pupil overcame personal inhibitions for the sake of the learning situation. Overcoming such inhibitions could be read as a high form of control and ownership over the learning process and further signify the impact of peer influence on the learning process. The pupils' viewpoints of peer-impact on learning concurred with Cummins (2001) standpoint of the significance of human relationships within schooling.

After this initial gauging of relational preferences in learning the next section focuses on aspects of social learning. Central points are identity negotiations and the creation of meaning within classroom interactions. The aspect of

space becomes transparent in this section again. One focus lies on teachers creating space for the pupils, where the pupils chose, to take up this offered space for a successful learning experience or not.

*'The Zookeeper and the Animals'—Making Space for Creative Learning Through Identity Negotiation*

Sharing knowledge has a variety of connotations; it can be very supportive and non-intrusive or distracting as the pupils above mentioned. Intersubjectivity determines that sharing knowledge utilizes not only reciprocity, but also co-creation of meaning (Laewen & Andres, 2002). In the following I explore situations where meaning was negotiated, focusing on the peer groups' impact onto the learning situations. Aspects of identity negotiations surfaced in these interactive learning spaces. Where appropriate I will discuss the power relations within the learning situations.

The seasons and weather poster distracts Eloise, because she wanted to check on some spelling. First Mrs Ferry says: 'it has nothing to do with weather', but [after a short break] said: 'on the other hand.' [Pausing and letting Eloise take over again.]

Subsequently the discussion shifts to months and seasons, and the pupils who are able to name the months and the seasons do so. Eloise realised that Amon is upset because he cannot do it. So she started singing a learning song about the months. Ms Ferry told the pupils: 'You remember things you sing. You will never forget them.' Some of the pupils give agreeing backchannel support. Amon seems to appreciate this. He focuses completely while Eloise sings (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

Initially the teacher's reflex was to interrupt the pupil's self-initiated learning. Eloise's investigation was so determined that Ms Ferry rescinded control and handed the learning space back to the pupils. Subsequently, the conversation shifted to months and seasons revealing Amon's knowledge gap and providing space for the pupils to take control and ownership. Ms Ferry only intervened to support Eloise's learning offer, and creating an incentive to involve the other pupils, who promptly provided backchannel support. In the EAL Unit the teachers usually gave space to the pupils' own explorations and interests, although it seemed counterintuitive to the teacher, as Ms Ferry's initial reaction demonstrated. Her confidence in her pedagogy gave her control and she was able to reassess her initial reaction,



subsequently taking herself back and leaving the control of this learning situation to the pupils.

In the following situation, Mr Gee, gave Eloise responsibility for four newly arrived pupils in the EAL Unit. She held the 'teacher' role and was to go through a list of vocabulary. Eloise read the words aloud and the other pupils wrote them down. A majority of the words were unknown to the pupils, so Eloise explained the meaning of the words. The other pupils joined the negotiation and used a variety of hand movements and mime to accompany the explanations. This drew on a variety of semiotic systems (Walsh, 2007) to pad language inadequacies (Lee, 2009; Varonis & Gass, 1985). Switching between Arabic and English, and using mime to create cultural context to the vocabulary learned was actively using translanguaging skills to create meaning (García, 2009).

The word dog seemed to be the most challenging one, which Eloise and the others kept repeating again and again: 'dog, dug, dough, duck' they could not agree on it ... Amon at some point just looked ... saying dog and started to make dog noises. All the children were laughing about this nice play. The negotiation about terms was lead in English, Arabic supported by mime, hands, noises or even little presentations of an action—like carrying a tea tray or sleeping. (Fieldnotes, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008)

Joking and teasing accompanied the negotiation of terms; it carried more than the creation of meaning, agreeing on a term and use. It was an activity negotiating identities. Eloise used examples relating to British as well as Far Eastern culture, for instance carrying a tea tray (Fieldnotes, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008). This interaction was a bonding experience between the participants. The other pupils answered Eloise with respect when she reproduced the role of the teacher. When Eloise mocked the role, overemphasising body language, strictness and imitating one of the EAL teachers, the other pupils took this up as challenge. They tried different power positions like accepting the 'power' Eloise had in her teacher role or rebelling against it, teasing her.

Next to a genuine interest in the learning topic and the desire to learn vocabulary, this exercise demonstrated the multilayered facets implied in

social learning. The pupils were able to try power positions, negotiated identities through finding common ground in knowledge, co-constructed the meaning of terms and established trust in each other, using reciprocity in the negotiation of terms. The atmosphere in this group was supportive and engaging, this enticed Amon to partake, barking and panting when he realised that the group could not find a consensus over the word dog.

I realised that Eloise was not only teacher but controlling the exercises also made her learn the spelling because some words she had to look up again before she was able to mark them. (Fieldnotes, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008)

The situation was characterised by all aspects of *creative learning*. Relevance occurred in establishing the cultural context of the words the pupils learned. The participants were truly learning connoisseurs here, and actively engaged with one another. Ownership and control were particularly eminent in this situation. Learning was fully pupil led, and collaborative, the pupils took ownership of the knowledge interpreting the terms using different systems of communication. The pupils used innovation in trying different forms of displaying the meaning of words to help each other understand, across their different cultures.

This significant learning space was only possible because the teacher demonstrated a high level of trust in the pupils. He left the group to their own devices trusting that they would actually undertake work and learn. The pupils reciprocated this trust in fulfilling the teacher's expectations. They were playing and making jokes throughout the exercise, but the pupils went through the complete list of vocabulary and Eloise marked the group results at the end. I understood this situation as a strong indicator for bonding social capital between the teacher and the pupils, but also between the pupils. With the negotiation of terminology and reflecting on each other's understanding of terms and their context the pupils undertook a bonding activity.

Another way of proving learning space was handing the pupils control over decisions on how to approach a task. The teacher had suggested pupils

should work for another 5 minutes on papers before moving on with the topic. The pupils disliked this suggestion and complained it was too short a timeframe. Red Flash asked how long the class would like to have, they replied, '15 minutes'. The teacher retorted that this was too much time. In my research diary I describe the following negotiation as bazaar-like bargaining. The class and teacher finally agreed on 7 minutes working time (Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

Initially I wondered if the situation was useful because 5 minutes bargaining time took 5 minutes out of class time. Why then did I still find this situation significant? The situation permitted the pupils to take ownership and control in determining time for their exercises. With this they contributed to negotiating their learner identities, knowing how much time they would need for a task. On another level, this negotiation also lightened the mood in the class and provided a bonding exercise between the teacher and the class. Both sides enjoyed the friendly banter of the negotiation and afterwards the pupils focused on their tasks. The pupils did take ownership of their work time and were proud of having negotiated more than 5 minutes. .

In the English classroom the teacher provided further space for collaboration and peer support. For a creative writing exercise he prepared the class to learn analogies, after an introduction he encouraged the pupils to work in teams and figure out the list of analogies.

When Red Flash introduced the term furnace the class became confused they did not know the term. So he related the explanation of the term with stories from his home Canada. The children began talking with the teacher for a bit about Canada and life there, before the session went on to different analogies (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

Identity constructions and meaning making became most obvious in this particular situation. The aspect nationality of the teacher's identity, although in the foreground, initiated identity negotiations within the classroom, and between the pupils (compare for Patchwork Identities, p.61). At the end of the class, in which analogies were taught, the pupils had control of the

learning content and they began making things up themselves like Duncan who said: 'Red Flash is to Canadian as Duncan is to Scottish' and Red Flash praised him for this.

The girl in front of me (the one without the book and the missing support teacher) is teasing Red Flash because of his pronunciation of Tuesday ... Red Flash says she is racist they tease each other for a bit. (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008)

The quality of relationship between teacher and pupils in this class seemed based on trust and also respect. The pupils accepted the teacher, even his occasional strictness. When the teacher asked the pupils, while they were waiting in front of the door to leave the classroom; 'teacher is to pupils like zookeeper is to?' The whole class shouted giggling: 'to animals'. (Fieldnotes, 29th April 2008) With this the transition of initially not understanding the concept of analogies, into making them their own became very clear.

The pupils who initially were not able to find the analogy of hand is to elbow like foot to knee, were eventually able to make up their own analogies and with these they chose analogies that were relevant to them. The teacher had left space in class to permit playing with words and negotiating meaning. Within the learning space created, the pupils were able to take control and ownership of the learning content and even create their own relevance.

Playing with words and permitting free associations seemed to help create meaning and a wider understanding of terms, it even led on several occasions to talking about the teacher's national identity and the difference between British and Canadian use of terms. Duncan, who initially did not believe in his ability to solve a task, when left to his own device, was the first pupil at the end of the session to make up his own analogies.

The space the teacher provided the pupils for discussion, questions, and mistakes enabled them to take control and ownership over the situation and the learning content. The teacher intervened when needed but left the pupils to free-flow suggestions, the mood throughout the whole class was dynamic,

interactive and generally friendly. Some of the pupils would still decide to selectively partake, like Kibby or the boy in the last row. However, they still seemed included in the whole exercise and could partake should they wish to do so. This knowledge transpired in the comments they made, or when they looked up from their work, if something in the classroom discussion caught their attention.

In contrast with this effective pedagogy, the teacher in the Maths class, initially offered space to the pupils. Yet, when they began to take control of the learning situation the teacher intervened and restricted the learning space again. She did not seem to trust the pupils and thus failed to acknowledge the success of her initial attempt to give space and the subsequent co-operation in the classroom.

The teacher started out to create a space during the session in which the pupils held control over the activity they undertook. Joe had started to co-operate with Dougal from the other team they had discovered that when they put their metre sticks above each other they could measure the height of the door in one go. Instead of letting the boys go on with their co-operation Ms Lee reminded Joe to stick with his team.

Some of the pupils worked together and were discussing how to approach the tasks best, while other pupils followed teams around and observed what they were doing without getting directly involved into the actual team (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008).

This co-operation and participation took on different forms. Some of the pupils were directly involved in the exercise, others took on roles as observers without offering their own perspective—a role that was accepted and supported by their classmates. Sharing information with each other is an indicator for high social competence, featuring forms of reciprocity. I understand this giving of space to each other as form of reciprocity because the pupils acknowledge their different needs, and so are able to see a situation from a different perspective (Blumer, 1969). Alfred, who was following his classmates around observing what they were doing, did so without impairing their work.

Observing the situation, I realised, that despite the usual lack of discipline in this classroom, the pupils showed positive qualities of their relationships. They were able to anticipate the other's needs and act accordingly. The pupils were aware of Alfred's background; he usually was very withdrawn in the classroom and interacted little with other pupils during my time in the field. In this situation, however, he interacted on a level that was comfortable for him. He acknowledged the team boundaries, yet participated by closely observing their activities and communication. The team were aware of Alfred and giving glances to him and the way they moved enabled him to observe their activities. They did not exclude him from their activities although he was not an active member of the team. This indicates the children's awareness of one another's learner identities and subsequently learning needs.

The pupils desire to cooperate sometimes infringed on the discipline in the classroom. The pupils were to work on their own; due to the issues they had with the task, several pupils attempted to get the attention of the teacher. When Ms Lee was unable to help Grant right away, Aline began to shout suggestions to him from across the classroom. Situations such as this were common occurrences in all classrooms.

The children are to draw lines of 75 mm etc a huge discussion starts about the task and how one knows how long this is. They seem not to make the connection between the exercise on the board  $10\text{cm} = 100\text{mm}$  etc ... Aline shouts out suggestions how to read the ruler to Grant because he had a question and Ms Lee could not answer right away because she was busy elsewhere. (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008, p.8)

The maths teacher wrote tasks on the blackboard waiting for the pupils to finish their calculations before providing the results. The pupils, who were successful with this task, became too impatient to wait for the teacher's results. Subsequently they began taking over the situation, loudly announcing that they had their results (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008). A situation that appeared initially as lacking discipline and learning opportunities, transpired to be an act of gaining control over the learning processes by the pupils. The pupils were actively involved in the discussion, eager to share

the answers with the teacher and the classmates. In these instances Ms Lee usually left the pupils to their discussion and held the learning open for their interaction.

Despite the apparent chaos which generally ruled during the Maths class, the pupils seemed constantly aware of one another's needs (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008). In the Maths classroom the pupils had a strong need for acknowledgement and peer support. If their needs were not fulfilled right away, they would choose other ways of obtaining support. From a disciplinary point of view, this could be understood as negative social capital excluding the teacher; however, it also could be seen as good quality of relationships between the pupils. Pupils could rebel against institutional structures and the coercive discipline the teacher tried to establish yet supported each other as soon as required. A study in Australia, about classroom discipline, showed pupils were more disrupted in their learning, if the teacher used coercive measures to discipline classmates rather than relationship-based measures of discipline. Lewis (2001) further found *the pupils who experience more coercive discipline act less responsibly in class* (Lewis, 2001, p. 314), a finding that concurred with my observations.

During a creative-writing exercise in the English classroom, some children interacted about the task before them. I became curious about their conversation as they were supposed to write. They showed each other their papers talking about the structure. Then one of the boys began to make strange noises I became curious.

He was deep in a discussion with a girl trying to identify the kind of noise a dragon might make. Since they could not think of a right word they tried out sounds and subsequently experimented with transcribing them. Eventually the teacher went over to the meanwhile small group of pupils. He offered suggestions of different words, and more pupils joined into the small discussion and all eventually agreed on one of the words Red Flash suggested. (Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008)

In this situation, the co-creation of meaning became apparent. Neither of the pupils had a solution to the problem, so they drew on one another's imagination. Taking control of the learning situation, the pupils drew on one another's experience, were collaborating in finding a solution, which, supported by the teacher, was successful. A significant element in this

negotiation was offering suggestions and trusting each other not to get ridiculed with the suggestions made, although the noises the pupils exhibited were rather unusual.

LilMo ... and Duncan one of the monolingual pupils were working together on a task. The word pair contained the term *pane* neither Duncan nor LilMo knew the word. Duncan's reaction was to instantly give up on thinking about the task, while LilMo consulted the dictionary. LilMo and I insisted that Duncan looks up the word the boy did not even know how to handle a dictionary, while LilMo was very confident with this, something that may have derived out of necessity. Duncan eventually told us *pane* is spelled *pain* although it was written in front of him. While LilMo is very self-reliant and searched for ways to solve a problem, Duncan gave up encountering the first problem. Only by insisting we were able to bring Duncan to focus a bit longer on the task he eventually started to be disruptive though and was sent out by the teacher (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

LilMo, as a refugee pupil, learned to rely on regular dictionary use. Duncan, as a monolingual, demonstrated no experiences in using a dictionary. When LilMo offered Duncan help, his first reaction was avoidance behaviour, only after I intervened could we convince Duncan to use the dictionary. An issue that became apparent in this particular situation was that of my conflicting roles in the field. I was so drawn into the situation, seeing Duncan struggle that I involuntarily slipped out of my researcher role into a teacher role. The tone in my field notes very clearly reflects my bias in the situation. This slip was in hindsight teaching me to be more aware of my role in the field.

LilMo wanted to share his knowledge of using a dictionary, an ability that could empower Duncan and LilMo was apparently proud of. Their different learner identities transpired in the different skills and attitudes towards problem solving in this situation. I knew from Red Flash that Duncan came from a problematic home; he had told me that Duncan knows more about real-life than most pupils in class. Red Flash did not disclose any particulars about Duncan but from how he said it and observations of Red Flash's reaction Duncan apparently used school to let loose.



In all three classrooms the need to draw from peer support became apparent. Peer support was often reciprocal, a pupil could choose to take up offered support or, as Duncan did in the situation above, refuse it. In such situations the impact of a pupil's preferences, or issues became most obvious. The pupils taking ownership and control did not necessarily only depend on the space the teachers created, but also on the pupils' use of these opportunities.

Aline got a letter that she has to do her prevocational training in a Sport Centre she is incredibly upset about this. She wanted to go to a hairdresser, although she is rubbish in making tea as she lets me know, she almost always manages to rip the teabag open. But she would exercise making tea [...] she would always make the tea home so she will be able to make tea. Ms Lee forbade her to talk about this topic, which Aline only partially listen to, since it really did upset her. She then turned secretly to Mary and asked her where she got her internship. Mary passed her letter onto Aline.

Throughout the whole session Aline would go back to this topic and say how upset she is and that she extra inquired to go to a hairdresser. (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008)

In prevocational training the pupils worked for two weeks in a local company trying out different professions, such as hairdresser, builder or childminder. The training was organised by the school in consultation with each pupil. The particular problem with this situation was that although there were several hairdressers in the area the study advisor did not manage to find a place for Aline.

All the pupils kept talking about their prevocational training letters throughout class. Ms Lee prohibiting the class to talk about these letters only had the effect that the pupils passed the letters to each other and secretly talked about them. Thus, taking control of the situation and infringing on the discipline in the classroom. Significantly, Aline showed high intrinsic motivation to succeed in her prevocational training. For this she tried to make cups of tea, acknowledging her weakness and trying to overcome it. The high relevance of this informal learning was brought into the school environment through the prevocational planning. The school however failed to acknowledge Aline's wishes, because the teacher failed to cater for the pupils' needs to share their grievances or joy about the placement letters. The

teacher's oversight to provide space for peer support in this situation was met with discipline infringements by the class, and the teacher did not manage to get the class back on track with mathematics during this session.

This reaction of the pupils demonstrated how significant the real-life impact onto a school situation could be. Identity negotiations took place with the pupils discussing their wishes for a future profession. It also demonstrated that the school failed to appropriately address the pupils' concerns. Despite each pupil having a career advisor with whom they planned their wishes for prevocational training, most of the girls in this classroom were sent to a local sport centre as receptionists. The apparent structural shortfalls of this career advice and the significance of the prevocational training for each individual pupil impacted onto the classroom situation. In other classrooms as demonstrated in the following situation, the teacher had trust in his pedagogy and picked up on the pupils' real-life concerns. This reaction seemed to have prevented discipline issues in this particular situation. In the Maths classroom in contrast the teacher struggled and eventually failed to get the class to focus on mathematics again.

I came into school just after the presidential election in the USA, in which Barack Obama became president. In the EAL Unit the teacher Mr Gee, picked up on the pupils' discussion about the election and showed them the online video that had gone viral. With this Mr Gee offered space for discussion and reflection. The pupils were able to express their excitement about an Afro-American president, bringing real-life experiences into the classroom. They were clearly elated to see someone from a minority group gaining such a significant position. Mr Gee's offering space for this discussion, provided the pupils with scope for identity negotiations, for getting their excitement 'out of the system' and the reassurance of the teacher for the needs and interests of the pupils. The similar values about politics helped the pupils bond over this discussion. All this took place in a time not longer than 10 to 15 minutes after which the pupils worked focused again.

A group of children looks at a magazine and they discuss if the picture is Tony Blair or Gordon Brown and G.W. Bush. When the session just started the children were in a discussion about the American elections and kept singing Obama. So Mr Gee asked them if they knew the 'Irish Obama Song' in YouTube, and that his song became a web hit. The children did not know this and he showed them on BBC news. The children really enjoyed the song.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/us\\_elections\\_2008/7718583.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/us_elections_2008/7718583.stm)

'A black man in the White House how cool is this?' One of the boys asks me I said: 'Pretty cool.' He said that he read his speech: 'It was so cool so emotional. ...'

Some of the [pupils] start dancing while the song is playing. Martha and the quieter boys look a little embarrassed. One of the girls sings 'Barak Obama, I think he is a hot bummer.' (Fieldnotes, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

Comparing this situation to the one in the Maths class, where the teacher failed to provide time for the pupils' concern, showed that the EAL teacher had trust in his pupils, the Maths teacher lacked this trust. Both trust and the lack of it were reciprocated by the pupils, trust is paramount for participatory learning styles (Kayes, Kayes, & Kolb, 2005; McGill, Segal-Horn, Bourner, & Frost, 1996).

Another form of identity and relationship negotiation took place in the English classroom between Vikki and Lorna. Here learner identities were in the foreground of the negotiations.

The pupils were supposed to make use of the analogies, they previously learned, in their creative writing. The teacher had come to the table I sat at this day. Then both pupils Lorna and Vikki went back to their tasks. It transpired however that Lorna had not understood the explanation that teacher had given. She started fidgeting and playing with her writing tools instead of writing. Her friend Vikki became annoyed with Lorna and decided to explain the rules again to her. However, Lorna was literally squirming trying to find excuses for not being able to write. Eventually Vikki gave up, rolled her eyes and took Lorna's paper. She wrote her a starter sentence and said: *From there you continue with this*. Being told off by her friend seemed to have effected Lorna, although she threw some folders to the ground and fought a bit she eventually started work, focused and continued with her story. (Fieldwork, 29th February 2008)

In this situation Lorna took on a teacher role, modelling her voice and behaviour in an authoritative way. Vikki accepted this authority after some initial rebelling. The situation was part identity negotiation, reinforcing Vikki as the one who in the group discussion confessed she needs punishment to begin working, and Lorna as the sensible and good learner. With this the girls also negotiated their relationship.

Some of the monolingual pupils, like Vikki or Duncan, demonstrated avoidance behaviour in situations with an apparent lack of confidence in their ability to cope with a task. This avoidance behaviour I did not observe in the EAL Unit, here the pupils proactively sought support struggling with a task. This may be related to a variety of factors. The proactive behaviour was not restricted to the EAL Unit, paramount, however, was that the remit of the EAL Unit and its teachers is clearly communicated between the teachers and the pupils. Room lay out, group constellations, teacher attitudes, their understanding of their roles, and structure of classes reflected the remit of pastoral support and support of scholarly progress.

A remit most pupils seemed not to associate with in the mainstream classrooms. Ms Lee might mirror Red Flash's disappointment in the school as learning space, and the stress he feels due to the amount of paperwork he understands as pointless. She also told me that she did not get any support from the school with her problematic Maths class. These frustrations and disappointments could impact the discourse that transpires from these teachers in their classrooms. Pupil statements like the ones below support this conclusion and exemplify the different perceptions of teachers in the mainstream classroom and the EAL Unit.

Gulliver ...' the teacher don't know if you learn or do something or not they don't know' ... [other pupil] 'well some teacher do' ... 'They don't actually care if you learn or not.' ... 'They don't teach you man!' [Grant?] ... 'They just want to get paid ...' (Group Discussion Maths Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

'They don't moan at you a lot' ... 'Yeah and some teachers communicate with the pupils' ... 'Yeah' ... 'Yeah they are friends they

don't treat different people' ... 'and some of them listen to you' ...  
(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

This section explored *creative learning* strategies such as participative learning strategies, exploring the relationships between the pupils and teacher within learning situations and a significant aspect of learning—learner identities. I demonstrated how small reciprocities such as backchannel support held a constant presence in learning situations. Their next more complex forms were sharing of knowledge, co-creation of meaning and other forms of co-operation. The children's need for support and co-operation would occasionally infringe on the teacher's plan for an activity or on discipline. All these forms of interaction were part of identity negotiations, which became more obvious in situations when real-life concerns were brought into the classroom. The following section discusses the impact of culture in learning situations, still placing an emphasis on peer support within learning situations and discussing aspects of co-operation and co-creation of meaning.

*'Why shall we learn about Jesus what's the point?'—Culture and Learning*

While this section still focuses on aspects of social learning and peer support, the emphasis here is on culture within learning situations. Peer support not only occurred in one-to-one situations, but also in group-discussions. In the following situation Marco ended up very confused because the discussion went back and forth. When he became stuck, the whole group interceded concordantly to get him back on track, showing that all pupils in this group listened and paid attention to the meaning negotiations.

When Mrs Ferry asked the pupils to describe how the Scottish Weather is, Amon raised his hand: ... 'Chang' ... 'change' ... Mrs Ferry keeps making circling hand movements as if she would like to pull out the last bit of the word out of Amon. When Amon keeps being stuck she pronounces 'ABLE'

He repeats: 'changeable', visibly proud of his achievement. (When Marco had problems to repeat the word Norman wanted to help him but Mrs Ferry said: 'let him learn' ... 'you repeat it please ... the word.' In all the back and forth however Marco had forgotten the word: 'Which word?')

The others jump in unison: 'Changeable!' (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Sharing of knowledge and backchannel support between the pupils was strongly present in all classrooms. The pupils focused on their own tasks; however if someone had a problem or finally understood a taught concept, all pupils would show their support. In these smaller learning groups within the EAL Unit, the pupils were constantly active agents of their learning (Bruner, 2003).

Norman appears to explain the word breeze ... to Kathryn, who seems to be at loss. He speaks Arabic and makes hand signs, which could indicate air movements.

Kathryn: 'How do you spell snow?' ...

Linda: 'S-N-O-Double.... No, no' ... shakes her head ...

'Yeah, you are right Linda!' This comment came from Mrs Ferry, Norman and Eloise at the same time. (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Pupils not only helped each other to create meaning of learning content, here the word breeze - but also had strong interest in one another's general learning. In similar situations in the mainstream classrooms, the pupils would place their bickering aside and help each other. The pupils in the EAL Unit drew very often on other forms of communication like hand movements, drawing or noises.

All pupils supported one another in their learning experiences, usually in a group. Interestingly, in the previous situation the pupils used exactly the same words and way of reaction as the teacher to support their classmate's right spelling of a word. I could interpret this as a sign that the pupils learnt the teacher's praise as positive, and they therefore reciprocated her way of reaction and formulation, to support their classmate. This could further indicate a set of values and norms implicit to this form of positive feedback, such as mistakes are an important part of a learning process, or that constructive criticism is nothing personal but a means of support.

Sharing knowledge and support within social learning was not only based on trust and reciprocity, but also on concern for one another. Not only the concern for peers, but also for the teacher as well as the teachers' concern for the pupils. Concern is not a characteristic of social capital; I would add it, however, because it does indicate the quality of relationships in the different classrooms. Concern signifies strong bonds in relationships, it stands for valuing the other person and caring for their well-being, therefore I understand it as a further indicator for bonding social capital. This concern enhanced learning situations, and impacted on the well-being of the pupils.

While Mr Gee explains the different learner types there is lot of backchannel support from the class. While he is doing so, he goes up and down in front of the class and eventually trips over one of the wires from the projector. The children got a fright; I heard loud intakes for breath and call outs.

