

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH ALISON AUTUMN 07

NF: So if you can just - so it's Becky Avery isn't it. Because I haven't met you before, if we can just talk about the year group that you're with and what your role is in the school if anything.

A: Yes, I'm new to this school this year.

NF: Oh, right.

A: I just started in September, I came from Nightingale, which is just up the road in Eastleigh. I'm teaching year four, coming down from year six where I was before and I'm responsible for Music, across the school at the moment. Hopefully, we'll start including a bit of Drama as well.

NF: Right, okay. And so it's very good of you then seeing as you're so new to the school to come and talk to me [laughs]. So in terms of M putting you forward then as somebody who wants to talk to Naomi - will talk to Naomi about Polish children in Hampshire schools, is that because you've got Polish children in your classes?

A: Yes, I have two Polish children in my class.

NF: Okay. And how long have they been in school.

A: They started in school at the beginning of year three.

NF: Oh, right.

A: And they've been here a year. Simon hadn't attended school in Poland, as far as I know, it was his first schooling.

NF: Okay.

A: But I've sort of picked them up, I mean they both can converse very well. Very supportive parents. Their oral English is now very, very good. I mean, obviously I'm continually trying to model good language for them, not just them, the English

children as well [laughs]. And their oral is very good. Written is a little bit further behind.

NF: Sure.

A: Tenses are a real issue with written. But they've both integrated very well, but they had already before I came, you know, they'd been here a year. They had friends in the class. They don't necessarily spend time together. But yeah, they've integrated very well within the year group. It's a very big year group, there are thirty two of us.

NF: So in terms of your own Ackground prior to coming here, had you taught in schools with children who had EAL before?

A: Just one child.

NF: Just one?

A: In the previous school yes.

NF: Okay. And so what sort of support were you used to having if any?

A: At Nightingale, I had one child, an Argentinian child, and had some help from Hampshire. They came in, did an initial review and then observed a couple of lessons and then had a chat with me and left a few things behind. But I'm so surprised how quickly they pick up the language anyway. Very, very quickly and he was a very bright child and before I knew it, he didn't really need much support anymore. I mean obviously at first it was all very visual but before long it was -

NF: It became more concrete.

A: Yes.

NF: Okay. So some Ackground, but actually you're used to quite small numbers. You had the one in that class and you've got two Polish children in your class here. Have you got other children with EAL?

A: Yes, I've got five altogether.

NF: Five out of?

A: Thirty two.

NF: Okay so a smaller percentage than are in some of the classes, so they are still in quite a minority.

A: Yes.

NF: And the other three, are they all different languages or are they -?

A: Yes, one Bengali, I'm not sure what Harshifa is - she speaks one of the other Indian languages, I'm not sure what language it is, and Adam came in September from the Czech Republic speaking no English.

NF: Right, okay. That's interesting. So is there any affinity at all between him and the Polish children?

A: Not really [BOTH PARTICIPANT SPEAKING AT ONCE] Yeah, yeah, exactly.

NF: Probably completely different just as there wouldn't be an affinity between us and an Italian or something [both laugh] or western Europeans as it were. Okay, great. Alright so kind of looking at the questions a bit, I just wanted to explore, I'm doing this with all the staff, what your views are on how children who speak English as their first language, how you develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing in the classroom. What are the key features of what you do? In terms of just teaching English.

A: Modelling is one of the main things, modelling and demonstration. Showing good examples - this is reading, writing and speaking?

NF: Anything, yes.

A: Yeah, good examples obviously reading will then inform on the writing, which helps. With the new strategy, the new framework, very much speaking and listening now before writing. There's lots of that to do. Making sure the children have, I don't mean rules, like a check list of things to follow for each genre or for, we have speaking and

listening rules across the school, three main rules that we use. So it's just continual reinforcement of those really.

NF: Right. Okay. And the thing with the new framework, you're more speaking and listening. Has that kind of affected your practice do you think?

A: Yes, it probably has actually. I probably do do - I mean I'm very drama orientated anyway, but I would say yes, I probably think about it a lot more and its impact on the writing, probably a little bit more yeah.

NF: Okay, so are you using things like the units from (PNS) for speaking and listening or -  
?

A: Yes.

NF: Okay. So that's how we look at it for indigenous mono-lingual speakers. Is there anything that you think is different from that, that you need to set up for your bilingual learners or do you think there's not a difference?

A: Not always, I do tend to try to use word banks a lot more, especially if it's a new vocabulary for something. Not necessarily just in English, probably more in things like science, where you might be coming across new vocab that they wouldn't have come across in everyday life necessarily. I try to make sure it's on display in the classroom as well as possibly giving them a word bank to have in front of their work area as well. Apart from that, it's really just integrating them in the same way. It does work very, very similarly. Obviously, my two Polish children both spoke very good English anyway when I first came. With Adam who spoke no English, it obviously started very visually. Lots of acting things out, lots of pictures and then as he's learnt, that's become more both together and now he's quite capable of reading the words as well on their own. So it's very similar, it's just maybe just putting a little bit more support initially for the children who are bilingual.

NF: And so for someone like Adam, I mean obviously it's meant to be about Polish children, but let's just focus on a new arrival with no English.

A: Okay.

NF: Would you, for example, use a systematic phonics package as well? How do they learn their letters and sounds?

A: Yes, similar to what they were doing in Key Stage 1 with the phonics. We haven't had training, I don't know if Rosemary's talked to you about the phonics that they're doing?

NF: No.

A: Oh, she will. They've just started in read write inc

NF: Oh right, with Ruth Miskin [laughs]

A: Yes, but it hasn't rolled out to Key Stage 2 yet, so it hasn't properly gone through the school yet. But it is going to be going to be.

NF: Okay. But you've used some kind of Key Stage 1 phonics package with the new arrivals?

A: Yes, sounds, blends yes.

NF: Okay. But on the whole though, there's some additional there but would you use them, would you still try and include them in the activities that the rest of the children are doing? Or would you -

A: As much as possible, yes. As far as Adam is concerned, originally for the first, and it wasn't very long, the first few weeks it had to be something completely different. We did a lot of phonics work with him, a lot of picture work. But it was really trying to do the same things that everybody else was doing but on a lower, or more visual scale. Rather than doing something completely different. We had to at the very beginning but it was then trying to differentiate, but in a different way than you would for special needs really.

NF: Right, that an interesting thing to pick up on because Rosemary spoke a lot about that, about that difference between how we respond to our SEN children and how we respond to our EAL children. So how do you make decisions about how you would group them?

A: Right, well I actually don't teach any of my bilingual children. Oh no, one of them, literacy, we split for literacy, and they are in the lower literacy group. Adam, who is the boy from the Czech Republic, probably will be moving up when he gets more, but it's just the vocab. He wouldn't be able to access the reading work that we do in the higher group at the moment, because of the understanding. Maths-wise, they're just integrated in other groups. The only reason with literacy that they are possibly, well it's not towards the lower end, but maybe more so at the beginning, is because of the language.

NF: Okay.

A: Because there's a lot of reading to do and if they don't have the language, then they can't access that work.

NF: And do you ever notice, perhaps it's early days for you, any sense of frustration then, that work doesn't feel ability matched or -?

A: No, I think you're right. It is frustrating, and I'm thinking about Adam here because the others all speak very good English anyway. I think it is frustrating for him. But he's working his way up very quickly, so it won't be long before he's in the upper set anyway.

NF: Right. So there is a process of reassessment and so on so he can just -

A: Yes, he's not just put in the bottom set because he's - it's just for the language really.

NF: Okay, great. One of the things I'm interested in is teachers' attitudes to new arrivals. Because obviously what you've described to me there is, although you're able to include them in the vast majority of things, actually you're having to plan quite a lot of additional stuff, specifically on a one to one basis. So how do you feel about that need for teachers in primary schools to do that?

A: I guess if you had lots and lots of children speaking many different languages, it would be a big strain on the workload. Having just, I only have a very small minority, it's just in the same way that I might differentiate for a very low ability child, it's just part of my job to try and match my work that I'm planning for those children. So I can

understand that if it was a bigger proportion, I might be a little bit - time constraints really, rather than anything else.

NF: You mean because you imagine that within that proportion to have all these children at different levels of fluency?

A: Yes.

NF: And therefore there'd be an awful lot of additional time?

A: Yes, but I mean you do have to differentiate within each of their classes. I mean in my class, the English speakers, the native English speakers in my class range with a great ability anyway, and the EAL can just slot in with them most of the time. There is a little bit of extra, like we said, especially at the beginning, but that's just something you need to do to meet the needs of that child.

NF: So in a way it's, maybe it feels not so burdensome in terms of what you would normally do with a different (ability) anyway?

A: Yes.

NF: Sorry, I didn't mean to put words in your mouth there [both laugh]. Okay, do you wish there was anything else in place or do you think there's a kind of expectation of you and your colleagues to assimilate these children?

A: There is an expectation but I have been supported. I mean we have had native Czech speakers coming in and working one-to-one and advising which has been helpful. I was very lucky at the beginning of the year because I had a very good LSA who would work - because I had never really worked with non English children before, I had one example, but he was already speaking a little bit of English already. It was new to me but my LSA had worked with children before, so she was very good at working alongside me and thinking about things we could do to maybe make it a bit easier.

NF: LSA you said?

A: Yes. And she did a one to one time with Adam right at the very beginning every day. Just a little chat really, mostly oral things, to try and get him to open up a little bit

more. I mean he's very good, he comes in in the morning, I try to greet every child as they come into the classroom in the morning, and he's quite happy to have a chat, even though it was quite difficult in the beginning.

NF: Right. So the LSA has been a tower of strength for you there. So had she had training or -

A: I'm not sure. I know they had a history here at N School of bilingual children. So presumably she'd worked with some before. Whether there was official training, I'm not sure.

NF: Okay, interesting. So what at this point would you describe as the key issues, if anything, for the two Polish children? So they've got some fluency -

A: Yes, speaking is very good. Writing I would say is the main issue now. They're both enjoying reading, although they're at quite different levels actually. But they both enjoy reading. But the writing is really, it's trying to get them to speak what they want to write first and then try to write down what they've said. You almost need dictaphones or something for them too - and we do use things like that but it's not constant. I'm getting ideas now [laughs].

NF: That's the whole point...talking makes you think doesn't it?

A: Yes, because like I said with the tense thing. It's the past tense which is the main issue with the writing. And it's just continual reinforcement. As I said, I don't actually teach either of them literacy, because they're not in my literacy group, so I don't have them and I wouldn't be able to tell you, you'd have to speak to the other, the literacy teacher about that. But I don't teach them literacy.

NF: Right, okay. But presumably you're noticing the issues in writing in science or history or anything else you're teaching them. So in a way, English is across the curriculum isn't it?

A: Of course.

NF: The impact it has on it.

A: Yes.

NF: Okay. So do you think their issues in terms of writing are the same as a lower attaining white indigenous speaker or not?

A: Similar.

NF: Right.

A: Similar. Tenses tend to cause problems anyway with children. Probably a little more so with the non English speakers. It's just getting the past tense in there, they find it quite difficult.

NF: Are you aware why that is?

A: No.

NF: There's actually a lot of research out there saying that this is - it's things like verb tense endings and prepositions are the two things that really trip us up when we're learning a new language. So the children will have set in their heads the structure of the tenses in their own language.

A: Yes.

NF: And it's terribly hard to get out of that and to start seeing it in the new language, I mean do you speak a second language at all yourself, like French?

A: No not for many years.

NF: Right, I know when I'm trying to translate into French I'm always doing it from English into French whereas of course, you know, the verb and the object and the subject are all in different orders aren't they and things like that and conceptually even, the way in which tenses are thought about is somehow different between languages, so that's why that's an issue.

A: Right.

NF: Yes, and so what you're doing by focussing on tenses is in fact great, because that's exactly what they need, because they can't just assimilate tenses, it's actually rather too hard.

A: Yes.

NF: So it needs that specific input, in fact Rosemary was saying exactly the same about her children, it's one of the things she has to really focus on, so that becomes their kind of additional target, but then you'd have additional targets would you for any of your children?

A: Yes well exactly.

NF: And that happens to become theirs, yes. Great, so you feel well supported, that's nice, by your LSA, is there any kind of local authority training on hand for you as somebody who's kind of not got a lot of experience with EAL?

A: I don't know, I mean I have – when I first came, obviously it was - not a shock to me, but coming from a school which was only up the road, it's very, very different coming here, very much higher proportion of EAL children, but the other staff have been very supportive as well. They're used to it now and Christina has been very supportive, just chatting really, just finding out about it and actually it's been very easy, it's been just – you know, like we said, you just differentiate for the child in a different way, because it is a special need even if it's not to do with ability. It's just getting used to it. I'm not sure if there is any training in the county, I don't know.

NF: I mean it is just differentiating isn't it, but it's also about knowing and understanding isn't it and that must feel quite scary, the kind of well I mean I wouldn't have a clue about what to do with some types of special needs.

A: Yeah.

NF: And it's the body – there is a body of knowledge I think, to some extent isn't there?

A: Yeah, it was very daunting actually at first, never having come across it before. It's just a different thing again. Like you say if you have a child in your class who's with a need, it's exactly the same.

NF: Yes, dyspraxia or anything or something you haven't done for a while and you've kind of forgotten, yes. So but that body of knowledge sounds like it's shared by some more experienced staff and that comes across, so there's a kind of peer support process going on.

A: Definitely.

NF: Great, lovely. Ok, that's great, thanks very much for your time there.

[End of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH ALISON SUMMER 2008

NF: Ok so can you just talk to me about, you had two Polish children in your class I think.

A: Yes.

NF: And how are they doing generally?

A: Very well.

NF: Right.

A: Yes, I mean in recent, not that testing is all it's about, but in recent tests they have both come out and made a lot of progress since last year. Simon more so than Patricia but both have made very good progress in reading and writing and maths, across the board.

NF: Ok so I think when I last spoke to you, they were both in the bottom set for literacy, are they still?

A: They are still in the bottom, I mean there are only two sets, so it's although it's the bottom set, it's not the bottom. Simon is at the very top of that set, and we did talk about moving him up, but we felt it was so near to the end of the year. Because we are not quite in sync with each other, that he would benefit more from being at the top of that set.

NF: Ok, in terms of confidence really you felt or...

A: Yes he is in a group, he is not like the one person that's the top, but he is in the top group, whereas Patricia is quite further down in that set, so they're both still in the lower set.

NF: And do you think, I know you don't teach that lower set do you?

A: No I teach...

NF: You don't at the moment, in terms of their English ability generally then, across any subject, do you think that they're in the lower set just because of their lack of acquisition of English at the minute?

A: I think that's the case for Simon.

NF: Right.

A: I think next year should sets take place he would go into the higher set, his English has come on a lot this year. Patricia less so.

NF: Right so it might be a combination of features ?

A: Yes.

NF: Ok, and then you talked about how their spoken language was doing really well, but their writing was further behind, that's still the picture or...?

A: It still is behind, but the gap is certainly closing now, it has got lots, lots better. I mean we have done lots of writing this year, because it's been a focus for the whole school, so we have made sure we have done lots and lots, so the gap is closing, but it still is behind their spoken.

NF: So are there things you have done specifically for them, for EAL and writing or have they been part of just the school program?

A: Well I can't speak for their literacy sessions, because obviously I don't teach that.

NF: No I know that.

A: Apart from obviously giving them extra vocabulary support, and any, for Patricia in particular she is maybe more on the special needs scale than Simon, she obviously has the support that all the special needs children have, so maybe extra adult help, working in groups a bit more. Apart from that, that's really all that's...

NF: Ok so nothing, no kind of specific actual thing is to do with help people rather than a kind of specific curriculum for them or...

A: No.

NF: No ok, what else did I have here. Are there any particular barriers for them at the moment, in developing any particular aspect of the literacy? So, I mean is reading an issue because of spoken English or do you see any particular...

A: Not really, I wouldn't say that anything flags up necessarily that is a particular barrier to them.

NF: Ok great, and so when you spoke to me last time you were kind of saying, well I don't know much about EAL. Because you had one child hadn't you.

A: Yes.

NF: At a previous school, N School, and so you didn't, you hadn't really got much experience and yet a lot came out, when I was reviewing your interview, about stuff that you did in those, so you knew about the importance of modelling and demonstrating as being valuable, the importance of having word banks, I wonder where that kind of knowledge had come from.

A: That's just, I don't know, that's just natural to me.

NF: Right ok.

A: That's just part of teaching, so that's just obviously just comes from my experience in teaching generally.

NF: Ok so in a way you were talking to me generally about how you'd developed language then for any children, monolingual or bilingual, so it was just a kind of coincidence that actually those things that are also really...

A: Yes because I think that to some, it might be to a way to extend, but those are the things you do with all for example writing, modelling, and demonstration is very important throughout, so yes it could be to a greater extent with the EAL children, but it's still the same things.

NF: So it wasn't anything specific, I wondered if you'd had, as I remember you were saying you were saying you had some input from, I think the EMAS team, when you had the child in the other school, I mean left resources and things like that.

A: Yes.

NF: I was wondering if any of the guidance had come from there or any particular...

A: Not really.

NF: No ok so it was all about just your general attitude to teaching literacy generally.

A: Yes.

NF: We also talked a bit about the revised PNS units for English, and I wondered if you, I think you are working with them, presumably with the most recent PNS at the moment in the school, rather than that old NLS.

A: Yes.

NF: And I wondered if you felt that that's affected your pedagogy at all in terms of using more speaking and listening, more drama or more role play or...

A: Yes it probably has, I mean I am very drama orientated anyway, so we do lots and lots of drama, but now that it's actually in there, I think you think about doing it maybe even more, so yes it probably has a little bit affected the amount of speaking and listening.

NF: Right, and I wonder, it's hard to tell isn't it, if that's then actually a really a major benefit for the EAL children. You had a little Czech boy in the class as well, didn't you?

A: He was here for just for the first couple of weeks of term.

NF: Oh and then he went?

A: Yes, because he was just in temporary housing.

NF: They do tend to move the EAL samples unfortunately. So you have been here for almost a year now, would you say that generally your confidence in terms of teaching EAL children has grown or?

A: Yes, I think it naturally has through doing it, through sort of experiencing it. Like I say, I had a very limited experience before, and it's, I don't want to say normal, but it's so natural here, because we have so many EAL children, I think just being part of it, yes my confidence has probably grown.

NF: You have a lot of EAL children in the school, but not actually in your class.

A: No, I just have the two in my class,

NF: There are only two Latvians now, because there were five I believe in the autumn or?

A: Oh no sorry, yes I do have five. But they are at very different stages.

NF: Right ok.

A: But I did have five, I've got four now.

NF: Right.

A: But the other two, I almost don't think of as EAL.

NF: Right, what language are they?

A: They've, I'm not sure what the actual language is, but they are Indian languages.

NF: Oh right so they are probably second generation, local communities, that's...

A: Yes that's a little bit different.

NF: That's a different issue isn't it yes, absolutely, I know what you mean totally different yes. So do...and at the time when we spoke last time you felt that the level of differentiation you were having to manage for the Polish children was ok, does it still feel that normal thing or does it feel like an additional burden?

A: Yes, it's very much within the differentiation of the class now. They don't...like I say I do use word banks and things, but that might be the same that my SEN children are using so it's not necessarily anything over and above that. It might be slightly more extensive, but the same kind of thing.

NF: Right, you talked about verb tenses a lot actually with them, was that still an issue?

A: Yes it's still is, although certainly with Simon his is much, much improved. Patricia slightly less so, I think she speaks less English at home than Simon does. I don't know if that's, if that has an effect on it.

NF: Possibly.

A: Because she speaking can still get her tenses wrong, whereas Simon generally his tenses are correct.

NF: So are Simon's family, deliberately going out of their way to speak in English at him?.

A: I think they are very, very supportive of him being here, so yes I think they do probably speak quite a lot of English with their children as well as Polish.

NF: But presumably wanting to preserve the Polish as well?

A: Oh yes, definitely I think, yes.

NF: Ok so do they ever use Polish at all in school or...

A: No.

NF: Not at all. They don't. Do they speak to each other in Polish?

A: No.

NF: It's interesting isn't it?

A: Yes.

NF: It's just completely, go through the gate and take on the different identity. So in terms of the confidence growing, and you saying that it's kind of almost the norm in the

school now, because there are a lot of EAL children. What's been most supportive do you think in terms of allowing you to feel more comfortable?

A: Probably the whole team, like the staff team here. There is a lot of support from other members of staff. They've obviously got a lot of experience as well, so it's sharing experiences, and we have got lots of resources and we celebrate lots of EAL type things in assemblies, so it's a kind of a school ethos really.

NF: Ok so it's a kind of general...you also have spoken about your LSA being a really big support, is that still the case?

A: Yes, well because I don't have either of the Polish children in my set, I don't have an LSA.

NF: Ok.

A: It's a bit difficult to answer somehow, because I don't teach them for English, but yes. So I don't necessarily have the LSA support.

NF: Ok, and also then you haven't necessarily had her, because you said the LSA had some training in fact, I think in...

A: I don't know if she had training, but she did have a lot of experience.

NF: A lot of experience, right. Do you not have her in other lessons for different subjects, like history or that (...) literally just for English is that, so you don't get...

A: Yes English and maths.

NF: Ok, right. Ok what was I going to say, so coming back to Polish children in general really, you talk about that progress socially, how do they do socially?

A: They fit right in really, you wouldn't be able to pick them out, apart from the fact obviously they are Polish, you wouldn't necessarily be able to identify if you saw them on the playground for example.

NF: Right ok.

A: They both, certainly my two, have very secure lot of friends in the classroom, they are quite popular, there's nothing that makes them stand out really socially.

NF: Right ok. So do you feel...one of the things that is happening in the interviews of a lot of teachers? You know I'm doing teacher interviews in several schools, is there is a sense of them having a particular confidence and almost being quite assertive, the children, not in a negative way I mean, in a, you know just in a quite confident together, do you get that sense, I mean it's very difficult to say as you are less experienced with other EAL children.

A: To an extent, I probably wouldn't have said it had you not mentioned it, but thinking about it, yes I guess they are quite confident.

NF: Right and quite kind of socially outgoing?

A: Yes, and thinking of other Polish children in the school, yes,

NF: Right ok, so there's a sense of them, of this community having come in and having quite an identity you mean socially, in terms of the other Polish children as well.

A: Yes.

NF: Yes, and the other thing I am picking up, because the other school I am going in to have long standing second generation Bengali families in with them, and there is a sense of that being really quite different in terms of the two communities.

A: Yes.

NF: Which is, I don't know why would they be similar, but I just wonder if it governs the way we then respond to them, if they're confident and outgoing I wonder, if it makes us confident and outgoing with them as well, I don't know.