One of the boys said: 'This could have damaged the light bulb.' Because the plug tore out of the wall and one boy in the row next to me said, that this incident taught him something: 'I just learned not to repeat your mistake.' He said grinning from one ear to the other. (Fieldnotes, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

Sincere concern for the teacher transpired, in their reactions. After the class calmed down, and reassured that Mr Gee was not hurt, the pupils voiced other opinions. The funny comment about not repeating the mistake was a play on an idiom Norman probably has heard quite often, although I was unable to establish if in school or at home. As it was directed with a challenging grin (direct eye contact, raised eyebrows) to the teacher, I might be right to assume that Mr Gee had used this proverb in class. Yet, it also depicts reproduction of culture. Mistakes as value terms, which only gain meaning in context (Maier & Shibbles, 2011) are cultural activities. Studies in early childhood development demonstrated the significance learners assigned to mistakes and keeping track of one another's history of success or mistake (Birch, Vauthier, & Bloom, 2008; Want & Harris, 2001). This situation revealed the pupils' sincere concern for the teacher, in combination with their viewpoint of this teacher as more of a friend than a teacher and the teachers' own perception of being more than a teacher. This demonstrates positive relationships between teachers and pupils in the EAL Unit indicating strong bonding social capital between the teacher and pupils.

The following situation demonstrated how the different forms of providing space in the EAL unit permitted the children to take different forms of control over their learning process. In this example Kathryn had focused during the first part of the session but seemed to lose focus during the second part.

She eventually got up and busied herself with tidying the room, while the teacher kept the session going. She put all the chairs back at the tables, where they had stood before. After some pondering in the room and being done with tidying up Kathryn went back to her papers and started rigorously erasing things from her workbook, drawing something new, erasing again she eventually gave up and got herself some new paper out of one of the drawers.

Marco who seemed to realise that the younger girl had some issues with sitting and listening to what the teacher and the other pupils were talking about, started to make pink dots with his pen on Kathryn's things. She pulled them out of the way and both started playing a little game of chase across the table. Kathryn pulling her papers and pencil case out of the way and Marco trying to make pink dots. This seemed to



have cheered up Kathryn a little. The teacher who was holding the class on this day is one of the stricter teachers in the EAL Unit; she however did not reprimand Kathryn or Marco to stop playing.

When Marco finally leaves his pen on the table Kathryn tries to blow it away with her book, when she realises it makes not enough wind she directly blows on it till the pen rolls over to Marco's side of the table again. (Fieldwork, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The freedom to doodle around when not able to focus permitted Kathryn to move about. Appreciating this freedom she used it to tidy the room, taking care not to make noise. When she settled down again Kathryn attempted to work, yet the furious use of the eraser and getting up for new paper seem to show that she still could not focus; so she welcomed Marco's deflection (Fieldwork, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

The last class of the day; Mr Gee told me this tends to be a poor time for the pupils. He said that using an additional language for the whole day is very exhausting to the bilingual pupils. Something I can understand, from my own experience. Mrs Ferry catered to this issue and let Kathryn ponder about the room, while she continued teaching. Marco, however, realised that Kathryn seemed not to feel well, she was fidgety and seemed nervous, but Marco picked up on Kathryn's obvious discomfort. The games and teasing he initiated with her, bonded, established some physical contact, and emotional support. The usually strict teacher, cognisant of this, left Kathryn and Marco to their exchange.

The support the participants gave each other in the EAL Unit was accompanied by more physical contact than in the Maths and English classrooms. During fieldwork in the EAL Unit, I observed that one of the boys had his head on the desk and the hood of his pullover over his head.

He appeared upset. Another of the boys in the room saw this and went over asking him if he is all right, then he hugged him and started singing to him. At first just he was just humming a melody but then he seemed to make up funny lyrics because both of the boys started giggling (Fieldnotes, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008).

The participants in all classrooms used their social competences in situations where real-life problems and issues were brought into the school. In these situations quarrelling was forgotten and the pupils usually offered support, or tried to point out to the teacher or me that something was wrong with one of the classmates. In the following situation it was not clear to me how far Big Bear's comment was meant seriously or was only teasing of the boy. The reaction of the other classmates however suggested that the boy had some issues, an indicator for problems brought into school. The boy however obviously did not want to talk about it, thus I left it. Interesting for cultural learning was, that the children who always greeted when entering the classroom felt the need to apologise for the boy's behaviour. The boy neglected the cultural script for this classroom. His classmates making amends for, and disclosing the boy's problems to me, included him into the discourse again.

When one of the boys comes in without greeting or even looking up, the children in class start apologising telling me that he has psychological problems. Big Bear says: 'Yeah, yeah he gets beaten up every morning this is really funny.' The boy keeps showing me his back till the others stop to talk about him. (Fieldnotes, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

Researcher: 'Do you have the feeling you have impact on learning?'  
'No not really' ... 'School is here to get to meeting Gulliver' Dougal says and then he hugs Gulliver (Group Discussion Maths class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The social importance for coming to school was emphasised by several other pupils whilst the academic significance seemed of only marginal existence. There was a strong element of rebelling against school culture, but I occasionally could observe situations in which aspects of positive social capital became apparent. In 'The Case of the Eraser' below, I found it intriguing that in this school pens, paper, erasers and rulers were provided for the pupils. The pupils even left some of their belonging in the classroom when leaving.

The case of the eraser has to do with this provision of stationary by the teacher. I could observe it in all the three classroom spaces. All pupils

shared only a couple of erasers with each other. This led to permanent negotiation of the whereabouts of the erasers. This negotiation however went always without bickering even the pupils who would usually tease each other would co-operate in that case.

All the pupils depended on using this 'tool' at some point during class. It seemed a natural process to the pupils to share the stationary, and no one was questioning the sharing. There were no fights about who had the eraser first. If one pupil needed an eraser, and another pupil close by was just using it, the pupil from the other end of the room would just give theirs. In other cases the pupil would simply wait without complaining or hurrying the classmate who had the eraser. Exactly this not complaining, and not bickering drew my attention to these situations (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

During these few minutes in the Math class the pupils were outside the social structures I observed as most common during my fieldwork, following a cultural script—as if co-operation was the most natural thing. With this activity the pupils showed a sense of belonging to the group, they knew what the parameters for this co-operation were.

Furthermore, they were aware of the interdependency with the stationary and thus sharing resources indicates the creation of social capital. They trust that once the classmate is finished using the eraser they would get it, without conflict. They learn reciprocity, in sharing and in considering different needs. In this learning culture when a pupil needed the eraser longer the classmate waited or someone else would pass on the eraser from his or her table, so the classmate would not have to wait. They trusted they could get it back again (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008). There were selected incidents like these that made me aware of the solidarity between the pupils. They did not differentiate in these cases between their friends and other classmates.

However, these situations did not translate into the overall behaviour of the pupils. As researcher I had, and still have, a problem with the complexity of these issues, while, there were situations like 'The Case of the Eraser', there were also bullying and disciplinary issues. Yet, when sincere needs arose, the pupils would step back from their usual bickering. Every time when I came to the Maths class and one of the pupils would be absent, Ms Lee inquired about the absent pupil. The pupil according to the record card either was in

school earlier on, or had not been in for some days. In these instances the class would fall silent and sincerely attempt to recall and report to the teacher the times they had seen the pupil, sometimes even tell the teacher if they knew something was going on with the pupil.

The rebellion, the mainstream class pupils displayed towards the teachers, would cease the moment there were serious questions or issues of non-academic content. What did this tell me about the social capital in the classes? The pupils differentiated between behaviour in school as non real-life activities (Lindner, 2006a), while the emerging issues that built a link to the out-of-school life changed behaviour.

Only sporadically, such as in the case of the eraser or helping one another with a question, would concerns and considerateness translate into school context situations. Willis (1977) found in his study that the class differences between the pupils and the school significantly impacted on the relationships between pupils and teachers. My initial interpretation of the pupils' behaviour as display of negative social capital does not fit with this form of behaviour, and I suggest that it is a form of selective use of social capital. The previous situation seems to support this notion. The pupils would support one another if they thought there was a real need for this support, yet regress into teasing and arguments when they lost control over a situation or felt that the activities done were not relevant (e.g. Fieldnotes 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008).

During the teacher interview Mr Gee and Red Flash provided their understanding of the academic support the pupils received from home. The main point being the refugee children had different attitudes towards education than the monolingual children. Mr Gee stated the EAL pupils' parents were doctors or had other academic degrees, and the pupils from monolingual families came from a background where the parents themselves were missing education and thus had problems supporting their children (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009). With missing education, Mr Gee referred to parents who dropped out of school, were low achievers and had

generally a poor academic background. The levels of family support in learning appeared not dependent on the social capital within the families or caretakers but on the different levels of academic abilities within these networks. It also indicated that differences between the refugee learners and the monolingual learners were due to class differences not cultural differences, a fact that was brought up in the group discussion with the EAL pupils.

One of the boys found a pair of scissor lying in the back of the room. Mr Gee takes it away from him saying that those should not lie around in a classroom at all. Mr Gee just takes the scissors and holds them in his hands while he sits at the table with the older pupils explaining things. Involuntarily he starts clipping with the scissors Big Bear gets very anxious when Mr Gee is doing this: 'Sir please stop that.'

Mr Gee nods and stops for a while, but involuntarily starts clipping the scissors again, till Big Bear reminds him again to stop this. When Mr Gee asks him why he is so anxious about this. The boy starts explaining that when one clips scissors in the air, it means that people to ones proximity would start fighting and attacking each other. Other children had heard about it, too and Big Bear is a little embarrassed he said it is only a stupid superstition but is anxious for Mr Gee to stop it.

'Sir you are doing it again.' (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009)

Mr Gee's face expression demonstrated clearly that he did not believe this superstition; however he accepted the pupil's concerns and stopped clipping with the scissors. When he unconsciously began again, the pupils reminded him. Next to learning about a superstition that was shared by pupils from a similar cultural background, the pupils respected the teacher, yet clearly insisted on their culture being respected, too.

Cultural learning occurred during the group discussion in the English classroom where the focus was religious education. When the group discussion shifted towards religious education both myself and Red Flash learned that our perception of the pupils' religion was incorrect. We both, as foreigners, knew of sectarian issues in Glasgow and had assumed the whole class to be Christians. We found most of the class was not even baptised. We were also not the only ones making the wrong assumption; Duncan had the

same image of his classmates, completely forgetting about LilMo. I am unsure if this is inclusion, colour blindness or sheer ignorance.

Anna: 'Because I hate to talk about religion nae one in the class is Christian' ...

Duncan: 'We here are all Christian ... so we dunno need to know about other religion'

Forgetting LilMo who sits directly opposite of him, who instantaneously responded: 'What's with me?'

'So we dunno need to know about other religion ...'

Red Flash: 'What did you do in RE today then?'

'... learning about Jesus' ... noise level raises everyone wants to tell ... they discuss with each other ... 'Aye'... 'son of god' ... '

'Why do we learn about Jesus?' ... LilMo starts getting defensive and keeps asking 'Why is he so special?' ... then he picks up on Duncan's comments how he is not caring about other religions so LilMo says:

'When other people don't care about us why shall we care about them?'

'Why shall we learn about Jesus what's the point?' (Ladies Man)

'Why you are Christian?'

Red Flash seems confused he seems to think that all the kids are really active Christians (Group Discussion English Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The discussion about religious education brought up the differences between the refugee and the monolingual pupils, but also showed how little the pupils knew about one another's' religion. Religion can be a contested issue in Glasgow which has a long standing issue with sectarianism (Deuchar & Holligan, 2008). One explanation could be that the pupils were so secure in their assumptions and local identities (as Duncan's comment demonstrates) that they did not question religious orientation of their classmates. The discussion about religion implied identity negotiations: 'We here are all Christian', 'What's with me'; are strong indicators for the individuals in the group trying to position themselves. LilMo became defensive as the only Muslim in the class. When Duncan said learning about other religions is unnecessary and boring, LilMo became defensive asking why he should learn about Christianity, if they (his classmates) are not interested in his religion.

Red Flash keeps reasoning that children in their age like to tease each other anyway and call each other names and would not knowing about

why they wear the funny things on their heads etc help to understand and not make them tease?

'Aye' ... unison answer ... 'if you're teaching bullies' ... 'it's obviously helping against bullies' ... one of the children says. (Group Discussion English Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

This anti-bullying effect of teaching brings up an earlier topic of transferability of learning. The pupils agreed that teaching religious education and informing people of the reasons for certain clothing or behaviour acts as prevention of bullying. However, the pupils did not make the connection between themselves and this need for education. Although the children made wrong assumptions about one another's religion, they did not show an understanding of their behaviour as bullying, and bullies were labelled as 'them' not 'us'.

A strong disparity between what was taught in school as values and norms and what the pupils perceived as values and norms came out in this discussion. LilMo had difficulties with cultural differences. He tried making the point that teachers should only teach values, if they themselves live up to the norms and values they teach. He found it disturbing that there were teachers who were divorced.

I partially let Red Flash lead the group discussion, for this provided me with the chance to observe the negotiations between the teacher and his class. At this moment of the discussion the teacher had problems to explain to the pupil that the actual life of the teacher did not impact the teacher's ability to teach norms and values. A point LilMo rightfully doubted. Authenticity of the teacher was what he expected.

Red Flash: 'What drives me crazy we teachers get paid to teach you to be sensible, brush your teeth, eat healthy ... we are not your parent's' ... 'I am not allowed to just teach English I have to look after you make you good citizen's ...

LilMo: 'not all teacher do that' ...

Red Flash: 'Why should they?'

... LilMo is confused when I asked him how the teacher should do teaching citizenship then.

Red Flash tries: ... 'I am supposed to be your parent at the same time'  
 ...  
 LilMo: 'You try to teach us be good family people and all but some teachers are not like that. ... They don't even do the things you try to teach us ...'  
 Researcher: 'So what do they?'  
 LilMo cannot answer then: 'say they teach you to read and write and be a good family person they could have family problems'  
 Researcher: 'But it's not about what they do in school or?'  
 LilMo: 'Nevermind' he gives up ... (Group Discussion English Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Red Flash and I tried hard in the situation to find from LilMo why it mattered so much what the teachers' private life was, so long as the teachers conveyed values and norms in school. We missed the point that LilMo had told us authenticity of the teacher as significant as avoiding the hypocrisy of living differently than teaching. With this reflection, LilMo might have indicated another factor of problems with learning. Learning content not only must show relevance to the pupils, but the pupils also expect relevance of the learning content for the teacher, or in other words authenticity.

Researcher: 'Why are you here?' ...  
 Red Flash: 'What Nathalie wants to know is if you see any point in being here?'  
 Pupil: 'Stuff that we've learned' ...  
 Red Flash: 'is there any point in being in school lets call it an education for matters sake ... is it going to make a difference' ...  
 All answer as far as I can observe: 'Aye!'  
 'It gets you somewhere in life' ... 'good job' ... 'qualifications' ...  
 'When you are older you can chose from all the advice from all the different people you got' ... 'children don't understand' ...  
 Red Flash tries again: 'Are you ever gonna listen to anything I told you?'  
 ... 'aye' ... 'aye' ... all of them  
 (Group Discussion English Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

An interesting aspect in the group discussion in the English class was Red Flash's involvement in it. He tried to pick up on misunderstandings between the pupils and me and translate these misunderstandings into the pupils' cultural reference frame. Nixon and Comber (2006) found in a longitudinal study that it is crucial for the teachers to acknowledge the pupils' *cultural*



*resources* (Nixon & Comber, 2006, p. 135). In both previous situations the teacher tried to gauge the pupils' point of view, becoming seemingly more frustrated when the answers fell short of expectations. The *cultural resources* that were miscommunicated in this occasion were the frames of reference between teacher, pupils and researcher. The teacher and I knew the kind of information we wanted to gain from the pupil participants, each carrying our own agenda with it. We however failed to 'translate' these from our points of view into the context of the pupil participants. Interestingly this miscommunication creating an 'us' for the teacher and me and a 'them' for the pupils. Subsequently the pupil participants were not able to give the information sought. What we gained though was an understanding of the pupils' general understanding of education as a means to gain cultural capital.

The following incident exemplifies one significant cultural difference, between refugee and monolingual research participants. Kibby was in the EAL Unit and in both the Maths and English class. In neither Maths nor EAL was she shown to have friends, only in English when she worked closely with GC.

One morning I came into school and Mr Gee took me aside first thing before the pupils would come in. He had told me that Kibby and her family had been taken into the detention centre. He was very concerned and had started contacting lawyers and the MSP. He told me to be prepared and not let the pupils see my concern. Involuntarily I had started crying, I had thought I am a bit tougher than that. In Germany I worked in asylum camps. Those had big fences and gates around a complex of barracks. When we approached with the play bus full of toys, the children had started climbing on the fences, trying to reach through. I always found that the worst work environment, but imagining a child in a prison, was far beyond my comprehension. (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

I remembered the butch removal officer and her proud presentation with the truncheon. Luckily I had my composure back when the pupils arrived, and felt rather stupid for my reaction. Mr Gee had told me the staff decided to keep this event quiet because they did not want to upset the children too much. However, the news made it round the school. (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008).

A boy suddenly said: 'and Jake as well.' I found out that Jake was missing for weeks at this point. This is why I had not even seen him before.

'Jake did get here through the bad people [trafficked] this is he is illegally here and now they are in this big prison cell.'

J-Jay: 'This is big crap he was my pal this is big crap man.' While Anna and Gulliver kept talking about passports

J-Jay asked Alfred: 'Are you getting deported?'

Alfred seemed to be incredibly embarrassed by that. He was very quiet and hardly interacted with the other pupils in class, now he held his hand over his face bend his head even lower and shook it.

'Good for you boy.'

One of the girls said: 'He might be not illegal' [about Alfred]. (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

Because the class was so merged into the topic of detention, trafficking and immigration the teacher came to me. She did not know if I knew about Kibby, and told me about the issue and also about Jake who is missing for weeks now and is said to have been in hiding with his family. When Ms Lee told me Kibby's story she said concentration camp instead of detention centre. She was utterly embarrassed by that slip up but permitted me to use it, because for me it was significant. Showing how deeply the incident affected the children as well as the teachers. The teacher also had told me that the children get worried when one of the asylum-seeker children was home sick they instantaneously asked if the child got deported. It seemed to be a big issue for the children although I am not sure if they saw it more as a big adventure or if they were aware of the stresses of such situation (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008).

She told me that the [children] get worried when one of the asylum-seeker children is home sick, they instantaneously ask, if the [child] got deported it seems to be a big issue for the [children] although I am not sure if they see it as a big x-factor adventure or if they are aware of the stress and cruelty of this situation (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008).

Besides the transition of traumatic life experiences into the different classrooms, the issue of detention had extensive impact on the detained child, her classmates, and the teacher. Ms Lee's slip about the concentration camp showed how negatively this teacher understood child detention and her concern for Kibby. This one incident also impacted on the inclusion of children from asylum-seeking families as it stigmatized and marginalized these children. Inclusion should not be conditional, this situation demonstrated how the division of responsibilities between the Scottish Government and Westminster, impacted on the individual. A more

dominant political framework halted the school's efforts and rendered not only the child concerned, but also the child's teachers and peers, powerless.

Later that week I asked Mr Gee about the event. He had managed with the support of lawyers to get the family out of the detention centre. When I asked him why he and the other teachers initially tried to prevent the children in school from knowing Mr Gee told me:

'I didn't want the children to get completely wired about it ... because we got it in the past, if we focus on it then it becomes a bigger problem and people get more upset for a longer period of time ... However, in the past we have addressed it more directly and we've had the children writing to their MPs writing to the MSPs and so on in Kibby's case we had a very short period of time in many ways we didn't get ... we got the children more concerned and so on but we didn't get what we had before ... maybe because the children here became activists had left the school. ... here just people worry that children were either shocked or surprised or also not sure what happened to Kibby ... and if she had done something wrong and if she hadn't what's ... what we have to do with first year is what we did with second year we have to explain' (Fieldnotes, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008, Interview Mr Gee)

He reasoned that at the time of my research no children in school would have coped with involvement. He said they were wondering if the girl actually had done something wrong and thus went to prison. The strategies Mr Gee used in previous years had turned peers of detained children into political activists, as the three girls I interviewed (Fieldnotes, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008) demonstrated.

The teachers held back their involvement in the discourse about Kibby's detention; with this the questions the children had, remained unanswered. The chances for learning from this situation were not taken up by the teachers, who did so to protect the children, and in Ms Lee's case probably too because she was upset by the situation. Better training for mainstream class teachers could have helped Ms Lee find strategies for coping with this situation.

In this section I discussed incidences in the field that best exemplify the impact of culture on learning situations. The support the children give one another with their learning became apparent again. The significance of culture in classrooms and real-life situations brought into the classroom impacted on the children's learning experiences.

This section of the Analysis and Discussion chapter focuses on situations concerning control and ownership of the learning process as well as the learning content. Relevance is another item of this following discussion. I will begin with a situation in the English classroom.

The analogy creek is to river as hill is to mountain gives the pupils major problems, mainly because they do not know the word creek. LilMo answered: 'A wee loch' (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

LilMo one of the bilingual pupils was very drawn into the discussion during English about verbs and adjectives. He did not let himself hold back by his constantly wrong guesses and suggestions; the dictionary was again on his table

... LilMo asked if one can call a baby cat a puppy and the whole class started laughing.

Red Flash bellowed that everyone can ask stupid questions and LilMo is not the only one and he said then to LilMo: 'No only little dogs are puppies little cat are kittens.' (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008)

The negotiations in the class went on, further suggestions were: 'water ... rain ... Gods creation' [Anna in cheeky tone]. Eventually LilMo found the word in the dictionary, but of the two explanations he read out the inappropriate one initially before ending with 'a small stream' (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

LilMo was the only pupil in the classroom using the dictionary as assisting tool, which helped him succeed rather than wildly guess. Both activities helped the pupils to gain ownership of the knowledge but using the dictionary was a higher level of control of this knowledge than the negotiation within the classroom. LilMo who used Scots in this situation 'a wee loch' had previously informed me proudly that he does not need to attend the EAL Unit. Throughout the research he kept insisting on a Scottish identity, which became most obvious in situations when he used Scots to communicate.

In another classroom, relevance and 'real-life' context had a major impact on one of the pupils. I was sitting on Aline's table where she had difficulties

solving teacher-assigned tasks. The pupils were to quantify and then convert different units of measurements. Aline, one of the monolingual pupils, complained she was unable to understand and complete the task. Aline had involved me in her troubles with the tasks because I sat on her table during this exercise. I subsequently spoke to Aline about her frustrations, pointing out the knowledge of measurements was crucial for her dream profession.

First I reassured that she really wanted to become a hairdresser, which she agreed upon. Then I told her that as a hairdresser she would need to know measurements because she would have to mix colours and so on. She answered: 'Och I know!' agreeing. From that point onwards she worked focused on her tasks, or what counts as focused in this classroom. Most of the pupils seemed to multitask easily. She still multitasked conversing with her classmates next to working. Eventually she shouts out several right answers in a row, which the teacher met with a: 'well done', every time. Aline eventually blurted out proudly: 'I am smart in this stuff' (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008)

Aline changed, temporarily, from defeatist to confident, acknowledging her ability to solve the task. Establishing relevance and 'real-life' context of the learning content initiated this success. A very different form of taking control and ownership of a learning situation I observed during a writing exercise. Here I closely observed the pupils immersed in tasks; many demonstrated interesting body-language. Although not instantly apparent, this behaviour demonstrated a subtle form of ownership and control over the situation. Claxton (2009) defined the highest form of creativity as being fully emerged in an activity, such as the writing process in the following situation.

... all the children are busy ... no one is talking to each other ...

The boy in front of me demonstrates an even more sophisticated version of head resting. He has his right arm on the table resting the right side of the head on the arm while the arm bends over the head and the hand plays with his left ear. He is absolutely focused on his writing and appears to be not aware of himself ...

Well the boy also has this staring phases which where rather long but eventually he stopped them at all and just kept writing. He also shifted his position several times nevertheless most of the time playing with his ear.

I have to say in the otherwise so lively class it felt far longer then 15 min. (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008, p.35)

One form of learning, or rather a form of creativity Csikszentmihalyi (1997) calls *Flow*, I observed during this writing exercise in the English classroom.

*Flow is a fancy name for being so engrossed, absorbed, rapt by something that time flies and you forget your worries. (Claxton, 2009, p. 89)*

When I began noting my observations during the writing exercise, I was not sure why it was personally interesting for me. I was drawn into the situation and had the feeling I was witnessing significant activities but could initially not understand why, until comparing literature about *the flow*. The rules during this writing exercise prevented anyone from talking and if someone needed help they quietly went to the teacher's desk and spoke in a low voice about their issues. This was the antithesis of the teacher's usual rounds through the classroom and did not disturb the writing.

Another strategy of *creative learning* I found regularly in the EAL Unit, was that the pupils would literally play with words; try out sounds and spellings to gain control and ownership of the vocabulary. An observation that I made in all three classrooms was that the pupils hardly ever feared repercussions for lacking knowledge. Some were afraid of embarrassment in front of their peers, but this never included the teacher. For none of the participating teachers punished pupils for having given the wrong answer.

... 'freezing' ... 'right'... Eloise plays with the word singing: 'zingzingzing' ... 'chilly ... jilly, not chilli or jelly'.  
'Boiling hot is the hottest version of hot' ... Kathryn repeats the spelling ... 'Can you say boiling cold when it is very cold?'  
'No you can't say boiling cold – very cold' ... 'yes you can say this but what else.' (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008, p. 19)

Similar to the confusion about calling a baby cat a puppy, the metaphor of 'boiling hot' provided some issues. After establishing that it means the 'hottest version of hot' the pupils tried to apply this information to another context, concluding wrongly that 'boiling cold' could be the coldest version of cold. Innovation was constantly a part of such negotiation of meanings, even if it occasionally led to the wrong conclusions. I hardly observed other

forms of innovation beyond the negotiation of meaning and applying new terms in different contexts. The ownership of the learning content became obvious in this situation. The pupils were trying out different sounds and spellings internalising the vocabulary—making it their own.

Two boys were playing with a facemask, which looked like the grid in medieval armour helmets and if worn differently it looked like a bicycle helmet.

The boys spend quite some time discussing and figuring out the meaning of this object before they approached me and asked if I knew what this object was. They took turns in trying it on their heads or faces and were arguing quietly about the possible use (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008).

The situation may initially appear insignificant, but at closer consideration there were several aspects of it that became important within the overall frame of the fieldwork. It is an example of informal learning within the frame of a formal learning environment. In particular the EAL Unit offered space for the transgression of real-life and informal learning into the formal learning space of school.

The situation took place in the EAL Unit, two boys had found parts of costumes from the samba club and the West End Parade some of the other pupils took part in, and were playing with these items. The item that fascinated the boys most was a costume part that looked like a medieval armour helmet. The boys had difficulties understanding what the item was and tried out different ways of wearing or using it (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008).

This form of learning I coded as self-initiated learning because the pupils used space within class, which the EAL Unit permitted more easily than the mainstream classrooms. The boys' communication of possible meanings left them in control over the situation and only when they were unable to find a solution, did they turn for help.

Investigating a piece of a costume seems unimportant for scholarly learning, it is, however, cultural learning. Wearing a helmet while cycling or knowing about armour, who and when was it worn, were things that related to issues



Scottish children would understand. These boys seemed intrigued by the possibilities and historical background of the object.

After wrapping up Anna and Aline discuss about the pictures of tables and bar charts, which hang on the pin wand. They discuss shapes and sizes of the bars.

Anna starts talking gibberish and some other girls join in, starting a discussion about spelling and speaking backwards they tried out their names but also other words. (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008, p.6)

The girls' immersion in the discussion was astounding for the pupils who seemed so dismissive of maths, and the learning content would show sincere interest in the work of fellow pupils. Their discussion of the posters then changed into discussing the easiest approaches to speaking backwards. They were exploring issues of spelling and began a competition about the most fluent backwards speech. This all happened at the end of the Maths class, showing me that the participants were interested in learning. They took the initiative and control of exploring the maths posters on the classroom walls, discussing those.

Another form of relevance, control and ownership of learning was pupils teaching one another or passing on their knowledge. I initially wanted to define this as self-initiated learning, since teaching constitutes a form of learning. With passing on their knowledge to someone else, the children had to re-evaluate what they knew and put it to scrutiny with their peers or interacting with adults. Teaching peers posed the risk of putting their own knowledge into question and under scrutiny. The initial self-initiated quest for help turned in all cases into a negotiation with at least one other person—the teacher or classmate, if not group discussion. Thus, it demonstrated the high significance of the social environment for the learning processes.

Again it was so busy in the field that all I wrote down were some key points about the event. Eloise had tried out to solve the task of spelling words by her own, at that point in time though the pupils started getting used to me being in the EAL Unit, so they started to make use of my presence and get help or ask questions. Thus, she had approached me to help her with her spelling exercises. She wanted to share some writing in Arabic with me seemingly proud that she could spell my

name. She told me about the different ways of writing in Arabic, longhand and shorthand form and how it would look in each. In sharing her knowledge she reinforced her own abilities but also seemed to reinforce her identity as an Arabic speaker. Eloise took on the role of teacher sharing her knowledge about Arabic writing with me and teaching me some of it. With this she demonstrated ownership and control of knowledge, this permitted her to build a bridge between her Arabic and English language comprehension (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

Our discussion explored pronunciations and how different they were between English, German and Arabic, and how there were more parallels between German and Arabic, and English and Arabic. With this conversation Eloise and I negotiated where each of us stood with parts of identities, mainly national and language identities, and the relation these had to Britain and Scotland. We shared identities such as my being left-handed and she tried out to write Arabic with the left hand. Eloise enjoyed being in control and teach Arabic (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

Eloise after getting to know me better involved me in some games she invented and played with a classmate. These games challenged co-ordination and involved some elements of competition (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

The EAL Unit space permitted the pupils to use time for some activities that were meaningful to them. They exercised their co-ordination, invented games with the materials given, co-operated on playing these games and negotiated rules for the games. There was a book about Cubism on the table, and the game about blind drawing turned into a discussion about different forms and styles in art in general (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

Later on they were busy with the calculator again (Eloise and Amon) where Eloise invented a game you had to delete everything she had punched into the calculator and then punch in the number 2 without looking at the calculator but you had to look into her eyes. Amon managed to do so after some failed trials. Then I had to try ... and then Paula was to show ... Then Eloise started drawing Amon without looking at the paper, then Paula, then she asked Paula to draw her without looking at the paper. Paula only managed a circle and gave up then I had to have a go and I manage a circle and a face outside the circle. Eloise drew again. I showed her the cubism pictures of one of the

books that was on the table and asked her to draw Pauline like this.  
(Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008)

The learning discussed here implies a high measure of control and ownership of the situation, further it showed relevance of the learning content. The children decided appropriately to their needs to ignore what is going on in the classroom or to take part or find something to occupy themselves with according to their needs.

This selective participation during classes I understand as form of ownership and control of the learning process. The pupils would decide to partake as soon as the classroom discussion became relevant to them or otherwise would focus on the work they wanted to undertake. Initially I had interpreted this behaviour as the pupils not learning anything from classes when they seemed to ignore class proceedings and discussions. Yet, the pupils would habitually react to conversation or activities in class.

Mr Gee and the children start talking about the new sister Amon and Kathryn just got and why babies cry. Mark says: 'because they are hungry' (while he pronounces hungry like Hungary) ... When Norman heard the wrong pronunciation (although still sitting on the computer ... he jumps in and corrects Mark. Interestingly small incidents like this keep happening and none of the children ever sounds or behaves patronising when they correct the others. ... So Norman casually corrects Hungary into hungry without really looking up from his emails. (Fieldnotes, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

I came to realise that this selective participation was a form of taking ownership and control of the learning situation and focusing on something that at this point in time was more relevant to the learner than the main activities in the classroom.

This behaviour demonstrated the pupils placed different emphasis and value on learning contents to those the teacher thought to initiate, which again might indicate that the children value a different learning content than the one primarily offered during class. Illustrated by the boy in the corner, who only sporadically dropped very sarcastic comments, before withdrawing

from classroom activities again, reading his library books. These comments showed me a thorough comprehension of the situation and learning content. (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008).

The 'two boys in the window row' were only occasionally in the classroom during me time in the research site. During one field session they worked on their tasks and silently talked to each other, seemingly ignoring the activities going on, however I observed them taking notes when the teacher provided key information. I was unable to access these boys as, although they signed the informed consent, they refused to reciprocate any approach for interaction (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008). Another situation of selective participation features Vikki and Lorna. The girls seemed to have a writing muse and were writing on their stories. Neither of them paid attention to the verb versus adjective discussion in the classroom.

This however seemed to be only on the outside because now and then Vikki looked up, mainly when the discussion became a bit confusing. Then she focused on the discussion for a while, before returning to her paper. Lorna although she clearly struggled with getting some sentences down and was focusing on her writing, would without raising her head laugh at the jokes Red Flash made. (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008)

Both girls wanted to finish their writing exercises and subsequently primarily focused on their papers; nevertheless, they paid attention to the direction of the discussion in the classroom and so participated selectively in the general class activities (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008). Further I realised during the writing up that many pupils were constantly multi-tasking, this is doing their school tasks while still following conversations with one another, or reacting to jokes and comments from the teacher.

The three characteristics of *creative learning* were discussed in all the previous sections. This particular section however focused particularly on factors of control, ownership and relevance. Passing on knowledge or inventing games were high forms of these factors of *creative learning*.

'Cos the teachers don't know anything'—Teacher & Teaching

This section explores *creative learning* focusing on pedagogy; that means the strategies teachers put in place to enable creative and successful learning activities in school. This is going to be explored from the pupils' as well as from the teachers' perspective. The relationships between teachers and pupils are significant here, as the teachers had a major impact on the pupils' learning spaces. I use the term teacher-initiated learning to describe learning experiences that were a direct response to a teacher's pedagogy.

The most significant kind of teacher-initiated learning, was offering space to the pupils for taking control of the learning situation. In the EAL Unit a group of nine pupils was sitting around one long table with Ms Ferry on the end of the table. The mood was relaxed and cheerful, the pupils were at ease with one another and with the teacher. Ms Ferry wanted to write the word 'sunny' on the whiteboard, yet the pupils began to object. Calling out: 'no, no, no, no', they preferred Ms Ferry to spell the word and they write it down (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Ms Ferry's initiation of learning to write the word sunny was taken up by the pupils, yet they took control over the learning situation by letting the teacher know which form of learning they preferred. Offering space for this feedback and impact on her teaching provided the pupils a *creative learning* experience.

Strategies of teacher-initiated learning the pupils found helpful were the establishment of mnemonics and providing information in an interesting or funny way. The pupils stated that providing information in such way made the information more accessible, interesting and easier to understand.

Researcher: 'Do you think the different ways of teaching make a difference to your ways of learning?'

'Yeah because Ms Clean our French teacher' ... 'She used to tell us stories and make it fun and this really would make us remember it. The class was really fun for the whole year.' ... 'See for the verbs she would give us a rhyme and we would learn it.'

Researcher: 'Ok like memory aid?'  
... 'Yeah, yeah we still know it' ...  
(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

The pupils told me their business class teacher taught the use of acronyms as mnemonics for the pupils. The pupils were talking of different strategies the French and business class teachers offered them. They appreciated this assistance comparing it to teachers who merely focused on lesson plans without adapting to the needs of the pupils. I asked: 'Why do you like some [teachers] more than others?' The pupils answered with:

'They teach you differently.'  
'Yeah, they have different teaching [hesitates] sils.'  
'Styles! It's Scottish man!'  
'They don't moan at you a lot' ... 'yeah, and some teachers communicate with the pupils with the pupils' ... 'yeah' ... 'yeah they are friends they don't treat different people ... and some of them listen to you'  
(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

Important information from this answer was the pupils liking of teachers who had no obvious favourites. Some teachers were even perceived as friends rather than teachers. Mr Gee was seen as such a teacher and found that this perception meant the pupils accepted the authority of the teacher in his role, yet showed a high level of respect and trust for the teacher. Another aspect in this short exchange was how the pupils supported one another with missing vocabulary. As shown in other situations of the EAL Unit, if a classmate failed to communicate, others stepped in to enable their classmate's communication.

When I tried to explore the issue of different forms of teaching in the mainstream group discussions, I found participants had problems contemplating the teacher impact. I reformulated my question, asking the participants of their ideal teacher. The participants thought this put an emphasis on the character, personality of the teacher and the way of communication instead of forms of teaching.

Researcher: 'What is your ideal teacher?'  
'More relaxed and funny' ... 'best one was Mr C because' ... 'Mr' ... 'he is the funniest' ... 'relaxed' ... 'Relaxed, no shouting, no work ...'  
(Group Discussion Maths Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The pupils wished teachers would stop shouting or moaning at them, permitted more freedom (space) within the classes, give no homework and were not overtly strict. The participants did not make a connection between the teacher's behaviour and the behaviour of themselves. In their interpretation, pupil behaviour was a direct reflection of teachers' attitudes (Group Discussion Maths Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008). A repeating issue throughout the group discussions was that teachers' regular shouting bothered the participants. The connection that this related to their behaviour was not made, indicating again the omnipotence assigned to teachers. When talking to the pupils they were not simply defiant but they felt disempowered in their impact on the situation in school.

When the pupils said they did not learn at all in school, I asked them why and blame entirely went to the teachers' perceived unwillingness or inability to teach.

Researcher: 'Do you have an idea how you learn?' ...  
Pupil: 'No because the teacher tells you what you do' ...  
Researcher: 'What are you doing in school?'  
Pupils: ... 'sleeping' ... 'copying' ...  
Researcher: 'Do you have a clue why you are not learning?'  
Pupils: ... 'cos the teachers don't know anything' ... 'the teacher don't know if you learn or do something or not they don't know' ... 'well some teacher do' ... 'they don't actually care if you learn or not' ... 'they don't teach you man!' ... 'They just want to get paid ...'  
Researcher: 'When teachers don't teach you what should they do?'  
Pupils: ... 'dunno' ...  
(Group Discussion Maths Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The sentiment from these answers seemed a resigned perception of disempowerment towards the pupil position and role within the learning process. This relates to what Mr Gee called 'mental poverty' and with this a negative form of cultural reproduction. An interesting aspect is that the

pupils' perception of their own role within a learning situation did not reflect my observations fully. Although I had come to a similar conclusion about disempowerment of the pupils I also observed in all the classrooms, the pupils' taking control of a learning situation. An observation I will discuss more in depth under Relevance, Power & Discipline.

The picture that emerged from the group discussion in the EAL Unit differed from the picture emerging from the mainstream group discussions. The pupils articulated different levels of control over their learning as well as different levels of reflection of their position within school and learner identities. The pupils attending the EAL Unit demonstrated confidence in their learning and control of their learning. Considering the feedback from the pupils and the EAL teachers' the tailored and extraordinary support the pupils receive in the EAL Unit assisted them to overcome learning disadvantages.

The pupils in all the classrooms had positive and negative experiences with teachers. Several pupils found teachers' missing support as reason for failing to comprehend content of school lessons. One of the girls found this particularly challenging, as her parents' English was not so good. She shared her cultural resources in the group discussion, enlightening us about the different forms of translation she used to cope with homework.

'Some teachers tell you go and read' ... 'yeah'

Backchannel support from group.

... 'and when you say I read and I still don't understand, how am I supposed to read more. ... I read, read and read it ... '

'Me when I don't get it my dad doesn't speak that good English when I stuck I can go and ask them in my language or in French and then they explain and then I translate it into English.' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

In the EAL group discussion about the pupils learning in school, the answers were not all positive but demonstrated a better understanding of the participants' own impact on learning and their situation in school. The participants appreciated making new experiences a topic that did not come up during the mainstream group discussion.



Researcher: 'What are you learning in School?'

Pupils: 'I am learning that everybody is selfish' ... 'new experiences' ... 'Ja new experiences' ... 'learning experiences and way in which to tackle problems in later life' ... 'when you're in trouble, bad temper in school, we know we need to keep our calm head when we are in trouble like in first year if I got into trouble I started shouting' ... (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

During the English class group discussion, pupils demonstrated understanding of how the teachers could improve their teaching strategies to support the pupils to better understand learning content. The pupils did not translate this single occasion into later learning situations; it only surfaced due to direct questioning from Red Flash. I had inquired if the pupils could tell me what forms of teaching they prefer. The pupils initially had difficulties answering this question thus the teacher explained it more. He tried to set an example asking the class if they can remember how they learned speech marks. First the class answered with, 'No'. Only when Red Flash tried again the conversation continued:

Red Flash: 'we used ...'

'The smart board' ... class and Red Flash in unison  
(Group Discussion English class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Afterwards the teacher explained he could not understand how several of the pupils still made mistakes with speech marks.

Red Flash: 'I am a teacher you [pupils] made this mistake after all that teaching? So I've done something wrong what did I wrong?'

Pupils: 'Be boring ...'

'Too confusing ...'

'Jumping from one to the other ...'

Anna: 'If you done something and then go back after a while you'd remember ...'

Red Flash: 'But so it's too much at once and your brains just shut down ...'

Several pupils: 'Aye' ...

(Group Discussion English class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

In this conversation the teacher's main aim was to prepare the class to answer my question. What emerged though was an insightful interaction for Red Flash after he surrendered his power position admitting that he made a mistake: 'So I've done something wrong what did I wrong?' (Group Discussion English class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008). The teacher had the pupils reflect about better forms of initiating understanding. At this point the pupils took control. The teacher adapted his teaching later on, yet the pupils did not use this insight about having an influence on the teachers' delivery style beyond the group discussion. They were unable to make the transition of the insight from the extraordinary situation of a research group discussion to the learning context in classrooms.

In the following situation the teacher could not, like in the English classroom, explain examples. The interaction took place in the EAL Unit and Mr Gee was not conversing in the pupils' language. He fell back to instruments of non-verbal communication, using hand movements, and when the communication broke down he and the pupils began drawing pictures.

'Do you have a loud or a soft voice?' Mr Gee asks Kathryn ... he puts his index finger on his mouth and then makes hand movements, which remind me on the triangular shape above our volume control of the TV.

...

Amon gets ask to describe the house they lived in back in Yemen he cannot manage to explain so Mr Gee gives him paper to draw the house but Amon has some problems, he says he cannot draw ... so Mr Gee suggests to him to tell Marco in Arabic how the house looks like, because Marco had offered to draw the house for Amon.

So the children start negotiating even Kathryn says something now and then Marco seems to have problems understanding Amon's description ... Kathryn loses her patience, she shakes her head and just takes the paper and draws the house. (Fieldnotes, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008, p.25)

McArdle and Spina (2007) in their study regarding children of refugee families in Australia found that art constituted a form of language that not only substituted a lack of understanding English but also mediated an emotional outlet through which the children could express aspirations and hopes. Mr Gee used drawings in the EAL Unit. The pupils had access to pens and paper and subsequently cupboards and walls were full of the children's

own creations. Again this situation demonstrated the teacher offering space for mistakes and permitting the pupils to take control of the learning situation. Offering hand movements built a bridge in communication and the children were able to answer the questions and pick-up hand movements when needed.

The relationships between pupils and teachers could be positive and supportive, yet there was also scope to reproduce negative images and self-expectations. The teacher reaction in the following situation deeply upset me. Particularly, as it came from Red Flash, who cared and supported his pupils. Red Flash usually demonstrated understanding even for the loudest pupils.

It happened during the group discussion, we were talking about prevocational training and Vikki was too shy to answer the question so one of the boys said: 'All she does is childcare.'

To which Anna and Lorna reacted strongly, going on about how much they hated children.

Anna: 'I hate them bairns!'

Red Flash said under his breath: 'Ironically you will be parents soon enough.' Luckily the pupils did not get his remark, some of them had heard it but they didn't understand it. I was shocked because while I am aware of the high numbers of teenage pregnancies in areas like Isengard I somehow had expected the teacher to lead a different discourse about this. I had expected this one particular teacher not to reproduce the expectations (how realistic and statistically likely they may be) I somehow had thought he would instil something else in the pupils. (Group Discussion English classroom, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

The reaction of the teacher, my expectations of him, knowledge of impoverished areas and the realities behind his comment left me upset. I wondered if even a teacher, who cared so much about the pupils, could be resigned about their futures. Cummins (2001) stated that teachers are not only persistently negotiating their own identities and the identities they expect of their pupils but further impose their ideas of the society the pupils will shape onto the pupils. If the image the teacher had of his or her pupils was positive, this behaviour can be constructive and supporting in the development of the pupils. Yet, Willis (1977) warns that: *One of the most oppressive forces is the belittling and sarcastic attitude of some teachers* (Willis,

1977, p. 77). Willis (1977) relates these negative attitudes to differences in social class, between the teachers and the pupils. This interpretation relates to structural discrimination as explained above (*Issues of Discrimination*). I obtained the only glimpses of these negative cultural reproductions in other classrooms from pupils' complaining about them.

The situation however was not yet fully dealt with. The girls had kept going on about how much they hate children, so Red Flash eventually interposed with saying that hate is a strong word.

Lorna: 'Bu' a hate'em'

Red Flash: 'So would you step on one when you see it?' (Group Discussion English classroom, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Red Flash used a metaphor to exaggerate the pupil's viewpoint and make them aware of the strong emphasis the term 'hate' carries with it. The metaphor made the class laugh and raised awareness of the implication of such strong terminology. The long-term impact however was not accessible to me (Group Discussion English classroom, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Another situation where the reproduction of identity between teacher and pupil became apparent was LilMo and Red Flash's bantering once again in the English class. This time however, I was startled by the apparent negativity of Red Flash's feedback.

LilMo: 'Yeah be yourself'

'I didn't say be YOURself I hate you', Red Flash says grinning'

LilMo grins back (Group Discussion English Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

In my reflective notes I wrote that this situation seemed to carry a hidden compliment. Both were grinning at each other during this exchange, and considering that pupils who perceive regular praise were considered 'teachers' pets' (Mary, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008, Dougal, Fieldnotes 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008) and tend to get bullied, I wondered if Red Flash got in the habit of complimenting in disguise. I further took notes that LilMo seemed unimpressed by Red Flash's comment holding his ground with the answers he gave (Fieldnotes, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Again the ambivalence in the relationship negotiations in the mainstream classrooms complicated my

interpretation. Reflecting on how Ms Lee for instance would use coercive methods, but then also positive reinforcement, sometimes take up the pupils concerns and other times trying to suppress or ignore them, this ambivalence could derive from the teachers but also the pupils' identities. The pupils with incoherent learner identities and maybe little confidence might need more specialised support and attention, than possible within the frame of a mainstream classroom. The differences I so far discussed between the EAL Unit and the mainstream classrooms could arrive from the diverse degrees of support given to the pupils. Some of this will become clearer in the following section, The Teachers' Voice.

*'My Classroom is Sometimes dead Noisy'—The Teachers' Voice*

Red Flash '... a classroom is not different like music at home—my classroom is sometimes dead noisy because I quite like noise, others are dead quiet.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

My primary focus was on the pupil participants, during the fieldwork, however, the perspective of the teachers on situations became significant. This was based, to some extent, on the strong differences in pedagogy observed in the different classrooms. Another aspect for this focus was the opinions of the pupils, who clearly favoured some teachers and claiming to hate others.

During one field visit I spent extended time in the EAL Unit during a 'quiet day'. Ms Ferry found time to provide an ad hoc conversation. During the conversation she compared her understanding of her role as EAL teacher as opposed to teaching in mainstream classrooms. She was a teacher in both so she had an understanding of the different role expectations. She found the most significant difference was the freedom the pupils and teachers had in the EAL Unit: 'They [the pupils] can move here. We are flexible in terms of curriculum no exams and deadlines. We are more relaxed as teachers ... our timetable plan is changeable because of new arrivals circumstances we expect pupil coming all the time and leaving maybe to mainstream class ...' (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). The greater structural freedom permitted the teachers to relax more. This freedom seemed the most significant point, but there were other aspects in the role of an EAL teacher: 'We are not only teacher for them we understand their needs. We also do social relationships' (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

The teacher found the EAL unit teachers and pupils built different relationships. Ms Ferry said that EAL teacher also must teach the children how to behave and negotiate in British society. She told me that Arabic speaking pupils commonly say: I want to, give me this and so on; however in

English one must use the conjunctive and polite forms, otherwise one is considered rude; something the pupils must instinctively learn. As in German, using the conjunctive and polite form is understood as weakness and is accompanied by negative connotation, so I could sympathise with Ms Ferry. EAL unit teachers assist pupils to access or learn cultural competence. The teachers occasionally offered access to cultural capital through direct involvement, outwith the school environment. In such cases they acted as mediators for social capital. A senior pupil wished to open a bank account, however the bank refused to let him open an account for saving money because of his ethnic background. Mr Gee was told and after school one day went with the pupil to have an account opened with the bank (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

*These intense relationships were visibly overburdening the EAL staff with work at both schools. Their title 'English as an Additional Language' teachers implies that their job is to teach English. However, in reality, their job comes to be about providing the support that their pupils need as new to the school and new to the UK. (Reynolds, 2008, p. 20)*

The supporting role Reynolds (2008) found in her research was reflected by Ms Ferry's interview. She called it being *more than teachers* (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Such relationships and support surpass the role of a teacher. They also help the pupils and establish a strong positive relationship between the pupils and the teachers. There seemed stronger bonding social capital between EAL teachers and their pupils than between the two mainstream teachers and their pupils.

The next section focuses on the Teacher Interview discussion, with Mr Gee and Red Flash. I inquired of their teaching styles and the conversation shifted into the teachers' perception regarding teachers. Red Flash and Mr Gee used the following examples of their own experience with in-service training to demonstrate understanding for pupils' learning experience, and particularly the pupils' complains about how boring school is.

Red Flash: 'Teachers are so badly behaved in presentations you try to instruct teachers they interrupt they don't listen'

Mr Gee: 'I try to make them [presenters & colleagues] laugh'  
(Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Red Flash: 'One of our biggest moments are the in-service days effectively we are experiencing for one day what the children experience for hundred days and you are twitching and you don't find that interesting or important and wondering what you are listening too and we never learn.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

When I inquired about the teachers' understanding of *creative learning*, I did not tell them about the concept. I asked the teachers about their own understanding of it.

Red Flash: 'From my experience in education system here teachers are not given enough of a chance to be creative from pupil (teachers) we are not encouraged to create units of work when people from [university] come here they are sitting in for 45 [minutes] with their tick box they want to see plan and this instead of giving freedom.' (Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

Mr Gee said that the most creative department in the school was the English department because it constantly developed its own learning and teaching material. He told me that when going through school there were a lot of teachers who used the same textbooks that have been copied for ten years and: 'they are on page 63 today'. (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Creative teaching depended strongly on the attitudes of the individual teachers in this research. Whilst the assessment framework determined teaching content and timelines, each of the participating teachers had a very personal and unique approach to teaching and learning. During the interview the teachers took a 'make do' approach, feeling they never have enough time for things important to them, such as preparation, developing material, extra-curricular pupil and parent relationships.

Trust was not only paramount in the relationships between teachers and pupils and the pupils. Mr Gee wanted to be: 'trusted as professionals', having 'freedom and autonomy' instead of a feudal system with super-managers coming in and telling them him how to do his job. Troman et al.



(2007) found failing trust in teachers as professionals is detrimental to their well-being as well as negatively impacts teaching. Red Flash and Mr Gee brought this up in the discussion. The teachers wanted their superiors to trust them in their professionalism and felt that the lack of trust strongly inhibited the support they wished to be able to give their pupils.

The teachers' answers to my question were surprising: What is *creative learning* and thinking? They stated it is: 'when children can connect with each other or switch on and use their abilities' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009). They also said this happened in Isengard but were critical to what extent.

Red Flash: 'Teaching—creative teaching is if you find a chunk of time and say I want to try something or you go and say I want to do this with you [pupils] how are we doing this ... this is the best kind of thing.' (Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

Red Flash suggested in his comment that involving the pupils and give them control and ownership of the learning process is the best form of teaching. I observed that Red Flash and Mr Gee often brought suggestions to the pupils asking how they would like to approach a topic. In the discussion regarding creative teaching, the understanding the pupils had of themselves and their impact on personal learning again surfaced. Red Flash wished the pupils would become more proactive. More significant for myself was his statement: 'They just need to believe they can do anything at all.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009) This statement takes up my earlier surmising about the learner identities and issues of confidence the different pupils held. Red Flash affirmed with this statement my observations of the disempowerment, particularly in the mainstream classrooms. Mr Gee differentiated this point more and related it to aspects of *creative learning* and teaching. He said that education, if imposed on the pupils, would be rejected.

'Only if they themselves can feel some sort of form of control or ownership or whatever that they can push forwards and that they are the once who drive the education system.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Mr Gee said: 'bilingual children have this attitude', relating it to Red Flash's comment of children's needing to be more pro-active and believe in themselves. Yet, he also confirmed Red Flash's and my understanding that with 'Scottish children it is difficult to discover this against the cynicism and the negativity ... try to get some sort of belief into their own education' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009).

During the interview I wanted to solicit the teachers' opinion of my perception that pupils in the EAL Unit seemed to value academic learning more, than pupils I observed in the mainstream classrooms, who preferred active learning that establishes a real-life context. I wanted to know from the teachers if this was only my perception or if they found similar issues.

Red Flash: 'What is strange with a lot of the children here you are teaching reading, writing and arithmetic they are sometimes distrustful in a weird way ... they accept it is important you need to learn reading, if you receive a bill or something through the post you need to know clearly understand what you are reading ... even if you try to give instances ... they are mistrustful.'