A: Yes possibly.

NF: It's different isn't it because the Polish children are so brand new and the Bengali communities all long established, so we all have different habits don't we, different ones with them.

A: Yes.

NF: So the families you say. You said they are very supportive and I mean does that go...have they learnt English the families, do they, are they able to communicate with you in English?

A: Yes.

NF: The mothers and dads?

A: Yes both families, one more than the other, but both can communicate fairly well.

NF: As far as you are aware is that something they have made the effort to do once they arrive?

A: As far as I know, I don't know anything else, but as far as I know yes.

NF: And attend parent's evenings and generally do all the things that they should do?

A: Yes, I have quite a lot of contact with them.

NF: Ok good. I know that Claire was saying that she felt, in fact several of other teachers in other schools have commented that they felt the Polish children were quite, I certainly don't think they said they were indulged, I think what she really meant was that they're allowed to stay young as it were, they are quite nurtured, there is a strong sense of family.

A: Definitely.

NF: It seems to come across from Polish families. Ok, and so the last one really is just, if we are looking at these children you know, socially happy and socially engaged to what extent do you think that affects their motivation to learn?

A: I think positively. Yes, I think the fact that they just slot right in, and they are just part of it. I mean both of my Polish children are very motivated in learning, very much so, they are very keen to please, eager to get things right to get extra merits for things, so yes probably it does have a positive effect on that.

NF: Ok, great, I think that's all really, there seems to be millions of questions but we seem to have gone through them all. Oh I know training, I was just wondering, I missed one out there. If during the year because you had come when you had limited experience, has there been any specific training put on by the local Authority or...?

A: I haven't had any particular training.

NF: No. So what you picked up has been really just support from colleagues as you said, and emotionally just having to do it.

A: Yes.

NF: Ok, do you know what's happening next year? Do you know are you going to have...well is it inevitable that in this school you would have EAL children in your class every year in fact.

A: Yes.

NF: Yes. Polish children or...?

A: I don't think there are any Polish children coming up from year three, so I don't think I will have any.

NF: Ok, I think that is it then.

A: Oh thank you.

NF: Thank you very much.

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH CLAIRE FEB 2007

NF So in terms of the background for EAL for this school you were saying to me that you already had some Bengali children...

C Yes, Bengali, Punjabi, which is mainly our ethnic background to start with and then last year we had Polish and Nepalese, so we actually had quite an interesting (pause) Bengali, Punjabi, Polish, Nepalese... There was one girl who's another Indian language and these two have just left now those to have, but all of these (shows interviewer school data on pupils' ethnicity). So the Polish and Nepalese since last summer but it's mainly the Bengali and Punjabi. We had one Polish girl last year, but her background was more, her English was much better, because her mother spoke English; so I'm sure for others which were new arrivals it was different.

NF So five is actually quite a lot isn't it to suddenly come in all with one language and that's the kind of thing we're exploring, it's quite a sudden arrival and it's like why and how.

C A lot of its brothers and sister isn't it, so...

NF Seems to be... and cousins. Yes, another school I talked to, one family moved over and then the next extended bit of the family was coming over...

C I think the first Polish girls mother recommended us to the next Polish couple who recommended us to their friends. That's how we got, that's how we gather it happened.

NF Ah. Again, I was at a school this morning that had exactly that, they had quite a lot about ten to fifteen now. And its, and they're saying that their children are out of catchment, the Polish children. In fact, is that the same for you?

C No ours are...

NF They're in catchment, OK

C We've got a new development of housing locally ..... housing. So they appear to be, I think they live round there. I'm not entirely sure about that but I think they do. It's fairly local.

NF So numbers, you've got six and they're across the year group? So are they mostly in the younger year groups?

C No, no, no, I've got a year one boy in my class, I'm Year R teacher, and he hadn't been to school before. So he's working with my Year R's although he's a year one and, you know, he's working and he's coping very well. He's a rather big boy so its look like a cuckoo in the nest a bit. He's lovely and we've got him in Year R and there's another girl in Year One who's the one who was originally here, who hasn't really had much problem with languages. She speaks very good English anyway.

NF So he arrived...?

C He arrived in September but the other girl in Year One spoke English when she arrived so I think she was brought up, her mum is Polish, her dad is Punjabi and they speak the three languages. I don't think she can speak much Punjabi but she speaks very good Polish and English, so she I think she was much younger when she came, and she came into Year R from the beginning whereas V... is it fine?

NF Oh no all of it will be erased out don't worry, they won't recognise the people

C So the V in my class he came in September knowing no English. Then in Year 3, there's two Year 3 children, S, he started, he was a Year 2, so two of them came in the summertime and J started in a Year 2 class, sorry a Year 1 Class, but he was actually a Year 2 because obviously we had more play learning in the younger classes. He spoke no English and when, I was just talking to the teacher who had him last year, he was quite distressed when he came to school and he was quite worried about when his dad went and sometimes he would go to M (Headteacher), I think it was the man thing, and he was very upset and then once he settled into class he was fine but now he's with his correct Year Group which is Year 3; he became a junior and became Year 3. In the same Year Group is P who's V's sister who's in my class- she had no English to start with either - but she could read and write in Polish whereas S couldn't. So she's come in with Polish skills and she's found it harder to settle than S. So although he had a rocky start, he's learnt it through, you know because he hadn't learnt to read and write before, so he's learning to read and write fresh, whereas she had learnt to read and write in Polish.

NF OK, so it's taking her a little bit longer to get to the...

C So yes it is taking her longer and then in Year 5 there was S and J. J is S's sister and they're both very athletic children and I think she went to some kind of athletic school in Poland, you know like the Russians do, we think because there was a gym club on in the summer, its not on now because that teacher's left, but if you watch her against the other children she had that grace and posture that other children don't have. J is much more outgoing and friendly but I'm not sure about her academic side because I haven't been able to speak to her teachers because I only know them, you know, in passing. And S she seems very very quiet, you know her little brother will be starting in my year, our class in September so I'll be going to his preschool to meet him soon. So that's where they are...

NF So quite a spread, it's really nice that you're a primary; you're the only primary that I've actually got. The others are single key stage...

C Oh no it's nice to have a primary.

NF it's nice that four other schools have responded and it's interesting...

C Is that all?

NF Well yes and it's, I talked to and I sent out to eight because they needed to be recent arrivals, just in terms of that A had given me. And actually five is quite a big

sample, I mean if I'd been coming in to talk to you all, you get quite a lot of data quite quickly. So we'll see, there may be more along the way hopefully.

C So what I did was I spoke to the teachers and because the Year 3's, S and P, have three teachers because its job shares in that class and setted work, I got the opinions of the three teachers on the children. So shall I tell you what they said?

NF Yes do, yes do.

C Because I mean I've talked to them and... This is S, he's the little boy that came in distressed and everything. He, one of the teachers said, he's left handed and so that sometimes causes problems in children and he couldn't read or write Polish and he couldn't speak English when he started. He can now speak in sentences and is able to interpret for P who is also in his class and will tell the whole class Polish words. So S(teacher) said they were doing grass and she said she was trying to show him and they didn't understand so she said she "here", so of course when you show them grass, "here". You know, so she got her piece of paper and she started colouring the grass, and he went "Ah green!" and then she went "no, no, grass" and then he clicked and said whatever the word was, S (teacher) told me it was "crosne" or something and then they told the whole class. So he's confident enough to say "Polish, crosne. English, grass." The second teacher said S is resilient and his speech is improving all the time. S has overtaken P, he appeared to be less able but obviously had been taking it in. You know the silent phase when they're taking it all in, he was obviously doing that. The third teacher said "S has come on brilliantly; he's reading much more, his home support is good and he's much happier, he's more independent." And recently our school's been doing something called Sprint Start in Year 3 that's been on Meridian, I don't know if you've seen that. And S, because he's sporty and an athletic child, it's raised his profile amongst his peers. So like R(teacher) said, it's made him more valued because of his achievements because you know the sporting thing with boys. So that's what they said about S. Whereas P she arrived with no English but could read and write well in Polish.

NF How old was she when she arrived?

C She was just a Year 3 so seven I suppose

NF Seven going on eight

C Seven yeah, yeah. She will write whole pages in Polish if she can't understand what to do in English, so she would be quite frustrated because in a way we were sort of deskilling her because she can't do it in English.

NF I can imagine that it must be the feeling of going back to the beginning...

C Its frustration

NF You already know she writes really.

C Yes, that's right. So S(teacher) said that she'd get quite frustrated and do it in Polish and she did this whole page of beautiful Polish which of course we can't read, you

know. Which is fair, I can see why she's doing it but S(teacher) was saying she's now becoming more confident to speak in English and she will try to speak in class but its usually single words which is what I find with my little boy too. The second teacher said P is becoming more confident, she's got good comprehension of what is happening, not comprehension skills but by watching others, you know, seeing what to do, she can see what to do. They were saying that they work with the lower group now for English and Maths and we know that's not really right because if they're more able they should be with the higher group but I think the teachers have got the frustration by the fact that they don't know the English words. I tend to put them in my higher ability group and I do try and persuade people to do things but you can't make other people do other things and they do realise that it's not actually probably the right thing...

NF But as long as the dialogue's going on it's...

C But they're getting the support in English so probably once they've picked up enough English then they'll be in their correct group. It is quite difficult that one isn't it and it's quite a hard one for other people to understand isn't it? The third one said that P's actually had some friendship problems, which S hasn't had, which they thought might be due to language because she's more vulnerable because like S would just rush in and kick a ball, girl's are chatty at that age and she wants to be part of the group but like R's saying, language is a barrier to her and they were saying that she wants to chat-chat and they don't understand her, so she tends to revert to playing with the immature children who are sort of Key Stage 1 Level and so she's been a bit sort of vulnerable, R feels, and the friendship thing is a shame. They were saying S receives help at home, P appears not to. Which is funny because the mother, I speak to her quite a lot because we have an ethnic minority group on a Wednesday, and after school the parents come in about ten past, collect them...

NF This is a group for the parents?

C This is for the children. One of the LSA's in the school runs an ethnic minority group through the EMAS service and the parents come in and wait in the hall and I sort of talk to them because you don't want to have time at the end of the day and she's often at work then and grandma picks him up who doesn't speak any English. And so V's in my class and P's in Year 3 and then the mum keeps telling me oh she loves kids, she's saying "I love kids" and says she's a teacher in Poland. Now I don't know whether she's actually a teacher or a teacher's assistant but she doesn't appear to be, from what they're saying, from what the Year 3's are saying, she doesn't seem to be, P's not getting the support. So I'm getting like mixed messages from the mum and the teachers. And the mums are saying "oh we know V, he's so bright" and he's probably an average Year R ability and he's Year 1, obviously because he hasn't learnt it. So that's a funny one a bit of a mixed message so you don't always get that. So that's basically it, we've had EMAS support and early profiling on these children.

NF Oh right, and you get your ten hours

C And they've had their ten hours, all of the children in the juniors have had their ten hours but I was saying it took a long time to come, obviously the influx of Polish, so we had to wait quite a long time and we kept nagging and saying "can we have our

profiling” and they know us really well in this school and C... knows me really well because she’s the like manager, do you know her C J?

NF No I don’t know her

C Yeah she’s lovely and so basically it’s C J and we’re on the phone going “so what, what are you going to do about it?” And we have K this lady came and, Polish lady came and one of the things, its not a criticism of the EMAS service, but its, some of the teachers were saying that she didn’t always follow what she was asked to do with the children, and we think that that’s her confidence because for instance they were doing history and she said “well I don’t know English history, I’m not confident.”

NF Because she’s Polish herself?

C Because she’s Polish, but what the teacher said was that she’d provided her the books the resources, what to do, because she wasn’t confident, it wasn’t what she wanted to do. So we had a slight problem with that, so we tried to get round it and say can you please support the teacher in what they want to do with the children and it would be interesting because the ten hours have all gone in the juniors so it’s my turn now and my little boy will have his ten hours so she hasn’t worked with him yet and I think it will be very different with early years because you know early years is going to be a different ball game.

NF The priorities are going to be different, completely different aren’t they?

C Completely different. So basically that’s where we are with all those children and as I say V in my class, he’s a great kid, he’s lovely. He comes in and tries to communicate with the others and at the beginning he would just stand, and we do planning, we do planning circles called “plan day review” and they would review what they’ve done and he would just stand up with it and we’d just say “ooh so what did you make there V, is it a car?” And now he’ll stand up and go “tower” and he’s still very much single words but he’ll, and then the other children will interpret for him sometimes and my class, they’re very good with that as we talk about things like that and he will make his needs known. He’ll come up and go “tissue, tissue” and “tap me” and he’ll go “toilet, toilet” so they very quickly picked up the words they needed to know. And I mean he follows routines and his work, I mean he tries so hard with his work and so I, I think he seems to settle in very well but one thing we have noticed about all the Polish children is that they are often absent...

NF Mm, this is the thing...Yes one of my school’s said they’ll book say a two weeks leave to go home over Christmas and there’s a third week attached to it...

C So apparently there’s a three weeks in May for V and his sister because it’s the big first communion and you have to go back to Poland for it and I said to her that they do actually have first communion in England if you’re Catholic and she was quite surprised and she was quite surprised, I said my niece is Catholic, she had first communion here but obviously you can go back to your home town and she said “but it’s three weeks” and I said that you can only have two weeks and I said “you have to sort this out with the Headteacher you know. And then they’ll be off sick, and V has been very poorly, I mean he actually went to the hospital because he had trouble with

his lungs so whether its that they've come from there to here and they've picked up the bugs like the Year R children do or whether its that they've come in and are exhausted from having to think in, I mean we're speaking to them in English and they're Polish and for little children it must be really exhausting. Or whether the culture is different because they, I don't know what it is, the Polish culture is very much more child orientated than the English one I would say, very much more. You know, everything is for the child. I'm not saying we don't care about our children but we're much more reserved...

NF And probably a lot of other Europeans think that...

C Yeah, and we're not quite sure about the absences so that's something we're keeping an eye on really. So that's basically the story of all of our Polish children.

NF Right, well that's really, really interesting, thank you. I mean, one of the threads I'm picking up there is I'm wondering if, and its something we can explore later, we don't have to have an answer to it today, if there's a difference relating to the age they come in at. So I'm thinking that the Year 3 child, who obviously came in with lots and lots of skills in her home language, if its then much harder because she's come in later and if the language acquisition device starts to switch down and things like that.

C We think, we think that's got something to do with it actually because the ones, I mean obviously we've only had, I mean A came in speaking good English anyway and then V's come in and although he's not speaking big sentences he understanding and he hasn't been distressed or frustrated or anything but I think P has. And I think S had that little Summer Term thing where he was a little bit distressed when he was in this building but then he started to pick up the English skills because he didn't have any Polish ones to fall back on. I think it must be very hard for her, you know for P, because if you were really good in your school and you were the one who did all the writing and then suddenly you've got a write "Biff sat on the chair" it must be very frustrating for them. I do feel very, very sorry for them there

NF And I wonder also if it's all related to, what we as early years teachers might do with our children in Year R is much freer anyway. Whereas with a Year 3 class there's this formality, there's this attention to outcomes and standards...

C Obviously, we've had a lot of that, we're doing a lot of standards and things at school but I think yeah obviously the early years curriculum is so geared up to child initiated activities, we don't actually need to speak with them, but we do especially in this school, we do lots of speaking and listening and I do loads before I even start phonics with my speaking and listening because you just need it and I mean, when people ask how you're doing, say for your Polish children or your Punjabi, I'm doing it for all the children not just for those children and those skills are relevant to all the children.

NF Absolutely yes

C Because that is what some people find because I did have a little bit of a problem, not exactly problem, but some of the teachers didn't understand that actually you just carry on, you do it. And it was me, I was the one who fought this time, I had a little

Nepalese girl and V and we were just tracing numbers because I was just seeing where they were and she just didn't want to do it and I was thinking "this is just ridiculous" and I said to my LSA "I think, I think she knows more than this, take her off" and she could count to twenty so she was probably thinking "what's this stupid woman making me trace number two for when I can". And then we realised that one of the junior teachers said "well how can I know what they can do in maths" and we said "well give them a sum and see if they can do it, you don't need to speak about it, you give them the things." And that is something that we had to get over to the teachers. It's quite interesting.

NF It's very interesting to hear you say that you feel in a way that the good practice for all children, like for example lots and lots of speaking and listening, is actually going to advantage either the EAL or your indigenous English speakers and that really it's not necessarily a bolt-on or an extra. So some of the view I get from talking to teachers, I mean including London teachers, is there's some kind of magic package you can buy in and deliver to your EAL children and make them all speak English.

C A lot of people have that opinion because a lot of my friends say to me "well why don't they speak English before they come to school, shouldn't their parents make them speak English?". They don't come from that sort of background because you know when I say "I have six languages in my class" and in London schools they probably have every child speaking a different language or even worse...

NF Yes, up to forty or fifty sometimes

C But actually, we don't make a big thing of it. You know, we're all learning the words together so what difference does it make, but I think, you see, I think early years should get that practice right the way through, but I'm an early years teacher though, I just feel that that is where it is- the doing and the...

NF Especially the speaking and listening...

C Definitely, definitely. I'm not saying we don't do the other things but you introduce them when you're ready. And then obviously the more able children you push on further. But then your reinforcing not only for the Polish, Bengali, Punjabi, Nepalese but for everybody. And I think, you know like with V he was struggling a bit with his sounds so we gave him a bit of extra time with the LSAs and they were using the Jolly Phonics thing, I'm afraid I don't like it very much but they do it with V and with J who's Nepalese, because the actions were actually helping them remember. So if it actually helps, if it helps you've got to do it haven't you? So that's what we do really and I think, yeah I think it's great the cultural difference that we have in school, and we try and sort of make everyone aware. Well, we do lots of SEAL work with them at school, you know the Social and Emotional Aspects of Literacy work. So we do all that and this term it's going to be me, so we do all that, lots of that about the all the children not specifically...

NF Promoting self-esteem with them and protecting identity and those sorts of issues.

C Yes that's right, and my LSA who does the homework club, she just wrote down a few things, the things she does. She sort of just said the things she does with them that

they do speaking and listening and they talk about different cultures and then they do some writing and numeracy and role play. So those are the sorts of things they do at the homework club, also she's backing it up in the homework club. She's got all the different languages there and it's usually her and one more person and I've just said write down what you do C(LSA) and so those are the sort of things. There's a chance there for children to talk about their background. See she's asked in, like A the one who speaks good English, her mum's been in and talked about Poland and someone else has been in.

NF So this is a homework club used just for the ethnic minority...?

C Yeah, the ethnic minority homework club, it's the same thing. It's on a Wednesday night and it's financed by EMAS but it started off with like an EMAS teacher running it and C(LSA) was like the assistant and she seemed to take over and she's in school and knows the children. She's like me; we've both been here a long, long time so we've known them all since they were little. And they do really like going and then she has a support from EMAS so she's paid by EMAS for running that club. So the children who are ethnic minority children are invited along to go, and they don't have to go but if they want to go they come and usually she's got about 20 of the 35 there.

NF Do you know if that happens in other schools in this area?

C There are some, I don't know about in E(town) with the clubs, but EMAS would be able to tell you where the clubs are. H T is the one we organised it through and she will tell you where the other clubs are but each sort of term or each year they have to fight for funding, you know what it's like. So they do get support there as well and C(LSA) sort of liaises through me and the teachers so that they know what they need to work on like P needs to learn some words and as V's learning the words in my class C(LSA) might borrow some of the games we play and some of the older child might play.

NF So it's very focused on individual need then.

C Well we try to but yet they have fun time so they have party time and bring in the different ethnic food.

NF So, how do the parents know about that club?

C There's a letter, a letter goes out to, actually I'm not sure whether the letter goes home in Polish, I think it goes home in English actually. We have sent them in Bengali but I don't know if we've ever actually sent any Polish ones, I'm sure though the letter goes home, well it seems to. Well we all try to explain to the parents when they're being picked up, because obviously they're early years you try and speak to the parents...

NF You've still got that contact.

C And if, for instance A's mum is very good at interpreting for us so she will interpret to V's grandma what we're trying to say.

NF So perhaps there's a sense of self-supporting with the families...

C They're very good themselves.

NF So do you get the, do you notice any...I'm wondering if there's any difference between the issues Polish children have when coming here and say your Bengali children developing English. Does it feel different or do the issues feel similar?

C I don't know because the Polish children seem keener to work than the Bengali children I think. Well, I'm not saying all the Bengali children but we do have special needs Bengali children and we also have the problem with the Bengali children going off on extended holidays. And so many of them go on, you know, it's not a week its six months sometimes. So, I suppose some of the issues will be the same but some of them are slightly different because as we were just saying that the Polish children seem to be slightly more keen to learn whereas I wouldn't say all of the Bengali children are.

NF And I wonder if that's a difference in family attitude to school so perhaps typically, I'm generalising again, Asian parents regard school with great respect but see it is as something a bit separate from the home. Whereas I wonder, I don't know, whether the Polish families just are kind of aspirational because they've come here...

C I think so, a couple of the Polish families have said to the teachers that eerm, England isn't quite what they thought and they're quite upset with some of the, I mean obviously we don't have hopefully too much bad behaviour, but some of the older children in the Secondary school are finding it difficult because when the parents come with the aspiration to heads-down work and they've come into a classroom where there's disruption and no learning, because we do have those problems. And they're finding it, and they're saying that's not what they've come for and they've come for the children to get on and they're finding it's not quite what they thought. And they also say that Polish children are children for longer in Poland, that's what they say. That's what they were saying, they're kept as children. Whereas our children, they were saying, to R who was just here a second ago, about the 'want culture' of the English and obviously they don't have the money. And the Polish mum of V, we were just talking to her and she works in the 99p shop and she was saying "well I stay here because the money is better, in Poland I earn £200 a month and £100 of that is my living expenses.

NF It's unimaginable that isn't it?

C I know, so although they've come here to better themselves I think that they think family and the culture isn't as good as theirs.

NF That must be really hard mustn't it, a real dilemma.

C It must be hard because it's a mixed message, you know, because you want to get on and you need money to get on. So they come here to get the jobs and if their children, as we were saying like S is, very resilient, he'll probably get on because he's one of the lads he's in with them, whereas the girls are struggling more. And I just think that's a bit sad.

NF Yes it is, so how about the other children? How are the other children responding in the class?

C What, do you mean in the acceptance of different cultures? We have always had, well for as long as I've been here, bilingual children. We've always had a very accepting culture of acceptance, it's a norm really. They're interesting really because one day V said, oh I know we were reading in class- we were doing our guided reading - and he wanted to get a tissue but I thought he was going off somewhere so I went "come back V, we're reading" and he went "no, no, no, no. Mummy" and I said "what's the matter" and he went "tissue" and I said "oh sorry!" And then J went "why is he crying?" and then I said that I didn't understand him and that he wanted to get a tissue and I was trying to explain to her what I'd done, and she said "yeah cos we don't speak Polish do we." So they are quite understanding, when we try to do things they do help them, but I think with P, because she hasn't got in with anyone, she's finding it harder.

NF Ok. So socially it's been harder for the older girls?

C Well for her, I'm not quite sure, X is quite outgoing so I, although I don't know her, I've never taught her, she will speak to me. P's beginning to speak to me because I'm V's teacher. Sd, I don't really know her at all she's just this quiet little girl and she doesn't speak to me at all. But they do tend to go together, I know the Year 6 teachers said that they usually go together like Sd and J would sit together and whisper to each other in Polish.

NF So at least they have each other really which is good.

C Yes, when J came she didn't have anybody.

NF There's certainly research around saying sort of the individual difference in children makes a huge impact on they're capacity to develop as English speakers or not and so...

C I think so because if you come in and you're a bit cowed and quiet you're going to find it a bit hard to take part. It's fascinating though isn't it?

NF Yes it is fascinating, yeah and I just also, I mean, do you have a feeling on the ground, I don't know amongst, because you're obviously talking to parents and so on as if this is going to grow? Obviously in Southampton it's huge already, I've deliberately chosen not to go there...

C I'm not actually sure if we will get many more, I don't know if there are more families to come or not. I just know that Sd's little brother's to come in September but nobody's really said anymore about friends, whether they will when they go home for their visit in May. I don't know, they haven't really said. So still quite a small number because A was really miffed when they all came you know, because she was the only Polish girl last year and her mum was very much about making her special and she's a bit of a precious special girl, and she was really miffed when S arrived and S was quite upset when he first came and the LSA would be taking him for walks or

anything and they would come and say “do you think A can speak to him?” but she didn’t want to speak to him. I said “don’t make her because she doesn’t want to speak to him” because that was her little bit that had been taken from her when suddenly there’s a new Polish person here.

NF Do you find they want to use Polish at school, or not?

C V doesn’t very much- he tries really hard to speak in English or to gesture or touch but the girls I think do. I don’t think S does much, it seems to be more the girls. But as I said, V’s mum does say to me sometimes that she’s tried to do English with him at home and he says “oh Mum not English, my head hurts” you know, he obviously says that in Polish (laughs). But he says he doesn’t want to know and she says she’s helping him but we haven’t seen with P as much progress as with S. So I don’t know, I mean she did say “Dad works very hard at the bakery and Mum works in the 99p shop and Grandma has been brought over to look after the children and Grandma doesn’t speak any English.” So probably they’re speaking Polish with Grandma all the time.

NF Right, so all absolutely fascinating, thank you. I only, is there anything in particular, I mean my, I’m sorry start at the beginning! My view of this research is very open ended, I think that it will probably be just tracking interviews, experiences with you over time and other teachers and it would be fascinating to talk to your LSA and how that’s going. And inevitably there’ll be developments as we watch these children go through. But is there anything in particular that you’re starting, or that you have a view to starting that also might be interesting to have a look at?

C What, to help the children?

NF Yes, is there anything you’re doing with this particular group?

C Not at the moment no but next term we’re starting the new “Songs and Rhymes” project which is another initiative with money so we’re hoping that D the little Polish boy who’s coming in September will be coming to it after preschool. But obviously we don’t know yet, we’ve sent the letters out and we’ll see who turns up, so there’s a possibility of a Polish child being in that group and it would be interesting to see what happens, so that’s a new initiative.

NF So you’ve got a preschool attached have you? When I came up and parked the car I noticed there was a Family Learning and... That’s separate from the school is it?

C Yes, they just hire that bit of the corner. A few years back we had a preschool but we don’t at the moment. We’re actually, tomorrow is the last day with Norwood Primary School and then we become federated with The Crescent as from the first week of April. So M is our acting head and J N will become our head as from the 16<sup>th</sup> of April.

NF What, J who’s at Crescent?

C Yes, she will be our Federated Head and she will be the Executive Head of the two schools. So this is totally new. Without a Headteacher for five terms, and I’m on the

governing body, we've had three or four rounds of interviews and couldn't find who we wanted and then the LEA stepped in and wanted us to consider federation and this is a new thing across the country now because of not being able to fill in headships. So there was lots of discussion between us and Crescent and the Governors and we've become federated and M will be sort of like head man here and the deputy over there will be head man there and J will be over everybody. I mean I'm not quite sure yet but we'll find out tomorrow because J's coming tomorrow, for our day closure. So, I don't know, it shouldn't affect any of this or anything we've started but I don't know if Jane's got any new ideas. I don't know if there are any Polish children there though, because they're a bigger school than us. There's 365 over there and there's only something like 160 here so it's quite different. I suppose something I should say is that some of the children are receiving intensive support because we're on an OfSTED notice to improve at the moment. So, presumably, intensifying support will help the children but I'm not sure whether any of the Polish children are in that bracket or not but obviously the work you're doing for those you're doing for everybody because it's Early Years. So we are being quite heavily being targeted for lots of things at the moment.

NF Well I'm even more grateful for having me in if you've got OfSTED breathing down your collars as well.

C Well, well, it's just one of those things and we just carry on. So that's where we are roughly, we won't be there again. So that is quite heavy which is why I think I didn't get much from the teachers because they've been so busy.

NF No that's fine, that was absolutely huge to be honest, that's quite a lot of information over and above what other schools have been thinking. It was quite an exploratory conversation.

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH CLAIRE AUTUMN 07

NF: So kind of catching up from when I last spoke to you, I think you had Polish children in your class last year, have you got them this year?

C: I have got one little boy this year.

NF: Just one, newly arrived?

C: No, they came I think the summer before last, but mum doesn't speak much English, but she is going to college now to learn, which is really nice, so I've just got the one.

NF: That's a provision in the local area for her to learn English.

C: At Eastleigh college; she said she was trying to do it by watching English TV, but she said it's been better since she has been going out to college, and that actually was good at the parents evening, because she actually had some little notes prepared to ask me some questions, and she had obviously done them with her tutor. They were written in English the questions, which was really nice.

NF: Yes, and more - another thing we talked about last time was this kind of, that they are so highly aspirational and supportive of the children, so that's like another piece of evidence there really isn't there.

C: Very supportive, which is nice, so as I say I just have the one and I've known him since the summertime, because we did the pre-school, and he came to nearly all of those, and he was an elective mute then, he has started to speak now.

NF: Right.

C: I've seen lots of changes in him; it's been brilliant.

NF: So what was the summer school then?

C: In the summer we did the songs and rhymes project, and I ran it at school and we did it for ten weeks, and so the parents would come with the children and do activities, and we would provide the children with the song book and CD which they kept, so for

him that was good because obviously he wouldn't have the same bank of songs and rhymes that, you know maybe some of our children might have, I'm not saying all of our English children do, but do you know what I mean, the nursery rhymes you might have. So there was like a shared background with the songs and rhymes, and he came with mum every week and he was very - he's quite a stubborn little boy and he obviously is the baby of the family, and very much the baby of the family. I think maybe perhaps Polish children, perhaps are treated slightly differently to English children. Where some English parents might say you need to be independent, and the Polish parents seem to want to keep them younger for longer. Also grandma's been brought over to look after him, so he's getting Polish spoken to him, you know by grandma, so he came, I think he came for eight or nine of the ten sessions, and over the weeks it was nice because I got to know him, although he wouldn't speak to me, we could communicate through words and gestures, and smiles, and because we had a task each week, which they were set, they didn't have to do, but they did, they always did theirs, the children would bring a scrap book, they would bring the scrap book the next week to show me what they had done, and I would talk to the children about it and give them a sticker, and we got like a sort of two way communication, so that when he came into school, it wasn't quite so bad. We had a few hiccups with him at the beginning, obviously he didn't understand things, and then he went back into his defence mode, I won't sit down with the other children, I won't go to the toilet, I won't do art, and we've sort got round most of those now, and he now sits down with the other children and he now speaks to me, which is you know -

NF: So just going back a bit then, the songs and rhymes project was you said a summer school?

C: No just over the summer term, ten weeks over the summer term, so it was an hour a week for five weeks and an hour and a half a week the second five weeks. It's like an induction for year R.

NF: You were in the middle of that weren't you, when we last spoke.

C: I think so, so it's an induction for year R children, and because we had the funding from the project, I used to do five weeks and last summer I could do ten weeks and give the children all these freebies to entice them in.

NF: So that's the funding provided from -

C: It was, it's gone now so we have now got to find ways around, which is very disappointing for me, I'm hoping that we are going to carry it on, because I've been doing a large amount of work with it and we have got to find ways of funding it through school now.

NF: Where did it come from? From the LA?

C: Yes, it came - it was a pilot project and now it's been proven that it works, that parents and children together you know, it's pretty obvious that it's going to work, and it's been proven so many times through all of the early years reports, and basically this is just another one saying is it going to work in Hampshire and of course everybody who's done is saying it's great.

NF: So is there a written thing about it, is there - do you know if anyone has written up the -

C: I don't know about the Hampshire one, but the actual project comes from the PEEP the Peers Early Education, and they did a really big study, six years study of it, but they teach them from birth to five, whereas I only did ten weeks, so obviously theirs is a much sort of bigger research paper, I was looking at it on Sunday actually on the internet.

NF: So there I something written about it, how successful it is.

C: About the PEEP program, and this is taken from the PEEP program, it's obviously they have taken ideas from the PEEP program, and it's obviously been scaled down so we can do it for just small blocks of time, but that is really interesting research, because obviously they have the control group, when they did the big research, the six year one, and the children, it wasn't just the EAL children it's disadvantaged children in Oxfordshire it started.

- NF: Ok, but with you doing it here, is your focus all your reception children or just your EAL children?
- C: No all, it was to invite all the children to come with their parents if they wished to, and over the time to see whether it actually helped them to come into school and settle in, and that's what I'm doing my module on at the moment, seeing how its working, and the children who attended the most, sort of eight or more out of the ten sessions, are the really settled children. So you know, and D is one of those and he is really settled except when minor things go wrong, and then that's a language thing, and we have had two visits from a bi-lingual assistant which were left from when he used to be at pre-school, but no more, so I've only had like two visits from a Polish bi-lingual assistant, but she helps us iron a few things out in those two visits.
- NF: Ok, because it used to be more than that.
- C: It was ten you see, but because the pre-school had had problems with him, they had called them out to the pre-school, so they got the profile, which I have asked them to send me, they still haven't sent it to me yet, and he had eight sessions at the pre-school, and Kasha said she couldn't believe the difference in seeing him in school, as to how he was in pre-school, because he wouldn't integrate at all there. They found him quite difficult at the pre-school, whereas because he had got to know us through songs and rhymes, and mum with him, you know gradually helped him assimilate into the class, so it was a good way.
- NF: I hadn't understood that the EMASS support kind of dried up if he had already had it pre-school. I kind of assumed that the ten sessions were for school, five to eleven as it were, I didn't realise that.
- C: Also you know some languages are free and others you have to buy into them, if you don't have the money in the school to buy into it, you don't get the support. So then it's a drain on the special needs budget, because obviously those children are not necessarily special need children, but they need the support, because obviously you need the support especially further up the school. As I say in my class, because we use photographs and signs and song, it's not quite so difficult, you can cope, but I see why people up the school get frustrated.

NF: Yes, in fact lets just come back to what you do in your class bit, so there's, in terms of - we touched on this a little bit when we last spoke, but we touched on lots of things then, so just to kind of clarify, your views on how mono-lingual English speaking children develop in terms of English.

C: It's quite interesting when you said that, because to be quite honest, I think it works for both, you know I found that quite difficult to answer because -

NF: No that's interesting in itself.

C: Because in early years classrooms there is so much with rhymes and songs with jingles, stories, role play, puppets, discussion, that whether you are a mono-lingual English speaker or EAL English speaker I think you're assimilating it, and you're absorbing it through doing.

NF: Ok, so in some ways you are saying then, for you, as an early years teacher there doesn't feel like a difference between what you might provide.

C: There's a slight difference where for instance, vocabulary might be a problem, because obviously if the children don't know the word, then obviously you have got to explain it or find some way of getting them to understand, but then again there are some English children who don't know their vocabulary either, you know because you're teaching them new words all the time. So sometimes its different for the EAL children, but sometimes you are doing the same for both, so I think it sort of slots in I think in early years classrooms.

NF: How do you go about introducing new vocabulary then, in terms of the EAL children?

C: I think that usually that whatever the activity is, I mean we just you know, show and talk about it and actually just tell them the word, just straight away.

NF: In many ways it's just a normal part of your normal practises, it's just a kind of an understanding that I know this child is going to need more vocabulary, because he hasn't got it, so therefore I'm going to -

- C: Exactly so you know, like you might for instance, we were talking about you know, properties of a circle or something like that, you want the word curved, well some of the mono-lingual children are going to come out with it straight away. Some of them aren't though, but the bi-lingual children possibly wouldn't know the word curved, so you know you got other children offering the word curved, and then you explain the word and you show them and they feel the circles, and we do it you know, hands on as well.
- NF: Hands on as well, so you have got also got the idea of a range of additional props.
- C: Yes, well I think with early years you have always got so many other props, its not just chalk and talk, which is white board and talk. We don't have those yet [laughs] but we will.
- NF: No, Ok so not huge differences there.
- C: No I was just saying only if they needed to learn a new vocabulary, that's the difference I think, otherwise you are absorbing all the time whether you are you know, a pure English speaker or whether you are a bi-lingual speaker, I think your absorbing all the time.
- NF: So this third one, people respond to slightly differently in terms of, so we have to do this, this is how its seen, I mean how do you feel about the fact that you do have to just get on with it, or -
- C: Well I wrote down here, it's much easier in early years rooms as much of the work is through speaking, so its through absorption really I mean I don't set up say, ok you're Polish, I'm going to teach you English, whereas further up the school I can see why they might have a problem, because you are right into the Tudors or something, and if you don't know the English for it, but the topics and the way we work in early years, you don't always need to know the vocabulary straight away, you absorb it, it's talked to you as you go along, it's shared between the children, so I think that maybe it's easier for me that one.
- NF: But you're the EAL co-ordinator aren't you, so does that involve you trying to support staff higher up the school?

C: At the moment basically my role is more purely liaison with the EMASS service, and getting in help through the support, bi-lingual support, and obviously if you have got any hiccups or anything like that, but I don't actually have any time as such to do anything else, so basically its getting in resources when people ask for them, when children come in liasing with the secretary about making sure that in EMASS children have arrived, getting the early profile done when it comes in, making sure that the teachers are supported and when we have the Bengali support coming in, to have to meet them and set that up, through liase with the Teachers and EMASS, and that's mainly my role at the moment, because I don't have any time as such.

NF: Right, because you have another role, because yours is a foundation stage.

C: I've got three, I'm foundation stage, EAL and History, so and I don't have any time because I'm a class Teacher, so basically it is quite difficult because when you are the foundation stage manager, that takes a massive amount of your time, and obviously I want to do the best I can with the others, but I can only do what I can do. It is quite difficult; I do find it quite difficult.

NF: It was interesting because I was talking to Becky who is obviously newly arrived at the school, and with just the experience of only one other EAL child in her class, and she was saying that she felt very well supported by her LSA, so I was wondering if the LSAs, are they receiving training or is it....

C: We have had in the past training from Anwen from EMASS, I don't think that's her name anymore actually.

NF: She got married.

C: But she came and gave some of us, so that would have been some of the LSAs - immersion in Welsh, when we had a big group a little while ago, just to explain how it feels, and it was so excellent you know, it made people see how the child would feel and how you can support you know, pictorially through gestures, so she actually did, it's a few years ago now, but I think you know we've been quite a lot of us have been here quite a long time, so some of those LSAs have probably been on that.

NF: Do you think there is a kind of body of knowledge about EAL in the school because you've had children a long time.

C: I think so because we have had it a long long time, I mean I've been here twenty years and there has always been EAL children. They were the Bengali's when I arrived and they were arriving from Bangladesh with nothing, and it was straight into the classroom and get on with it. And then over the years obviously we have picked up other cultures, and I think that we do have, because we are a community school and we do have that community feel, I think that we support each other. I think that's how we get around it, I think we are a very supportive school to each other.

NF: A kind of sense of peer support really.

C: I think so; if people are stuck we know we can help.

NF: You are quite a small school, aren't you, I didn't realise how small you were, hundred and seventy is that -

C: Seven classes.

NF: Just one class in each year group.

C: Yes that's what we are always going to be now.

NF: Right because you are federated with Crescent.

NF: It's not because we are federated with Crescent, no, but Jane our new Head wanted us to be a single form entry school, and we are going to be moving into the other building.

NF: Oh really?

C: And this building is going to becoming a children's centre.

NFL Oh is it; oh gosh I didn't know that.

C: Yes, so obviously last time you came, it wasn't all out in the open, you know but it's obviously all happened and we are going to now be all in one building.

NF: Over the road, over at (...) crescent.

C: No in the Junior building.

NF: In the Junior building I beg your pardon.

C: Which is going to be the Nutbeam building, it's going to be the school, and this is going to be the children's centre.

NF: When is that going to happen, that this year or -

C: Yes well it's supposed to start in February, half term till April, I'm not sure whether we are going to be moving in April, I had a governors meeting last night and that's what Jane told us last night, our Head. I don't quite know whether we are going to move in April or whether we are actually starting in September, I'm not quite sure about that, it depends on how fast everybody goes, there's going to be a lot of to-ing and fro-ing.

NF: Right, but you are quite a small unit aren't you, I wonder if that is an advantage in terms of things like EAL support, or -

C: I don't know because talking to sort of other people in bigger schools they have you know, many more languages than us and I don't know if that's harder or, we thought eleven was a lot, until Becky said you know that her boyfriend had about forty four or something, so, because we are a small school. I suppose because we are supportive of each other, we try to help each other and obviously like we have the home work club, which is going on now, you can hear that going on now, and that's all the EAL children who are invited to it, and they can go along and with two of our experienced LSAs and money from EMASS at the moment until March.

NF: And I wonder if in a small school, just speculating here really, if you have this sense of so when your children, when your little boy you've got now leaves you, you'll talk to the year one Teacher about him or you -

C: Well I still talk to Rosemary about this because Victor was actually in R and then he went straight up to two.

NF: Yes so she was telling me.

C: You know which is quite difficult, and then at the beginning of the term, Rosemary was finding it quite frustrating and yet Victor was talking to me in full sentences, and so I said to Rosemary he couldn't speak English when he came, and he's talking to me in full sentences, so we do speak to each other about the children, and support each other and we are quite supportive between you know, the year groups and obviously with the continuing learning journey from year R and into year One, we try and encourage a lot of liaison as a team, so foundation is in the team key stage one, its only three classes you see, whereas I'm in a team on my own.

NF: Yes, that's interesting, because yes I wonder if school size impacts at all on the way it supports.

C: It might do, I'm not sure about that.

NF: No I'm not either.

C: Yes.

NF: So thank that's really interesting, so just, there's a fourth question there, just in terms of what are the key issues specifically for, is it D in your class now? You have talked about him a little bit and you're saying he had a few problems.

C: I wrote down a couple of problems that came over, we had a problem over toileting, he wouldn't go to the toilet, he still won't go actually, but I think he must go at play times now, I tried to get round it with a photograph of the card with a question on the back, saying can I go to the toilet, giving him one for the parents, explaining to - the dad speaks ok English, the mum tries really hard, her English has progressed so you can communicate better with the dad than the mum, and saying that he doesn't want to ask, so we have problems over that, that one's not really resolved. Then we had problems over the Art and he wouldn't do Art, and we couldn't understand why. The second time, Katya the bi-lingual assistant came in, we said can you ask him why he doesn't want to do it, and he didn't want to put the painting aprons on, because he said they were dirty. I mean you know we wash them, but they've got stains on them, and so we thought what can we do about this, so she wrote a letter home in Polish to the

parents, saying could they send a shirt for him you know, from home, so they sent a large T shirt for him and he's been doing Art ever since. So that was a problem and if Katya hadn't have come in, he might still be refusing to do Art, and we wouldn't have known why. His parents say he is a fastidious child, he just doesn't like things dirty, not necessarily because he's Polish, I mean a lot of English have been like that, but he couldn't explain to us. The other day he was doing some cut and stick, as his child initiated activities, and he came over to me and started waving his hands, and I thought what's he on about, I just couldn't work it out, and he was pointing and pointing, and I said "aren't you going to do your cut and stick?". And he was going, so I said "well don't you want to get on with it", and then I clicked - he wanted his shirt and it was in his tray folded up, and I said "well you can get it", and it's little things like that that which is a bit of a problem, because obviously that is a language problem. But we manage you know, waving our hands around and smiling, and he comes in the morning and he stand with his book bag and he stands by me and smiles, and I say "good morning D", and he smiles, I say, "put your book bag away", and if you just you know, he does it, and he just needs me to know he is there, and once he knows that I know he is there, he'll do the routine. It's very strange but that could be him, and I think he is a bright boy, he's in intake three at the moment so he's only part time in the mornings only until Christmas, so you know I obviously don't know him as well as I know Victor, having him all day, but I've seen so much progress in such a short time, from a very sort of timid child in the summer, he was very reserved for the first couple of weeks, and as I say all the children would be sitting down in a circle and he'd stand up, and he would not sit down, so we tried to sort of persuade him to, it didn't work, so in the end between my LSA's we said just leave him then, we won't force him, and then one day, the first time we watched television, we put the maths program on, I had a student, I said "where's D?", and he went, "he's sitting down", he just sat down, so obviously at home he feels comfortable he sits down for television. He had obviously never sat in a circle with other children.

NF: Right, that's interesting, so it's about, you can't explain to him why we are all doing this, therefore he doesn't understand it and so it becomes a frightening thing for him.

C: Obviously, you think you're explaining it and you're showing the other children doing it, he wasn't taking that in, so that can be a bit of a problem, because obviously we are demonstrating by everybody, but if you don't get it, you don't get it, and that was difficult, but as I say it was great that we had these two days from (Katya), it was only like two hours or something like that, that in that time you know she sorted out a couple of things for us, so it is handy to have somebody who does speak the language, but I suppose we could have asked the sister, because we have done that in the past, we have asked the sister but I don't really want them to become over reliant on older children, its not fair on the older children.

NF: He has got siblings in the school then?