Mr Gee: 'Education—education is middle class and is completely distrusted by working class ... because the value system is not shared—so education has become an enemy rather than an aid to freedom.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

The teacher opinions reflect my interpretation of class differences as implication for differences in academic achievement and attitudes. The participants' trust in education seems to play a major role impacting their behaviour. Mr Gee understands the mistrust of the children as based on a class issue between the school as a middle class institution and the children as working class. Red Flash said, though:

'I don't think that alone, can account for the fact that the children really do devalue and distrust education but it's an unfortunate thing.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Mr Gee added that this mistrust and loss of belief in education as means to freedom and empowerment: 'developed [through] years of systemic unemployment and underinvestment [and] poverty.'

‘Of course the opposite of that is ... the bilingual children, some of them who had no education, ... are the ones that value it [education] most because they realise what it is like not to have one at all ... and there has been a historic complacency amongst in the west.’ (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

An American study about the success of immigrant pupils showed the advantages in belonging to *certain groups in certain contexts* because it found significant differences within immigrant groups (Portes, 1999, p. 504). The researchers established that the factors for academic achievement are too complex to clearly establish a general concept of their impact.

During my data analysis, this complexity was a problem I encountered as well. There is a complex multivariable system affecting the learning processes of the pupils. I found the concept of *creative learning* helped to account for a major part of incidences, yet it is not sufficient to explain all the differences. The major characteristics of social capital supported the exploration of some of the relational issues more in depth. Yet I also found that social capital sometimes failed to enable a full understanding of relational situations.

When I inquired if the teachers experienced a change in the school with the arrival of refugee children, they said five years ago, when the school had more refugee children, the school seemed to move in a certain direction and the teachers could observe a change. Yet, in the current situation (2009) it was a matter of each individual pupil and his or her personality. The teachers and the three monolingual girls interviewed said there were relationships between monolingual children and refugee children—interestingly Red Flash related this to children who are on the highest academic achievement level in their classes (Teacher Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

Red Flash: ‘In terms of relations with children they become friends ... it is certainly still seen in our top children in our school ... the ones who are most able who are in the top class together are the ones who social together invite each other places give each other Christmas cards

despite religious differences ... children from the flats ... they are genuinely friends.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Due to access issues on the research site, I could not use the whole school as an entity because the access was restricted to three classroom spaces. Another aspect restricting my ability to generalize for the whole school was the hierarchical and complex structure of a secondary school in Scotland (Glasgow). I glimpsed references to the school as a whole through the stories of the participants, but could not venture to confirm or refute these stories from different viewpoints.

I initially planned to discuss issues of power in an extra section not directly related to the research questions. Yet, the issues' strong relation to relevance and control of learning situations, made me decide to conclude the discussion of the first question with these points. A further reason for the position is that this section will relate to issues that emerged during the previous section, reflecting on the teachers' opinions. A further reason for placing the section here was that I interpreted discipline infringements as a form of countering disempowerment by the pupils. Such discipline infringements changed the learning experiences; therefore belong under the discussion of learning processes.

I derived my understanding of disempowerment from Cummins' (2001) definition of empowerment, and the absence of named characteristics (see quotation below). My finding was that a majority of the monolingual pupils seemed lacking confidence and motivation for academic success. The pupils felt that they were not heard in school and perceived that the teachers lack interest in their development.

*... empowerment [emphasis author] can be defined as **the collaborative creation of power** [emphasis author]. Pupils whose schooling experiences reflect collaborative relations of power develop the ability, confidence and motivation to succeed academically. [...] In other words, empowerment derives from the process of negotiating identities in the classroom. (Cummins, 2001, p. 16)*

Wanting to explore the nature of disempowerment more closely I addressed this with certain questions in the questionnaire and group discussions. My conclusions until this point were that missing relevance, control and ownership impacted on the feelings of disempowerment as well as triggering discipline issues.

Both instruments began with a general question: 'What do you learn in school?' The participants from the EAL Unit primarily wrote subjects they took in school and for Highers, at this point of the research only three pupils

named non-academic skills. The primary gatekeeper later told me these answers were to be expected from this group of participants, because they focus on academic career and progression.

‘I personally think my school there is a lot of different culture, so I learn how to live with other people.’

‘In school I’m learning new skills all the time however the best thing I enjoy is computing... and being confident.’(Questionnaire EAL Unit)

‘All different things, lots of stuff, stuff you didn’t no [know], all different things’ (Questionnaire Mainstream Classes, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

The pupils from the mainstream classrooms focused on school progression to get a good job, or an education in general. The questionnaire responses were as follows: ‘I am learning at school that I have to go to if you want an education.’ (Questionnaire Mainstream Classes, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Two pupils even claimed to learn: ‘everything that a person needs to know and everything that you need to know’ (Questionnaire Mainstream Classes, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008). Only one pupil responded with receiving more confidence from school. The teachers later stated that the pupils probably repeated what they heard at home or expected me to hear when answering these questions; valid comments considering the responses.

The initial interpretation of the detachment of the pupils from their learning was supported by the questionnaire answers. Whilst learning was understood as a vehicle to access jobs or university, I found the context of the learning contents was not always clear to the participants. Statements like ‘learning everything there is to know, stuff’ or listing the names of subjects, is a strong sign that the pupils were not fully aware of the relationship between school, learning and how learning impacts on their lives. Only three pupils from the EAL Unit and one from the mainstream classrooms indicated learning transferable skills in school.

Researcher: ‘Do you think what you do in school has any relevance to your lives?’

Pupils: ... ‘Aye’ ... ‘You get an education to get a job’ ...

Researcher: 'What is it doing for you?'  
'... better life ... better future ...'  
Researcher: 'What is it doing now?'  
'... you only have to learn sometimes ... nothing ...'  
(Group Discussion Maths Class, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Long-term results, and the cultural capital that resulted from attending school, were in the participants' awareness. There seemed a lack of comprehension what education means and how it affects the pupils' lives. The missing relevance of learning in school and its significance for the real-life context became more apparent during the group discussion in the English class. The question: 'What do you learn in school?' turned into a brief discussion about prevocational training, which generally was highly valued, particularly by the boys. Because of this, the participants focused on active learning as a preference such as physical education (PE). Prevocational training (prevoc) continued arising as the most favourite learning related activities (Group Discussion English, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

The boys of the English class took over the conversation, during which backchannel support was constantly given. Joe, as we were informed by one of his classmates, did construction during his prevocational training (Group Discussion English, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

'Yeah.' Ladies Man says impressed. 'He got to make a concrete wall!'  
'Yes he did.' Someone else agrees.  
Red Flash wants to know how they went about making a concrete wall, what kind of instructions they got.  
'They talk you through it.' (Group Discussion English, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

One of the boys found prevocational training more relaxing than learning in school. Less tension was an important aspect yet, in the subsequent conversation, the participants also emphasised their joy in being taken seriously and not talked at during prevocational training. It transpired that the participants appreciated learning by doing and being actively involved in the process. A significant issue arising with this was being 'talked at' in school, which was not the case during prevocational training. The

participants in all classes complained about 'being talked at' repeatedly during the duration of the research project (Group Discussion English, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

Ownership, control, and relevance of the learning activities in school seemed to be missing or were perceived as missing. The participants complained of the repetitive nature of activities. Boredom was also a factor that arose often. Pupils, particularly in the Maths' class, often over-controlled a situation that means they ignored the teacher, and disrupted one another from learning. Despite this form of control, they regularly showed disempowerment over their actual learning processes. By choosing teaching material with the same content as the previous year, only from a different publisher, the teachers reinforced the pupils' perceived inabilities. Ms Lee was not aware that the pupils noticed this, and in the group discussions complained about doing the same things all the time.

One of the girls was not answering some of the questions: 'I ken nae'di'them.'

Teacher: 'Try it, you did it before.'

Lorna: 'But I ken nae remember how I dae'em.'

Teacher: 'Try it, think about it!'

Lorna now starts shouting, and throwing stationary, because she cannot do the tasks and the teacher keeps insisting upon it. (Fieldnotes, 07<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

Lorna began disturbing the class because of her feeling of lack of control towards the tasks before her. She tried gaining control over the situation through arguing around the actual issue. Eventually, she began working on the tasks. I am wondering if it was a power issue, control issue, or if she only needed attention and support. When needs were not met, disruptive behaviour regularly became the standard reaction of the pupils, as Bill would confirm in a conversation I had with him. Bill was one of the boys whom the teacher of the Maths class regularly berated for causing significant trouble. The teacher often (every time I was conducting fieldwork in her class and Bill was there) sent Bill out though other pupils behaved in the same manner if not even more disruptive. He differentiated between other classes and Maths



as, 'They don't mock about in this ones'. Bill indicated that he missed relevance and challenge in the Maths class. The following situation supported my interpretation that he wanted to learn, yet missed learning opportunities throughout maths.

He was once again sent out of class; Bill secretly opened the door to the classroom and tried to listen to the teacher's explanation. Unfortunately my observing him drew the attention of one of the girls who thought that he wished to mock the teacher. The girls started commenting loudly ... preventing him from listening to the classroom procedures. (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008).

Anna was one of the girls who stood out regularly because of her disruptive behaviour. The teacher's rejection of Anna's homework triggered a sudden mood shift from motivation and wanting to share her results into rebellion.

Right at the start Anna discusses about the homework she had done but the teacher did not acknowledge this and only tells her not to bother with the homework. Upon which Anna got up and started jumping through the classroom singing. (Fieldnotes, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008).

These situations implied missing relevance, while Lorna might indeed have struggled with the actual task, Bill and Anna missed relevance in the situations I encountered. Power issues influenced these situations as well, because the teacher chose to use her power position to sternly apply her lesson plan rather than creating a learning space that offered the pupils scope for *creative learning* experiences. As a result, the pupils rebelled and boycotted the session. In the situation with Lorna supporting her in solving the task might have prevented her getting upset. Missing power was a topic that emerged throughout the group discussion in the EAL Unit. Here some of the pupils knew better than others how to negotiate within the school structure. Katja's peers were open to listen to her problem and offered suggestions that would empower her in taking control of the problem encountered.

'I am not interested in this' ... 'in this age like now we are effected by alcohol drugs cars ... that's why they teaching us this in school' ... 'they

concentrating on this but because we come from different culture from different background in our cultures or our upbringings religion they don't let us—like in Islam—they don't let us allow you to drink but over her is nothing. But people at the age of 12 and 13 they start smoking and drinking and if you are in 1st year so what age are you 11 or 12? So they start telling you from that point that you should not drink or smoke but people still do it,' ... 'but we come from different background and we think, oh we don't do this anyway why they are teaching us - they are from the same community?' ... 'We are 6th years they are supposed to teach us things that are more relevant to us' ... (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

A disturbing issue for the Muslim pupils in my study was sex education class. The Muslim pupils in this group, Katja in particular, preferred moving on to lessons of importance such as passing exams, or preparing for university. Yet one teacher continued returning to sex education lessons (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). She clearly demonstrates the link of learning in school to cultural capital in passing exams, obtaining a degree. Katja complained and subsequently a discussion began not only about the value of sex education, the feeling of disempowerment and what to do against it, but the pupils also co-constructed their sets of values and norms with each other. Big Bear for instance stated an understanding for the necessity of sex education, while Katja insisted that learning about it once is more than enough. Although the problem was related to one particular teacher, the classmates had a hard time understanding Katja's problem as they had different teachers in the subject and did not share her experiences.

Other pupil: 'Listen the more you grow up the more you need this this is why they keep teaching this [PSE] ... we already done it we don't learn it ...'

Big Bear: 'Than you should go to the head of department ... the teacher cannot decide'

Katja: ... 'No no no the topic is driving but he gets on about hormones and sex even if the topic is driving ... when I am saying something try and respect what I am saying ...'

Other Pupil: 'I think whatever it is it's all included in the course maybe we just do it at different times?'

Katja: 'No no I said we are talking about driving and than he just moves to hormones and stops talking about driving ...'

...

Mara eventually jumped into the discussion and explained to the boys again that this one teacher keeps going back to sex education although the topic should be drugs or traffic. Big Bear eventually seemed to understand and blurted out: 'So it is the teacher not the institution?' Katja: 'Yes, it is the teacher, not the institution.'

Big Bear then suggested that Katja should talk to the teacher or the head of department about this issue. The situation was a good example of how this particular group of pupils tried to create a common understanding of a situation. Further a comprehensive understanding of the institution school and its hierarchies transpired indicating a high level of cultural competence towards the institution school. The conversation reflected empowerment that was negotiated between the pupils. Katja felt disempowered in the situation, her classmates in contrast suggested different strategies of taking control of the situation (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

In the final part of this section I focus on the perceptions pupils and teachers have in relation to power. Illuminating how this understanding impacts the learning and teaching of the school. Issues of ownership and control again accompany the discussion regarding power, as both imply amounts of power necessary to be maintained.

Pupils found that next to being 'moaned at' and 'shouted at' there were teachers who are 'too bossy, annoying' and 'cheeky'. These teachers allegedly set themselves above the pupils and became inaccessible: 'they are up there and you can't go there' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). This power discrepancy impacted on the learning of the pupils. Teachers holding onto power position or certain roles did not provide space for the pupils to take over control or ownership of the learning situation. As one of the pupils complained:

'They don't open the door for you. They don't let you choose, which way to do your music composition or your course book tasks, you have to go that way you can't go that way.' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

Problems of power discrepancies played a role in all the classrooms, however the participants dealt with or understood these discrepancies differently. The pupils from the EAL Unit, as shown in earlier examples, understood the difference between institution, the individual working for the institution, and the instruments of approaching a problem with either. The EAL pupils also appeared more confident towards their learner identities and abilities. For instance the boy who complained about ways of composition understood his way was another way and one that is more suitable to his learning or creative needs (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

In the mainstream class, participants were focused more on the omnipotence of the teachers without acknowledging their own abilities. Here the pupils showed stronger cynicism and even resignation to the situation. The pupils in the mainstream class who attended the EAL Unit otherwise did not contradict these attitudes. This may indicate the reproduction of culture within different peer groups and shows the contradictions in different networks inhabited by individuals.

Unfortunately no teacher who made the pupils feel frustrated (Group Discussion Math Class, EAL Unit, Questionnaires, Fieldwork Thron Theatre) was willing or able to participate in an interview or any of the research. Two teachers who participated in a interview were favourably viewed by the pupils. Pupils liked how these teachers could laugh about themselves and some pupils in the EAL Unit viewed these teachers more as friends rather than figures of authority. Both teachers experienced less discipline issues in their classes than Ms Lee did. Igoa (1998) in a study of US schools found similar results stating that migrant pupils often looked to teachers as their closest friends, particularly EAL teachers. In Reynolds (2008) study, all the refugee pupils listed at least one of the EAL staff-member as among their favourite teachers.

Pupils in the Maths class and EAL Unit told me that some teachers thought of themselves as better than the pupils (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008, Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). The constant 'moaning

and shouting' (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008 & Questionnaires Main Stream classes) of some teachers was found to be very disturbing and unsettling to the pupils. The participants wished their teachers were more relaxed, without shouting: 'Not only just pen and paper the whole day' (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008, p.1).

Researcher: 'Understand I right you said your opinion does not really count because the teachers opinion is above your opinion?' The whole group agreed to this.

One pupil said: 'no we just get Pets and referrals ... for saying what we want to say' (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

There are some pupils known in school as TP or teachers' pets, in the eyes of the other pupils—these pupils can get away with anything. Pupils who are not TP get referrals just for saying what they want to say. There was seemingly a lack of self-perception or self-reflection in this group. The children did not indicate how their behaviour could be inappropriate. They blamed the teachers, particularly the ignorance and indifference of the teachers towards the pupils' feelings and points of view. My observation is that the school as institution, and thus the teachers are almost seen as enemies. This transpired in the discussion about how unwanted such a reputation as teacher pet was to the pupils (Group Discussion Maths, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008). The group identity in this class strongly relied on an agreed code, if not of disobedience then possibly counter-structural behaviour. By this I mean behaviour that intentionally disagrees and is counterproductive to the norms and values that are communicated in school. Despite the feeling of disempowerment of the pupils in relation to school and learning and teaching, they actually held a strong power position within the school in manipulating the daily routines and classroom sessions.

'The new head teacher ... she picks on people'

'She is an extremist she just wants to have everything perfect'

'She just wants to improve our image come on'

'What image?'

Laughter ... (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

In the EAL Unit group discussion the new headteacher became unexpectedly a strong focus point taking a significant amount of the discussion. Most of which seemed related to the ambivalent perception of the new headteacher; actions by her were perceived as discriminatory and racist by some pupils and as necessary disciplining by others. However this discussion of the new headteacher was accompanied by the transpiration of values and norms held by this particular group of children. It was accompanied by identity negotiations and group dynamics. This group was also more aware of the dynamics within school and reflective about their position and instruments of influence within the structure (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

One issue that particularly concerned the boys in the group most was how they wanted to use certain spaces in school like the assembly hall, during their study periods. The girls told them that it was their own fault if the headteacher prohibits this because of their behaviour. The boys however insisted that they are the oldest in school and should be treated as adult but the headteacher: 'she demotivates us, tell us go get the form, leave now, you are not needed here ... you don't need to be here' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

The boys seemed hurt by this response and said there are other ways of disciplining. However, they agreed with the girls that their behaviour was sometimes not the best. The boys also perceived the head teacher handling the situation as overreaction and asked for other ways of disciplining, mainly to not be removed from school (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009).

'I said its like everyone wears the same uniform but they get away with tracks and jeans but, if she sees me with just some pink stripes in a shirt she come to me and shouts gives referral'

' ... see this is not true Zula got caught without uniform so many times but she never shouts at us she just says please wear uniform the next time ... she just say wear it.' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

The boys perceived the head teacher's behaviour as discriminatory, handing out referrals on minor infringements on the school uniform to them. The

boys said that pupils in tracksuits are not punished for not wearing the school uniform. The girls did not experience any form of punishment for the same or even stronger infringements.

Under the previous headteacher the school received several awards for integration and equality. Although the school had won awards for inclusion, the pupils in this group opined that the previous headteacher was useless, and how he never did anything or was involved. They did appreciate him being less strict than the new headteacher. The issue that disturbed the pupils most was the new headteacher telling them: 'I am not gonna listen to you—which is not fair.' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). The pupils' perception of the new headteacher and the opinion my contact teachers had of her did match. The head teacher's failure to support Ms Ferry with her discrimination case and the pupils and teachers opinion of her make the strong power position the headteacher has in this Secondary school clear.

The pupils of the EAL Unit experienced a strong dichotomy between very engaged and supportive teachers in the unit and the attitudes of the headteacher or other teachers discriminating against them. Several of the pupils from the EAL Unit had experienced the headteacher holding her hand up in front of them and saying she would not listen. Considering the stories from the pupil participants, the boys who were against the headteacher as well as the girls who tried to defend her, demonstrated the perception that the headteacher did not cater for reciprocity or establishment of trust between her and the pupils with a migration background.

One issue observed during fieldwork as highlighted earlier was how mainstream class children seemingly understood school as an enemy. Teachers affirmed my interpretation during the teacher interviews. Mr Gee stated school is a middle class institution with middle class norms and values, which raised suspicions, mistrust and animosity with the working class community of the children and their parents. The following incident demonstrated the gap between the pupils and the school. The Maths session was already on for some time when the door was opened and the deputy

head teacher entered shouting at the pupils. The pupils stood up and he checked their uniforms, and continued to shout insults. An atmosphere of anxiety and aversion held the class and even the teacher lowered her looks without standing up to this bullying teacher. The class and I were quite shocked subsequently my field notes turned very emotional.

Male staff member comes in and shouts and does a uniform check. When he came into the room one could have cut the air, he pushed a strong wave of authority in front of him. ...

The children's body language instantaneously becomes hunched and fearful. This guy is quite a bully and seems to be more of a field marshal than a teacher. The girls later tell me that he is deputy head for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years and that even moms and dads are afraid of him. At the time of the incident I did not know who the man was, only after class was over the teacher and girls told me. (Fieldwork, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

In the conversation with Mr Gee and Red Flash the most startling observation was the picture Mr Gee held of his pupils and how this varied significantly from the picture I drew out of the data. It was difficult to establish a clear boundary for the situation of the study's research participants. Ambiguity characterises the experience of refugee children. This ambiguity reflects in the following answers to my question if the teachers were aware of the feeling of disempowerment I gathered in the mainstream classrooms.

Mr Gee: 'A lot of them are',

Red Flash: 'a lot of them don't know where to begin

... this is a weird thing a lot of them just want to keep their head down and get through things.'

Red Flash even elaborated that the pupils he works with seemed perversely happy to have their intellectual freedom taken away from them.

Red Flash: 'I think this is indicative to powerlessness. When faced with options and choices ... that's difficult for them it's not that they don't want to.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Red Flash talked of the powerless pupils from the mainstream classroom, Mr Gee referred to the pupils from the EAL Unit. The forms of disempowerment experienced by the teachers differ significantly between these two groups of



pupils. I assigned group identities these children, based on the differential treatment and experience in school. The teachers' and my understanding is supported by a Scottish Government report, pointing out the 'lack of 'aspiration' among some parents and pupils', which is reasoned by 'high levels of third generation unemployment, geographic isolation and social segregation of the community.' (Menter et al., April 2010)

Mr Gee established group labels when he compared refugee participants to Gaelic speakers in Scotland or Native Americans or Australians. Mr Gee is a caring, supporting and considerate teacher but his perception of group identities reinforced the negative picture or contributed to reinforcing troubled group identities.

Mr Gee: 'powerlessness is there ... taken away their culture ... similar to what you see in northern isles where the Gaelic culture was suppressed similar to north America Australia ... I don't know how its happened ... there is immensely powerlessness amongst these children there are only some children who are able to jump this hurdle and see education—perhaps education is wanted.' (Teacher Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

Mr Gee contradicted what he stated about the refugee children taking ownership of the city while the Scottish children remain in their local gang boundaries. Both Red Flash and Mr Gee agreed this powerlessness being installed in this school. Red Flash said it is societal, whereupon Mr Gee argues: 'I think also in school ... is part of society' (Teacher Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009), revising his previous statement. Mr Gee's statement that the pupils from asylum-seeking and refugee families access 'nightclubs in town that they themselves have created as against some of their fellow pupils' (Teacher Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009) the teacher raises several issues relating to power. The most significant aspect is how the same teacher mentioned earlier that the children had their culture taken away. He unknowingly realised with ownership about clubs in city centre and thus ownership of the city as a home, these children made up for an enforced disempowerment. The other children who could not cross gang boundaries in their lives but experience a strong local identity, are

disempowered by what Red Flash calls 'mental poverty'. This 'mental poverty' I understood as a lacking cultural competence, because these children were not able to navigate between local boundaries and translate their experiences from one context to another.

Discipline was an issue the pupils used as a control instrument. All the teachers reacted differently to infringements on discipline. Ms Ferry usually became very strict, and changed into speaking Arabic. Mr Gee in contrast would tell the class how infringements affected him and restricted the learning and teaching (Fieldnotes, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008). Ms Lee attempted training the class into certain behaviour patterns using coercive measures. When the pupils had sincere questions, even if shouted out loud, she would answer and take time to explain, while she ignored provocation or raised her voice. Further in the Maths class, if the teacher tried to establish discipline she would speak school-English. What I label as school-English is clearly pronounced language without making use of localisms and dialect. When she explained something to the class, tried to bond, or other me from herself and the class, she would fall into a mild Glaswegian dialect. This behaviour can be interpreted as a form of translanguaging, utilizing different forms of language according to negotiating positions within a social group.

I observed in the English class a similar use of different speech patterns. Red Flash occasionally took on a role, impersonating a character from a contemporary movie, and changed the register and volume of his voice if he wanted to establish discipline without appearing patronising. Only when stressed and under time pressure would he use his real voice and say things like: 'because I said so'.

Red Flash generally took the children's issues on board, occasionally he used his power position and has the children carry out tasks. In the situation below the teacher had the pupils work according to the national assessment guidelines. As the pupils had problems understanding the requirements, he sourced his power position to oblige the pupils to follow the rules.

The class was still writing on the story for national assessment and LilMo went to Red Flash's desk in front of the class to show him his story and get some feedback. Red Flash told him that the word number was restricted and that LilMo had far too much text. So he took a big black pen and cancelled out some text LilMo had written. Instantaneously the boy complained about it and said: 'It is difficult to write in English anyway and it took time to write so much and now he [the teacher] is cancelling it all out!'

Red Flash teasingly made LilMo shut up and said: 'Listen, this is not what you want. You don't want to write a book!'

LilMo disagreed saying that: 'This is a whole point of a story to finish it.' (Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008)

I was upset with the teacher in this situation. I had focused on LilMo significantly during my fieldwork, and found he not only struggled with creating an all-Scottish identity, but also worked hard to achieve in class. LilMo would have appreciated if he could have finished the story at home with more instructions from the teacher. The entire class had difficulties understanding the point in writing only a part of a story and not finishing it. There was some discussion in class about this problem. Yet, the time pressure to finish this task impacted on Red Flash's teaching style and he reinforced the pupils' having to finish with their writing (Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008).

The teacher's power position made the pupil carry out the actual task, but did not enhance the pupil's understanding. The class had a particular image about how a story should be. In a cultural context a story has beginning, main part and end. It was a coherent structure that followed certain rules. The class was aware of these rules and had problems breaking them for the sake of a test. The pupils found it difficult to comprehend why the known structure of a story should not apply. The teacher, rather than negotiating with the class and providing space to discuss and build understanding, used his position to strictly make the pupils following their tasks. I wonder how much this was determined by the story being for a national assessment test.

In the English class, Red Flash neglected his usual approach of creating learning space for the pupils and thinking of different ways of explaining something. The pupils were confused over their tasks, and several appeared

not confident with their stories. There was complaining regarding that they were unsure whether to continue or stop and improve their writing. One pupil asked:

‘Why’r’we di-in’ this?’

Red Flash answers: ‘Because, I told you, this is all you need to know right now. ... Be as correct as you can be’ ... (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

This time the class accepted Red Flash’s strictness and refusal to offer support and further explanation. I was initially very upset with his reaction because the class was at a loss with the task. Yet, the teacher needed the class to finish the task to a deadline. I also wonder in how far his refusal to further explain and provide examples forced the pupils to develop trust in their work. (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008) The assignment was part of national assessment and Red Flash wanted his pupils to succeed. He held back telling the class that the assignment was for assessment to avoid the pupils becoming nervous, yet it obviously raised his stress levels and changed his behaviour into a strict manner instead of his usual laid back attitude.

One of the boys takes pictures.

Mr Gee says: ‘Could you not take pictures, without asking permission, you get us into big trouble ...’