C: He has a sister up in the top of the school, so yes, he is a lovely little boy now, he seems to have settled, I just put the successes were that he is now kind of speaking two to three words, one to one with me and its mainly colours, numbers, or like he drew a picture, I said "oh you've had your hair cut D", and he points and eyes, ears mouth, "two eyes" he says, so you know its two to three words, to me, he doesn't really say much in the class yet, but he does say "yes Mrs Oldham" when I do the register now, wouldn't do that a few weeks ago.

NF: So he is quite anxious, he's quite shy, so we are just looking at normal individual differences here really.

C: I think that's just how he is really, he's very different from Victor's type of child. Victor was very you know, he was lacking in confidence, but he would stand up for himself, whereas D is a bit more reserved, and I do think probably he is what the English people might say, babied at home, because when they pick him up straight away he is in their arms like a baby, and they are talking to me holding him in their arms, so you know it's a difference in expectations maybe.

NF: Do you think the way in which you support him, I mean because he was reserved, and quiet at the beginning, do you think you kind of just left him to it, or did you kind of go out to him and try and include him.

C: We tried to do it in a one to one situation, because it became a confrontation if you did it in the class, I mean we didn't - we just left him standing in the circle while the children were listening, but then when the children moved away, and we tried to persuade him to choose his - because we have cards which they choose to do their activities, and for a long time he wouldn't pick the cards up, and then he then suddenly started by nudging them with his foot, so we did in a one to one way, and then its non confrontational, and now he does it himself. So I think you have got to be very careful with children, because you can either, if you make it a big issue it could be that all year, couldn't it, hopefully not but as I say he is bright, I mean he can write his name and as I say is starting to speak.

NF: So he's going to be quite an interesting one to watch across the year actually, because he's a new arrival and at the beginning as it were, it would be nice to come in and see him, did you say you are happy for me to come in.

C: Yes I think so, yes.

NF: Lovely, it would be lovely to just come in and I'd just sit and observe really, I was speaking to Becky (...) last week, I'm obviously so not, coming in with a judgemental hat, its just a like, how are these children coping, what do they do?

C: To be quite honest, I don't mind anybody coming in to early years classroom, because you know, because of me being in lots of early years classrooms and you know people come in, don't they, and you have to accept how we are basically. Whatever the activity is you know, and then they can point out what he's doing. It would probably be better to come when he's doing you know, like a child initiated activity, rather than a teacher lecture, no point in watching one of us doing something.

NF: Well maybe both, it's quite interesting to see, well how does he cope with the kind of being asked directly to talk. That might be quite interesting as well.

C: I don't mind any time.

NF: I was thinking after, I mean definitely after Christmas now obviously, because we are all exhausted now, and everything is so busy now, maybe in the New Year, do you want to set a date now.

C: If I can get my diary.

NF: Ok let's do it.

[End of transcript

### **NF THIRD INTERVIEW WITH CLAIRE SUMMER 2008**

NF: So tell me about D and how he is getting on. I saw him didn't I in March?

C: Yes.

NF: It was interesting for me because when I was looking back at the old interview with you in October, he had quite beginner English then I think.

C: Definitely he wasn't participating much at all.

NF: Whereas by the time I saw him in March in class, he seemed to have full sentences and...

C: He's really come on really well. Today we were doing literacy and we were reading a big book, The Giant Sandwich, and we were reading through the story and at the end, it was something like, "let's make a sandwich the giant said", and he was reading along and he was saying the whole sentences, and he will answer me in a sentence now. He will come up and initiate conversation with me, he's isn't a bit timid anymore, because I don't know if you remember when he first started, I said to you he wouldn't even sit down. Until October he wouldn't say more than one or two words individually to an LSA, but now you know, he initiates conversation with other children, he plays, he doesn't spend his life in the book corner anymore, he's often with construction lads you know, a little group in the corner, he has come on so much, it's absolutely unbelievable. In one year.

NF: That's literally one year isn't it, because the last time I spoke to you was about...?

C: It was April I first met him at Songs and Rhymes.

NF: Songs and Rhymes that's right.

RD: That's right because I'm now on week five of this year's songs and rhymes, and I'm thinking you know, how he has come on since then, when he was totally non verbal until about the end of September, and yet you know, now he is fantastic.

NF: It's quite interesting really isn't it, because he kind of maps a kind of sequence, there's the silence and then there's one word and then...

C: Definitely had a silent time.

NF: And then mentioned the phrases and now complete sentences.

C: Definitely.

NF: And as you said even initiating conversation right. And what about reading and writing, how are they?

C: He's writing now he's beginning to start, because we are doing ReadWriteInc at school, we use the Fred Fingers, so he is beginning to spell out words, and he can write simple words like mummy and daddy, D, and, and the, he's beginning to write a simple sentence, which is sort of on line with my more able children in the class. So you know he knows you go from left to right, and he's beginning to put sentences together, very simple sentences, like "I went to the park" or something like that, but it's the start.

NF: So that's interesting, so within a year, having come in with no spoken English, you're saying he is at the same level with literacy as more able children in class.

C: Yes as my...yes he's a bit of borderline...I've got a very big divide in my class, of very bright children and very needy children, and he's in my middle group, but I would say he's at the top of my middle group. And you know, I'm sort of teetering on whether to put him in the bottom of my second group or leave him at the top of my middle group. It's a difficult one, but he's comfortable in that group and he's the most able in that group.

NF: It's probably a useful confidence-wise I would imagine.

C: It is especially like you say with reading as well, because we do guided reading and we use the Oxford Reading Tree, and we're reading stage one plus, and he's able to read that quite confidently and talk about the characters and know their names, what

they're doing. He gets quite excited about the pictures, talks about what they are doing.

NF: That's good.

C: Yes it's amazing.

NF: Right, really impressive, so in fact when he goes up into Year One, would there be anything specific that he'd still need support with do you think?

C: The only thing he might, because we have found it with the other Polish children in Year Two, is that there is specific mathematical vocabulary, which sometimes tricks ethnic minority children, also tricks the native children as well. And I think maybe perhaps for, what's the word, technical vocabulary. I think...

NF: The science and things of that nature.

C: That sort of thing, but I wouldn't say that he would need, like special needs support or anything, he just maybe need a little bit of an input, because he had his ten hours from the Polish...well he had two hours less, so he had eight hours, before I got him, and you know, that sort of got us over a few hiccups because that's when you know, we weren't able to understand why he was getting upset about things. But that's a thing of the past now yes.

NF: He seemed during the class I was watching to really enjoy the maths, it seemed to me, is that...

C: I think he enjoys everything.

NF: Ok, because I have only seen him doing maths, I was thinking oh gosh! He really loves it.

C: Because he was doing shapes I think.

NF: Doing shapes, yes.

C: Because he knew the vocabulary really well for that.

NF: I was really amazed at the vocabulary he knew, he seemed to know a lot.

C: But I'd taught him that.

NF: Yes.

C: So he had learnt it, if you see what I mean, so that's why I think he might need to be taught those things.

NF: Right so there is a kind of overt introduction to specifics, as you say vocabulary, you probably still need.

C: I think probably he will, but he picks it up really quickly, where some of the native children don't.

NF: No.

C: You know this is where the ethnic minority children amaze me quite often; because sometimes they overtake the native children, because they are...he is an able boy. So he has got over the problem of the language, and once he felt comfortable with the language, then I think he started to blossom really.

NF: Do you know it's interesting you saying that comment, because one of the things that struck me while I was watching him actually, I wondered to what extent we're actually watching things that are class related, as much as anything, so it's probably a stereo typical thing to say but if he has got all sort of aspirational, more middle-class type parents, who are working hard on his behalf at home with him... do you know what I mean? Although the language barrier is there I wonder if in the long run, the reason some of the ethnic minority make progress.

C: Definitely I agree with you, because the parents...

NF: Is because just looking at aspiration and class...

C: Definitely because we have the same with our Indian children, especially the Indian, not so much the Bengali, but definitely the Indian children. But their parents aspire to maybe higher things than maybe some of our native children, and I think it might be to

do with the catchment and type of children that we have. They're lovely children, yet different types of children.

NF: Absolutely, no it really struck me hard, I just suddenly started to think the extent to which is quite hard to unpick, what's ethnicity and what's class and what's parental aspiration, it's quite complex isn't it.

C: Yes, something I meant to...I don't know where that would come in but, I'll just tell you while I remember, is that it was his birthday in the holidays and his mum asked me how many children were in the class, and we had got a full class of thirty. She wanted to bring them all a present, so I thought maybe that meant he wasn't having a party, because that's what other children, ethnic minority children have done. I was actually ill on the day, so I missed out, but he brought a big present for us, sweets and things, and he brought party bags with lots of things for all the other children, and then another little boy showed me on Tuesday a picture of him at D's party, and he had a party, and that really surprised me. And I said to his mum, oh what a lovely picture, and it was a real cross section of lads from my class.

NF: Really.

C: Lad's that I wouldn't...a surprise that you know, I was surprised were there, plus the little Polish girl from year two and plus the Polish boy from Becky's class, were there.

NF: Presumably because the parents...

C: I think the parents have obviously have befriended themselves, and on the back she had written, the mum had written thank you to this little boy Divic for coming to the party, and then she put, I like my present very much.

NF: Right.

C: And then they had a photo, and I said what a lovely picture and she said yes lovely party.

NF: Oh great.

- C: And I thought a year ago she would never have done that, so she has got the confidence...
- NF: That's really brave actually, isn't it?
- C: The confidence to have a party and it was a mixture of children, it was a mixture of nationalities, it was a mixture of abilities. It was really fascinating, I don't know how that fits in anywhere, but I was just surprised.
- NF: In a way a complete kind of decision to immerse yourself in what's a really cultural norm, I mean that's (...) as well. I think that's a real sign of amazing confidence isn't it?
- C: Especially for the parents who find English quite difficult, and I think they live in a flat too, so you know, there was this smiling group of children with party hats on and so on, and I thought what a lovely thing to happen. When I think how that first day he was like a little scared rabbit and his mum was a little scared rabbit, you know, and now they're so different, fascinating.
- NF: The next set of questions are about the family really, we have probably touched on some of this. So the mother I remember you saying in the last interview, that she worked really hard at learning English, so...
- C: Yes she is trying really hard, I mean they...I think they prepare what they are going to tell me, because Divic's mum was going to take D home one day, I think they are trying to do the old friendship thing. And they came over together, mum and dad together to tell me that tomorrow, Divic's mum will be taking D, and they were getting tomorrow and yesterday muddled up.
- NF: Right.
- C: And they realised they were, and they laughed about it, so I was saying, you are saying he is going with so and so tomorrow, and they said "Ah yes" tomorrow. And they laughed about it so they don't get so uptight with me about it. Which I think is really nice, and they have obviously prepared what they are going to say. So she is becoming much more fluent and at the last parent interview, I can't remember when that was, I

mean she didn't have her little notebook this time, she actually did the speaking and we talked about it, and she did say that they do speak Polish at home, but she said he uses English words at home now too. You know with Sandra his sister, sometimes they use English words as well.

NF: Ok so there is still, it's the next question actually; he is still using Polish at home.

C: But not all the time you see, so it's probably, I'm not sure, but I think it is probably Polish with parents and sometimes Polish with Sandra, but sometimes they are using English words too.

NF: It's interesting because I guess what we would both hope for him that he would be carrying on using Polish at home in a way, because he is so young.

C: Oh definitely, well I think they should keep their mother tongue.

NF: Yes.

C: But I think that they need to use the English when they can as well, because some ethnic minority parents think that they shouldn't speak their language at home, and we are saying no because, because obviously you do your development in your first language.

NF: Exactly.

C: But, you know alongside, because I remember his mum said he is bringing home English words, that's how she put it, so he's obviously you know, saying that's the banana, that's television things like that, so he is teaching her English words.

NF: Interesting.

C: Which is fantastic yes, so I think he does both.

NF: Do you know if the family intends staying, are they kind of settling?

C: Don't know, I'm not really sure, they haven't made any you know, they haven't sort of said if they're staying or going, I'm not even sure if they work, because they are often both there at home time, I don't really know a lot about the family.

NF: It could be that dad is on night shift or something.

C: He could be, I really don't know about that at all, they seem quite happy to be here, but I know at Christmas when they went home, she brought some lovely little biscuits back, and she gave me these biscuits, and I said to her, oh those biscuits were really lovely, I was hungry one day after school, and she said my mother she made those. And she was so pleased that I liked her mother's biscuits, and so you know, obviously it's my home, so she obviously misses Poland a lot, must be hard.

NF: It must be hard.

C: But they try so hard and I think it's a better life for them here, but I don't know, I'm just assuming that, I don't know.

NF: You mentioned, as you say they try very hard, I mean do you still have this sense of how aspirational these families are. Certainly it's coming across from all the other teachers I'm talking to.

C: But the Polish families particularly seem to be...the Polish and the Hindi seem to be the most aspirational for their children. The Polish they seem to embrace our culture more, but then maybe that is because they are European.

NF: Maybe yes.

C: I don't know you know, they seem to try to embrace our culture and they try to fit in, and they definitely aspire for their children to do well, and they want them to do well and they are so pleased when they do well. Because we went to Manor Farm for our trip, and when we got back the children had to do a picture and we wrote a sentence about what animals they had seen, and then we had a day closure. And on the Monday they then had to use that picture to write a sentence, and I said to his mum, D did a beautiful picture of a pig and wrote a beautiful sentence about what we did at Manor Farm. She said "I am so pleased" and she is so grateful when you tell her, and you know says I am so happy, because we all the problems with him wanting to go to the toilet, wetting himself, nothing like that anymore.

NF: That's fantastic isn't it?

C: And then yesterday he came over with a little sort of plastic apron, I don't know if you remember, I told you he had this funny instance and had a shirt.

NF: Yes he had a shirt.

C: He had like a funny little plastic apron all folded up, and he says look I have this, and I said well put it in your tray then, now he would never have come and told me that, he just showed me.

NF: Very dramatic change there.

C: That's fantastic.

NF: So he feel's ready for year one as well then, leading on from the foundation stage.

C: Definitely.

NF: That's great.

C: Yes he is definitely a bright little lad, definitely.

NF: So coming to your practices, it was really interesting watching your...the practice when you were working with D, because I obviously...you said that you felt that good EAL practice is much the same as your ordinary early years practice.

C: Yes.

NF: And I wondered if you kind of felt...you still feel that or if you think consciously that there are things you do maybe, that's support Davic or...

C: Yes as I say I have noticed with Tisha, a little girl who has just arrived from India this term, she is extremely bright, oh because when they arrive you don't know what ability they are, so you slot them in a group where you have got a space basically. And she was in my second to bottom group, and within a week I knew she was in the wrong place, because she is so bright. So she has now moved into my second to top group now and, for instance, today we were doing one less take away, and I did have to...I did a demonstration to the whole class and then when I worked the group, I did a demonstration to the group on a white board, and then I had numbers on the table from

one to twenty, and they had to pick a number, write that number down, and they were using circles, twenty take away one equals. And she looked at me and I said, so I actually went circles Tisha and drew them, so maybe I wouldn't have done that the Alice or somebody else, I would have said circles, and then I said take away so perhaps I'm doing a little bit more but don't know I'm doing it. But I noticed it with Tisha.

NF: When you were talking with D I think it came across, so I was thinking it probably feels like you don't do any extra, but I think because it's innate for you because you know what you should be doing I suppose, you just kind of do it.

C: You just it don't you, so I hadn't noticed it with D so much, but I have noticed it with Tisha, because she is so bright, and I was like the first, we had the same problem with another girl a few years ago, when they arrived and then we were saying alright practice your number one's and practice your numbers two's, and they were like... No wonder they can add and take away, and you realise that actually it's just the language that's stopping you, and they do, the ethnic children they do look a lot don't they, they watch the other children and they learn from the other children, if they are not sure, they will sit back and they will look. So I suppose another thing is I wouldn't always ask D or Tisha or somebody first, I would ask somebody who maybe would model the answer first, so maybe I don't realise I'm doing that.

NF: SO it's the little tweeks that impact all the time probably.

C: I think you just do it because I've been doing it for years so you know, had EAL children for years, so maybe you don't realise you are doing it. But I have noticed with Tisha that, maybe I did do that with D and I didn't know I was.

NF: As I say it's interesting. Yes and I think, what have I got down, yes we have talked about all that. Yes apart from the things that you do, like we have just talked about, like additional prompts, putting in extra languages and so on. Are there any specific resources that you use at all with children on arrival?

C: What with bilingual children?

NF: Yes any specific things that the school uses?

C: Well we have got puppets that we use, but we use those with all the children, so...

NF: There is no kind of commercial stuff out there.

C: No, there is something which hopefully it's actually on my targets to sort out, at the moment but we need the money to buy it, there is something called Switchon, which is for children who arrive in the UK. I don't necessarily think it would be for early years children, I think it might be these children who arrive further up the school, and two of the other teachers in the class with lots of ethnic minority children and have been to St Mary's in Southampton, who do Switchon and Jane Norrie, my head teacher when we were setting my targets, we talked about the fact that she would help me to purchase Switchon. And then when I got my budget then I would be able to buy myself some time to go down there and find out about it, but I haven't done that yet. So that is the target between now and November.

NF: So Switchon is a scheme?

C: It's some sort of scheme, I think it's something from what I can gather, from what I saw when the others came back, that you have say half a dozen children you know, say ten minutes a day for six weeks, or something like that, it's a bit like ReadWriteInc type things.

NF: Like intervention strategy.

C: I think so, I think it's either a catch up or a words...you know the sort of things that maybe we used to do years ago when children arrived from Bangladesh, you know we used to have like LSAs to collect up a group of them and take them to Tesco's. And say this is eggs this is butter, and then come back and make some cakes. But of course you can't do that now, so this is a bit more paper work and that, but apparently Jane said it is very good, my head teacher, and so that is something that I've got to look into. It's on my list of thing to do, not done yet.

NF: It sounds really interesting.

C: It does sound interesting, yes.

- NF: Right back at the beginning of this project, when I was talking to some schools that did not continue with me, but who were a lot less confident, teachers were saying oh I wish there was something out there, some sort of scheme, so it sounds as if there is now, that's interesting.
- C: I think it probably is always there, but you need to know where to find out these things don't you. And I mean the EMTAS are so good if you phone them up, like teachers arrived and I phoned up the next day and said it's me again, they know me by name now when I phone up, it's me again I've got a Hindi girl arrived, seems very bright can you come and do a profile, and within a week they have come up and done the profile. I haven't actually had it back yet, but you know I'm waiting for it to come back. Unfortunately for me Hindi is not a free one, there are certain languages like Polish is free, Bengali is free, well part of your package you pay so much don't you.
- NF: Yes I have heard that, there's a range yes, where you get a total of ten hours.
- C: But Hindi isn't one of them unfortunately, it would have done her good, because she just needs a kick start again, but she will pick it up because she is totally immersed and she is so confident, whereas he wasn't confident to start with but he is now.
- NF: It's very interesting to hear you say about the resources that you just have to know where they are, and so on, because it's a case with another school I am going in to where they have got things like Sparklebox and things like that, but again it's to do with the fact that the head teachers happened to find out about it, because she was on a EAL course and thing like that. You wonder why it's not kind of there at national level, these extra resources are out there, because at national level they are getting things like...
- C: They are just starting to aren't they because we've had some things through in early years, I can't remember the title of it now, but there is one I have just through about ethnic minority children in early years. Because of obviously the high profile now of birth to five and new early years foundation stage and everything, so there is one that I've just got...

- NF: Yes that's the...but they tend to be kind of policy guidance documents don't they, rather than saying stuff that we probably...I don't know.
- C: I think the trouble is that schools probably used to get drowned in paperwork, so now they are trying to save it and do it electronically, but unless you have got the time or the nous or the, you know, it's not going to happen is it? You know this happens with all sorts of things.
- NF: Anyway, great that was. Yes that was that one that was resources. So your role as EAL co- coordinator, I know you have had EAL children as you were saying before for some years, but you haven't had the sheer numbers you have now, so how sudden is that rise, is it the last two years?
- C: Yes the last couple of years, it's sort of gone up sort of quite a few, I can't remember the percentage number, there is forty seven children now and before it was usually between twenty five and thirty.
- NF: Out of?
- C: A hundred and seventy-ish.
- NF: Oh right.
- C: Yes so you know it...
- NF: It's doubled.
- C: Yes so it has gone up, and I've found it quite difficult to you know, keep a handle on it because I'm in class and you are trying to be an early years manager, then you have also got this job and your history job as well you know, it's very difficult. And so some things take a back burner and some things take a front burner, but had we had the monitoring when you came last?
- NF: I don't think so no, tell me about that.
- C: We had Liz Statham from (EMTAS) came in to monitor us for our ethnic minority achievement, and we had a morning where basically I was given time out of class and

we prepared a morning where we showed her children, we showed her our records and things, we showed her children's work samples. I had a little group of children from all the ethnic minorities, who came along and were interviewed by Liz, about how their role in the school, how they fitted in, was there anything that the children didn't like, have the children been negative to them, and I think one child had said something had upset her, and that had actually been documented as a racist issue and had been followed up.

NF: Ok.

C: So you know, we were...and we came out good so that was ok. It was quite hard work they did pull all the things together, because I'm not really a data person, I mean Jane knows this and she is sending me...

NF: It is rather data heavy this sort of thing.

C: I have never been trained to do data, I'm an early years teacher, and suddenly you're supposed to learn to do computer data and everything else and not be taught you know. So I had said to Jane I need help with data, and so I've been on a course for early years now, so we are going to be doing a bit of data with the early years. So that will be quite helpful, because you know, you can keep a track on all of it, it could be gender it could be EAL, it could be physical (...). You know once someone has sorted me out and how to do it, then I will be alright, so that was quite data heavy I think, so that was quite difficult and I do find that although I liaise informally with the teachers and sort of set up things with the teachers, I don't really...I know who the children are and they most of them know me, a couple of the year sixes I'm not certain, I don't know them so well. But it's difficult really to be fully involved with all of the children when you are in class all the time, you know because you need probably time out to do it, but it's something that we need to address that, either I get so much time a term out to do it, or I'm afraid I can't do it, so I just do the best I can.

NF: It must feel as if it has become more, a bigger role because you...

C: Definitely I mean with the monitoring I did find extremely stressful and you know, I did actually have a lot of help from Rosemary and my key stage co-ordinator, she

helped me out there. Because we had all the data but it wasn't properly collated properly, do you know what I mean? You had this here and that there and this there and we just need to tidy it up a bit.

NF: So is it a new thing that the local authority are doing or have they always done that.

C: No they have always done it I think, they always do it every so many years, and because we weren't done in the last one because of all our Ofsted's and everything, we were done in this round, and as we were done our federated partners were also done, over at Crescent, they look good as well, so we were both ok. So we were alright, it was just a few sort of issues which you know, we are just going to have to work on to do with the data and the making sure that everything is up to scratch. But it wasn't anything drastic, they were quite happy with us anyway, so that was alright.

NF: That's good isn't it, I mean I wondered because you have been doing a MA module haven't you, have you finished it?

C: Yes I finished that one and now I'm waiting now until September because I'm going to do the two compulsories. I'm doing it back to front really because I did the three.

NF: Ok you do sometimes.

C: Well it was just how I fell into it because I did the three modules through Val and Chris about the you know, the...oh gosh, all I can remember is about reflective practice, because that was three modules I suddenly thought well I want to carry on with this really, so then that's how I came to do the fourth independently myself with Val Saunders' help, and I passed that one. And now I'm on Tony's books for September to do the compulsories. But I'm...in the meantime I'm in sort of negotiation with my head teacher about release time, because I have said to her that I would like to go part-time so I could finish my studies and she's sort of at the moment suggesting that maybe I might like to stay full-time and she will support me. So you know, which would be quite good for me, so that hasn't been sorted out yet but she's going to talk to me about it.

NF: But part of it was...there was an EAL focus to what you were doing before.

C: Well no, what I thought, the only EAL focus to the module I did with Val was, it was you know, about the songs and rhymes, it was the transition project with parents and their children and D was one of my children you see. I chose four very different children, an ethnic minority child, a looked after child, a child who lives with his father and a child from a normal family [says this with fingers showing quotation marks, laughs]. You know, so I just took four for my focus children, so that was...but what I had said, I mean that has put this down in her report, because I did think it would be quite nice to follow, a bit like you are doing but not in your depth obviously, an EAL child through from songs and rhymes further up the school. And I don't know if you are allowed, I don't know because I haven't got as far as dissertation, I don't know what you are allowed to do and not allowed to do. I don't know if you are allowed to use something you have already started, like D and carry on with him or whether you have to start afresh, because I could start with my...I've got two other ethnic minority children in my songs and rhymes this year, who I could work with, I'm not sure.

NF: You probably have to start afresh unfortunately.

C: I thought I probably would have to, which is a shame because of the...

NF: But I mean you could draw on your experience of D couldn't you.

C: You could use that, that's what I wondered.

NF: Yes (...) and things like that.

C: That's what I thought because obviously I haven't had those talks yet. I'm sort of quite excited but a little bit nervous, because I've got this far now, I've got four modules, it's stupid to give up.

NF: Oh no go for it.

C: But its hard work isn't it?

NF: It's really hard work.

C: Its hard work when you are trying to run a class and...

NF: It's the reading I think isn't it as much as anything.

C: That's what I find difficult.

NF: It's finding time to read.

C: And also finding it all, I find that, I find that quite difficult to find my way around...I can never get into the university from home and..., you know always have to go up to the university and then I have trouble with my passwords. I'm not very computer literate, and I find that hard, I prefer books, but of course there's any books these days, there is so much electronically. So, so that's where I am at the moment, so I'm sort of on a rest period now. Which is a good thing because I have such a large class. I don't think...I did find it really hard.

NF: I'm sure.

C: I mean it's a full class, so it's just like you haven't got time to think really.

NF: No, in a sense, but you are doing a songs and rhymes project again.

C: Yes, well this time it's funded by the school, because I persuaded my head teacher that it was so good, and they didn't have any money for the project, we did try twice, but they said sorry only new projects. So I'm using the same work that we set up last year and just tweaking it, and it's run so much easier this year, I've just finished the first five weeks of the actual just pure songs and rhymes bit, and then next Wednesday we go for the next five weeks. When we go into the classroom and we do a little bit of our change group, which is children at N School gaining experience. That's what it stands for, and so we are doing it again and we are really enjoying it, and we have got a very supportive group of parents. It's a smaller number, it's a smaller class, about twenty two for September and we are getting between...it was smaller yesterday there was only twelve yesterday and two babies, and parents, but usually between fourteen or fifteen coming, and there is two ethnic minority in there and they are Indian this time.

NF: Ok

C: It is excellent

NF: The benefits, you are obviously very excited by it, from what you did last year, what was it that was so useful or valuable about it?

C: Well I think the value is that you get to know the children informally. The parents get to know you informally, because what I have to keep remembering, because I've been a teacher forever, is that some people this is new for, they haven't been into a school since they were at school. And you know like you think what are they fussing about, but actually it's a scary thing, and I had one little lad last year, his dad actually wrote on his evaluation "I was more scared than him to start with", and he is this big tough guy who scares us to death, do you know what I mean, and he wrote that on the evaluation. So that we find is really good and we have a task each week, because we base it on the PEEP and it's the ORIMs that they have the opportunities and say you have got opportunities and then recognition, and then you have got input and then I don't know what the M stands for at the moment. But it's all the different parts, so you are saying these are the opportunities of things you can do with your children, you are recognising that your child is doing well, you know, so you are going through all the different things you can do. And you suggest things for them to do at home, so that then the next week the children bring along their scrap book and they share it with me. So the first five minutes the first couple show me while people are milling around, this year it's been nice because our resources manager has been free, for giving people cups of tea and coffee, which is something people said last year we should have had, but we didn't have enough people. So that has made it much easier because there is myself and an LSA to sort out the parents and the children. I usually talk to the children about their work and my LSA does all the paper work and chats to the parents, and then Elaine the resources manager says would you like a cup of tea, cup of coffee blah! blah! blah!. So that works really well. And then I start the actual session and I say to the children, right we are going to start the songs now and then when we do the activities then I'll look at the rest of your scrap books, and they are running and throwing the scrap books at me, so before they even come to school they are knowing me in a non-threatening way, because you know, it's quite relaxed and as I say this year it has been much more relaxed than last year. I was a bit more nervous

last year, and it was a much bigger group too, but this year it just seems really good that you can like drop in little things like, someone is writing in block capitals, and instead of saying don't teach them block capitals, I've took along the ReadWriteInc cards and showed them the letters we do in school, and then I've started my play school visits and I went to my first one yesterday, and I was talking about a little girl who, she wasn't there that day but I'm seeing her at another play school she goes to. But the people at this playschool said, oh yes she has already said oh Mrs Oldham says I have to do my 'a's like this.

NF: Really.

C: And she hasn't even started school yet, and some of them actually come in their school uniform to songs and rhymes, they want to wear their school uniform, which is brilliant, and we love it, I mean we love songs and rhymes, and what's really great is that we use the songs and rhymes to lead in for the first term, we use the hello song in the morning when they came in and the goodbye song. I don't do it now, I've dropped it now this term, but then on a Wednesday with my PPA time for phonics, for the last half an hour, my LSA she uses songs and rhymes and then in the middle term we started to do a bit of songs and rhymes and we do something called bingo lingo, which is you know, rhymes and things. And now in the summer term, it's mainly bingo lingo or a story or something from my LSA's and then we are doing ReadWriteInc the rest of the time. So it really has helped the transition and eased the transition, and that's basically what my module does ease transition. Basically I said to Val I should just have written, yes, and she said yes I don't think you are going to get any marks for that.

NF: But particularly for EAL children as well, there is all that stuff about needing to be familiar, needing to know routines and all that.

C: Definitely because Palak's mum one of the little Indian girls, I gave them a sheet...I've got a book called Foundation Stage at Home by Ros Featherstone, and it's got lots of suggestions and things you can do with the children, so I suggest an activity for them to do at home, and I also give them a sheet of something and it's a suggested that their children have their own shopping list when they went shopping, and she came up to

me and she said, this is a good idea, own shopping list and you know, so we are actually giving them ideas and whereas when I...when my boys were that age, you did those things. But if you are Indian maybe you don't do those things because, or if you are Polish maybe you don't do those things, so you know, it's what is innate to us, and also a lot of our native children, they don't do those things. So even if they have not learnt nursery rhymes, which is such a starter isn't it for reading, you've got a base of songs we do know, all of us whatever nationality you are, so that's why I love it you know. It's really good.

NF: It came across in both interviews with you actually, that it was a very successful very exciting thing to do, so I'm glad you've been able to carry it on, because you were worried when I last spoke to you about funding.

C: Yes but Jane, I obviously convinced her, because I sent in all my questionnaires and all the things the parents said, and there was hardly any negative comments, just things like it was a bit too hot in the room and couldn't we have a drink, and don't use the puppets too much, and that was the dad, he was threatened. So basically, what I...I was talking to a friend and she said well maybe perhaps you say the puppets are specially for the children. Because the adults feel threatened by the puppets not the children, but then perhaps if you are a big tough guy who has been in the army and somebody gives you a puppet and says tell him your name, maybe you do feel silly.

NF: Yes that must feel quite...

C: You see I didn't think about that, because obviously we see it from our point of view.

NF: We are so immersed in it, yes.

C: You know so I could see in a way and it took somebody from outside you know, a friend I said I can't understand why...and she explained to me how he might feel, because she said I might feel a bit like that, you see so it is...so that's why questionnaires and evaluations are so important.

NF: Absolutely they are.

C: So I will do one again this time, there won't be quite so much in depth, but I shall just probably do one at the end to see what can be improved hopefully for next year. So you know at the end of my module I put something like, my head teacher has promised me that we will be able to do this, so I hope you know, and then she said you have two thousand pounds for songs and rhymes.

NF: Fantastic.

C: So that more or less has taken up with supply cover for my current class buying in extra LSA, so that I'm supported in songs and rhymes and my supply is supported in my current class, and the resources, we spent four or five hundred pounds in getting them all a book bag, scrap book and all bits and pieces, really good, it's really good, and they were thrilled with them, so all the children in the current Year R and all the children in the newer Year R having a N School School book bag given to them, filled with goodies you know. Which is great, so yes really good.

NF: It is good yes. Right ok,

## **NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH DEE AUTUMN 07**

NF: Ok so I've sent through this reminder about the questions, but obviously I've not really talked to you at all before. So if you just want to kind of give me a background to your role here, what year group you're in, how many Polish children and so on, then that would be really helpful.

D: I'm year two class teacher, but I'm part time, I have a job share colleague because I'm also the SENCO. So three days in class and two days as SENCO. So I have an overview of the needs of the children in the school as a whole and that includes EAL children, because the last two years we've had a higher percentage of children with English as a second language coming into the school and that's had an impact on the support team because obviously they need the support as well, but I'm looking into how I assess EAL children as against SEN criteria, because just because they're EAL, it doesn't necessarily mean they're special needs.

NF: No absolutely.

D: And it's very difficult because we've had to put them on the special needs register because the support that they demand, but they're not SEN children necessarily. So that's my next –

NF: Ok, so that's an interesting way of organising it.

D: Well they have to, because they are demanding support and they're taking more support from LSAs.

NF: Right.

D: Or they're in groups which are special needs children.

NF: Right, but there's clear recognition obviously on the staff then, that EAL and SEN are not the same thing, it's just for organisational purposes it works to put them on the SEN register.

D: Yes and that's because it's at a lower, sometimes at a lower pace, or often at a lower pace and a slower pace, so it helps them to be included more and they feel that they can achieve, just like the special needs children, you want to achieve at their level, you're helping EAL children to achieve. But my concern is that we've got to show that these children are not necessarily SEN – they might have and some of them do have certain problems.

NF: Ok so you're saying that in the last two years that's been the case. Is it literally in the last two years that it's been – has it been quite sudden then the influx of EAL children?

D: We've always encouraged and we've welcomed children, EAL children in, but the last two years particularly Polish children and this last year we have had an awful lot of children in, particularly year two and year six. We would have had other children in other years in key stage two, but class sizes are already quite full anyway.

NF: Oh right, I see.

D: So and children with very little English.

NF: What – children of any languages coming in?

D: Yes we've had Polish, some families from Saudi Arabia, some children who are from Finland, but they're actually originally from Ghana.

NF: Right, gosh.

D: So it's actually English as a third or fourth language.

NF: Quite a range ok. So your own experience with EAL, how would kind of rate yourself in terms of – or not rate, but how would describe yourself in terms of experience with EAL prior to this two year influx?

D: My ethos, my sort of philosophy as a teacher has always been to include every child and that my teaching and planning should be child centred, so it doesn't matter whether they're bilingual or whether they've got special needs, whatever the problem

is, I've always looked at each individual child and what they need and that informs my planning.

NF: Ok, so coming back to these questions we've got here then, what are your views, if any, on how English speaking children, so going back to first language children, best develop their skills for literacy?

D: I think the same way as any child, you're immersed in the language and the way to do that is giving plenty of opportunity for speaking and listening.

NF: And so how does that look in terms of your year two curriculum, how does that look on a kind of weekly basis?

D: Well for example we've just done a unit on traditional tales, so we've – for those children obviously who are from other countries who don't necessarily know, especially those from Saudi Arabia, they've got a completely different set of traditional tales. Polish children is very similar, so what we've done is made sure that through use of pictures and props and everything, we've acted out the stories. So first of all to see how much they know and then we've just – several weeks we've just done a lot of role play, we've got a role play area in the classroom and that, through this unit, has been costumes for Little Red Riding Hood, because that's been the focus story and then so they listen to it, they act it out, I don't want them to write anything down, I just want them to be immersed in the total thing. So they think about the way they look, the body language, so they're also learning, which is so important when you're learning another language, that body language, how one culture uses their body to express a certain feeling and another culture could be completely different. So we've talked a lot about that, how we're going to show that Grandma's angry or mum's angry or the wolf is cross or whatever.

NF: Ok, so the conversation here has kind of criss-crossed between first language and second language children, so do you – you're obviously planning all the time then, with some you know, detail about – attention to the needs of your L2 children, but do you think that the planning generally is therefore different from or inhibited by having the second language learners in the class? Does it in any way affect the progress of the first language learners, the way in which you're planning?

D: No, I think it enhances it because we've had, I encouraged a Polish mum, because the little Polish girl brought in her traditional tales book and one page is Polish and the other is English and mum came in and read it in Polish and we helped the little girl to read it in English and to see how you have to listen, so in a different language you have to listen for which part do you think was the Grandma, which part do you think was the wolf and that's – so that's what we're getting bilingual children to do in our language, so now you're having to appreciate what it's like when you listen to another language and it's helping them to slow down and to think about how they're saying it and not just assume that somebody in their group is going to know what to say. So I included that as part of it and it was also good for the mum because she felt valued and the children were astounded that this little Polish girl goes to school, Polish school on Saturday and that she can speak two languages and you could see the self esteem, her self esteem being raised by it.

NF: So the emphasis obviously on speaking in this thing is they're in your class because that's what you believe all your children need, regardless of whether they're monolingual or bilingual speakers, but do you think that in fact it probably enhances the experience for the bilingual learners?

D: Definitely – all of them, and just watching the less able, well they're called the less able group because of the type of support they need, but there was only one English as a mother tongue in the group, the rest were all EAL children and they acted out, they decided which role they were going to take and they acted out each part brilliantly and got into it and made the rest of the class, when they performed it, laugh and so they were thinking of their audience. And to do that in another language as well –

NF: Remarkable isn't it.

D: Yeah and they had so much fun and that's the thing, I wanted them to see that it's fun, I don't want them to be unhappy, I want every child in the class to be happy and that should be whether they've got special needs or whether they're more able that they're still challenged, because you can be unhappy if you're not challenged.

NF: Absolutely. So big focus on oracy, and then what happens when it's a move into writing? I mean do you notice that there are differences between how you then need to support the writing for your first language or your bilingual children?

D: In the classroom, in English, the words, the key words up with a picture, but also I've been looking at, well I've actually made contact with a school in Southampton who have got thirty three languages in their school and to ask them which sites to use to help to put this sort of thing – you know, so they've got their language up in the classroom as well, so that's what I'm trying to do, so it's not just English, to celebrate that. But a lot of well just sort of support in the way of pictures, props, the language there, but they are encouraged to like for example this morning they were doing a story board and they had to do the pictures, so that would be at the level of a child possibly with special needs but they can talk about their pictures. And I'm also using ICT, I'm using clicker, do you know the clicker programme?

NF: Yes I do, which is actually a SEN programme isn't it, yes.

D: It is a SEN programme but they are actually – so I've put the grid on for them, the language that they need and then they can listen to it, so they're hearing it and they're looking at the word and they're making their own up and they can hear when they make a mistake.

NF: Right ok, so some additional stuff is going in for your bilingual learners, which seems – that's a lot of work on your behalf isn't it? So I mean do you think that presents a problem for teachers in primary schools, having to develop spoken and written English in new arrivals?

D: I think we could do with some more funding, definitely if we had more funding then I could have some more support in the classroom. For example getting something like clicker, you have to – they're very clever, you have a license for each one, it's not a one site, a general site thing. So it's things like that, it's extra money that's needed which I have to, if I'm going to take it out of my SEN budget, I have to justify that and you know, I have to put that against the other needs of children who have got special needs.

NF: Absolutely.

D: And there isn't enough funding for EAL.

NF: I wonder, yes, so how does it work in Hampshire then in terms of that funding? That's an interesting thing to pursue. So you've got your SEN budget and –

D: And SEN, you'd have your SEN budget and funding based on how many children you have on the register and then I have to work out where those hours are going to go and I usually do it in the classes where the need's greatest or where the children, although in one class there might be a lot of SEN children, they might not be necessarily severe SEN, but another class might have a (...) child and then support has to go there. So the support team are deployed where they're needed most and then I have a certain pot of money which I can put on SEN resources, and again that has to go where it's needed most. EAL comes from a separate budget which is run by the EAL coordinator, but it's a much smaller budget and I don't know how that is worked out, that's Claire.

NF: Right ok, so I can talk about that with her, thanks ok that's useful to know. Right so there is some funding, but it feels a lot tinier presumably because it's attached to numbers of children.

D: And the support we get is very very – I have one hour a week for two children.

NF: Right ok. So do you –

D: And for the Polish I don't get any.

NF: Ok, what so you've got some support for some children with EAL in your class?

D: It's more like the Arabic and Urdu and Bengali. Last year when I was in key stage two and I had two Polish children who had no English knowledge and we had ten hours altogether but that was done between the two children and really they needed to be individual, because one was progressing at a faster pace than the other.

NF: Ok.

D: So it's not enough.

NF: So who's made the decision about some goes into the Arabic and Bengali speaking children but not into the Polish, is that made at a (...) level?

D: Well you get – I mean they've had their ten hours as it were.

NF: Ok, I remember talking to Anwen about that, yes. Ok, so –

D: So these children were new this September, so at the moment that's all I get the support for, whereas I feel that not both of the Polish children in this class this year, but one child, one of the Polish children definitely he could do with some more support.

NF: Right, so moving on then to specifically the Polish children you've got in your class, you've got two did you say? And they've been in how long? Since - ?

D: In education?

NF: In the school, in education in England.

D: One of them has been in from Year R and the other, the boy, came last year, so that was chronological Year one, but he hadn't had any schooling in Poland, so went into Year R, but he's had to make a big jump from Year R to Year two now. So to try to keep him up with his chronological peers.

NF: Right so the one who's been here since Year R has had two full years of schooling before reaching you.

D: Yes, she's doing very well.

NF: Right, so she's relatively fluent?

D: Yes.

NF: So how does she compare in relation to the other children in the class for example, in terms of where she is at (...), reading and writing?

D: She's in my higher ability group.

NF: Right ok.

D: But that also comes from the support at home, very good parental support. She goes to a Polish school on Saturday and it shows.

NF: Right so the parents are maintaining Polish at home.

D: Mum's Polish, Dad is I think he's Bengali, he's not English. So she's actually –

NF: Ah so she's probably got three languages.

D: Yes.

NF: Gosh ok. Right that hasn't in anyway, doesn't seem to have inhibited her progress, if anything possibly enhanced it.

D: Her mum's very, very supportive, she , because it's Year 2 it's an important year and we held an end of Year two SATS information evening and she's gone out and , you know, what they're expected to do in the test and she's been out and bought some books and she keeps coming in, "is this right and am I teaching her the right way?" and just supporting what we're doing in the school and you know, I wish parents did what she's doing really.

NF: Right. So it's interesting isn't it, I'm finding more and more, the more I talk to people, obviously there's lots of stuff around individual difference and there's lots of stuff around obviously home background, which is common to any culture.

D: But generally, I would say generally that the Polish parents are very supportive, the children I had last year who are now in Year four, parents were concerned that they weren't making the progress, even though they were learning their second language and anything – they actually said anything you need us to do at home? And we did send things home to help them.

NF: So they actually are very proactive, actually coming in and asking?

D: Yes and also the whole sort of, just that they want to get through to their children the reason why you are here is to have a better life and they say that to you as well.

NF: Right.

D: And not to waste it, that's constantly, that comes over. Their attitude is brilliant, it really is.

NF: Wonderful, that's great isn't it? So let's talk about the little boy you've got, who didn't have – obviously they don't start school in Poland until seven do they? So if they arrive here any time before Year two, we've got that haven't we?

D: I think kindergarten is quite structured isn't it?

NF: Right yes.

D: I don't think he had any form of formal –

NF: Ok, so the school decided to put him into Year R, rather than in Year one, yeah? And that worked?

D: That was ok, yes it was to give him that foundation, he needed to be able to – and because it was important because of the language as well. It was felt that the Year R environment was better for him because it wasn't so structured and the opportunities for him to interact and that and play, structured play, which carries on in Year one, but more is expected of formal writing and things like that.

NF: Sure, ok. So it's to do with giving as you say, a firm foundation, but then the school decided to put him in Year two because – rather than him going then up into Year one?

D: Well just because it's a small class and we thought he probably – and the school is small so he already knew the children anyway to try to get him up in line with Year two levels, but I think, well I'm going down the road of assessing him anyway because I feel he has special needs and have spoken to mum and he was early and had problems with muscle tone and things and he displays Dyspraxic tendencies, so not – we thought initially in Year R that he was making slow progress because he hadn't had any sort of pre-school, but I think there are other issues there. So that's what I'm

looking at now. So that's quite good that he's in my class, because I'm monitoring that.

NF: Yes, wonderful and again you've got this issue of is it EAL, is it SEN? Which is always a difficult one isn't it? Do you think it delays our response to them, if we're thinking is this an EAL child? Do you think we take longer to respond to what are possibly SEN issues?

D: I think as a SENCO yes because when I mentioned it to the Year R teacher they were like "no, oh I don't think so, it's because – ", but as a SENCO I have to assess other children, you pick up these things quite quickly, whereas I think if I wasn't, but I'd said to my job share partner "have you noticed anything about this particular child?" and she said "like what?" and I said "no, no, I just want you to see if there's anything" and she said "actually now because you've made me look, I have, yes I agree with you", but I think there is just so many things you're trying to tick boxes with, can they do this? And can I help them with that, that you're sort of overlooking, could overlook other things. So that's why I think it is important if we can – if there is some kind of assessment that we can do.