Boy: ‘head teacher does this all the time ...’

Other boy: ‘yeah and puts it up on the screen ...’

Mr Gee says: ‘She wants you make feel part of the school.’

This was answered by disagreeing comments and backchannel noises ... Mr Gee: ‘You don’t like that?’ (Fieldnotes, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

The pupils felt comfortable in certain environments, like the EAL Unit, yet there was no overall inclusion in the school. The pupils were upset that the head teacher kept taking random pictures of the children and then displayed them on the big flat screen in the entrance area. One of the boys was not comfortable with this in particular and several other children who overheard this conversation agreed. The teacher explained photographs were to build inclusion, which was answered with cynical remarks by the pupils. The forced inclusion attempt by the head teacher was met with contempt of the pupils; failing communication seemed the main problem in this situation.

In the English classroom and the EAL unit, the relationships between the pupils and the teacher were more relaxed. Here the teachers were confident enough to let the pupils have control over a situation. They trusted that giving the pupils space and allowing them to take control would not impact on discipline. These attitudes permitted the teachers to build social capital, or aspects of it like trust, humour and reciprocity. The Maths teacher hardly ever used humour or trust in her class. She stuck strictly to mechanisms rather than responding to situations in the way of other teachers. Further she was the only participating teacher whose focus was building discipline in the class rather than teaching.

I found that the pupils trusted [and] respected Mr Gee for instance strongly. During my introductory session in the lunchtime photo club Mr Gee entered the room as one of the last ones. When he introduced himself he said that he is a very young man, to that Mary countered: 'ach cm' on she isn't blind!' (Fieldnotes, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007)

This form of banter I observed with Mr Gee, Ms Sally and Red Flash, indicated to me a high form of trust between the teachers and the pupils. The teachers could permit pupils to engage in making fun; it seems they knew the pupils would not cross a point of insulting, hurting or questioning the teacher's position. The pupils seemed to understand and appreciate that teachers were able to laugh about themselves. Borders were provided where pupils may experiment with the teachers' identities and questioning or reinforcing these with different forms of teasing comments.

... the relationship between the teacher and the pupils seems to be very relaxed the pupils can say things and seemed to feel rather secure and confident with Ms Sally and Mr Gee and still there seemed to be respect. (Fieldnotes, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007)

A similar attitude appears to prevail in the English class.

Kibby told me she absolutely hates the maths teacher and the other girls who know her agree and say that she is 'moany' and always shouts at people they do not seem to realise that her class is also the loudest one.

Every one sitting at the table with me though loves Red Flash they like that he can have a laugh and that they can tease him and he is not taking himself too serious. (Fieldnotes, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008)

Occasionally rather than justifying the trust the children offered him and take it on board, Red Flash emphasised his power position in the classroom. I had problems discovering why he acted like this. These occasions seemed to be random without obvious pattern of occurrence, like the following situation. One possible explanation could be Red Flash's understanding of the effectiveness of strict teachers, which succeeds the classroom situation.

Red Flash was pleurably sipping on his strongly aromatic coffee, the boys in the front row were commenting on this and one said that he would be the man for making really good coffee. Another of the boys said that he would be the man and Red Flash answered: 'No I am the man you are just a little kid.'

[This seems to really have hurt the feelings of the boy.] (Fieldnotes, 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008)

Red Flash: 'A soft-touch teacher can be as much counterproductive as a very strict one ... discipline can mean different things ... if children have freedom to work creatively ... don't remove external discipline rules' ... (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Red Flash understands *creative learning* as freedom to work self-responsibly, he wished that his pupils would take up the freedom offered to them in his classrooms, as he stated earlier on. The pupils who could hold agency themselves did not always choose strategies for empowerment. When I refer to agency in my thesis I relate this to Bruner's (2003) definition. An *agentive mind* is *proactive, problem-oriented, attentionally focussed, directed to ends using decisions, strategies and heuristics* (Bruner, 2003, p.93). In a learning context that means agency is ownership and control in a learning situation. Bruner (2003) extends the definition of agency by stating that an *agentive mind* seeks collaboration and intersubjectivity.

Lindner (2006a) who states that schools are state organized monopolies of coercion, which are reproducing structures, blames forms of disempowerment mainly on the schools as institutions. However, analyzing

the data I realized that there is a structural and institutional power in school and the teachers are its agents. Some of the teachers, however, created spaces for the pupils to have freedom, and the pupils also had means to create their own spaces within this structure. I subsequently experienced power in school as a two-way process. Cultural capital of the pupils, such as the knowledge how to use complaint procedures, had an impact on their abilities to create their own spaces and utilize them successfully.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Question—*'Between the Stars'*.

What role is social capital playing in school context, particularly with the emphasis on support and inclusion?

This section focuses mainly on identity negotiations and the role of social capital within classroom settings of my research. Some issues that arose in the analysis were: the impact of group territoriality on the usage of social capital, the impact of cultural competences on knowledge and behaviour.

On several occasions I observed Mr Gee mediating bridging and linking social capital making is accessible to the refugee pupils. He signed the pupils up for a dance event during refugee week, enticed them to attend the West End Festival, a big street fair and parade in Glasgow's West End; helped pupils to buy international calling cards; get a bank account; contact lawyers to fight detention; co-operated with local community projects to involve the pupils; to name the most prevalent of his activities. These activities contributed to the refugee children taking ownership of spaces and aspects of their lives.

Mr Gee always encourages the pupils from the EAL Unit to take part in Glasgow's West End Festival; a celebration featuring events all over the West End for a couple of weeks. Businesses, clubs, schools and organisations take part in its high point the parade. When I told him that I had the impression that children were not really into the parade, he said that my impression was right. Despite the teachers encouragement the children were not really up to partake in the event. ... I think it was the group with the traditional South American samba costumes meaning quasi-naked with some feathers. (Fieldnotes, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008)



Encouraging the pupils to participate in the West End Festival, Mr Gee helped them to establish a relationship with the city. Participation in community events provided space to gain ownership and control of life in this community. When a bank teller refused to open a bank account for a young adult refugee based on racial profiling, Mr Gee helped the pupil to open this account. His position as mediator made the community part of identity negotiations of the refugee children.

During refugee week, Mr Gee encouraged some of the pupils from the EAL Unit to participate in dance training and performance by Youth Dance Glasgow. In this performance, the participants learned choreography based on a poem by Daniel McDonagh—*Between the Stars*. This poem features the most prominent river in Glasgow, the Clyde. Children with forced migration background from all over the city took part in the performance. This was significant as children and young adults from the research site travelled into city centre, crossing their local boundaries.

*Between the Stars*  
*Between the stars and the River Clyde*  
*A path appears when the moon is bright,*  
*And rising from their sleep, awake the Glasgow souls*  
*And descend onto the path of silver and gold.*  
*And Glasgow's daughter walks on the riverbed,*  
*With an emerald crown upon her head,*  
*From beneath the water she waves goodbye,*  
*As the stars disappear from the midnight sky. (McDonagh, 2007)*

The training for the performance assisted the participants in overcoming inhibitions and gain confidence. I could observe this very clearly with two of the most quiet and withdrawn girls from the EAL Unit. The dance performance was so powerful that Kibby opened up towards me during a training lunch break. The following condensed observation of the dance training shows the significant impact the training had on the pupils.

Rehearsal observations

**(10:00 a.m.)** At the beginning of the training the children are really awkward with each other and I am wondering if this is going to change during the day.

Kibby gets confused with the choreography and starts interacting with a girl from another group.

**(10:48 a.m.)** ... While the instructors explain and read the poem and then start rehearsing again Kibby starts to show stronger expressions in her movements.

Martha shows initially a very hostile body language arms folded strictly in front of her, head and looks lowered to the ground and tense face expression. One of the boys from Isengard starts talking to Martha and explains and shows her the one hand movement she might had have problems with.

First run through. Martha and Eloise got confused and start negotiating; where to go on the stage during it. There are more run troughs and the number starts to take shape.

**(11:20 a.m.)** Martha's body language eases up and she starts genuinely smiling.

[I am impressed with the rather quick effects of this project.]

Martha's movements during the act of the rehearsal become more and more open and expressive I can literally see how her resistance melts and she becomes more daring.

Similar happens with Kibby, her moves are more confident, stronger expressive and she seems to be more at ease. (Fieldwork, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008, p.36/37)

Next to celebrating their identities as refugees or asylum-seekers, the children made new friends during this event. Particularly Martha, Kibby and Eloise seem to gain confidence through taking part in the performance. An effect culture pedagogy in Germany uses regularly in work with marginalised children and youth (Fuchs, 2005a). The identity-reinforcing effects of such events support the well-being of the children and young adults (Cummins, 2001; Keupp, 2005). The choice of the poem linked the children actively to parts of a Glaswegian identity and established a stronger relationship to the place they live in now.

The following field note extracts focus on the topic of identities. I explored my initial interpretations further in the teacher interview. By holding the teacher interview as the last activity of fieldwork I had already worked on coding and analysing my data, thus was able to pick out some issues from the pupil participants and my observations to triangulate those with the

opinions of the teachers. One of the major issues was that of the participants seemingly over emphasis on a local (here Isengard) identity and occasionally hostile behaviour towards the school as institution.

Mr Gee: 'I was shocked when I came out with two children to the river Clyde and they asked what river is that? ...'

Red Flash: 'I told a 16 year old kid about the turnstile [Glasgow Underground] because he never had been on the underground ... this wealth of knowledge where the kids come from—history of Glasgow etc—has been lost the kids don't know'

Mr Gee: 'Ironically it's so sad ... in that sense you find that you've got asylum-seeker pupils accessing nightclubs in town that they themselves have created as against some of their fellow pupils have not stepped out of the gang boundaries because of the fear factor because of the mental poverty.'

Red Flash: 'This wealth of knowledge, where the children come from (history of Glasgow etc) has been lost—the children don't know.'  
(Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

The picture was puzzling; the teacher interview raised more questions about the participants' identities. Red Flash highlighted the strong metaphor Mr Gee referred to as 'mental poverty'. The metaphor, as used by the teachers, does not only refer to poor cultural competences, with the lack of local knowledge and context of the environment the pupils live in. The pupils' not taking up opportunities to overcome physical boundaries of their living spaces, means also 'mental poverty' is missing a part of an individual's history of stories—identity negotiation (Hall, 1992; Michel-Peres, 2006; Schäfer, 2005). Because the poor social competences mean that aspects of a wider identity, such as being Glaswegian, Scottish or British are not part of the identity negotiations. Talking to one another in Glaswegian and changing to a more subdued form of Scots when addressing the teachers or me, the pupils used dialect to include or exclude people, and reinforcing their solidarity and identities within the classroom. I asked the teachers about my interpretation of the monolingual children as very protective of their identities, who even seemed to display hostility towards school. Red Flash first stated that this is 'textbook xenophobia' but he also blamed the school for not being a community place. The school's exclusion of the community is understood by both teachers as a barrier for pupils' well being.

Red Flash: 'The weird thing here in this school in my experience in comparison with going to high school in Canada there is always things clubs and activities and people are in and out of the building all the time

The school is used by some groups the gym for instance there is a weird kind of exodus when the staff leaves save the odd after school club the school is not centre of community' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

When I asked the teachers about possible disparities between groups of pupils with and without migration background, they came to the conclusion that only pupils on high achievement levels are beyond disparity.

Red Flash: '... so there is for instance the group territorially ... so territorially you have a group of asylum-seekers who are on the top of the hill and some on the bottom of the hill and only after this there is some interplay where they would cross to different groups ...'

Mr Gee: '... basically saying that only the children on high achievement levels are beyond racial divides' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

When Mr Gee stated that high achieving pupils 'are beyond racial divides', he picked up an issue the girls from the activist group share with me.

'You see very often a group of refugee kids and one indigenous child or vice versa.' They also told me that there are arguments between refugee and indigenous children and one of the girls meant: 'But honest I just think it is because they are teenager, they always pick on each other you know how they pick on this one because she is too skinny, or this one is too fat or this one's clothes anything that stands out. It does not really have to do with being a refugee.' (Group Interview Scottish Activist Girls, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008)

The division in peer groups according to ethnicity, race, religion and gender, seem an ambivalent topic in the school. I observed the ESOL group standing together in the assembly hall not mixing with other pupils without obvious migration background (Fieldnotes, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008), but I also observed the phenomenon described by the monolingual girls during the group interview. According to the teachers, this differentiation in peer choice depended on the achievement levels of pupils, while the monolingual girls (Fieldnotes, 6<sup>th</sup>

May 2008) think it relates to 'common' differences in teenage groups. As examples for the ambivalent nature of this issue: Dougal names Gulliver as his best friend and hugs him (Fieldnotes, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008) and another pupil uses derogatory terminology as racial discrimination towards her Iraqi teacher (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

As a researcher, it was hard to establish where the common ground was with the choice of peer grouping. It seemed to me that all participants were correct in their perceptions, and the choices strongly depended on individuals' experiences, personalities, biases and interpretation of situations. The transition from primary to secondary school and subsequently previous experiences in primary school may have a strong impact on the choice of friends.

As much as I understood from the girl whom I had the conversation with (her friend would only occasionally give backchannel support) it was a rather traumatic experience for her to come into secondary school.

She said that she used to be shy but that she had to completely change not to get bullied all the time. She did not seem comfortable with the identity of being loud, disruptive and saying dirty things, but she found it a necessity to get respect. One small incident that seemed to support the girl's perception was that when one day Ladies Man behaved particularly disruptively and one of the girls in the class asked him if he does this because he wants to be levelled up (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008).

Mary: 'When you are bad, you are funny ... when you say dirty things, which means you get respect, when you are nice people don't respect.' (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

A constant rebellion against the school and teachers seemed a necessity in mainstream classrooms in this school. An interesting observation was pupils from asylum-seeking and refugee families, were absent in misbehaviour or making the girl feel miserable. This could either be because they are not part of her identity negotiation within this school, or their migration background is indeed irrelevant to this girl as a differentiation factor. Mary's statement concurred with my own observation of participants from refugee and asylum-seeking families in mainstream classrooms. Here they seem to

withdraw from the discourse and power struggle between the pupils and the teachers. Only a couple of pupils like LilMo would take part in this discourse. Yet, Alfred or Kibby, for instance would stay out of these discussions completely, even during the group discussion.

They are making you feel shit all the time [the teachers] ... they shout at you the teacher ... some people do never bad ... people like that ... pointing at Ladies Man ... make you feel crap (Fieldnotes, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

The pupil stated teachers and fellow pupils alike bullied her. When I asked her about friends, she said they are all in the same group of people. I was unable to continue the conversation due to the noise in the class and the class ending. The conversation with the two girls in the Maths class, showed me how strong the peer pressure was on the mainstream class pupils. It provided an insight regarding the consistent negative attitude of these pupils, being reproduced by teachers or their families and also the pupils themselves. However, I could not explore the origin of the hostilities. The teachers provided some indicators during the interview but I could not find the original source for this behaviour.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Question—*‘There is different people using different ways.’—Learning and Negotiating Identities***

In context of learning and teaching, does social capital influence identity constructions and understanding?

This section focuses on identity negotiations within learning situation and the possible impact social capital has on them. In the EAL Unit the pupils negotiated their cultural differences and identities in reflection about a learner styles activity. When asked if pupils found the learner styles activity helpful, the answers were positive. However, it was followed by an explanation of learner identities.

Because of a historical invasion by Britain into his home country, one pupil perceived his ability to negotiate within the Scottish school system as easier than students without the same history. He thus raised the topic of post-colonial relationships, yet another boy countered this argument stating that learner identities are individually dependent.

Boy one: ‘All of us come from different countries and different countries have different practices of ... like my country was invaded by Britain so they have the British way of teaching so it is similar to hear this is a good way of teaching using interacting ...’

Boy two: ‘I don’t think that’s the point, because there is not different countries, using different styles. There is different people using different ways of how they learn is not different country it is you learn in different way - can you make sure that when another person comes from your country and he wanna learn the same thing as you he would do it the same way as you do it’

Boy one: ‘No ... well ...’

Boy two: ‘It is not about teaching it is about how you learn ...’

Boy one: ‘So you say every country has different people’

(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

In this brief discussion the boys negotiated their understanding of learning taking up one another’s argument and in the end finding a consensus. Identity negotiation arose in discussing the impact colonial politics had had

on the education system in other countries. The boy handled a potentially difficult topic matter-of-factly and reflected on the positive aspects of interactive teaching. Further, their discussion about reasons for differences in learning reflected the negotiation of their learner identities. The boys agreed about learning as depending on personal preferences and not on how teaching takes place. The boys' opinions reflect on attitudes of the pupils in the EAL Unit who demonstrate strong control and ownership of learning.

The EAL Unit provided an open learning space for the pupils, when pupils had completed tasks or during self-study, the teachers and room offered a variety of learning incentives. There were shelves with books (dictionaries, storybooks to textbooks and coffee table publications) different pens and pencils, paints and craft materials. The pupils made regular use of these learning incentives.

The boy who waits for his essay takes the huge 'Pictures of the World' book and starts looking at it, while he is doing so, most kids are still working on their tasks. 'You've seen this all the moisture freezes from the cold' ... to Ralph. 'Your people' now the boy shows the picture book to another one. And then explains to me. 'This is a calf they take a sharp thing put it through its head, it's a sport the men are on horses.' (Fieldnotes, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

The boy with the book was aware of Ralph's ethnic and national identity and seemed proud to have found something in a book he could share with his friend. He clearly stated his identity as opposed to Ralph's ('your people'). The boy also demonstrated his awareness and knowledge of this other culture in telling me about the tradition that demonstrated agility on horseback and hunting skills. Ralph seemed embarrassed about this particular tradition as he gave no backchannel support and his body language was defensive. I wondered during the fieldwork if Ralph was aware of the strong difference between a pristine agrestic tradition versus the urban culture he so far experienced in Glasgow, and unsure how I would react. As my reaction was interested and positive, Ralph eventually joined in the conversation, until a classmate interrupted us.



My position as participating observer became more apparent in the following incident of cultural learning and identity negotiation. The pupils drew me into their friendly banter and this time I permitted the attempt with interesting consequence. I initially had not paid close attention to the pupils' banter because my focus was on something else in the room when Katja said something about the difference between boys and girls, rendering girls more mature.

The discussion was friendly banter, Katja said something concerning the difference between boys and girls and she looked to me for support. Showing the girls in a better light. I grinned and gave her the thumbs up Big Bear said: 'Nathalie won't agree with you as she is a mature woman.'

I told Big Bear: 'Well, thank you so much!' and started laughing. Big Bear was seriously embarrassed and the discussion went back and forth till Mr Gee jumped in and told Big Bear that it was all just because he tried to chat me up and so he got himself into trouble.

Big Bear asked: 'Sir why can I not say mature woman, I just wanted to say she is not a little girl (big angry noises from the girl) she is a mature woman?'

Mr Gee explains to him that one can use the word mature in the sense of 'the boys in the class become mature' but one cannot say mature woman that refers only to women over 50 years of age. Big Bear still did not understand what the problem was he thought that calling a woman mature would show her respect. (Fieldnotes, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009)

Here, the participants undertook identity negotiations, which were accompanied by trying to gauge the term maturity. The problems Stephan encountered seemed of cultural nature. For him it is a compliment to characterise a woman as mature or grown up. In British culture this word is only used for women of certain age and understood as an insult any time before this age. Recent research indicates that values of bilinguals change depending on the language the bilinguals use during a value judgment situation (Ogunnaike, Dunham, & Banaji, 2010). In Big Bear's situation he tried to impose the values of his native language upon English terminology and struggled when being told that this was not possible.

During the previous situation the boys and girls argued with the teacher about the meaning of a term and negotiated their gender roles. On that day

Katja also had severe back pain, when Big Bear began the banter about gender roles, he seemed to do this because he wanted to put Katja's mind onto something else. Big Bear and Katja demonstrated signs of a strong relationship, they occasionally were holding hands in class, thus, my conclusion about the intended distraction. This would be a similar form of peer support as the one described above between Kathryn and Marco, where a classmate would seek to establish distraction from an obvious problem. Further research might reveal, if these strategies are specific for the learning environment of the EAL Unit. I have found no similar instances in the other classrooms.

Occasionally the teacher drew me into the ongoing situation. In the following, the teacher's identity was questioned by the pupils, nothing he did stopped the pupils from laughing. Subsequently he referred to me to deter the pupils from scrutinizing his position.

Red Flash: 'Do you think it's alright to have a person in class who is always talking? ... Shut up I am asking the quiet people', when Lorna starts saying something loud or was it Ladies Man?

'It's really annoying (LilMo) ... class discussion ... the Duncan effect ...' Red Flash starts telling a kindergarten story, everyone is laughing about the word [kindergarten]. Red Flash gets confused and asks me, if I know the word because the children seem not able to stop having a laugh at the word.

Red Flash: 'It is a German word so you have a problem with German? Take care or Nathalie is gonna bust you and beat you up.'

He tells about his kindergarten time when he does his work but gets it done and then starts distracting other children ... the Duncan effect ... (Fieldnotes, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

Red Flash's use of words would occasionally initiate discussion in the classroom. For instance, when he pronounced kindergarten it sounded funny to the pupils. I could not judge his pronunciation, as it sounded just right for me. Red Flash became defensive and stated if the pupils do not know the word they should stop teasing him because it is a German word otherwise I would get angry with them. From the pupils' reaction this discussion was still amiable, but I had the feeling Red Flash's defensiveness was more serious than he let the pupils feel. I understand the pupils' reaction towards

Red Flash's atypical pronunciation or use of American English terms as part of their identity negotiation within classroom. Most of the class would bond against Red Flash's usage of English. The pupils agree on the right way to use words reinforcing their British or Scottish identities, and so sometimes excluding Red Flash from this discourse. This exclusion alienated the teacher in such a way that he drew me into the discussion to reinforce his identity.

'The Duncan effect' (See above, p.259) can be interpreted as stigmatizing one of the class's children but it also, under consideration of the way it was talked about and the way backchannel support was given, as part of negotiating the class-identity. All the children were aware of Duncan, and some said that they find his behaviour annoying, yet when Duncan was in the classroom, the children interacted with him and seemed to generally like him. The classes if not accepting but providing space for Duncan to behave the way he does, without getting seriously angry with him, could indicate their understanding of his situation and his need for an outlet. I make this assumption based on other pupils who talking to me disclosed their awareness of the family situation of their classmates.

Red Flash blurted out 'shut up' in this situation, in different circumstances I would have understood this way of talking to the children as negative. However, similar to the banter Red Flash took up with LilMo, he seemed to use informal language and occasionally bickering with the pupils as a form of picking up their language and way of communicating. That this was perceived positively by the pupils showed in the group discussions or conversations, where they named Red Flash as one of their favourite teacher's who was able to laugh about himself.

### *'Yeah this is text book-xenophobia'—Issues of Discrimination*

Incidents of overt discrimination did occur during my fieldwork, as well as covert incidences, or perceived discrimination. Some staff members seemed not to be keen on refugee children. Once, during break time I had a cup of tea in the English teacher base. One of the older teachers was utterly upset that a child from school and his refugee family were moving into her neighbourhood. She was upset about it and kept complaining and wondering how a refugee family could afford this (Fieldnotes, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

If, at any point, I had wondered about Mr Gee's insistence on the significance of class disparities, this teacher's outburst was a strong indicator. The teacher's behaviour seemed merely discrimination against refugee families, her statements stressing the unsophisticatedness of this family and how they were to afford her neighbourhood, had me wonder how much the class difference was more significant to her. This demonstrated also that the reasons for discrimination are not easily detectable and sometimes a mixture of race, ethnicity, religion, class, and gender without preferences to one of the differentiating factors.

I told the teachers that I found it striking how monolingual children appeared strongly protective of their identities and how their hostility against the school laid within the protection of these identities. At times the Scottish dialect seemed the only stable factor these children possessed. This understanding derived from the selective and excluding use of the dialect. It reminded me strongly of mechanisms explored within the frame of integrated threat theory (see *Issues of Discrimination*, p.43). The teachers supported this interpretation. Red Flash related it to xenophobia as fear of disparity and otherness (Rydgren, 2003).

Red Flash: 'Yeah this is text book xenophobia is not about racism or nationalism whatever xenophobia is a fear of what is outside of your knowledge ... our children they are afraid of what is unknown quantity

to them and what is unknown to them is almost everything and we [the teachers and school] are part of this ...'

Mr Gee: ... 'Another aspect is that for years and years that the relationship between the providers and the community has not worked we have very poor parental turn out there is no community involvement in the school and if there is no community involvement the school is dead the community is dead.' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

The teachers implied that, in reference to integrated threat theory, the school is an out-group for the pupils. This would also make sense when looking into the issues of disempowerment the pupils felt and their mistrust and refusal to co-operate with teachers and the institution unless in issues that are reaching out into their 'real lives'.

Mr Gee: 'I've hear senior managers in this school saying 'I don't care what you do out there in here you do that'. There is no way you get any learning growth or any growth with the community if you come away with this perception that's for the institutionalised exclusion' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

My observations found reflection in Mr Gee's statement. He named this 'institutionalised exclusion'. Although it is a form of structural discrimination (*Issues of Discrimination*), there were instances of overt and even violent discrimination in the school I will discuss in following.

When I came into the EAL Unit on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2008, I found a stranger sitting there. It would transpire that this was Norman's and Eloise's father. Mrs Ferry told me the following story. The story had started last Thursday or Friday when Norman had a row with a boy who had tried to take away his mobile phone. In this Norman had pushed the boy away. Yesterday when he was in school the cousin (a girl) of the other boy called her 'pals' when she found out that Norman was on his own. They showed up with 15 people and started to beat up Norman and his two little sisters when they left school. The police got involved and the father was very shocked and angry. Mr Gee would affirm that this indeed was based on racism, not like in another case a year ago when the press played it up as racist incident. I believed Mr Gee's account because throughout the fieldwork he always tried to approach issues objectively and understand reasons. (Fieldnotes, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008)

This incident was not without consequence. The following week I was in the EAL Unit during final period when Eloise and Norman had left the school about half an hour earlier at 3 p.m. This was to avoid meeting the crowd of children and triggering another fight or bullying (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). When I returned to the field in autumn Martha said Eloise and her family had moved to England due the incident. Martha said that Eloise was really happy because they have a large house now with four bedrooms. However, they are still in the application process and did not yet have leave to remain (Fieldnotes, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008). This incident had long-term consequences for everyone involved—the refugees moved away—the bullies had to face police investigation, and school exclusion. I think these consequences only appeared because of the obvious violence. Ms Ferry explained how she was very upset and had lost her confidence as a teacher in the school because of an incident of discrimination by a pupil. This incident however, was not followed up on.