NF: So did you say you're working on an assessment or you're hoping to find one?

D: I've been in contact, but this was before we had our special visit last week, with a school in Southampton like I said. Seventy percent of them are EAL and they have devised a programme or they use a programme that Southampton have introduced, it's called Switch On.

NF: Right.

D: And which was very good and they've given me some information on what they do, so I'm looking into that next, that's my next job really now that Ofsted have gone away.

NF: Yes. So you're hoping to use that as an assessment tool and what does that do? Is that an assessment tool that assesses stages of language acquisition or –

D: Yes as opposed to cognitive, physical and sensory.

NF: Right, so have you been using anything else like Hilary Hester or the QCA stages or anything like that in terms of assessing EAL levels of fluency to date?

D: No. In key stage two the children, well all the children that come in, they're sort of tested with the same sort of barrage of tests that we give out -

NF: As you do with your mono-lingual, right, yes. Because it's difficult isn't it, because I sometimes think some of the tests that are out there, I mean the QCA stages, they're pre-level one and I just think ok, but what do these children do post level one? As if suddenly once they're level one, they're just -

D: I have done some one to one assessment with children in my class using the P Levels, just to help me to break it down.

NF: Sure.

D: And then when they're one to one with you, and you've got the concrete materials, then you realise because everyone says they can't do this, they can't do that, they don't understand, but it isn't, it's the language that's inhibiting them, because when they've got the concrete materials there, and you've got the time to realise that if you say it one way they haven't understood that, so you re-phrase it or you show them and do a model, then they're "ah" and then they can do it. But you can't do that all the time one to one.

NF: No.

D: And that's -

NF: So you've got, there's the two Polish children in your class and then how many other EAL?

D: Of a total of sixteen in class, we've got sixty four percent EAL.

NF: Right gosh, so that's high, is that high for the school?

D: It is high.

NF: Because the school generally is much lower than that isn't it as an overall percentage?

D: You could ask the coordinator, but it has gone up, we've got eleven languages, I forget the percentage but it has definitely gone up.

NF: I think that's burgeoned even since I spoke to Claire last summer actually.

D: Yes oh definitely.

NF: I think it was about twenty or something last June, July, I think I spoke to her.

D: No since September – quite a few new children.

NF: And a variety, wide variety of languages.

D: Yes, not just Polish.

NF: Ok, right so that presents you with a range of issues, so you've touched on the funding as an issue, but on the whole do you find you need to – do you find that provision for any one language is different from provision for another language as it were? Or do you tend to think there are some key features of your pedagogy that support language acquisition?

D: Yeah it's that thing of going back to what each child needs, whether they've got a language problem or anything else, you've just got to find the way round of making sure that they can understand and be included really. But that is hard, we had a staff meeting about it at the beginning of the year and we have to take on – it's not just special needs children we have to look at, we have to look at every single child to make sure that we are meeting their needs, whether they are more able and like we've said, you can have a child come in, who is more able, but they are operating with a language which is their second or third or fourth language, so are you meeting their needs? And that's what you constantly – and that's the battle, that we've constantly got to be looking at really. So you can't even group them sometimes, it's wrong to sort of – well you know, you can't say they're all my EAL children, because they need to go in the right level for them.

NF: Ok, so you try where possible to put them in ability appropriate groups?

D: Yeah.

- NF: But recognising that language barriers are going to be there, so then having to take additional steps to try and overcome that for them.
- D: Yes, but I don't – if they're in that ability group, then they will have the same target and I don't make concessions for them, because if they've been put in that ability group and they complete that task the way I've asked them to complete it, if they're in the right ability group they should be able to do that. See what I mean, it's difficult to –
- NF: No I do, I see what you're saying, so you put them in thinking that they can do this in terms of cognitive development or intellectual development or whatever you want to call it, knowledge and understanding, but that in a way you do put in something additional in terms of to support the language in order that they're able to reach the level that they're able to.
- D: Yeah, so for example, I mean I can even photocopy it if you wanted it for your study, the more able Polish child in our class, their target in a piece of writing with that particular group, they had to do a piece of journal writing within a give time, which was twenty minutes and they had to make sure that it flowed and that they used connectives which we'd used in literacy the week before and the correct use of full stops and commas. So they had to read it through and it had to make sense and everything. She did all of that so she had reached the target of what I'd asked that group to do, but because it's her second or whatever language, when she uses the past tense, she always uses the form did – we did go, we did look and I've noticed when she talks as I'd sort of picked up on that and thought I wonder if she does it and I've been homing in on that and she uses that when – like when she wants to recount her weekend – “we did go to the shops”. So I'm having to say “we went to the shops” and just bring it in like that and modelling it, which you would do with a child who says – an English child who'd say “we brang” or you know “we brung” or something and you'd say “we brought” and you just would quietly do it, but I've noticed she can't get out of doing that. So her last piece of work, I've actually sat down with her and said let's go through this and let's go through “we did look”, how should we say that? And I've written down look, looked, so for her she needs – and that's something that I will relay back to mum.

NF: That's really interesting because in fact the research shows that in terms of developing a second language, one of the biggest stumbling blocks, as we know from our own second language learning, is about verb tenses, because you're thinking in your home language and the way in which it's constructed grammatically and they're so different across different languages. So you're having to put in specific instruction about conventions of English grammatical structure for her?

D: Yes because she doesn't need – if it was one of the other children, I'd probably have to do a group activity on it, so that it wasn't so highlighted, but with her I could just talk about it and showed it to her and I said “so next time we do some writing, I'll just give you a little reminder” and I'm sure because of her level of ability, she will pick on that very quickly. Because she's already said “oh look, I did it there”, so she knows and she just needs that pointing out, but you do that to another child anyway, you'd say “look you haven't used –ed, you've used t” or something, you know.

NF: Absolutely I mean verb tense endings, yes, in key stage one generally are an issue aren't they?

D: Yes.

NF: But that's interesting, so expectations remain high, I know you can do this, but I'm going to support you in a way that's appropriate for your language.

D: Yes. I mean to me you should always, your expectations for every single child, whatever their level, should be high.

NF: Absolutely. Yes and it's the not using as you say, you don't use it as an excuse, the lack of language isn't kind of a get out clause, but you are obviously you do understand very clearly about where you're supporting it.

D: And I think perhaps I ought to mention as well, I lived myself for eight years in Germany, I went there not able to speak a word of the language, just having that terrible English sort of air of oh well I'll be able to – you know that attitude of they'll be able to speak English and went to little village where they couldn't, so I think that probably helps my understanding, I don't know.

NF: I'm sure it does, no that's really interesting, because you know, you're sitting here, you're talking to me with an obvious level of confidence about it and a kind of an understanding of what the issues are in quite some detail, so I'm sure yes, your own immersion therefore and having had it.

D: But special needs does help, so there are a couple of things there.

NF: Yes, yes. That's really interesting, thank you, you've said about a million really interesting things there.

*Tape turned off but then on again as interviewee started to talk about comparative levels of confidence in school.*

NF: So just to recap there, there's a sense that for some of you then, so I'm talking to you and I'll talk to Claire and obviously the response – so there's nothing critical here, you don't have to say anything that you don't want to say, but I get the impression of very confident staff members who are well informed and know what they're talking about with EAL. But you're saying that's not necessarily universal amongst the staff, other staff might feel –

D: Either in this school or (...)

NF: No absolutely.

D: So it's that thing of I'm not sure how to approach it, it's another thing for me, you know, it's quite scary.

NF: Yes it is isn't it, yeah and I wonder how we get past that really.

D: I think it's training.

NF: And so maybe as SENCO that's something that you have to tackle do you feel as well?

D: Yes I mean that's what I mean, my job is –

[participants speaking at once]

NF: Come and sit and I'll start again with you in a minute, I do beg your pardon, sorry. It's just we thought we'd finished and then Rosemary said something terribly interesting. [laughter]

D: I was saying it's very much like special needs, I'm sure – well I know that there are some members of staff who are just sort of scared about this child who cannot speak much English and doesn't understand anything – “what do I do with them?” and it's that thing of ooh I'd rather not pass over to the LSAs or something isn't it.

Becky: Yes.

D: (...) and a special needs child with severe special needs, thinking I can't cope with this, I don't know what to do, pass over, rather than embracing it and sort of looking at it and coping with it and sort of talking with everybody. And I think we're very good here because we've always had a history of these children coming into our school, but for other schools where it's happening suddenly, that's where it's more [gasps] “don't know how to deal with this” and almost to the point that heads are saying “no, there's no space” because they just don't know how it's going to impact on the school I think. Would you agree?

Becky: Yeah.

D: And I think that, probably as a county thing should be addressed, that either some sort of training or whether it be for heads, for SENCOs, because SENCOs really our job is now becoming more inclusion rather than just special needs. Well special needs is everybody, should be, but it's changing to be all – everybody is included, so I don't know if you can –

NF: It's very interesting to hear you say that because that's my perception and one of my problems with setting up this project is I'm absolutely dying to go into schools where it's actually completely brand new, but they are too anxious to let me in. I mean I haven't got an OFSTED hat on, I'm just a person coming in to have a conversation with you because it's interesting, but it's – people are even worried about talking about it. I guess because teachers are so used to being inspected aren't they and kind

of as if everything they say is on show and on a league table, that they don't want to engage with it.

D: But it's not going away and it's going to affect their levels of attainment if they don't address it!

NF: Yes.

D: And maybe they just need people like us who are addressing it, have coped with it and could say it's not that bad – if you do this, this and this. It's like anything, if you put things in place, it's half the battle isn't it? And if the children are happy then you're starting to get something back from them. It's when they start to clam up don't they? If they're unhappy and they can't understand and they don't feel welcome. That's another thing, you know, I think we do celebrate that here, don't we? Every different culture, language. Whereas it's very hard if you're one in a school of about two hundred plus or just two of you, and the same for the parents, we encourage the parents to come in and that's another thing, that's half the battle. But anyway I'm taking your time so –

NF: That's fine, thanks very much indeed.

[End of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH DEE SUMMER 2008

NF: Just really remind me, in your class you have got two Polish children; was it one boy and one girl?

D: Yes.

NF: And so can you just talk me through, we have spoken about October, November, can you talk me through how they have done this year, SAT results (...).

D: Yes, I can't remember, did I tell you their levels?

NF: No.

D: Right, the boy had a, I think I remember reading about it in here, I think I did say that he had gone straight into year R, even though he came in a year one level, and then he had to make a big jump into year two, which he did find very difficult to begin with, and his language, his knowledge of English wasn't as good as the little girl's. Also his levels, he had problems from an SEN point of view anyway with fine motor skills and things but he's made good progress this year, really pleased with him. He is trying really, really hard. English is definitely improved, he is writing independently now, his maths is very good, when he first came in he wasn't even really doing one to one correspondence of numbers and objects and that, so that's improved. I think it has all been helped, as we have said about the whole class, with being a very small class, we have only fifteen children.

NF: Fifteen?

D: Fifteen.

NF: That is a very small class, gosh.

D: And previously the class has been split, but because there is a high percentage of EAL children in the class, it was decided it wasn't really beneficial to them, so that's how...and Jane the Head wanted to keep it to one year class grouping, and that has been definitely beneficial to all the children. The little girl whose not only Polish but

her Father is Indian, so there is three languages there going on, and she goes to Polish school at the weekend, both of them go to Polish school, she has made very good progress, above average in some areas.

NF: Ok, so in terms of comparing her with the rest of the class, she's a more able child?

D: Yes a more able child.

NF: Right, so her reading and writing scores in the SATS are...

D: She is certainly more literate and numerate, I'm not sure if that more of a language thing as well, she takes a while to take in the new concepts of maths, but also she is...she prefers literacy, she loves writing stories, so I mean some children are like that anyway.

NF: Exactly it's an individual difference thing, yes. So the little boy, you were intimating that he might stay another year in key stage one, but he is not going to he is going to go on up?

D: No he is going to go on.

NF: He's going to go up, he's fine.

D: Yes he will cope.

NF: And it is all fine.

D: So long as he has the support there and a less able group, they will do fine. He wants to succeed.

NF: Do you think some of these issues are SEN issues rather than the AEL issues?

D: Not all, the other thing is I don't think there is enough support at home.

NF: Right.

D: Mum has had another baby this year, so he's been pushed out of being the youngest and I don't think she has the time, whereas the other Polish mother definitely supports and actually will say I want my child to do well at school. Whereas the little boy, I

just think as long as he is happy, as long as he is making some progress there isn't the same support with the reading and the spellings, and things like that so...

NF: Right, that's interesting isn't it. So we are looking at different systems that are nothing to do with nationality in a way then, it's just about how families are different...

D: So whether the culture that they come from, the background that they have come from hasn't put so much emphasis on, I don't know.

NF: The Polish/Indian mix sounds interesting doesn't it, because Indians traditionally we always think of as highly aspirational, high achieving and so on.

D: So we have got both sides, Mum is...we see more of Mum, Dad has come into things, but it is more Mum I think because of work, but right from the beginning of the year she said I want my child to do well. Constantly asking and she has come in and shown me the books that she has bought to help her, what can I do to get her to the next level, which is really encouraging, I wish all parents would do it [laughs].

NF: So she had done things like, there were tense issues and so on in her writing and so on, has she...

D: That's still, and speaking as well, so I just gently correct her, but...and that could in the future affect or have an impact on her levels. Because at the moment the level of writing looks for, not only the correct grammar, but it also looks for the humour in it and the sort of maturity in it, whereas later on it should fall down and so that might become an issue, when she gets older.

NF: Yes,

D: But then a lot of children, I mean she is not the only one, with things like, "I brung" still, and she says it and she hears the others saying it, so I'm correcting all of them really, it's not just...

NF: That's interesting, so she is a baby to some extent, picking up on the muddles that she is getting from the other English speaking children.

D: And that's typical of a year two child really.

NF: It is, yes you have to be careful not to kind of pin developmental issues on them, when in fact they are just normal and the difficulties of having a second language.

D: And also at Eastleigh, the Hampshire sort of accent and Hampshire way of speaking, "I was", is accepted, although it's not grammatically correct.

NF: Yes it's interesting. So we talked a lot about the detail of your classroom practice, in terms of supporting both your English speakers and your second language learners, and you seem to have an unusually high percentage of EAL children, even for the school, that are in your class. I was wondering, are you conscious of having adapted your practice at all?

D: In what way, I think I said last time, look I've sort of been telling...the teacher would be taking them over next year; they need a lot of visuals, need a lot of speaking and listening. We were doing a transition time this morning and at lunchtime I asked how she got on, she said they are so quiet, they don't say anything. And so this afternoon she came in to watch a lesson that I did, and she watched how I introduced something and then I get them to talk in pairs, and she said that the difference, because they are talking to one other person, and she said how focused they were on what you were talking about, they didn't go off at a tangent, and the children who wouldn't normally say anything, even though there is only fifteen of them, they're still sort of inhibited, because of the language. But because they could talk to somebody else, and it's not always...they used to be just they would find another ethnic minority child, but now they will talk with whoever they are sitting next to, they will talk. And she sort of saw how important that is, that they felt that they could talk about it, but keeps them involved, but they don't have to, and then I'd say, what did you decide between you, and that's a way of drawing the answer out of them. So you do have to adapt.

NF: Yes, so much more oral work then, much more speaking and listening to develop, you think than you might have done had you had a class of indigenous English speakers.

D: It's difficult, I mean I think I'd have worked like that anyway, but I have ensured that everything I do, maths, everything, it's a question and they get the chance to discuss it, so they are not just sitting there. And it's also visuals are everything; I prepare lots of visuals, more than I think I have done before in a year two class.

NF: And in terms of literacy strategy, do you think...are you using the units of work from the revised strategy at the moment, so I wonder if that's adapted anyone's pedagogy really, because it puts speaking into the front now doesn't it, very much so.

D: Dovetailing to the topic, so the topic really has dictated which (genres) we do.

NF: When?

D: Which units we do when, and that has been so much better for them, and the topics we've had, we've tried to make them really sort of fun and like we have had one on monsters, so that included dinosaurs and so like the ethnic minority boys, absolutely loved it, but whatever the language they just love it, but the girls loved it as well. So if you are very careful which topics you choose, and make sure they all go in together, they constantly talk about it, for example this term we have done town and country, so we have looked at habitats in science. We've visited a country school, and they came to visit us in the town. So we looked at town mouse and country mouse and things like that, and so the whole time I am reminding them of what's our topic, so it's all interlinked.

NF: Right, so it means all the learning is embedded in a kind of framework of common reference.

D: The language flows over into the other, so we are not doing something completely different, sometimes we have to do something, because sometimes you just have to include it, but there is maths as well, I've tried to include the maths even like for example, we have been doing data handling and sorting, so like this afternoon I did the maths in the science, and we were sorting out the different minibeasts and things you know according...so they have learnt wings and things like that and legs, so it all interlinks. The language is not separate and I think it would be interesting to see how they are go into a junior environment, but I think the aim is next year is to carry that on as much as possible, because that has worked.

NF: That would be quite interesting to follow up I must say, very interesting. So where you described your practice there, very cross curricular, everything embedded in a

meaningful context. shared vocabulary and so on, is that common to the whole school or do you think that's a key stage one thing or...

D: I think it lends itself more to a key stage one environment, but the whole school is now moving towards that, because that's...our topics are, that's how the way we find it is working better for our children.

NF: Great ok. What was my next question, my next question was all about oral storytelling, which you'd use...

D: A lot of hot seating and...

NF: Yes it just says, using oral storytelling and drama, you have already said that you already are continuing to do. I wonder if the, coming back to the revised national strategy, if it's given us a sense of more freedom to do that, are you conscious of that or...

D: I think so yes, I mean for me it's like full circle, when I first started doing teaching that's what we were doing anyway, and I could never see why, especially for young children, that's how you learn. Everything is cross curricular, you just go from one to the other, and I am so glad that it's going back to that. You can link so many things up, it's so much better, which is so much harder to do when you just kept to the literacy frame work and the numeracy frame work, and then you have got to try and do history and geography, which didn't come in at all with the rest and children don't learn like that.

NF: Do you think the design of the new framework also supports teachers in planning more cross curricular work.

D: Oh definitely, and like year one and year two, we do a cycle of topics. So year one and year two do the same, that's good because it's only two classes so a lot of things we join together for, we have visitors in we can share. And that's been great because we just took what our topic is for the first six weeks of the new term and just looked to see which...can't do that so much with numeracy, that's harder, but definitely for the literacy what fits best and then slotted them in to make sure you get it all in.

NF: It's an interesting time because it seems that you're describing that you changed your pedagogy as a result of a lot of EAL children in your class including these Polish children, but actually perhaps also there seems to be supporting mechanisms in place that are allowing that to happen as well.

D: I think also that maybe it's coming from experience, that by knowing what's happened in the past and sort of years of experience, that works with any child but you know, I've adapted more visuals and I've been on the internet more than I probably would ever in a year, to look for things and...But really I've just used what I've always done, that I know that will work.

NF: I mean I was looking at the data for the school recently, and you've risen from about twelve percent, twelve or thirteen percent bilingual in 2005 to twenty five percent now. And it's more than that in your class, which it's a huge shift isn't it, and a lot of those are Polish children. Has the school as a whole addressed that as an issue or have you, do you think you have used your existing understanding from having had that small Bengali population for years, or, I'm just interested to know...

D: I think that's where it has come from, but I'm looking together, I think I mentioned in one of our other meetings with the EAL co-ordinator, about the SEN and EAL that we want to ensure that we don't label children as SEN just because they need more support, but there is and there is also a danger that you know, you don't give them any support because they are EAL. But also that thing that you assume that their levels are going to be low, and like for example the little Arabic boy, he's very, very bright and he has proved that, he came in in September and he has reached in a year a 2c in maths and that's in a second language, and I think he probably could be higher, but it's his understanding of the questions. If it was in his own language. In fact the little Nepalese girl we have got in the class, she's come out at 1a but now I think she is more 2c, she had a Nepalese speaker for her and she came out as a 2a, we said no way is she a 2a but then somebody else said well why not, that's in her own language, but she can't, she wouldn't be able to operate her to 2a, you see the difference?

NF: In English, it's a conflict isn't it?

D: And it's her own self-worth and confidence, she just would not be able to operate at that level. But there's a danger that because she is constantly put in that group, which means that you don't push them on enough, do you know what I mean?

NF: Yes absolutely, yes it's a real problem with expectations isn't there and where yes, have you set them in the right group, in fact that's a tension that a lot of teachers have mentioned across all the interviews that I have had this year, is where you sit them.

D: Yes, it's very difficult with her because she doesn't give much either, just very, very quiet, very, very shy and quite suddenly she won't come out. Whereas the other ethnic minority's they have got more confidence and they are coming on, they are actually are speaking more, and they are not worried what the meaning says.

NF: So the two Polish children you seem quite clear about them and that they are actually appropriately set...

D: Yes definitely.

NF: Then that's ok, so they seem a bit clearer. You mention there your role as SENCO which is obviously is very tied up with your practice and your work here generally isn't it, and you mentioned in the last interview, support from a school in Southampton?

D: Yes, St Mary's.

NF: How has that developed?

D: Well we haven't managed to do anything more since then, but and it's been such a busy year.

NF: Yes, because of moving.

D: But with a EAL co-ordinator next year, we have already talked about it, she is going to make a visit as well, and so we sort of, there will more of a focus next year and how we take it, and how we make sure that we don't group children or put them on the SEN register you know. But it's that thing like I just said, how do you ensure that they get the support, they will get support if they're in a SEN group more than...

NF: Right so funding is still a tension, because...

D: There isn't funding for...

NF: Ok, so there is money obviously for SEN but there isn't money as such for EAL.

D: But it's also down to differentiation and good planning, because SEN children can't always have support either, they have to learn to be independent, so it's that...it is back to really good planning, knowing the children and making sure you have got the differentiation there.

NF: So although you were saying you do adapt your pedagogy for example to have far more oracy in...that actually there are elements of your practice which are just good practice.

D: Yes should do, that's what...I think that's what is hard possibly for other teachers that haven't had so many years of experience and they're suddenly faced with these children, but they don't know where to put them and how do I differentiate it for them.

NF: I'm sure you are right it's a confidence thing, that's...another thing that's emerging a lot, is the teachers then talking with, who are able to articulate what their view is of teaching English at all, seemed to me to have a clearer view perhaps of what it is they should be doing with their Polish children and their second language learners. I mean it's hard generalise because in fact you are talking to ten different people, who just have ten different takes on things obviously, but there does seem to be a confidence with, yes the first language teaching at all really, that's interesting certainly. So the money thing interests me because when I told you I'm sure, because my background as a London teacher and Head teacher, we had a specific budget for EAL as well as a budget obviously for SEN, so is there money, is there really very little money.

D: Oh well we have...there's a support in that we have specific ethnic minority or whatever, native speakers come in and support the children for so many hours.

NF: That's the ten hours at the beginning from EMAS yes.

D: And then if there is any...I think if children are on the SEN register they support that in a way. But I think with the number of children coming in to each area into the schools there should be separate funding for that.

NF: Particularly as there has been such a rapid rise for you perhaps.

D: And just resources as well. I mean I have downloaded a lot off the internet, laminated them and things you know, like we have got hello/goodbye in different languages and things, but it would be so nice if we could just go or just order things just like that, they've got...you can order things in French, German, Spanish because of MFL now, in schools, but why not other languages as well?

NF: Yes it's almost like the hierarchy of how languages are perceived.

D: Yes.

NF: In terms of when you might be using certain resources, it is funny, yes you are right. Ok, we have covered the SENCO, so that just my last question was you mentioned and it's sort of everybody mentions, in fact I think ten out of ten of the interviews that I have talked to have mentioned it, it's this very high degree of involvement of the Polish parents in their children's education, you mentioned it when we first talked in fact, didn't you? Can you identify, is it becoming at all clear, why that is, why there's an enormous sense of desire to do well, do they ever articulate that to you?

D: The only reason that they are here is that they want to improve their family life, their quality of life and they feel that they can do that if they come to England and obviously they can earn more here, but their philosophy is to get on in life, to do well, is you have got to get a good education, and I think that's going back to how it was viewed by parents twenty, thirty years ago, because that...they have a respect also.

NF: Ok.

D: For teachers and education, which I think has fallen in this country.

NF: Right so that feels different then, you sense a difference in the relationship? Do they seem to be showing any evidence of going home, that's another thing we hear about in the press, that they are home, the poles.

D: Not yet, they do go back regularly to see their families there, obviously not the whole family has come over, and they want to keep up that contact with them, remind the children of their roots. For example the boy in year two whose gone back, he won't be back now again until September. Mark was saying that they are going to take them Auschwitz, and I actually said don't you think they are a bit young, because I know when I lived in Germany it was the thing that every child in secondary education, it was part of the curriculum, they had to go and face the history in a way, and she said no we will explain it to them. But I think they are a bit young to face that.

NF: Very young yes. So how strange it is that is a Polish guilt about it, a polish catholic guilt about Auschwitz or something.

D: Yes, and I run a German club and they have been very interested, and saying why are you interested in German. And I said well I lived in Germany, and they say what! Their attitude is...this particular family is very much anti-German, and it was quite interesting, and I said but that is all in the past now you know. I had quite an interesting conversation, discussion about it.

NF: Yes there has been other stuff in the press, hasn't there? Again I don't know that we have got evidence for it over here, about the Polish children arriving and having experienced an extremely mono-cultural, mono-ethnic as it were, background in Poland. Did you find, were there any difficulties in the school with them playing with the Indian and Pakistani children or whatever for example?

D: No.

NF: No tensions there that were visible, no. There was some stuff about that wasn't there I remember talking to...

D: Not here. I think because we have so many different groups represented, and our children are very good at...any child actually, the same for different cultural backgrounds, but also the disabilities, whether it be autism or whatever, they just

accept them, and they make them feel so welcome, so very quickly, and I think that as a school we are...we can say we have got a good reputation for that so, maybe even down the road it may be different, but I know that here we have always sort of prided ourselves on that really. Maybe because there are so many...because we have got such a high percentage, it could be that, we always have.

NF: And you haven't got a dominant group, in a way you might have had more Bengali at one point, but the feeling from your current data is of lots of isolated bilinguals in fact, I mean they are not isolated because there are other bilinguals in the classrooms with them but, lots of children with a different language all in the same rooms. It must be quite a challenge for everyone I'm sure. Coming back finally again to our Polish families and Polish children, I'm interested in the teacher response to them, which is universally positive, everybody loves them, and I wonder if it becomes a kind of virtuous circle whereby you know, we all love the children and families so therefore we teach them well and they...are you conscious of that at all, that kind of any difference in the way you responded to them, or more of it being extra positive?

D: I hope I respond to every child positively. I just... I can't say I make any exceptions, in fact if I have a feeling that I know, I can't say that any child in my career, over my career I've actually said I hate that child, and if I found a dislike for a child I'll make a conscious effort to think why do you feel that, and get over that you know, it could be because they are quite precocious or something and then I try to look beyond that, maybe it's my SEN background.

NF: I'm sure that influences you a lot.

D: Why are they like that, you know is there something else that they are craving, why are they being like that, is it really their fault that they are a product of their upbringings and things. So I've always felt like that, always been interested in children with special needs and to me special needs isn't just, fine motor skill problems or less able, it's gifted children as well you know, and they've got to be nurtured in a completely different way. So I think these children coming in, they've got special needs and I've got to look at it in a completely different attitude a completely different angle to other children really, to help them.

NF: So in many ways your SENCO role you see as a broader role of inclusion manager...

D: I think I came in to SEN because of you know, I have always had an interest in it really. That's what I've always sort of had as a basis of my teaching I think, I suppose it's the last twenty years we have been talking about differentiation or ten, fifteen years, but I think from the moment I started. I think I said to you before, that my training was very much a child centred training and that's all, I have always kept that with me you know, you look at each child individually and think what does that child need, and even if you have got a class of thirty you still have to think of the each individual child and what they need. So I think that has always been the core, and I can say I have always been interested, so that's helped me really.

NF: Yes.

D: I would hate to think there is anybody that I particularly, or any child that I...

NF: No I was...no not at all, It just is so interesting for me, I never...I didn't expect to hear this, it's extraordinary every interview has this very positive response. Even if people, people might complain in one breath and say they are going back to Poland too often or whatever, but within the next breath it's, the parents are fantastic, and almost as if it feels as if a very specific response to this one particular national group, which is you know, just interesting to me.

D: No not for us, I don't think there is. I don't know what anybody else thinks in this school but I wouldn't say we are particularly positive for that particular group, I'd say we are positive with any child from any ...

NF: It might just be the way my interview question are phrased [laughs]

D: Teachers are...they always want to see the positive's in their children.

NF: They do.

D: I mean that's why it is a vocation isn't it, because you know it's very rare I think to find anyone completely negative, and if you do they shouldn't be in the job.

NF: Ok that's all I wanted to follow up with thank you. Was there anything you wanted me to know about that hasn't been covered, great, lovely, thank you.

D: It would just interesting to know from your point of view at the end of your study what sort of...to come out of all of this.

NF: It's going to take a while so I've collected the data this year and I'm collecting more next year. I've having some difficulty getting into schools, and I have to say, it's so nice to be welcomed here and at Kings Furlong with open arms this year. For next year I have got one or two more teachers. I think partly because Polish families aren't coming in with quite as much numbers, so people are thinking well my child's fluent now so we didn't ought to talk to you, which in its self is interesting, because of course you know they're fluent...

D: So they consider them one of the two...

NF: Yes that's right, so yes it all, at the moment it's just a great mountain of interviews and then in about, it will probably be another three years or so before there is something actually kind of published, yes I will keep this school informed yes.

D: You won't need to come back here?

NF: I don't know, I might ask, because it would, from what you said in your interview, it would be actually be interesting to follow through.

D: What might be interesting from your perspective....

NF: If you would think it would be I think it would be.

D: ....is the teacher they are going to have next year has only been teaching for a few years.

NF: Right,

D: So it might be interesting from a different sort of angle, someone who's not...I'm not saying, but hasn't been in teaching as long, and has had a different kind of training.

NF: Is it Alison (...) or someone else.

D: No it's a new teacher.

NF: A new teacher, new to the school as well?

D: Yes new to the school as well, so I think this is her second year in teaching.

NF: Right, that might be very interesting, particularly if she hasn't had EAL or Polish children before.

D: She comes from Townhill, which is kind of (...) and said have you got such a sort of range, and she said no not as many as you have got here, so that might be quite interesting.

NF: It might well be, very interesting. Right, I've got to ask M.

D: And also because there would be a junior environment.

NF: Yes very interesting, and also similarly with Claire's little boy Dominic, I don't think he's having him in year one.

D: Yes Jane Smith and several other teachers, but they're experienced teachers.

NF: Right.

D: Don't think...Simon came, who's in year four will be going into year five, he came in at the end of year two for a couple of weeks and then went into year three last year.

NF: But certainly your class will be very interesting to follow, as you say... because of switching key stage

D: And also the numbers that might go up during the year, will that make a difference having a much bigger class, because I definitely think that has been, for them anyway of benefit,

NF: Well thank you for identifying that, because that was something very interesting if she can bear it, it's whether you...

D: I think it will be interesting...

NF: I mean Alison was new to school this year wasn't she and there's another teacher in Kings Furlong where I am, who was new to the school, and in a way that has been very interesting tracking their experiences.

D: But somebody who is so young in the profession that might be, you know, quite interesting to see how...and also like I say I don't know how...we are going to carry on with cross curricular topic work, but it is different in key stage two environment, it's not quite so...because I carried on the role obviously, the role play has been, that's another, the role play has been so important for these children. The things that they have picked up, the little Arabic boy, his Mum came to me and said sometimes they can't understand him in English, and I said oh really why, and she said, because he has got such an Eastleigh accent [laughs] And I said that's actually praise you know, he's actually speaking, he has picked up so much. She said I can't believe it, she speaks good English and she is at the University in South Hampshire, so I can't believe how much he has learnt. But the role play area's been very...and I don't know that they are going to have a role play area next year.

NF: Ok

D: So how they are going to cope without being able to do that.

NF: Ok, that sounds really interesting, lovely; I'll talk to M and...so she is new to the school in September, so she is not here now.

D: No, well she came today just for transition. I think if you wanted to track things for....

NF: I think it would be really interesting to do it

## **NF INTERVIEW WITH EDYTA SUMMER 2008**

NF: So can you just tell me what you do really, when you go into school.

E: The first appointment it's maybe profiling for a child, some, I'm asking about her education the child's education in Poland, which level of English of a child have, and what kind of jobs doing the parents, everything what can be important for education in English school, and after that I try to decide does this child need my help or not. My help means that I can support the child in the class. For example, if the child has a problem with English or with science I can stay on this lesson in the class and translate what is going on and what the child should do. We can work outside not in the class, we can work, I can help in English or maths or other, and this is support. Also I'm helping the parents on parents' evenings because usually the parents have a problem with English as well.

NF: So they need a translator.

E: Yes. So they need a little support for parents' evening. Also I have Polish phone line one time per week, on Wednesday afternoon two hours, so all our parents know that they can phone us and ask about child's school or about benefits, everything what they need.

NF: Ok so they don't just ring you to talk about the school and education, it's also about other things they need to just exist and be ok.

E: Yes, exactly.

NF: Just want to shut the door because it's a bit noisy. There we go.

E: Sometimes we have problems like dyslexia or some family difficult situation, they need some help to contact with correct service or...

NF: So it is quite a whole kind of community social support really, not just education.

E: No.

NF: Do they have other forms of support they can use, or does it all tend to come through here.

E: We have forms for profiling, so after the first appointment I have to fill in and send to the office and office should send it to the school, a copy of this report. And then after every support, after every hour I have to fill in a special form for a teacher, this is information about this hour, what child did on this hour and how the child did it so. Usually that is ten hours support per child.

NF: Right, yes I had heard that from the teachers. And then after their ten hours, do they tend to ask for...do the schools pay for more of your time, or do they tend to just stop at the ten hours?

E: Sometimes the school decide that they want to pay for more hours and then we can give a few hours more. But we can give ten hours support, we have sometimes the special situation like now I have extra five hours for two Polish boys because of the situations are different.

NDF: Oh right.

E: The school contact with our office, explain the situation we had to contact with other services, and then they all decided that they can have five hours more.

NF: Ok. Now one of the things that's interesting for me, is the teachers tend to think that the children, I'm only looking at children in primary schools ok, and they tend to think of their Polish children as needing help in English lessons, as if you are only using English when you are in an English lesson, which is quite strange really, because obviously they are using language all the time, aren't they. Do you find that you are mostly supporting English lessons, or is that not the case, are you in on lots of different subjects?

E: Usually their first problem's English definitely, because the education in Poland looks a little different than here and they haven't got the problem with maths or other subjects, but the English.

NF: So it's the language that's the barrier.

E: And quite often teachers are confused, because they want to help but they don't know how. So they are asking me what they can do to help the child, and to contact with the child, so you know the first simple words and pictures, that is the first step for communication with child. And everything the parents of child does well because when the child is very shy and quiet that's much harder.

NF: Absolutely, now a lot of the teachers are talking to me about the children's' individual personalities making enormous difference.

E: Yes exactly, yes because sometimes when child is very chatty and open, it's not a problem, because the child doesn't think about it that "I can't speak English, I can do some mistakes", it doesn't matter so...I know because I'm learning English as well, so I know that the best way to learn English is speaking.

NF: Just try, just jump in, but that requires a lot of confidence doesn't it?

E: Yes exactly.

NF: Right so the teachers generally when they, when you are going in to meet the teachers and they have got a Polish child in their class, what are they seeing as the problems then, what worries them?

E: Communication with the teacher and adapting in the class, so communication with the rest of class, and the school timetable, because it's quite different than in Poland. Because in here the children are in a school all day, in Poland in the younger classes they have four or five lessons per forty five minutes, and between the lessons are ten minutes break, so they finish about one o'clock, half past one and now they move there and they are surprised that they have to stay so long.

NF: So it must feel much more intense, the school here then. So for the children arriving that's a problem for them, is getting used to that then, they must be tired.

E: Yes I think so.

NF: So and also am I right in thinking that in Poland they wouldn't start school until, is it seven?

E: Six.

NF: Six, they are later than we start it's very early here.

E: Usually they are going to kinder...

NF: Kindergarten.

E: Yes, when they have three years old and some Kindergartens have the first year, it's class zero, when the child have to start education.

NF: So do all Polish children have a kindergarten or the majority from three or not necessarily?

E: No, basically I think that the not all of children can start kindergarten because we have too less not too much kindergartens.

NF: No, like us here really.

E: About half of population.

NF: Ok and probably presumably those that live in the cities rather than out in the countryside, like here.

E: So we have to ask grandmums, nannys...

NF: Ok. So for the children then, that's what worries them when they first arrive, it's the school day feels very different, are there other things that bother them?

E: They worry about English as well, and they are confused because usually they start school after one week, two weeks moving, so it is a completely new situation, new country, new place, new home, school, neighbours, so all of this decide about they confused about things.

NF: There is so much that is new all at once.

E: They feel lost sometimes and the first steps in the school, especially the small children, they feel confused because they don't know what's going on, why...I heard many

times the question about, why I have to speak English, I'm Polish not English. So they don't know who am I, am I Polish or English?

NF: Oh right. So identity, who they are is suddenly under threat, suddenly difficult for them. That's very interesting, so how, what age are the children who are expressing that thought, quite young are they?

E: Seven, eight.

NF: Seven, very interesting, and do they want to use Polish in school though or is it a matter of the individual.

E: It depends because sometimes we have few Polish children in one school, so I'm not sure is it good for them, because you know when they have other Polish people they don't want to speak English, because they can communicate in Polish. But it depends again on character.

NF: Yes it's a big factor isn't it, it's a big factor, yes. So the thing that I think fascinates me as an English person who doesn't need to leave her country for any reason, is why Polish families would come here, because it seems to me it's very hard what they take on, they work very hard when they get here and so on. So what is it?

E: Yes it's very simple answer because life in England, it's much easier and the salary is much better because I can tell you on like it was with me, because I moved here four years ago and I am finished studying in Poland, I had good job, I was a teacher in a private kindergarten. So my salary it wasn't that low like other teachers in community schools, so it wasn't that bad, but anyway the life was too expensive to have house or car, so in here it's much easier to plan to have a car.

NF: Really?

E: Yes, I had a thousand and two hundred zloty- Polish...

NF: Currency.

E: Yes, per month and if I would like to buy a car like here, I have old ford fiesta, nine years old so, here I have to pay eight hundred pounds for example for this car, in Poland I had to pay for it about five thousand zloty.

NF: Really! For an old car?

E: For the same car.

NF: For the same car.

E: Now you can see a difference.

NF: Very different, yes because we think of England as a very, very expensive country.

E: No.

NF: No, ok.

E: Maybe it is expensive because if my family visit us in here, and they want to buy something, it's very expensive for them, but if you have English salary and if you live in England it's much easier.

NF: Right ok. And do you get a sense that the parents who are coming here are happy with the English schools, it's another thing I have picked up, a lot of the teachers are saying to me that the parents really like the school system here.

E: Yes, because it's not that stressful like in Poland. In Poland children have a lot of homework, and they have to read a lot of books after school and they have to worry about writing books, everything especially in school as well. Books, writing books, pencils, blocks, everything what the child needs in school, the parents have to buy.

NF: Ok, which we don't have to at all.

E: Exactly, and I think that for parents it's much easier when child is all day in the school, not only until one o'clock, for example because they have a problem what they should do after school, so that is better in here.

NF: So the longer day for them, it's like free child care in a way in that respect.

E: And I think that the parents are very surprised in here because they are open in Poland. Children worry about school sometimes, because they scare.

NF: Really!

E: Yes we have a lot of tests so they have to learn very hard. In here the parents are surprised because for example when there is half term, the child is worry because, oh one week without school, no it's not possible, so the children love school because it's quite different in the school.

NF: Do you think it's a difference just in the way our teachers are, do you think there is a difference in the relationship between the teachers and the children in Poland as compared to England or?

E: The way how to learn is different, because it's much comfortable and fun in here and from the year one in Polish school everybody have tables, chair, white boards and lessons.

NF: Much more formal.

E: Yes, exactly so that's why they love English schools.

NF: It's so interesting to hear because we think of our system as being one...we think we put the children in school too early, we think that we give them too much formality too young, you know like things like literacy hour and things like that. So it's terribly interesting to hear someone say no, it's actually quite relaxed.

E: You know...

NF: It's not how we see it.

E: Yes it would be very interesting to make a trip to Poland.

NF: It would be fascinating, I would love to.

E: Visit a school.

NF: Absolutely, I need to do that really, as part of it to see that difference.

E: If you do that and need a contact just let me know.

NF: Thank you yes I will, it would be lovely.

E: I was working in private school and kindergarten so they will be very open to have a visitor.

NF: Yes I'm sure that would be lovely, yes I think that would be very interesting to see that difference.

E: Yes interesting, yes.

NF: So the other thing that a lot of the teachers are saying is, that the Polish families and their children are, they are just very pleased to have them, terribly positive, terribly...they find the families terribly supportive and you know really working hard for their children, and they really like the children and they, you know the Polish children, and they say I wish I had more Polish children in my class and so on. That's just in like two schools where I am doing a lot of interviews. So are you finding on the whole that teachers are quite pleased about the Polish children and it seems to be, you are getting that feeling too?

E: Yes, not only Polish just all ethnic minority children. So I was very surprised because the teachers really wanted to help, really trying to explain the parents what they need, and to contact with parents, parents are very surprised because often they say to me that the teacher is very friendly and open, the teacher have a time for them, so I think...

NF: Is this Polish parents or other ethnic minority parents as well?

E: Polish parents but when I am in the school I can see a lot of situations not only with Polish parents and Polish children, because it's very (...) in English schools, a lot of people from all the world.

NF: Yes, interestingly I didn't...I lived in London until recently and did all my teaching there, where obviously it is very mixed, and I wasn't expecting to find people that mixed in in schools down here, but in fact there are quite a lot of children from other countries, as you say. So that's interesting, so you are finding teachers are very

positive about other children, but is that in schools that are in towns and in schools that are like in the villages, it's like anywhere, are you finding any differences?

E: Anywhere I think, anywhere yes, and even if they are confused or they don't want how to help, they are trying to find their way how to help.

NF: It's the effort of wanting to try to help.

E: Yes they are looking for training or any information from internet or from me, so it's very positive.

NF: So all in all its feeling quite as if the Polish families are coming here, they are happy to be here, the children are learning English and succeeding very well in school. Do you think they are going to stay?

E: Most of them, especially the ones where all family is here, so because very often it was like the Father came here about three years, four years ago and after one year they decide to move here, so most of them I think they stay.

NF: Yes I have heard that, and in some cases they then bring Grandma over to help out or Aunties or Uncles, so it seems to me that extended families are coming, not just the nuclear family but the extended family as well.

E: Yes, I know a family when it was only one Father and then he moved his family and his Brother with family and his Sister with family, so basically it's a little sad because for Grandparents for example, they stay in Poland and all the Grandchilds are in the other country. So it is sad for Poland.

NF: I think so, presumably there...are there enough people to work left, because it feels like they have all come here some people would say, obviously they haven't all come here, but so many left after 2004 didn't they?

E: Yes because...

NF: Is it a problem for Poland in terms of having enough workers of their own?

E: At the moment yes, but when in 2004 when a lot of Polish people moved here, because we are in European Union and we can work legally in here so, and it was quite different situation, it was difficult about job in Poland and quite easy in here. Now it's, you might say it's not that difficult in Poland but it start difficult to find a job in here, because it's now a lot of Polish, Slovakian...

NF: And other eastern Europeans.

E: ...people and if someone looking for a job, it's not enough like four years ago to have time, now you have to learn English, you have to, good is if you have a qualification.

NF: Ok so it's got more difficult.

E: Yes, so now is changing, so a lot of Polish people go back to Poland but that's singles and students.

NF: Right, young adults who come here to earn money to go to University and things, yes I got that impression from other people I have spoken to.

E: Yes and the parents talking that they have to stay, because the children started education and they don't want to change it, because it's difficult back again to Poland and start again Polish schools so...

NF: Ok, so the families get kind of locked in to needing to stay because of the children.

E: Yes exactly.

NF: It will be interesting to see how the children develop isn't it, because they will have this Polish-English identity, won't they over time. It will be interesting.

E: But a lot of Polish parents decide to learn Polish they are sending children to Polish schools.

NF: Otherwise they would lose who they are.

E: Yes, about Polish language, Polish history, so they care about it.

NF: Yes I'm sure they do, yes, that's good so they have this very strong sense of their own identity. But also the other thing people say is that they have mixed in, integrated so easily with English communities, so there is this kind of sense of kind of coming here and just kind of getting on with it, you know, which is interesting.

E: Yes but basically in my own experience it's not that easy to.

NF: I'm sure it's not.

E: And the lot of Polish people just keeping together.

NF: Really?