Mrs Ferry works as support teacher in the maths class, my other mainstream class. When she was there some time before Easter break one of the girls in the class Lorna did call her: *cheeky Paki*. This comment was triggered when Mrs Ferry tried to call the class to order, after the teacher had left to talk to one of the children who got sent out of the room. Mrs Ferry said at the beginning she was so shocked she thought she had misunderstood the girl. Then she went and talked to the girl in the meantime the teacher came back into the classroom asking what was going on and Mrs Ferry told her (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

The girl started to make a show; she had her head on her arms and was crying. Mrs Ferry asked her why she was crying if she was ashamed or sorry but the girl would not talk. Bottom line of all was that the class teacher did not believe Mrs Ferry that the girl had insulted her. Mrs Ferry went for help to the headteacher, who said she would take care of it. Yet Mrs Ferry had heard nothing back so she recently went to the headteacher again and asked her what came out of it. As she was not confident anymore to go into this particular class, since the class teacher had undermined her position.

Additionally the girl kept on harassing Mrs Ferry every time she met her in the corridors the girl made faces at Mrs Ferry and started laughing. The headteacher said that they had talked to the girl, and the girl did deny everything but she had been put into a counselling session (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

Mrs Ferry's confidence was affected by the incident; she particularly felt isolated by the headteacher. Mr Gee recommended she should go to the Union, yet Mrs Ferry was reluctant to do so and she sometimes doubted her judgement if the incident actually had happened (Fieldnotes, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008). This incident demonstrates that individual discrimination does not only affect the pupils, also bilingual teachers despite their assumed more powerful role as teacher they are not immune from it. This situation contributes to the finding that teachers, despite some of the pupils' perception, do not hold an unchallenged power position.

Another form of discrimination is favouritism. The pupils had strong feelings towards favouritism, because they felt it infringed support needs in learning. Pupils told me how, in some classes, if the favourite pupils understood the learning content, the rest of the class had to cope without further explanation. Their questions were met with dismissive answers like:

'It's on the board, it's on the board just read it ...'

'When we did not understand first hand from the board why should we ask? But the three best understood so she does not care this is not fair ...'

'When answer a question a least favourite says something the teacher goes: I am not quite sure, if it is the right things, if that boy she really likes says exact the same thing just in different words than it is correct.'

'There is favouritism in some teachers ... '

(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

This issue only came up in the EAL Unit, yet I cannot state this is a form of discrimination against refugee pupils alone, or if it is a common occurrence within the school. Some pupils in the mainstream classes had told me about pupils who were teachers' pets; yet, they made no indication if this affected learning, or support for learning. In the situation the pupils described during the group discussion the failing to catering for the bilingual pupils' needs was perceived as a form of discrimination. It definitely is a form of exclusion. Again the boundaries of what accounts for discrimination and what is mere ignorance of a teacher are unclear.

When I asked during the EAL group discussion, if the pupils would change anything in school, they expressed the wish for teachers to treat them equally and not say things like: 'Oh these asylum-seekers they are always making trouble.' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009). I inquired if the teacher really said this and the class agreed, stating it was not the only discrimination this one teacher regularly exhibited. The pupils were reluctant to tell me about more incidents. Only one pupil provided another example.

'I didn't have my uniform and there were three other people who did not have their uniform but when she saw me, she said: where is your uniform go to Mr Bramble.'

'Mr Bramble [whom the pupils respect and like] said make sure you have it on Monday, she [the class teacher] said this is not good enough for me, oh you think you are better than everyone else ...' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

It is difficult to be categorical about covert discrimination, because there is always a measure of doubt, and one could always excuse it in some way. Red Flash did this during the teacher interview, when he stated that all pupils at some point feel treated unjustly. The overt discrimination and obvious dislike of this one teacher could hardly be understood as mere perception of the pupils. Therefore, when holding the teacher interview I told the teachers about the pupils' perception and asked them if they were aware of such problems. I did not expect a straightforward answer, as direct allegations, could have severe consequences for the involved teacher. I remember that when I asked this question I could literally see the teachers squirm and they exchanged questioning looks with each other. More interestingly, one teacher told me after the interview, without mentioning names or incidents, that I am surely aware that there were colleagues who are racist.

Red Flash: 'Children perceive some teachers displaying some forms of racism but I don't think that there are so many teachers that are racist at school ... but there might be the case that ... you know.'

Mr Gee: 'I think there are teachers in school who are more supportive of particularly groups ... more critical of others ... children perceive this as racism ... there has been a very difficult problem because it divides the school'



Red Flash: 'I would not think there is any staff that would behave overtly in a racist way ... in reality children can perceive things if a child perceives something it has to be addressed ... at any moment the teacher is under stress ... they can be dismissive towards the children ... also we try not to do this, if a child is indigenous they might just see it as referring to class this is because they are the centre of their own world is based on themselves ... there are other members of staff they can address ... .' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

Researcher [when teacher asked if I inquired about cases of discrimination]: 'I did not inquire it came up when I asked what the children would change in school ...'

Red Flash: 'That, that surprises me'

Mr Gee: 'In any investigation it comes down to a different thing all together. Sense of persecution coupled with a feeling of being picked on when in fact the teacher (it could be argued) the teacher wanted the very best for the pupil to it gets dubbed in the wrong way I am not saying there is not a lot in Scottish education of institutional racism. I am also not saying there is no racism amongst teacher because there is a percentage you know how ever ... it had been identified however if that was real racism or a rightly or wrong feeling of persecution'

Red Flash: 'Almost every kid in this school has said in their academic career you are picking on me. I think this is something almost all children experience at some point in reaction to ... again where a teacher has more expectation and of course they push them ... the fact of the matter is there is a different of skin colour but it happens because the children have a feeling of being powerless and we are symbols of authority (if we believe we have any or not).' (Teacher Interview, 19th May 2009)

When talking of discrimination issues, Zula kept insisting that she was not discriminated against; she did not want to share the incident with me. The boys knew the story and while they respected Zula's wishes to not share the story, they insisted it was a clear case of discrimination and the girl only wanted to deny it.

Zula: 'Why do you say it is about me ...'

Big Bear: 'Because you don't want to say she treated you badly and you don't want to say ...'

Zula: 'the senior management went to her and told her and then she did something about it ... but she did nothing to me ... the head teacher was not in this school ... ' (Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

[They keep telling anecdotes how the head teacher treated them ... one thing that concerns me with all the anecdotes is that the head teacher holds up her hand in front of the faces of the pupils and refuses to talk

to them and listen. The gesture seems to disturb the children a lot as they repeatedly mention it.]

‘Oh you taking it as a racist issues it is just because you are being immature’

‘... and then she banged the door in front of my face’

‘... yeah but she said you can come my door is always open’

(Group Discussion EAL Unit, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009)

Zula refused to acknowledge that she had experienced discrimination and kept repeatedly insisting that if the boys would change their behaviour, hold their heads down, and not say anything they will not be bothered too much by the head teacher. Zula suggested avoidance behaviour to prevent discrimination by the head teacher.

The school hosts in its entrance hall a display cabinet with awards for integration. The information I gained about the school was positive, and engaging for pupils’ inclusion. However, the underlying issues emerging during the research, showed a different side.

Pupils and teachers criticised members of staff for discriminatory behaviour. Refugee and monolingual pupils shared these experiences. Pupils and teachers experienced discrimination. Mr Gee’s did not acknowledge his awareness of racist attitudes from colleagues in front of Red Flash. Ms Ferry’s superior mishandled the discrimination issue, placing Ms Ferry into an even more difficult position. The concern of pupils who felt bullied or discriminated against by teachers indicated that the school is far from being inclusive.

Albeit my research focused on only three classrooms, the participants shared their experiences of classrooms throughout the school with me. As I had no first hand experience of such incidents, further inquiry with the inculcated individuals would have been necessary. However, the distress some of the participants experienced impacted on their well-being and feeling of inclusion within the institution. Ms Ferry, or Eloise and her family obtained support within the Unit by members of staff there. These incidents

emphasised the extra-position of the EAL Unit within the school, as a safe space.

## *Summary of Analysis & Discussion*

I set out to explore what *creative learning* strategies refugee children had access to in a secondary school in Glasgow. Part of this focus was exploring the impact these strategies had on scholarly development and inclusion. Aspects of social learning and the impact of relationships on learning processes was part of researching *creative learning* strategies. Therefore I explored the role social capital played in learning situations, aiming to gauge what impact it had on learning support, inclusion and identity negotiations.

The results show that there were strong indicators of the impact of social capital on positive learning experiences. An understanding of the impact of social capital on scholarly success would have needed even longer involvement in field (at least two years) and exploration of performativity. It became clear that peer support, trust, reciprocity and concern were factors that established a positive learning experience.

One of the most significant impact factors to successful learning in my research was peer support. Peers were regularly sought for help with learning tasks and for emotional support. Further, real-life context or relevance of learning content appeared a significant point for a successful learning experience: if relevance was a given ownership, control and innovation could take place. To achieve these factors of *creative learning*, learning spaces had to be created by the teachers and the pupils. Space in its physical and metaphorical property was important for the creation of successful learning situations. The refugee children and their peers had access to *creative learning* in all of the three classroom spaces.

Peer support and relationships were important for the pupils' inclusion. I observed instances where pupils would share cultural knowledge to empower friends. For instance supporting one another with learning vocabulary, sharing strategies for dealing with particular teacher problems,

encouraging and comforting one another while problem solving. These were indicators for good relationships between pupils.

The teachers held a strong power position. Some pupils perceived the teachers' position as omnipotent and disempowering. Where the teachers worked on reducing this power position taking the pupils needs into account learning became successful and space for *creative learning* was provided. Failing to provide relevance of learning content and control of the learning situation by the teachers was often answered with discipline infringements.

The extra position of the EAL Unit enabled teachers to take on complex support roles, cater for the needs of the individual pupils, and actively working on bridging or linking into the wider school context and even other institutions. In this way, the EAL teachers became mediators for inclusion and bridging or linking social capital for the pupils of the EAL Unit. This specialized learner support appeared to be the reasons for strong learner confidence and identities.

The teachers' roles were more comprehensive than initiating learning. The teachers' roles and their own perceptions of it impacted the style of teaching. All these factors combined indicated that, regardless of the curriculum or political guidelines, the interaction in the classroom is each teacher's own interpretation of her or his role.

The importance of 'real-life' context of learning content for the pupils, in other words relevance (Jeffrey & Woods, 2009), and the creation of space for the pupils were crucial teaching practices that enabled *creative learning* processes. Despite the dire picture unearthed by my observations and confirmed by the teachers, not all monolingual children were disempowered. Even if the teachers failed to provide space, the pupils drew on mechanisms to gain control and strove to learn. These mechanisms were selective participation and discipline infringements.

Disempowerment or the feeling of disempowerment reflected in the preceding section, stands in contrast to the positive observations of learning situations. In the Maths class in particular a culture of low achievement was reproduced, emphasising mental poverty of the pupils. The EAL Unit created a niche within school, establishing support, which through comments from the EAL pupils, can be understood as the preparation for inclusion Whitehurst and Howells (2006) talk about. Part of inclusion means the ability to navigate within an institutional structure, and understand an institution's culture, which became clear in the discussion about the headteacher and her role.

The pupils' need for control, ownership and relevance of learning content meant they applied strategies to fulfil this need, even if the teacher did not cater for it. All pupils appreciated interactive learning. All the pupils enjoyed teaching that involved participation and engagement that took into account their experiences. The emphasis pupils placed on peer support during group discussions and fieldwork highlighted the significance of peer support and social aspects of learning. As established earlier on, social learning is *creative learning*. I found that intersubjectivity; trust and reciprocity were paramount in peer support and social learning. This further transpires in personal learning, with seeking support from teachers or peers.

The characteristics I observed for social learning held parallels to social capital, such as trust and reciprocity. In some instances the pupils co-creating meaning and learning in a group, indicated bonding social capital. Social learning as part of *creative learning* seemed to produce social capital, or at least some of its characteristics.

There was a strong distinction between the kinds of learning valued. Pupils in the EAL Unit placed a stronger value on academic learning and communicated the importance of school and education. In contrast the majority of pupils in the English and Maths classes valued job-related learning more. The mainstream pupils saw little point in a majority of taught subjects, while demonstrating a strong appreciation for pre-vocational

training and sports. Mr Gee and Red Flash supported my interpretation of differences in the value assigned to school education.

The missing value may derive from the absence of relevance of learning content, to the pupils. Some findings suggest that these differences might further come from differences in social class between the children. Nasir, Hand and Taylor (2008) argue for the relevance of context particularly in mathematics teaching and learning. They state that the teachers need to consider the cultural context of the pupils, without imposing a certain culture onto a heterogenic classroom. While the participation in the Scottish poem performance during refugee-week, may seem such an imposition, the differences to this extra-curricula activity to school are choice but also control and ownership over the learning process. They also point out the impact social class has on learning, stating further that knowledge is power-related.

The pupils appreciated when the teachers offered mnemonics and supported their learning processes. Allowing the pupils to take ownership and control instead of insisting on particular ways to solve tasks. Teachers, who tried to understand pupil needs, were authentic, and abandoned coercive discipline measures, were the pupils' favourite teachers. This indicated the value pupils gave to the relationship with their teachers, being taken seriously and respected were major points for the pupils.

The Flow, such as in the creative writing exercise (p. 209), (Claxton, 2006) implied a high form of ownership and control over a learning process. From a methodological point of view, it was more difficult to observe than extrinsic forms of *creative learning*. I spent a long time noting down the body language of the pupils who were obviously focused on their writing tasks. The teacher unfortunately lost the pupils' stories, preventing the analysis of the actual intrinsic processes or insight.

The power each teacher held over his or her classroom cannot be matched by the guidelines they must obey. Red Flash opined that it always depends on the children, if they take up his incentives or not. I observed in his classroom,

though, that Red Flash's power position was never questioned. Curriculum and educational legislation had apparently no influence on the tone the participant teachers used, their involvement beyond the classroom, covert discrimination, or ignorance of pupil needs. On the upside, teachers like Mr. Gee and Red Flash, occasionally managed to establish a power-equilibrium in which the children felt content and relaxed. Initially, power seemed to completely rest with the teachers, until I observed pupils using instruments such as poor behaviour or selective participation to undermine the teachers' power position.

Some teachers picked up on this behaviour and adapted their teaching, enticing the pupils to participate through offering more relevance to the learning content, or handing over more control to the pupils. Teachers who tried to force the children into partaking, without offering control or relevance over the learning content only achieved more vehement reactions from pupils. Pupils tried taking control by other means—not doing homework, not working on given tasks, starting loud disruptive behaviour, ignoring the teaching attempts, and secretly listening to music, drawing, reading or chatting with a classmate.

The EAL Unit was a particular space within the school, in which, to some extent, different rules applied to the other participating classrooms. The significant difference was that most of the pupils from the English and Maths classroom harboured strong mistrust towards school. Reynolds (2008) found how overstressing the EAL teachers' role beyond the role of a teacher, such as Mr Gee for instance helping a pupil opening a bank account, or organising lawyers and writing to Members of Parliament to get a pupil released from detention, is damaging for pupils inclusion, because it infringes on the teachers' focus on the pupils. As the numbers of EAL teachers reduced during my research, I observed the increasing signs of stress in Mr Gee. His neglect to work more actively with his pupils during Kibby's detention related to Mr Gee's time constraints.



Due to access restrictions, I only observed some instances of bridging or linking social capital used by Mr Gee. He acted as mediator of social capital for his pupils, as demonstrated with the opening of a bank account and helping pupils to obtain international call cards.

I observed characteristics of social capital such as trust and reciprocity. Insights were gained into the relationships between pupils, during the group discussions and observation. This is where I came across trust and reciprocity as significant factors within social learning situations. Due to access issues with the lunchtime photo club I was unable to explore the relationships between the pupils further.

Culture and identities issues occurred during the research. There were strong indicators for the pupils' identities' impact within learning situations. On several occasions, particularly during the group discussions, cultural background and the impact of peer influence on identity negotiations became obvious. One instance was the discussion about religion in the English class, another was the argument between the boys and girls about the head teacher's behaviour as discrimination versus reaction to the boys' behaviour in the EAL Unit. Another instance was the discussion about the meaning of the term 'mature woman'. However, more subtle forms of identity negotiations and the impact of culture in learning I could observe in all the learning situations.

I was unable to establish the impact of social capital in relation to the above negotiations. While peer support had an impact on understanding—the creation of meaning—the role of social capital was unclear. The indicators reciprocity and trust (Appendix B.2) emerged repeatedly in the data. The complexity of the factors makes it difficult to establish their interrelations. I can substantiate the argument that there was strong bonding social capital between some of the research participants, and Mr Gee and his EAL pupils. Indicators for this were instances of trust and reciprocity and the sincere concern for one another's well being.

The one expectation I had from the literature review was that the refugee children I would observe were a disadvantaged group of children. I realised however, that social class and poverty constituted disadvantages for children within their learning environments that require specialised learner support as well. This became clear when the data analysis showed that the refugee pupils displayed strong cultural and social competences, in for instance finding strategies to overcome problems with teachers. The monolingual peers who seemed to have an ambivalent relationship to school and learning, displayed selective forms of social competences and social capital, during my fieldwork. I take this particular observation up in the following section, discussing the Wall of Inaccessibility, which summarises the different impact factors for positive learning experiences such as social class, migration, language etc.

My data showed how the refugee children have abilities and resources, not only despite, but because of their life experience, which their monolingual peers from socially deprived backgrounds do not possess. The specialised support within the EAL Unit might reason the bias of this interpretation.

## **Integrating Findings into Wider Context**

In this chapter I discuss the two sections, *Wall of Inaccessibility* and *A Pending Generation?* These sections summarise my findings in a conceptualising exercise.

The first of these sections focuses on factors that impacted my research participants. These factors emerged mainly out of the analysis of my data and partially from the conceptual framework I applied throughout this research. The second section focuses on a concept of establishment utilising capital theory that emerged out of my data, I call it for now Pending Generation. Pending Generation emerged out of my PhD project as a first draft concept and necessitates further research. The focus of the Pending Generation lies in agency of migrants and the different legal statuses they can inhabit; and also in varying attitudes towards the new country they settle in to. These attitudes include acceptance of gaining cultural capital in this country.

## *Wall of Inaccessibility*

My research questions focused on learning strategies and social capital as factors impacting inclusion, scholarly development and identity negotiations. The analysis unearthed more factors influencing the situation of the research participants. The teacher interview resulted in my understanding that the monolingual participants in this particular school were disadvantaged and marginalised due to socio-economic factors. A finding that is also reflected in a study carried out at the same time as mine in the research site (Menter et al., April 2010). The refugee children in my three research spaces disadvantaged by migration background and interrupted education could draw an advantage out of their life experiences. They demonstrated peer support coherently within learning situations, and assigned a higher value to school education than their monolingual peers. Yet, all participants seem to understand school as vehicle to cultural capital—to get a good job, to have a good life, to get an education.

The refugee participants knew that they could cross borders—physically as well as metaphorically—in comparison to their monolingual peers. These were strongly dependent on their locality, some not even aware of Glasgow having a river called Clyde or an Underground train. The children attending the EAL Unit created youth clubs in the city centre too, to which they regularly went.

Yet not only the different uses of physical space I observed, but also the usage of learning spaces varied in the three classrooms. The discourse the monolingual children led was strongly characterised by disempowerment. Although the children in the mainstream classrooms would utilize discipline as a control instrument, they understood this as a direct reflection on the teachers' behaviour and subsequently a defence mechanism as opposed to pro-active and purposeful activities.

The pupils in the EAL Unit learned how to negotiate within the school structure; if had they have a problem with one of the teachers they knew

whom to address to complain. Although some pupils were more proactive than others, a strong peer support and teacher support in the EAL Unit, decreased the intensity of these situations. From my observations and the group discussions I concluded that the children in the EAL Unit demonstrated a stronger cultural competence than the children in the mainstream classrooms. Considering the existence of an EAL Unit at the research site I was initially questioning the inclusive character; yet on further consideration this EAL Unit might be exactly in line with Whitehurst's & Howells' (2006) findings—a preparation for inclusion.

Although the picture shows an apparent divide between the refugee and monolingual children, factors such as achievement levels, family situation, and age differences could also impact on this result. Mr Gee stated that children with high achievement levels in school are beyond racial divides (Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009), a statement that seemed supported in the interview with the three girls who were political activists. The complexity of issues of disadvantage and disempowerment led me to develop the Wall of Inaccessibility. This wall demonstrates the inhibitions of the children to access of provisions and opportunities for learning. The Wall of Inaccessibility depicts some factors I could observe as contributing to a disadvantaged position. This exercise in theorising from my data is by no means comprehensive, yet it reflects my research findings, and links them with my conceptual framework, aiming to depict relations of factors that impact on, or constitute obstacles to positive learning experiences.

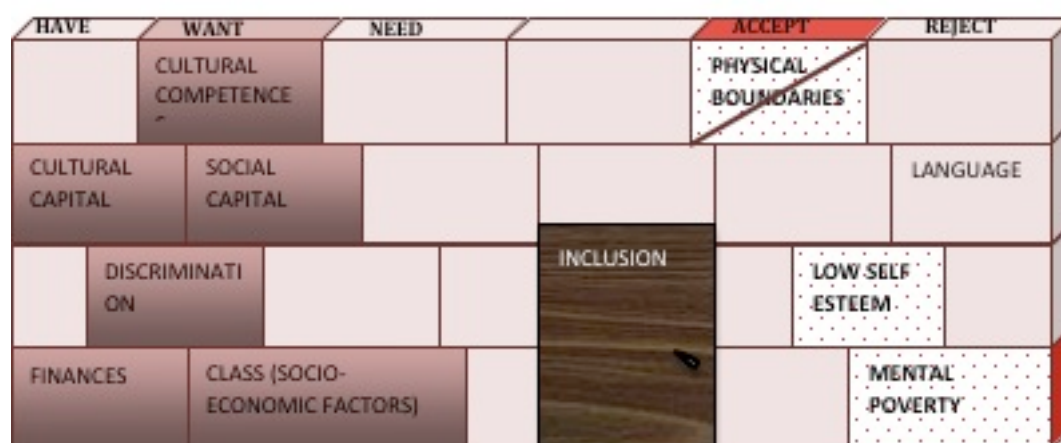


Figure 17. Wall of Inaccessibility

I describe the bricks of the wall as obstacles; at the same time the bricks host the potential for overcoming these obstacles. They might be temporary obstacles or very specific obstacles depending on different life situations. The dark bricks symbolise the shared obstacles of refugee and monolingual children in my research population. The split tile had an affect in both groups, yet one group overcame and the other group has not yet overcome these boundaries. The white tiles with red dots symbolise obstacles specific to monolingual children from deprived areas within the three classrooms. The simple pink tiles stand for obstacles predominantly affecting refugee children. Inclusion, as a doorway in the middle, appears as main tool for overcoming these obstacles, utilizing their potential and passing the Wall of Inaccessibility. The engagement of some teachers demonstrated building cultural competences to access cultural capital and utilize social capital.

HAVE, WANT, NEED, REJECT, and ACCEPT stand for control and ownership within the inclusion process. These factors determine the out-group members' ownership and control with a particular focus on social capital. I found the factors impacting inclusion are complex; each participant has a different willingness to reciprocate. Strong bonding social capital for instance can hinder access to other forms of social capital, because it acts as an exclusive factor (Catts, 2009) or covers all needs of the concerned persons

(Ryan et al., 2008). Hence the WANT, HAVE and NEED bricks on top of the wall. Participants from either group were ACCEPTING or REJECTING efforts for inclusion dependent on a variety of factors such as trust in the mediator (teacher) or school as a middle-class institution. Low self-esteem, or mental poverty (Mr Gee, Teacher Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009) in the sense that the children did demonstrate little understanding of their learner identities or life chances, were predominantly observed within the both of the mainstream classrooms. This concurred with findings of the Schools of Ambition project of the same research site (Menter et al., April 2010).

This research taking place at the same time as mine may have contributed to the access issues I had throughout my project. On the other hand the focus of this project was different from mine and reading the findings contributed to my understanding of the research site, because it added complexity to my restricted view of the school.

The factors on this Wall of Inaccessibility were factors having an impact in my specific research. There are indicators for the significance of these factors in other circumstances. This exercise of conceptualising provides a means for reflection of my research.

## *A Pending Generation?*

I found it rather disturbing that in the literature children of first generation parents, when they arrived with their parents from their country of origin in a new country, were automatically classified as first generation immigrants. This first generation label does not concur with the family history of these children, as they are chronologically the second generation of their family in the new country, and their parents are the first generation. My data suggests that these children experience specific issues in their identity negotiations, from which the necessity arose to assign a different label than that of first generation immigrant to them. For my understanding the term first generation immigrant (independent of refugee or economic immigrant) holds the control and ownership, it implies the intention to leave the country of origin, uproot and begin anew somewhere else. In Figure 18. this, issue is depicted in the box Power of Decision. The parents carry the power to decide; a power, children of first generation immigrants do not have, particularly if they are minors who still depend on their parents (or care takers).<sup>3</sup>

Based on my research project the word 'pending' emerged for a variety of reasons. First some of these children did not yet have leave to remain and were in danger of detainment and deportation, assigning a negative dynamic to their life situations. Second, several of my research participants seemed to struggle with their national and cultural identities, which resulted in either denying having any other than a Scottish identity, or having the opposite: identifying more strongly with the cultural and religious identities of their country of origin.

The process of inclusion is more complex than gaining a stamp in a passport, with Pending Generation I refer to the concepts of fluid identities (Hall et al.,

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<sup>3</sup> I do not discuss unaccompanied minors within this framework, because I had none in my research and their situation has different characteristics.



1993) or patchwork identities (Michel-Peres, 2006). Patchwork identities became most obvious with the group of girls who took part in the EAL group discussion. The girls showed sartorial characteristics of awareness of Scottish pop-culture and fashion. They wore bangles, and the Palestinian scarves that were in fashion, and had popular music on their MP3 players (27th November 2007, Tuesday, Field notes, 29th April 2008, Fieldwork 17th November 2008, Fieldwork, Throne Theatre). On top of their Scottish teenager outfits the Muslim girls wore headscarves. The girls choose to reassure their religious and cultural identities with the obvious wearing of headscarves, yet still kept their Scottish part of identities with other accessories and fashion items. In the graphic (Figure 18. Pending Generation) these Patchwork Identities are depicted in the blue boxes 'Forming Cultural and National Identities', 'Caught between Chairs' but also in 'Obey Decisions' because the decisions of the parents inevitable have an impact on the identity negotiations of their children. The links to the boxes about cultural and social capital are part of the identity negotiation processes.

The opposite of this form of identity negotiation and representation, and a good example for fluid identities were LilMo and Gulliver. LilMo insisted on his Scottish identity as the prevailing identity he inhabited, yet when during the group discussion the difference of religious views became apparent, he switched into his Muslim identity defending it against the ignorance of his classmates. Gulliver who also came from a refugee family, stated that he had no recollection anymore of where they came from and he saw himself as Scottish, speaking with a strong Glaswegian dialect when interacting with his classmates.

Identity negotiations however are not the only characteristics that are strongly related to the Pending Generation. For some children, like Kibby, Norman or Eloise, the insecure status of their family as asylum-seekers impacted on their behaviour and position within the learning environment. Kibby, for instance, was withdrawn in most of the classrooms, some her classmates even thought she had done something wrong and was thus brought into prison. The impact this insecurity about the future of her family

had is a factor that is specific for Pending Generation children of asylum-seeking families.

Pending Generation needs further development and research, particularly with the focus on identity negotiations and special forms of support for these children. The model aims to help exploring issues immigration that can have an impact on the development of children from first generation immigrants.

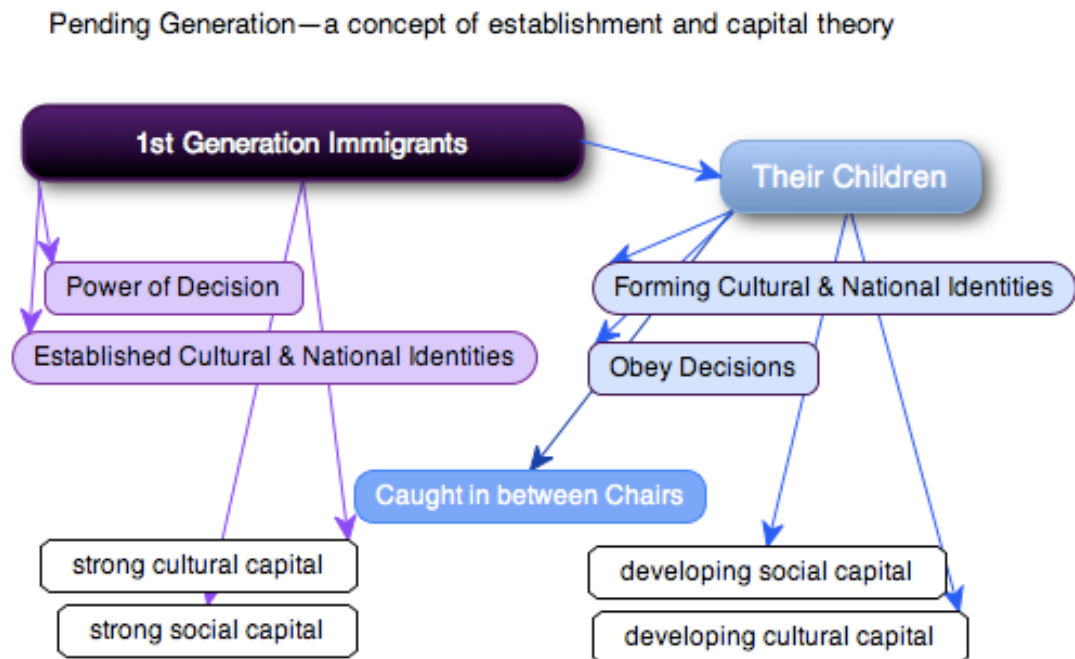


Figure 18. Pending Generation

## Building the Scaffold

As Delamont (2002) advises; an ethnographer should learn, even be passionate about, all types of reading. The drafting of the conceptual framework coincided with reading *Wintersmith* (Pratchett, 2007).

*First Sight and Second Thoughts, that's what a witch had to rely on: the First Sight to check what's really there, and Second Thoughts to watch the First Thoughts to check that they were thinking right. Then there were the Third Thoughts ... they were odd, seemed to think for themselves, and didn't usually turn up very often. (Pratchett, 2007, p. 44)*

Reading about the notion of different thoughts helped me to conceptualise ethnographic research. I understand the *First Sight* as the researcher encountering the field. It stands for collecting data of *reality of everyday life* (Berger & Luckmann, 1991, p. 33) and implies the inevitable impact of the researcher on the field (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Ball, 1990; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, et al.). It is the first impression—raw data, uncorrected field note recordings, inescapably carrying the focus of the researcher, and thus the ideas and concepts s/he brings into the field.

The concepts help to initiate *Second Thoughts*. For me the notion of *Second Thoughts* typifies the interface between theory and practice. The concepts create a scaffold for the research project and offer the means for reflection. *Second Thoughts* are the dialectic between ongoing research and the theoretical framework. They negotiate between the data gathered, fieldwork, research planning, literature and the theoretical framework.

Approaching the research I sought a conceptual framework for scaffolding the epistemological process this research constitutes. Exploring the *creative learning and teaching* strategies refugee children have access to, implies the need for a conceptual framework that helps understanding the creation of meaning, emphasising personal as well as social aspects. Therefore one

dimension of the exploration is the social environment and its possible impact on learning and teaching processes.

This focus derives out of accepting the individual as an entity in its own right within a society, that can determine via intersubjectivity its place and agree or disagree with the discourse of a group (Blumer, 1969), where stories create not only identity and establishing a place in time and society, but also help to make sense of life (Gergen, 1994).

The dialectic between *First Thoughts* and *Second Thoughts* will provide space for reflection and understanding. The interaction between the theoretical and practical dimensions of this research project aims to produce *Third Thoughts*; the insights, new ideas, eureka moments that emerge out of the fieldwork and subsequent contribution to the wider research community.

I found it impossible to use symbolic interactionism and social constructivism without referring the one to the other, mainly because of overlaps in their concepts. The more I was researching the concept of social capital the more its connection with the both previous concepts became apparent. Integrating social capital, symbolic interactionism and social constructivism to finalise the scaffold that support the process of my PhD project (Figure 21, p.293).

Hammersley and Atkinson (2009) point out the mistake of using no more than one concept to relate to ethnographic work. The authors state that this hinders the interactive process between data and ideas. My use of the three concepts symbolic interactionism, social constructivism and social capital emerged naturally during the initial stages of the project. I had previously used symbolic interactionism and social constructivism together (Tasler, 2005). After an initial focus on social capital in my research, I realized that rather using it as an entity on its own, it should become part of the scaffold together with the other concepts. I avoided using one theory as a foundation to fit my research in a predetermined concept, not leaving enough room for development. The concepts are used as a referential frame; I combine them to

gain a better understanding of the fieldwork and have a framework for developing my ideas.

Most challenging I found was understanding the place culture has in my research. Where exactly would I be able to see its impact on learning and on relationships?

As stated earlier, culture is the reference frame or umbrella for all discussion in this project. It is also the lens through which we see the world. However, when I tried to formulate this with a model it became clear that I needed to provide different lenses for the participants with migration background and without migration background, as well as for the researcher. Therefore, my model would need to provide applicability for all these perspectives.

The graphic develops in four further steps Figure 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, From Culture to Cultural Capital; Figure 19. 3<sup>rd</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, The Role of Social Capital; Figure 20. 4<sup>th</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, Looking through the Lens; Figure 21. From I over the next pages gaining complexity. The final graphic will combine all four steps into a comprehensive framework.

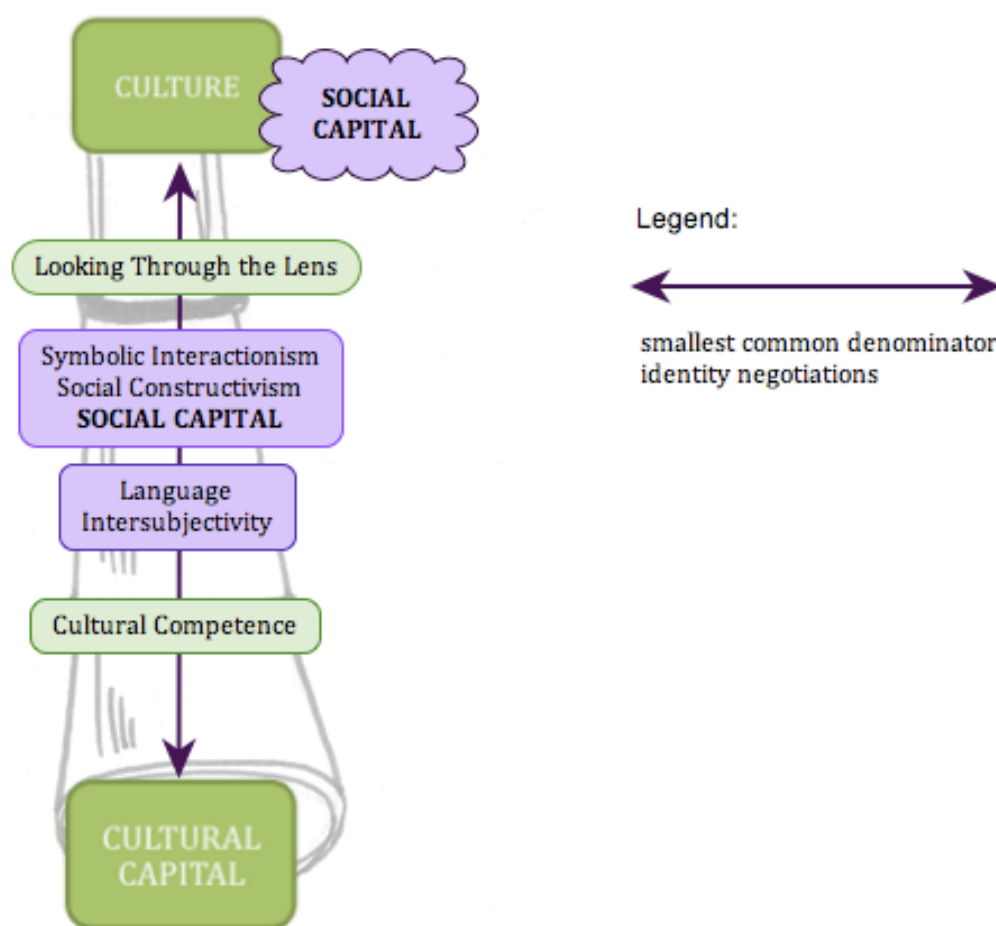


Figure 19. 3<sup>rd</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, The Role of Social Capital in gaining Cultural Capital

Before finalising the model, I realised an in between step of simplification is necessary to clarify impact factors on refugee, bilingual and monolingual children. Based on the in-groups and out-groups of Integrated Threat Theory (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006; Rohmann, Florack, & Pionkowski, 2006; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000), I established the two lenses in-culture and out-culture, realising that a telescope (Figure 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, From Culture to Cultural Capital) would not suffice as model. Bringing possible in-groups and out-groups onto a cultural level has the heuristic purpose of exploring a variety of factors impacting these groups. It further permits me as researcher to keep an open mind, instead of labelling groups from the outset of the fieldwork.

Each cultural lens is assigned a set of factors that I expect, concluding from the review of literature, to be pre-eminent during fieldwork. Some of the factors provide a common ground between participants with and without migration background, such as the shared school environment and possibly similar peer groups. Other factors are factors of difference such as nationality or language. The model below (Figure 20. 4<sup>th</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, Looking through the Lens) is not comprehensive; the purpose is to demonstrate factors implicit in the subsequent step of the model under aspects of culture. Figure 4 aims to clarify the process of creating the final model (Figure 5).

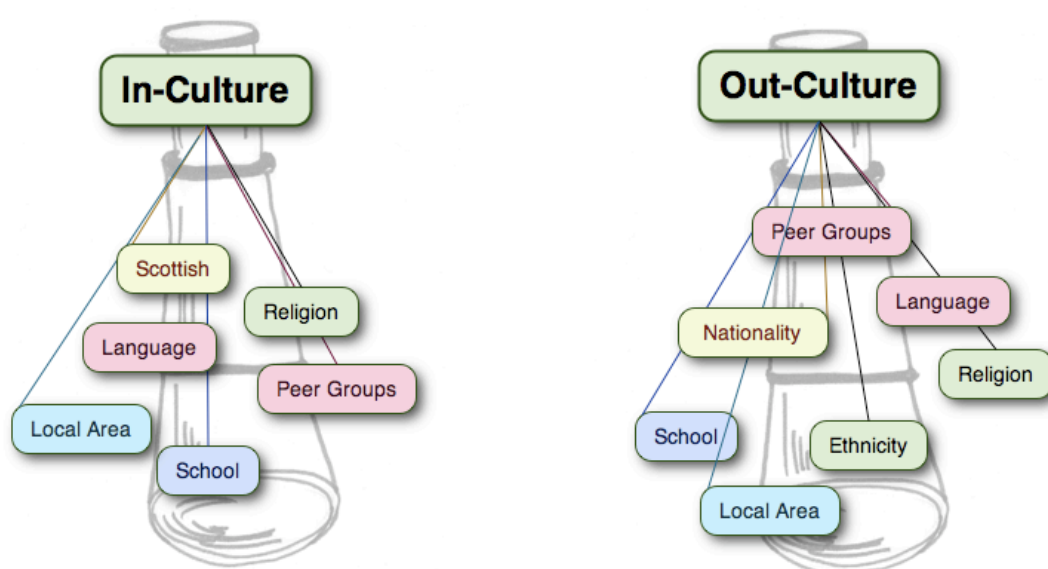


Figure 20. 4<sup>th</sup> Step of Conceptual Framework, Looking through the Lens

The both lenses of in- and out-culture do not remain disjointed. As research about identities suggests, individuals strive to join the different cultural perspectives for gaining life coherence and significance (Michel-Peres, 2006). This is similar to binoculars, where only the pictures from the left and right eye combine into a holistic image. In my study, culture is not only an overarching concept but also understood as situated on a meta-level, as the participants themselves bridge wider cultural contexts, such as nationalities, with micro level contexts, such as families or local environments. The micro-level focus of my study explores cultures that are emerging within the school

context. As Fraser (1990) points' out such cultural-specific lenses make up a public sphere and are able to host certain language modules—a point Keupp et al. (2006) made with their description of modules of communication. The researchers found communication modules to be specific to different youth groups and not transferable between these groups. This is an important aspect for research with bilingual pupils, as they will have to learn the modules of communication of their local peer groups and possibly developing their own modules.



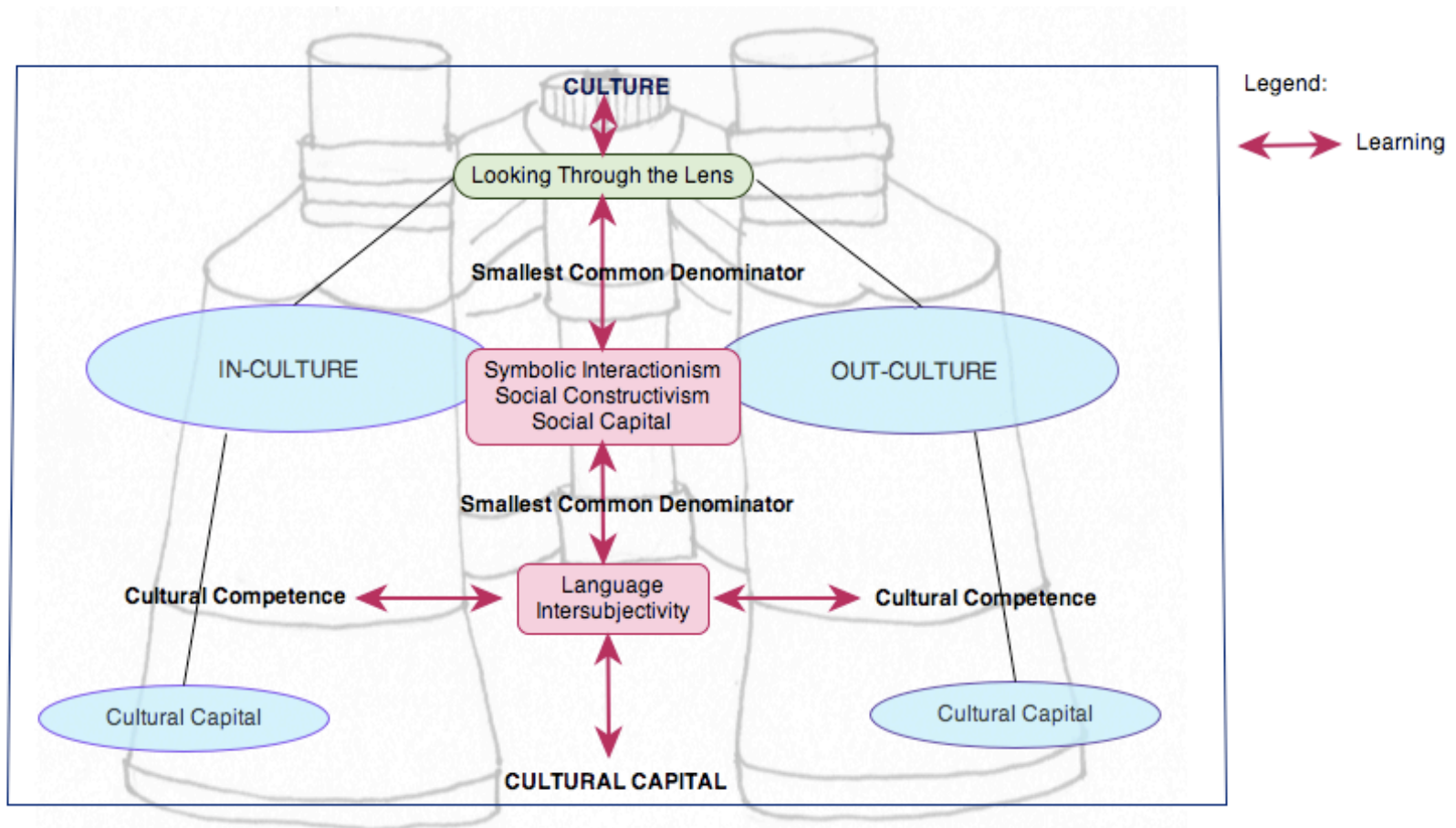


Figure 21. From In-culture to Out-culture—developing cultural competences and gaining cultural capital

The final graphic of this model sets learning in the middle axis (pink arrows and boxes), learning takes place at the interfaces between the middle axis and the adjoining lenses. This understanding comes from seeing learning as a social and personal process that takes place in the interaction of learners and their environment (Loi & Dillon, 2006; Nasir et al., 2008). The smallest common denominator determines how intersubjectivity reproduces culture, how knowledge is created within a social environment. These negotiations inter-relate the home-culture and school-culture with each other. This is not only part of the identity discourse of the children but they also act as mediators between Scottish culture and home (Avan & Bakshi, 2004).

This understanding means that *creative learning* could substitute learning in this model, for *creative learning* strategies such as collaborative participations, playing with identities, engaging interest and personal development are strategies that correspond with the identity negotiations and negotiations of meaning within learning situations. Control and Ownership as characteristics of *creative learning* for instance contain learning strategies that permit the learners to develop cultural competences and gain cultural capital.

Combining the three concepts of symbolic interactionism, social constructivism (Pollard, 1990) and social capital helps not only in exploring and making sense out of learning processes, but also looking at social capital more critically. While I made a strong point for the significance of symbolic interactionism and social constructivism for exploring learning processes, it is necessary to explain the complex position of social capital in the model. Social capital is a factor impacting the reproduction of culture and is thus the space in which on one side social environments are created and negotiated. On the other side however, social capital (or aspects of it) is created within such social environments.

The ambiguity of the concept can hinder its heuristic use. However, it can also permit the researcher to accept ambiguity as a natural state of human

relationships, offering scope to examine the complexities of relationships without predetermining what they cannot be.

While the philosophical aspects of this might seem appealing, the practicalities for conducting research require some structure and labelling. Cultural reproduction, the negotiation of meanings of values and norms within social networks, and the quality of relationships in which intersubjectivity is understood as social network maintenance (James McGonigal et al., 2007), lead inevitably to a focus on symbolic interactionism and social constructivism, this is why all three concepts share the same box in the model above (Figure 21. From I). Symbolic interactionism and social constructivism focus on exploring how intersubjectivity takes place, how values and norms are negotiated and thus culture reproduced; therefore I placed them at the interface of in-culture and out-culture in the model. Both these concepts explore how intersubjectivity is determined and directed by cultural components of one social environment or the combination of different environments (groups, societies).

Social capital, symbolic interactionism and social constructivism are related to each other through culture but also through intersubjectivity or social interaction, the model depicts this relationship with the vertical axis. Within this relation culture is created and/or reproduced through social networks. However, both intersubjectivity as well as culture (in the sense of values, opportunities for instance) is part of network maintenance.

I insert Bruner's (2003) emphasis of the significance of intersubjectivity at this point because language as means of communication may be restricted in research with bilingual participants. Therefore, the research may have to focus on other means of intersubjectivity used creatively within the learning processes during fieldwork. This is why intersubjectivity and language share the same box in the model above, both are significant for the research and exploring the usage of language and intersubjectivity are expected parts of the fieldwork.

*It is not just words that make this [intersubjectivity] possible, but our capacity to grasp the role of the setting in which words, acts, and gestures occur. (Bruner, 2003, p. 20)*

## Conclusion

My research aimed to explore if refugee children had access to *creative learning* processes in a secondary school in Glasgow. Further, I wanted to understand if and how the children utilized social capital during their learning experiences. Another research aim was to understand how learning experiences influence identity negotiations of the refugee learners. This chapter summarizes my research project, highlighting the key points of each chapter and elucidating the limitations and contributions of my research.

### *Summary of the Thesis*

My research project's primary aim was to explore which *creative learning* and teaching strategies refugee children had access to and how these strategies helped their scholarly progress and inclusion.

The Literature Review set the context for the research, exploring ongoing concerns of asylum-seekers and refugees, drawing a picture of the asylum-seeker and refugee experience in Scotland. From the Literature Review a picture of refugee families and their children emerged that highlights issues of destitution, inadequate housing, and poor mental-health. Experiences of refugee children prior to arrival in the UK can negatively impact their learning, triggering issues such as lack of concentration or anxiety. The analysis of the literature proved there is research regarding provision for refugees and well-being of refugee children, but there is a lack of research regarding learning of refugee children.

In the Literature Review I developed a conceptual framework, to scaffold the research process. The framework combines symbolic interactionism, social constructivism and social capital into an applied model I used during my

research (Figure 21. From I). The model provides a heuristic tool that scaffolded my research, providing a means for reflection and analysis.

I applied an explorative research approach given the relative absence of research in the field of refugee children's learning. The explorative approach enabled me to gain in depth insight into the day-to-day school experience of the research participants. I conducted ethnographic fieldwork, utilising the research tools observation, field notes, participant photography and group discussions. Participant photography, participant observation and field notes were research methods planned before entering the field. My research participants were four teachers, one English one Maths and two English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers. 22 refugee children and 27 monolingual children consented to take part in my research project. The children were between 12 and 16 years old.

The pilot study found children had little ownership or control over their learner identities and learning experiences. This finding had an impact on my planned research methods and I decided to add questionnaires and group discussions aiming to gauge the participants' voices in more detail. What further emerged as an issue in my research was access to participants and learning-spaces. Here the role the primary gatekeeper took on as a negotiator to access within the research site became crucial. Despite his efforts I only managed to gain access to two gatekeepers of mainstream classrooms.

My methodology chapter discusses in greater detail Research Ethics and Validity, Reliability, and Verification. Gaining consent from my research participants was an ongoing process, with some participants only consenting after I was in the field for a prolonged time. A key point emerging from the discussion of research ethics and verification is transparency of the research process. Ethical and verified research requires discussing issues encountered throughout the process and justification of my dealing with these issues.

In the coding and categorizing section of the Presentation and Analysis of Evidence—Analysis and Discussion I explained how the different categories and their codes developed during the analysis process. The Analysis of Findings discusses Spaces in School and the School as Space. My research took place in a newly built secondary school in Glasgow, situated in a socially deprived area. The school has an English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit. I explore the teachers and children's opinions about Isengard, and Isengard High School. The teachers' opinion about Isengard, and Isengard High School was more negative than that of the children. The children had clear preferences of spaces in school, such as rooms of their favourite subjects and the EAL Unit.

The rest of the Analysis and Discussion chapter is divided into three sections each discussing findings that answer one of the three research questions.

Which *creative learning* strategies, can refugee children access, and how are these strategies helping to support their scholarly development and inclusion?

What role is social capital playing in school context, particularly with the emphasis on support and inclusion?

In context of learning and teaching does social capital influence identity constructions and understanding of the refugee learners?

In the chapter Integrating Findings into Wider Context, I explain two models developed from my data. The first model I call Wall of Inaccessibility, it shows the obstacles my research participants had to overcome during the inclusion process, some of these obstacles are language, cultural competences and social capital. The second model, Pending Generation, summarizes specific issues of children from first generation refugees.

### *Limitations of the study*

While conducting my research a number of limitations arose, which related to the explorative nature of my study. I had expected some issues concerning access to learning spaces and participants, but not to the extent encountered.

Access restrictions to learning spaces, and participants, was the most significant limitation of my study. Due to access restrictions I was constrained from following up on the transferability of the indicators for social capital into other mainstream classrooms and beyond school. I was unable to gather a comprehensive school picture, or accompany most of the children from the EAL Unit to other mainstream classrooms.

Further exploration of social capital was not possible within the framework of my research, because I could only follow a couple of refugee children from the EAL Unit to two mainstream classrooms. Therefore I could not follow up on the indicators for their relationships within the school. This wider access would however have contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the utilization of social capital. I found strong indicators for the utilization of social capital including trust, reciprocity, concern and humour to indicate bonding social capital. One of the EAL teachers also initiated access to bridging and linking social capital to the children.

The Scottish accent impeded on full transcription of data in the Math's group discussion. As discussed in Methodology the native speaking transcriber was unable to transcribe the Maths class group discussion fully. I anticipated transcription complications, though not of such impact. I managed to recreate most of the group discussion with the notes I had taken during the session.

Another aspect of limitations was how refugee participants may not have shared everything they wanted to with me, due to language barriers. The use of drawings, mime and other non-verbal communication measures were used to overcome such obstacles.

The case study of three secondary school classroom spaces is too limiting to draw generalisations for all Scottish secondary schools. Considering not all secondary schools have an EAL Unit or refugee children caution must be exerted in making generalisations. The research nevertheless gives valuable



insights into specific learning arrangements and reveals patterns that can be useful to researchers and practitioners alike.

The main limitations of my study are access, language barriers and generalisation of the research findings.

### ***Summary of Major Findings***

The most significant findings for my research were: that space in its physical and metaphorical sense was crucial in all the classrooms to provide *creative learning* opportunities; and peer support was crucial for positive learning experiences. The other key findings were: refugee children demonstrated high forms of cultural competencies; *creative learning* strategies were available to all children and particularly the refugee children in the English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit; there were strong indicators for the utilization of social capital improving learning experiences; relevance and real-life context of learning content was significant for the learners.

The creation of space was one of the most significant factors in all three classrooms. Teachers used their pedagogy to create learning spaces for the pupils, in offering space to collaborate, work independently, support each other or encourage using different learning tools. The pupils created learning spaces for themselves, sometimes by infringing on discipline to create relevance but also in engaging intersubjectively in problem solving.

The English as Additional Language (EAL) Unit provided comprehensive access to *creative learning* strategies for the refugee pupils. The extra position the Unit held within the school was emphasised by the teachers having more freedom from the curriculum framework than the mainstream class teachers. The teachers were subsequently able to provide more space for *creative learning* and demonstrated a strong ownership of their pedagogy, creating relevant learning experiences for the pupils.

Relevance, ownership and control were the main factors of *creative learning* I observed regularly in all classroom spaces. Relevance and real-life context seemed to play a significant role for assigning value to a learning situation. The omission to provide relevance by a teacher was met with discipline infringements and behaviour that aimed to seize control of the learning situation by the pupils. Innovation, the fourth criterion of *creative learning* I observed, in specific situations. However, I observed innovation less frequently than the other three criterion of *creative learning*.

*Creative learning* strategies were available and important for the research participants. The exceptional support children experienced in the EAL Unit was crucial for the development of positive learner identities. This support was characterised by offering space for *creative learning*, one-to-one support, and offering advice and help beyond the remit of school education. The mixture of age groups within the EAL Unit further provided opportunities for peer support and learning, not found to such extent in the mainstream classrooms.

I found strong indicators such as trust, reciprocity, concern and humour for bonding social capital. These indicators were utilised by children and teachers alike. Teachers can be mediators for bridging and linking social capital of the refugee children, as demonstrated by Mr Gee. There were strong indicators for the utilization of social capital to support scholarly development but also to enhance well-being of the refugee pupils in the EAL Unit. Peer-support was characterised by reciprocity, trust and concern for each other and was a significant feature in *creative learning* situations. Peer-support was a major influence on positive learning experiences throughout my fieldwork. The support from classmates and friends did not only further the co-creation of meaning and support learning, but it also showed impact on well-being of the children.

The refugee pupils appeared to have strong cultural competences and a distinct control and focus on success in school for their life planning. In this aspect they differed from the monolingual pupils I had access to in both

mainstream classrooms. Here the social class of the monolingual pupils seemed the key factor for displaying behaviour patterns of disempowerment within and a rejection of the school as learning space. Despite my interpretation of disempowerment the pupils, when asked directly, demonstrated some awareness of the school as means to access cultural capital. They, however, did not make the link between this awareness and their behaviour in school.

My research shows that refugee children have access to *creative learning* strategies. There were also strong indicators for the utilization of social capital and the negotiation of identities within learning situations; this results in strong cultural competences of the refugee children.

### ***Contributions***

My conceptual framework, integrates concepts that were previously investigated separately but never in one framework. The conceptual framework is a useful heuristic device for research, but also demonstrates crucial interfaces within culturally diverse education environments. The framework aims to enable practitioners and researchers alike to explore factors permitting reciprocity and dialogue between different cultures.

I outlined two concepts deriving from my data: the Wall of Inaccessibility and Pending Generation (Integrating Findings into Wider Context). These initial concepts have the potential to contribute to further research and discourse in the field.

### ***Implications for Theory and Practice***

There are several implications from my research findings for theory and practice. These implications are: creating a more inclusive school space; considering real-life experiences of the children; the Wall of Inaccessibility as

a potential means for reflective practice for teachers and voluntary sector. I further created a conceptual framework as a heuristic tool that I used throughout the research process. There is potential for my research to impact on the theoretical landscape in researching education. In the following I will explain these implications in more detail.

### *Implications for Practice*

The premises for support and academic progress seem clearly communicated within the EAL Unit. A more inclusive school space may provide a more democratic than archaic school structure. Instead of creating niches such as the low achievement classes or the EAL Unit, the school could offer open spaces for interaction and collaboration to enhance *creative learning* experiences.

The recognition of children's real-life experiences in classroom discourses should become part of an inclusive school space. Real-life context provides relevant learning incentives, and also creates space for *creative learning* and opens the dialogue between teacher and children. Importantly the research demonstrates that there is scope for the creation of such successful learning spaces even within restricted mainstream classrooms. All of the participating teachers manage to do so, with different frequencies, engaging their pupils and providing learning spaces.

Considering the significance of trust and concern between children and teacher, raises awareness of the impact an individual teacher and his or her attitude has on a daily basis on the children.

Teachers can create a Wall of Inaccessibility as well as opening the door in it. The Wall of Inaccessibility as an accumulation of factors that can hinder or support inclusion might help practitioners as means for reflection and further expansion according to their own experiences.

### *Implications for Theory*

My conceptual framework offers new perspectives analysing learning under consideration of diverse cultural backgrounds. It offers further perspectives for theorizing about the relationships between culture and learning. The new perspectives derive from an holistic approach successfully integrating several concepts (symbolic interactionism, social constructivism, and social capital) within one framework.

My data analysis resulted in drafting Pending Generation and Wall of Inaccessibility. Both theorizing exercises relate issues of migration and learning. Pending Generation accumulates aspects that contribute to the exploration and understanding of complex issues of migration and establishment within a society. The Wall of Inaccessibility accumulates issues specific to my research that were hindering or supporting inclusion of research participants.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

My research results in a number of issues that have the potential to be taken up as further research. Identity negotiations for instance would benefit from discourse or conversation analysis—taking into account the different aspects of identities and analysing how these influence learning processes and the relationships between the learners.

The research revealed that there were issues of discrimination against refugee and monolingual children in the school. The covert, and complex character of these issues, require further exploration. Understanding causes of the different forms of discrimination might help to prevent such incidents.

Due to the explorative nature of my research I had not anticipated finding a difference in learning attitudes between the monolingual and refugee participants. During the analysis I realised that the factors impacting these differences were so complex that further research is required to establish if such differences occur in other schools as well. While there is a strong indication that the difference in my study derived from socio-economic differences, diverse support structures within the school, and the life experiences of the participants, I cannot exclude that other factors, such as gender, age, or abilities also had an impact. Further research could explore issues of disadvantage by social class versus disadvantages through displacement and how schools could prevent compartmentalising their pupils.

The study demonstrates a first scope of availability of *creative learning* processes to refugee children in a Scottish secondary school. It remains to be explored how far children take the strategies they learned in primary school into secondary school.

The teacher impact onto the learning processes seems paramount to success or failure of the pupils. Further exploration in teacher agency and power relations between teachers and pupils may clarify these mechanisms.

The EAL Unit created a niche within the research site, further research could focus if learning processes change, once refugee children are in schools without an EAL Unit.

### *Reflective Commentary*

As a novice ethnographer, undertaking an ethnographic research project was challenging, exciting and constantly forced me to question my research and myself. I had expected to explore the research site and interact with the participants. I had not expected that the research process would have an impact on my life and that the participants would raise questions that went far beyond the remit of the research. My reason for adding the vulnerability of mental health and well-being to Gabriel's (2000) suggested list, was how surprising the impact of ethnographic research can be to the researcher—in my case on my world view and ideas, challenging the researcher's identity and making experiences that are outside the life-realities of the researcher.

Conducting a research project over an extended time period, while already beginning the analysis, created a dynamic between the data gathering and interpretation that enabled me to adapt my focus in the field and ask questions derived from initial analysis. When I began write up, more questions arose and I sometimes wished for the ability to return to the field and ask new questions. However, a cut-off point was required from the field and as a novice ethnographer I struggled to determine exactly when to stop.

Coding and categorizing of the data was a further struggle. What felt a straightforward process in the literature, felt in practice a wrestling match. The amount and different sources of data appeared an insurmountable accumulation of information. Utilizing data analysis software helped me

understand my data and develop an overview of the information. The disadvantage of the software was how different features NVivo™ offered enticed me to deconstruct the data too much-leaving me to use highlighters and scissors to get my 'hands on' the actual information.

The focal points my conceptual framework and *creative learning* offered in this first time ethnographic experience enabled me to 'find my way' in the fieldwork. The learning process of what to make visual (Wagner, 2006) benefited from the heuristic framework I had developed. From my experience a novice ethnographer is endangered to become the proverbial 'blind chicken' and succumb to the temptation of gathering too much information, subsequently failing to make the visible visual (Wagner, 2006).

Throughout the research process I used different forms of reflection to make sense of the data and of the research process as a whole. A variety of texts, poems, mind-maps, drawings emerged, and communications took place, which reflect on and depict the research process and PhD experience. The most rewarding conversations took place with practitioners, such as teachers, who would share their experiences with me. Therefore, I will end my thesis with a reference from my proofreader.

*This is fascinating. The refugee children see school as a place where they come to learn; the monolingual pupils see school as a place where they come to be taught. So it is not all the teachers' fault—the cultural attitude to school is a major factor. (Personal Conversation, Edmund Holt, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011)*



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## Appendices

## *Appendix A.1*

| <b>Characteristics</b> | <b>Strategy</b>                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Relevance</b>       | Engaging Interest                                                                                                                                               |
|                        | Establishing positive social relationships                                                                                                                      |
|                        | Valuing contributions                                                                                                                                           |
|                        | Learning connoisseurs                                                                                                                                           |
|                        | Active contributors                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Ownership</b>       | Social Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Co-participation</li> <li>- Collaborative Participation</li> <li>- Collective Participation</li> </ul> |
|                        | Developing Ownership and Identity                                                                                                                               |
|                        | Playing with Identities                                                                                                                                         |
|                        | Achievement                                                                                                                                                     |
|                        | A sense of place                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Control</b>         | Familiarisation—scaffolded engagement                                                                                                                           |
|                        | Mediating – taking off and taking over                                                                                                                          |
|                        | Moulding and Crafting—the developmental phase                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Innovation</b>      | Acquisition of new knowledge                                                                                                                                    |
|                        | Acquisition of new skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cognitive skills</li> <li>- Technical skills</li> <li>- Social skills</li> </ul>             |
|                        | Personal development                                                                                                                                            |

## *Appendix A.2*

| Method                             | Data Gathered                                      | Rational for Method                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fieldnotes                         |                                                    | Data Gathering<br>Reflection                                                                                                                                                   |
| Research Diaries                   |                                                    | Reflection<br>Analysis<br>Research Planning                                                                                                                                    |
| Participant Observation            | 24 Field Visits                                    | Data Gathering<br>Observing in context of the actual situation                                                                                                                 |
| Participant Photography            | 189 (?) Pictures                                   | Gathering Mnemonic Objects<br>Incentives for in depth conversations                                                                                                            |
| Conversations                      | XX throughout the participant observations         | Mostly ad hoc during participant observations<br>In depth information<br>Questionning my own observation and interpretation<br>Participants want and need to share experiences |
| Group Discussion                   | 3 one in each class room between 45 and 90 minutes | More in depth and directed exploration of issues arisen in previous fieldwork                                                                                                  |
| Questionnaires                     | 49?                                                | Preparation for group discussion<br>Gaining a first impression and triangulate my interpretation of issues arisen in previous fieldwork                                        |
| Teacher Interviews (Conversations) | 1 with Mr Gee and Red Flash<br>1 with Ms Ferry     | More in depth and directed conversation about issues arisen throughout the <b>19 months</b> of fieldwork<br>Triangulating my initial interpretations                           |

## *Appendix B.1*

| <b>Quality of Relationships</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Learner Identities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Creative Learning</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Friendly Teasing</li> <li>• Humour</li> <li>• Taking on Roles</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Willingness for Compromise</li> <li>• &amp; Understanding others position</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking on Roles</li> <li>• As-if activities</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Application of Knowledge</li> <li>• Reaction to new situations</li> <li>• Tasks and challenges</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership</li> <li>• Control</li> <li>• Relevance</li> <li>• Invention</li> <li>• As-if activities</li> <li>• Pondering &amp; Scratching</li> <li>• Application of Knowledge</li> <li>• Eureka Events</li> </ul> |

*Table 7. Categories and Codes after Paper, Highlighter and Scissors Coding*

## Appendix B.2

| Categories                                     | Strategy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Practical Learning</b>                      | 'Real life' context of learning<br>Hands on learning<br>Active engagement                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Academic Learning</b>                       | Academic achievements<br>Purpose of learning to achieve cultural capital                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b><i>Creative Learning</i><br/>Ownership</b>  | Social Learning<br>Role Behaviour<br>Collaborative strategies<br>Participative strategies<br>Co-creation of meaning<br>Identity negotiations<br>Sense of achievement<br>Cultural Learning such as learning of Norms, Values, Regulations, Scripts |
| <b><i>Creative Learning</i><br/>Control</b>    | Scaffolded engagement<br>Demonstration of purposeful activity                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b><i>Creative Learning</i><br/>Relevance</b>  | Engaging interest<br>Learning connoisseurs<br>'Real life' context of learning content                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b><i>Creative Learning</i><br/>Innovation</b> | Acquiring new knowledge<br>Applying acquired knowledge in new context<br>'Pondering & Scratching'<br>Eureka Events<br>As-if Activities<br>Application of Knowledge                                                                                |
| <b>Initiation of Learning</b>                  | <b>Self-Initiated<br/>Peer-Initiated<br/>Teacher-Initiated</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Teacher & Teaching                                                          | Negotiations & Identities                                                     | Relationships                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Creative Teaching</b><br>Ownership<br>Control<br>Relevance<br>Innovation | <b>Negotiating Identities</b><br>Gender<br>Ethnicity<br>Race<br>Religion etc. | <b>Quality of Relationships</b><br>Trust<br>Humour<br>Reciprocity<br>Compromise |
| <b>Power</b>                                                                | <b>Negotiating Meaning</b>                                                    | <b>Power</b>                                                                    |

Table 8. Final Categories and Codes, After Recoding in NVivo™

## *Appendix B.3*

### Questionnaire

Name:

Date: 13th May 2008

What do you like most in school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

What do you like least in school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

When you are in class which activities help you best to understand?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Do you like to learn on your own or together with friends?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Is your family, care-takers or friends helping you with your homework?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

What are you learning at school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

If you could change your school, what would you change?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



## Appendix B.4

### Some Questionnaire Answers

| Question                                                                    | Mainstream Classes                                                                                                                         | EAL Unit                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>When you are in class, which activities help you best to understand?</b> | <i>Explainin it showing with examples</i>                                                                                                  | <i>Factual information, like activities that are not interrupted</i>                                                                                                        |
|                                                                             | <i>In Groups because you can discuss things better</i>                                                                                     | <i>Working in groups and learning visually</i>                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                             | <i>Discusing the problems with my friends</i>                                                                                              | <i>Working in a group and also discussions</i>                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            | <i>Talking about it</i>                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                             | <i>Smart board becaaws lets you see how it is spelt exactly</i>                                                                            | <i>I understand picture</i>                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                             | <i>Pructil and games</i><br><i>Games one on one</i><br><i>Games make it more fun</i>                                                       | <i>Practically practicing and when next day come back to school, when the teacher ask you about yesterday work</i><br><i>Practical activities, interactive explanations</i> |
|                                                                             | <i>The activities that help me, best to understand &amp; when the teachers help me</i>                                                     | <i>Listening to the teachers and writing my own notes</i><br><i>Reading and listening to the teacher</i>                                                                    |
|                                                                             | <i>When the teacher is working with us because it better (He crossed out: I like to work myself so I can choose what I want to do ...)</i> | <i>When the teachers are explain what to do</i><br><i>If I listen carefully to teacher I can get everything</i>                                                             |
|                                                                             | <i>When a Teacher helps you to understand Things and when They do stuff All different stuff Esplaen</i>                                    | <i>Writing notes Listening and trying to ask questions referring to the subject</i>                                                                                         |

| Question                           | Mainstream Classes               | EAL Unit                                 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Do you like to learn</u></b> | <i>I like to learn on my own</i> | <i>I personally like to learn myself</i> |

|                                       |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| on your own or together with friends? | because it help's mom (?)                                                                          | <i>because if is with friend we just and up gossiping</i>                                                                                                             |
|                                       | Yes because, don't like the teacher always watching me                                             | <i>I prefer working alone or with a team but not with friends as I will get distracted</i>                                                                            |
|                                       | On my own because can put my own ideas in with out enyoned [anyone] disigreein                     | <i>I like to learn on my own because with friends I will just talk but on my own</i>                                                                                  |
|                                       | I like to work my self so I can choose what I want to do                                           | <i>I have no one to talk to so I can learn</i>                                                                                                                        |
|                                       | I like to learn on my own                                                                          | <i>I like to learn on my own.</i>                                                                                                                                     |
|                                       | I like to learn on my own because if I work with my friends I get reall distrackted and can't work | <i>Independency, quietness</i>                                                                                                                                        |
|                                       | I like to learn with my friends because you can talk more                                          | <i>Together with friends</i>                                                                                                                                          |
|                                       | It depends sometimes on my own or with my friend it depends how I feel                             | <i>I like to learn with my friend if I don't understand I can ask for help from them</i>                                                                              |
|                                       | Depends on the lesson                                                                              | <i>I like to learn together with friends because it means that am enjoying my self while learning</i>                                                                 |
|                                       | Whith friends because its fun to lenin with friends                                                | <i>Id like to learn together with friend because I think I learn better that way</i>                                                                                  |
|                                       | Together with friends feel more confident                                                          | <i>I like to learn together with friends</i>                                                                                                                          |
|                                       | I like to learn with my friends                                                                    | <i>Both</i>                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                       | I like to work with groups with my friend because if I get stuck I can get help                    | <i>With friends and on my own</i>                                                                                                                                     |
|                                       | I like to learn with friends because you can get more                                              | <i>I like a combination of both – there are times when doing my own work is better than having to do it with other people – friends pose as distructions at times</i> |
|                                       |                                                                                                    | <i>I could only learn properly on my own But I enjoy debaing with friends or team group</i>                                                                           |

|  |                                                       |  |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
|  | advice and more<br>convidence                         |  |
|  | Together with friends so<br>we get different opinions |  |
|  | With friends more fun                                 |  |

## Appendix C.1 Pupil Information

### Information about our research Questions you might have



What are you trying to find out?

Do you use *creative learning* and how influence friends your learning and integration?

What will you do and why?

I would like to talk to you about relationships in school, because I am interested in how far they influence learning.

Since you are the experts in your learning, and what you like about school and what not I would like to ask you to take part in my study.

What does this involve?

I will attend some of your classes and maybe talk to you during breaks.



I will give the school some digital cameras and a digital recorder and ask you to record and take pictures of places and events, talks or class presentations you think I might be interested in



If there is anything you don't understand or if you just have some more questions to ask please contact me. If you do agree to take part you can ask me questions at any time.

Why do you come into my class?

I talked to the headteacher and class teacher and they told me that it would be good to go into your class.

Do I have to take part?

No, you don't have to take part if you don't want to. If you decide to take part but want to change your mind during the study you just can come and say you changed your mind without giving any reason.

What is going to happen if I decide to take part?

I will arrange with your teacher to come into class and talk to you. I will tell you more about what I am going to do and answer any questions you might have.





What if I change my mind during the study?  
You can stop taking part without having to explain why you want to do so.

Will other people find out what I said or did?

Everything you tell me will be private. If I want to use something you said or a picture you took I will check with you again and your name will not appear in any paper unless of course you want your name to appear. If there are good pictures I would like to show other people I will ask you again if you will allow me to use these pictures.

What will happen to the results of the study?

I will use them to discuss and show what is done in your school and to talk about your ideas about how school helps you.

I might write about what I find out (without using your names).



Will I be able to find out about what you learned?

Yes after I am finished I will tell your teachers and come into your class to tell you about what I found out.

Whom can I contact about the research?

You can talk to me when I am in school. You can also contact **XXX** if you have questions at any time. The head teacher or your teacher will let you know how to contact her.

## *Appendix C.2. Pupil Consent Form*

### Consent Form for Participants

Before you answer the questions in this form you should have read the information leaflet, which tells you about the study and what you will be asked to do.



Did you read the information leaflet?

YES/NO



Did you understand what it said?

YES/NO

some  
points, did



If you had questions or did not understand  
you ask someone for help?

YES/NO



Do you understand what you will be asked to do?

YES/NO

Do you understand what you are asked to do?

YES/NO

If you agree to take part in the study, you can change your mind at any point.

Do you agree to take part in the study?

YES/NO

If you have agreed to take part please write your name and then put your signature below. Please don't forget to write the date. But it is OK if you would like someone else to do this for you.

NAME: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

Thank you for filling in this form. You do not need to fill in any more information.

-----

Researcher's signature:  
.....

Date: .....

Participant number: .....

Consent form version August 2007

## Appendix C.3 Teacher Information

### Information about my Research Questions you might have

What are you trying to find out?



I am interested in observing students learning and exploring, particularly in how far peer support plays a role in this. Further I would like to understand the teachers' position and influence on learning.

What will you do and why?

I would like you to attend a focus group or take part in an interview with me, which will last approximately half an hour. I am intending to conduct focus group interviews with the pupils about their perceptions of school and I would like to discuss their answers with you. Before letting you know the answers the pupils gave to questions like: most and least favourite subjects, what they would change in school and what they think they learn, I would like to ask you, if you can indicate what you consider might be the possible answers. This should help my understanding of any possible differences of perception between teachers and pupils.



The focus for my main project is on how *creative learning* and teaching is applied in a performative school culture. I would like to obtain the opinion of teachers and students to get a more comprehensive picture of the day-to-day life in school.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part if you do not want to. If you decide to take part, but want to change your mind during the study, you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

What is going to happen if I decide to take part?

The information obtained from the focus groups and interviews will be used to gain understanding of how *creative learning* and teaching takes place in schools. The information will be treated anonymously, that means I will not mention your names or the name of your school.



What if I change my mind during the study?



You can stop taking part without having to explain why you want to do so.

**Will other people find out what I said or did?**

Everything you tell me will be confidential and will be treated appropriately by myself, the University under the Data Protection Act. If I something you said is quoted, your name will not appear in any documents unless you explicitly provide permission.



**What will happen to the results of the study?**

I will use the results to demonstrate what is done in your school and to talk about your students' ideas regarding how school helps them. The results may be utilized in formal published studies, but without mention of which school or the names of anyone involved.

**Will I be able to find out about what you learned?**

After I am finished with the research I will inform you of the results.

**Whom can I contact about the research?**

You can talk to me when I am in school. You can also contact my supervisor if you have questions at any time.

## *Appendix C.4 Teacher Consent*

### Consent Form for Participants

Before you answer if you agree to take part in the research, please ensure that you read and understood the information leaflet, which tells you about the study and what you will be asked to do.

If you have agreed to take part please write your name and then put your signature below. Please don't forget to write the date. If there are any further questions please don't hesitate to contact me or ask me right away.

NAME: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

Thank you for filling in this form. You do not need to fill in any more information.

-----

Researcher's signature: .....

Date: .....

Participant number: .....

## *Appendix D.1 Initial List of Patterns and Codes*

- About relationships btw teacher-students, teacher-teacher, students-students
- Hints towards negative Social Capital?
- Professional Capital
- Power relations
- Gender Issues
- Do children accept their attributed roles without questioning? Role Positions
- Communication
- Non-verbal communication
- Use of certain kinds of language
- Noise level
- Usage of cursing words
- Situation in School and Class
- Discipline Measurements
- Creation of Niches (achievement, ethnicity / race)
- Bullying
- New Head Teacher
- EAL unit vs Mainstream Class
- Eng vs Maths Base (teacher relations)
- Children in Detention Centre (Refugee)
- Social Class as bonding Learning, Participation
- Pupil as teacher
- Negotiation of terms
- Negotiation of roles
- Control, Ownership
- Over control of situation, negative control?
- Access
- In general
- To main stream class
- The Gatekeepers (Receptionist, Contact, Teachers)
- Any Other Business

## *Appendix D.2. First Coding Exercise*

- Access
- Peer Influence
- Professional Capital
- Questions
- Research Planning
- Researcher in the Field
- School Culture
- School Policies
- School Structure
- Cultural Policies
- Culture
- Detention
- First Interpretations Questions
- Identifier
- Identities
- In the Base
- Interviews
- On the Way
- Teacher Perceptions of Students
- Teacher Tensions
- Towerblocks

### Appendix D.3. Exported NVivo™ Table

| Name                               | Memo Link                                      | Sources                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Teacher and Teaching</b>        |                                                | 1                          |
| Tree Node                          | Teacher Identity                               |                            |
|                                    | Tree Node                                      | Power Positions            |
|                                    | Tree Node                                      | Grouping or Boxing         |
| <b>Quality of Relationships</b>    |                                                | 1                          |
| Tree Node                          | Willingness for Compromise and Understanding   |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Taking on Roles                                |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Respect                                        |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Humour                                         |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Friendly Teasing                               |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Competition                                    |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Activism or Political Ownership                |                            |
| <b>Learning</b>                    |                                                | 1                          |
| Tree Node                          | Question Learning Related                      |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Peer Influence                                 |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Participation                                  |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Learning Environment (2)                       |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Assessment                                     |                            |
| <b>Learner Identity</b>            |                                                | 5                          |
| Tree Node                          | Territorialism                                 |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Taking on Roles                                |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Reactions to new tasks, situations, challenges |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Participation                                  |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Co-operation                                   |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Competition                                    |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Citizenship                                    |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Belonging, Adaptation or Integration           |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Tools of Power and Negotiation                 | Added 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct |
| Tree Node                          | Learner Identity/Types                         | Manual coding              |
| <b>Creative Learning Processes</b> |                                                | 1                          |
| Tree Node                          | Relevance                                      |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Pondering and Scratching                       |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Ownership                                      |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Invention                                      |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Eureka Events                                  |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Control                                        |                            |
| Tree Node                          | As-If Activities                               |                            |
| Tree Node                          | Application of Knowledge                       |                            |

## *Appendix E.1 Ethics Approval*

From: [REDACTED]  
Subject: **RE: Consent form amendet**  
Date: 9 March 2009 13:28:05 GMT  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: Nathalie Sheridan <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED]

Thank you for this [REDACTED]. I am pleased to confirm ethical approval for the project 'Creative Learning Processes and the Utilisation of Social Capital of Refugee Children'.

kind regards

[REDACTED]

Dr. [REDACTED]  
Ethics Convener  
CPS Research and Ethics Committee  
T. [REDACTED]