E: Yes, it's very difficult to make friends.

NF: ...with the English? Right.

E: Maybe because of the English I don't know. Maybe because they are working so hard and equally have two jobs for example.

NF: Yes I spoke to someone a year ago who is a Polish community worker in Winchester, and she was saying exactly that, that they are working so hard and such long hours there's no time, and also the English are just very reserved aren't we, we are not so outgoing, very you know, a bit kind of closed in (laughs).

E: But there is a big plus about the English people, all English people are very friendly, if I want to...I have something for to do in bank or county council or anywhere, and the office everybody are open and friendly, everybody want to help, even in the shop you know, or on the street, it's not normal in Poland that you are walking on the street and someone smiling to you.

NF: Really.

E: Some stranger persons smiling to you, it's not normal so it's very nice for us here, because we can feel better.

NF: Right, that's very interesting, because we see ourselves as a bit reserved and so it's funny how the world, the review of the rest of Europe of us is being really quite

different from the way we see ourselves, it's actually quite a positive view of England and the English.

E: Very positive because I was travelling into my school by buses and trains before I pass exam for driving, so I was surprised that on the bus stop it was some lady and she back from shopping, and she start to speak with me about her shopping, "Oh you know I shouldn't buy this trousers because I have a lot of trousers in my wardrobe". I was surprised because she start to speak to me like old friends, it's not normal in Poland.

NF: Ok.

E: So it is very nice and bus drivers' friendly smiley, ask how are you? Or if I was driving every day by bus so drivers know me.

NF: That's really nice to hear. I must say it's a surprise. Ok I think that's all I had to ask really, is there anything else you wanted to talk to me about, that you think I haven't covered, that you think is really important?

E: I think that is all.

NF: I think we have covered it all, great, thank you very much.

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH FRANCES JULY 07

NF So, yes, I'll take a few notes while we're talking, but not really because it gets picked up on here anyway. So, I guess it's a good idea to start with the basics, just what does EMAS provide, I mean specifically in relation to the Polish children? If you want to take it broader as well because it makes more sense to then just do that.

F Yes. Well what's provided for the Polish children is really the same as what's provided for all the children with English as an additional language to an extent, and the kind of basic package in terms of what we can provide to schools, is 10 hours of bilingual assistant support and also an assessment visit to determine, you know, lots of information about the child, you know, their previous education, what kind of needs they may have, and then at the end of that a report is provided to the schools, so the school's in a position to know really what kind of support the child needs from the start. Then the bilingual assistant will go in and provide bilingual support in the classroom. It's a very small amount of time, but it kind of comes down to resources really in terms of what we can provide.

I mean, in addition to that, they can have a training session as well. A practical workshop type of session...

NF Sorry... that's the teachers that can have a training session?

F Yes, whoever wants it really. The teachers, if they want to put forward a team of teachers or teaching assistants and teachers. Quite often these days it's a whole staff... in the past they used to put forward one or two teachers, but now increasingly its whole staff teams.

NF So you deliver that like in a normal staff meeting time. I mean they bid for you to come and run INSET for them?

F Yes, it usually takes place in an after school session, one of their staff meetings, and we've got some things that we go through. Usually it involves things like a lesson in an unknown language, discussion of the support strategies, lots of question and

answer opportunities and a kind of resource booklet that they can mull over when we've gone. So that's the kind of basic support that we offer. If they want more than that then they can buy in extra support.

NF I see, so there's basic package of 10 hours, then on top of that the assessment visit and the training session and that's provided by the county?

F Yes

NF So that's free to the schools essentially, there's no money changing hands?

F No, that's free..,

NF So they can then use something like Standards Fund money to buy in additional support should they need to?

F Mmm. I should say that this isn't kind of universal. It is in terms of Polish, but a while ago when we were really pushed for resources, it was necessary to prioritise which, because there are so many. I mean last year we had over 1,000 new arrivals so we had to, well in previous years, prioritise which languages we were going to give the support to. It sounds like an awful thing but how it's worked out is that we fund languages and ethnic groups that we know are under-achieving, because we've got data on that, plus languages that are most numerous. So Polish is probably second on the list after Nepali at the moment, so they do get free support. But unusual kinds of languages that get asked for not that often, they have, fortunately after the assessment which is free and the training which is free, they have to pay for their support. Which is a bizarre situation, and I feel the schools are now used to it and know about it but at the start there was a lot of questions and a need to explain and all the rest of it, so it wasn't ideal.

NF That sounds really difficult...

F It is...

NF So how was that kind of formula arrived at? Was it in consultation with Heads or...?

F Yes. There's a Headteacher consultative group that works with our service and er, although I wasn't part of that group it was discussed within that group. And, I mean the alternatives were things like looking at job cuts and things like that. It's kind of the best of a bad set of options probably. But, eerm, as well as that, I think the schools have realised that they have to actually put in a certain amount of things themselves. So I suppose its had a few kind of positive spin offs, but it's very inequitable because you may have two children in the same school and one can get free support and one can't, so it looks like you're attaching a kind of hierarchy, a status to particular languages which is awful. So we're not happy with it....

NF No. And it sounds like you must be having to go in to schools and explaining that quite a lot of the time

F Yes

NF So teachers must be wondering why if they got say a Pushto speaker and a Polish speaker ....

F That would be a good example!

NF That's very hard isn't it?

F Very difficult.

NF So, that's what you actually provide ... I mean, how far do you think it works?

F Well...

NF Or, how far, is it possible for you to measure it ? It sounds really hard ... if you've got 1,000 new arrivals and a wide range of languages ...

F I think we've got over 90 languages now

NF Gosh! That's a significant increase in the time I've been here. It used to be 40 something a few years back

F 40 would be about 5 years back

NF 5 years, yes that's right

F But now, I mean it may be between 90 and 100 languages, so that's not Southampton and Portsmouth, that's just Hampshire

NF Just Hampshire. So, I guess that point I'm trying to make here is it's so incredibly disparate, the picture we're looking at, do you have any way that you are able to make sense of it?

F Well, lot of ways that we can measure it in a kind of small way. First of all, the bilingual assistants who go in to support those children write some targets in conjunction with the teachers. So at the end of that support time it's reviewed, so that's that. The other things is that the bilingual assistant, as part of their performance management or work review processes, they all get feedback from the schools as to how effective the teachers working with them have felt their support has been. So we get some comments back in some sense. I mean sometimes parents as well, erm, send back a comment to say "Please don't take the support away because it's been so valuable, how can you take it away so quickly", this kind of thing. So there are those kinds of ways to measure it. I suppose looking at it, what it kind of does, it provides that immediate, emergency kind of response, and that's effective at the start because at the start, you know a child who's just landed at the school has got so many changes to face, that's what they need, is the kind of social/ emotional support if you like. And that can come from somebody who shares the same language; they feel a sense of security. But if you haven't got at least that then you can't really take in the learning that's going on around you. So the kind of settling in time, I don't think you can underestimate how valuable that is. And, I think having someone around who speaks the same language has a tremendous impact on that. And I've seen children for

example, who will not speak at all in their new environment, and that's actually a stage of language children that children go through, particularly young children I think, but you bring in a bilingual assistant and it's like a magic effect. You'll see suddenly their facial expression changes, they're talking, and the teacher will see a different side of them that hadn't existed previously. So it does have a very satisfying kind of instant effect really which is lovely. So I think it has a lot of spin offs probably, but it's a very short time and the difficulty is that support time finishes and then they're left then to kind of get on really, and maybe that's when things will slide. Eerm, but maybe not, I mean if they've got enough English to kind of make their needs known, then sometimes those early stages are where you see the most progress and it's later on they may plateau. So, I think it's quite effective, and if you're thinking of a kind of customer focussed world in terms of our schools, then I think that's what our schools really appreciate to be honest, even though it may not coincide with what the DfES are saying in terms of 'oh look at the needs of more advanced learners and don't be distracted by your new arrivals all the time.'

NF Mm. And that's a difficult one for you isn't it, because we do all recognise that actually we do need to support the more advanced. And so are schools, are schools coming back to you and asking you to support the more advanced, or does it feel like your work is always the cavalry with that initial arrival .. you know the 'doesn't speak any English time'..?

F A lot of the... well I think because we have a team of teachers and bilingual assistants, the bilingual assistant work is predominantly with new arrivals but increasingly the specialist teachers on our teams are working with more advanced learners or with children with particular issues, so I think sometimes the new arrival bit is the way in to open discussions about those kind ... you know, the fact that you do have advanced learners. And quite often, when I'm doing a training session on the new arrivals, you know I'll mention the advanced learners and I'll give an example, and you know you'll see teachers nodding and saying "oh yes, that's so an so pupil in my class, yes, that pupil was misunderstanding instructions and I thought he was quite fluent", and you can see them nodding in an 'oh yes!' kind of situation. So, I think it opens the discussion up, but I tend to think it's not until schools have got an

established group of EAL learners that they begin to look at them as a whole and they begin to think “oh well we do have these advanced learners and they have needs.”

NF So you notice a difference then in terms of schools that have to manage it as part of their every day and schools that have to manage this at the start. There’s obviously a stark difference there?

F Yes, for example, the schools in the Aldershot and Farnborough types of areas , particularly in the North of the county, where there are growing numbers of Nepali pupils, I mean we have schools where maybe 20 or 30 % of the pupils are from ethnic minorities and most of those are EAL learners. They might be Nepali. And that’s quite a sizeable percentage of your school.

NF Yes... in a county setting

F Yes, and you do have to take notice then and some schools, not that many, they are doing things to address some long term issues. For example, one of the schools I was in recently, they were using one of the Primary Strategy programmes for writing to work with the more advanced EAL learners , because they were noticing a kind of a dip at KS 2 from their KS 1. But things like that are probably few and far between..

NF What... in terms of a school that recognises, that has that level of understanding that once they are verbally fluent it doesn’t necessarily mean that they can write it fluently. That need to put in support with those things like the conventions of written English?

F Yes, exactly yes. I mean there’s a lot of very useful materials and research as well, that’s available to try and back up what’s working and the strategies that are working from the DFES, so that’s good. So when a schools starts to show an interest in that that’s good, you can get in there with lots of different ideas and strategies and things like that which is good.

NF Good. So, eerm, what’s your... in terms of these Polish children in particular, do you have a particular perception now of what the teacher or the school need is for

supporting this particular section, or does it not feel any different from other children arriving?

F Well, I think when there's a particular language group in a school, I mean I suppose a lot of schools still have a situation where there are lots of isolated learners. It's not usually that there's one predominant group. I think ... I don't know how many schools there are that would have predominantly Polish learners. I think they would probably be spread amongst a range of other learners. Where they do have more than one, and there are schools that do, they are looking at wanting to know more about background, culture, and previous education, styles of learning, parental contact, information translated in Polish. They are looking a lot more at the particular needs of that language group; speaking to parents, seeing what they want, using interpreters, those kind of things are being put in to place, but I suppose that kind of situation is more unusual. The more usual is that there are 10 languages in the school and Polish is one of them, or there are a couple of Polish speakers in amongst 10 other languages.

NF Where you mentioned your list of things there, that thing like support with parents and so on... Do they come to you for that, in terms of help with that information or do they go elsewhere?

F I suppose they tend to come to us at the moment for Polish speakers. I think with the schools who have Nepali speakers, because they've had a longer history with Nepali, they are more in tune with finding their own information and using kind of community support. For Polish, there isn't really community support because, you've probably noticed, the Polish pupils are everywhere.

NF That's interesting for me actually because I've found it difficult to pin down that sense of, where do they come from...

F No, there doesn't seem to be a ... I mean I think there are kinds of local groups that come in to contact with each other, but also the Catholic Church as well, which, you know, people have found support with as well. Because I actually hadn't realised how many Polish families are Catholic but a lot of them have graduated towards Catholic schools, or have gravitated towards the Catholic church and meet each other that way,

or may meet other Polish families within the church and that kind of thing. So there's that to an extent, but predominantly at the moment, because it's all sort of new, I suppose that the schools are at least asking us to signpost them to where they can get extra support or extra information. We have two bilingual assistants who are Polish so there is the facility to go in and do some training in a kind of question and answer session. "This is how the schools are, this how they are different, did you know that education was optional up to age of 7? So you children may have been to schools, they may not" And also, the Polish bilingual assistants have produced a booklet for schools which gives a background to school for Polish pupils, every day language, a basic glossary. So then we kind of direct them to particular internet sites perhaps where they can get more information. But they possibly ask us where to go.

NF OK. So does EMAS have ... I mean you explained to me in detail what you provide, but does EMAS have a sense of what they think teachers need or is it maybe difficult to pin down to one thing, because what we are actually talking about it seems is a very disparate picture of schools with varying need. Is there a sense of a core need?

F I think we'd probably look at it in terms of a broader context really. I mean we'd look at Hampshire and say look at the new arrivals, look at the trends, you can't afford to not put in to place certain things because you, at the current time, don't have any new arrivals, because you will. I was in a school a few weeks ago, a village school, and 9 Polish pupils arrived all at once, and it was pandemonium there! The SENCO had arrived from a different school where they had experience of EAL learners, and so she knew what to do; but it was panic stations, absolute panic stations there. And a real sense of "what's somebody going to do for us", rather than "what can we put in place ourselves". And, actually, when you start to talk about a different support mechanism to put in, it's a lot of common sense type of things, and things that you could say are good for all children. It's not a case of asking schools to do things above and beyond really. They might need to modify their approach in certain ways, but in general, it's not hugely different from what you will see in the Primary Strategy for example as good practice.

NF Do you think the teachers understand that? I mean what you've articulated there is terribly clear to someone like me, that EAL practice is actually good practice in terms of linguistic development, do you think the teachers see that?

F Eerm, maybe... it depends who you talk to. If you talk to people in a management role then they may be able to take on board the fact that you've got to have certain things in place as procedures or systems or resources that will kind of help things along considerably. But, if you talk about the teachers then they are the teacher with a Polish child in front of them who doesn't understand them, you can't start at that level of discussion, you've got to start at a completely practical try this, try that, this is what you've got to do in this situation, if that happens try this or this; you've got to start at that level really. So, I think you have to start at the level of the feedback you are getting from whoever it is that you are talking to.

NF So you're having to differentiate your input quite a lot?

F Oh yes, yes and er, increasingly it's in a kind of.... Well for myself anyway... it's in a kind of whole school context. So I am at pains to put in lots of practical things eerm, but, I also want to put in those messages about you can't just have an emergency reaction. You've got to put things in place to make things easy for yourselves. Yes... I suppose the bilingual assistants going in... they are more at the teachers' level. I suppose what they are offering is entirely practical eerm, you know, here's somebody who can speak the same language. The problem is one of sustainability once they've gone. So, those other things must come about because, the more long term things must come about, otherwise the school is completely relying on our service, and when it goes they are completely stuck.

NF Yes, So are you aware of schools that just become stuck? I mean how on earth do you cope with that when you have 450 schools all wanting you at the same time?

F Yes. I mean we ask the bilingual assistants to refer schools for additional training on particular issues, and we'll go in and suggest particular resources. I guess we try and differentiate our response in a little, you know, to some extent, to the stage the school is at. I mean, the school I went to a few weeks ago with the 9 Polish children, I'd have

to do quite a lot of follow up to that to make sure that they feel supported. Because I think they... the panic response comes out in different ways. In fact I think it came out in what you could describe as quite aggressive type of eerm, you know what I was there doing the training in the beautiful picturesque village, some of those teachers were quite aggressive in terms of "Well what are you going to do about it? This is my situation, I can't possibly have that! And what are you going to do about that, that and that, and it was all directed at you and you had to just deal with each thing in turn. So sometimes it comes out like that. Sometimes it comes out in terms of putting in inappropriate kinds of ... what we'd rather not see... for example, placing new arrivals in the SEN groups, that kind of model of support... or withdrawing pupils completely and having a teaching assistant go through very basic English with those pupils which, I mean that kind of thing comes very quickly, it's more the kind of access to the curriculum things that are more difficult.

NF So how are you able to deal with that? You're in quite a difficult position, you're not their senior managers, I mean are you able to say, do you have any remit from the county to say actually the practice you are engaging these children in is not appropriate or not helpful for them ?

F I wouldn't put it like that. I would always acknowledge the effort the school is making I would always say, you know, you're doing a fantastic... you know... you're making available these resources...eerm, what you might try is such and such, such and such, because that may have this result. So I'm probably putting it across in that way. I guess that I've been in this role for so long that there are probably not many questions that I haven't heard before. So I can probably... although I'm sometimes in a situation where I think 'goodness me I didn't expect this kind of response' ... it's not that I haven't kind of been there before. And I think, as well, from our point of view, the more reading that we do around the subject, teachers want to know 'why' all the time, and it's really important to be able to try and justify ...well it's very important to be able to say why something is a good strategy and why something else is not. It sounds obvious but, eerm....

NF I'm sure it's very important where, in this scenario, a lot of the time you are dealing with teachers who have no experience of doing this so they have no grasp of

what's a good or what's a poor strategy, so you're having to fill in subject knowledge for them all the time in a hurry aren't you?

F Yes exactly. Another thing that we can offer them, which I forgot to mention before, is going to a school where we have the leading teachers. And that's brilliant because then...we've got three teachers now...it's so powerful to be able to say 'oh yes, why don't you go and see such and such a school, who have got quite a good relationship with parents, and they put in these different mechanisms to communicate. It's much more powerful to do that instead of saying oh do this, this and this...you can go and see something happening. They can talk to somebody who's overcome the problem that they are encountering.

NF And with a peer, with another teacher, I'm sure that must be very powerful.

F Yes, because we are outsiders in our service so it is more credible coming from a fellow teacher in the same situation.

NF This is all absolutely fascinating eerm... I just have one more question on this list... We talked about what you provide, what you perceive as a core need and about how some teachers perceive what that core need is... In an ideal world what, additionally, what might you want to provide that you can't at the minute, that you can't provide simply because the funding doesn't stretch that far?

F Eerm.... Well that's a difficult one actually, because a lot of it is about building capacity in the school. So, the resources to do that... those... that's at odds to what the schools want. They want the solution to the problem immediately, if they are looking at it as a problem. What would be really good, though this may not be popular with schools, is far more alignment of what we're doing with eerm, things that are coming as messages from the county as a whole. So, if you are looking at children and writing, you are considering the EAL writers' needs within that context. And, I mean we're really not at that stage at all in Hampshire. We're not working closely enough with the inspector and the level people, we're not working closely enough with the strategy staff and the consultants. We want joint kind of training messages. We want that, but we want that ultimately. But at the moment it wouldn't be quite appropriate

because you would water down your messages too much, because the schools aren't quite at that stage when they would take on the whole big picture, they're more thinking about how to deal with more arrivals and what do we do. I think that would help a lot.

NF Yes, I mean I can see that. My perception as someone who has never worked in a county setting so I don't really know, but has obviously talked with you and with members of the county inspectorate, is that the teams seem to operate a little bit as islands, and I don't wish to be at all critical, that's not my job at all, but there appears to be not much dialogue...not dialogue that's the wrong word... but little coherence between you and say the English team, which surprised me a bit.

F Yes, exactly, that's exactly right, we are operating as islands, and it's crazy, but I support as well, I mean talking to colleagues in other areas, one of our problems is the sheer size of the county.

NF Of course

F If they were talking about being in the same offices as other consultants, I'm thinking well we're not even in the same town, you know, it's completely different.

NF So, it's just completely kind of practical measures that get in the way?

F I think so, but there are also, I mean for example we have done presentations to HIAS consultants and, this is just my personal point of view, but I get the impression that apart from a few people who are genuinely interested in finding ways of working together, it's more a kind of polite interest. Yes, that's a good idea, yes, yes, but there's no real oomph about trying to work out how we can do that. And I think until we do that it will be difficult to have the kind of impact on capacity building that I think a school... as we would want. To weave in those messages about the EAL learners; to provide the practical support as well, but to have a bit more impact on the long term rather than the quick fix kind of response.

NF OK, so it feels like a need for a more joined up response? I wonder if it's the same nationwide, even in LEAs where there are higher numbers of EAL learners. It would be quite interesting to know wouldn't it!

F Yes, it's quite interesting. Funnily enough, last week, because certain counties and local authorities took part in the EAL pilot for that DfES pack we were talking about earlier, they are now hubs of excellence. So we are joining with them to find out ways of working and there are authorities who can give examples of how they are more joined up. But it's quite a far reaching thing, it involves changing roles, changing job description, it's vast really and that will take a bit of time.

NF OK. I wonder if you can talk to me a little bit about the TEAL course? Is that something you're running, or with Portsmouth or...

F Well, the TEAL course is a result of TDA funding. The TDA noted several areas where there were weaknesses locally in the kind of CPD training available to schools and one of them was EAL at a more advanced level, so the level of the course is Masters level. That's the level that was missing; there was a practical, every day, know what to do type of training around, but there wasn't anything that was critical where you could evaluate, it's difficult to explain really, but that level of CPD was just missing. So we seized this opportunity to bid for that money and we were successful. When I say we, it was Hampshire EMAS and Portsmouth EMAS as well who originally started off and were thinking about it. But subsequently Hampshire is the kind of lead authority on delivering the course recruitment and all the rest of it. The other authorities which were Portsmouth and Surrey in fact, and now Southampton, they have been involved in delivering some of the training, but nothing to do with the assessment or the organisation or the hard work (laughs)

NF OK, so it's being delivered at Portsmouth?

F NO, it's accredited by Portsmouth

NF Ah, that's it, I knew it had something to do with the university

F It's delivered mainly in Hampshire..

NF By your team?

F By my team, in conjunction with pulling in other people from other authorities who have particular expertise in those areas. And the reason it's in Hampshire and became a Hampshire type of concern, is that originally when it was set up Portsmouth EMAS didn't feel they had the capacity at this time to be able to do that, and I'm not sure about Surrey and the other authorities either. And, having said that, the recruitment has been all Hampshire. Hampshire have been recruited, and a couple from Hampshire, but apart from that, it seems to be timely in Hampshire at the moment. Because, in previous years, you'd put on something like that, and you'd struggle, you'd really struggle to get people on to it. This time they are paying, I know it's subsidised, but they are paying and we didn't have trouble recruiting.

NF That's wonderful

F It's amazing

NF How many have got on it?

F 11

NF And has it got, got Masters credits attached to it?

F It's got, eerm, there's the TLU bit and then there's a professional practice bit which takes it to 60 credits. So it's actually a nice package for people interested in going on to masters.

NF So, actually, you've got a growing number of potentially...sorry, does that 11 include the 3 leading EAL teachers?

F It includes 2 of them, the third will probably go next year

NF So you've got a growing cohort of staff now, with this expertise developing, this detailed subject knowledge for EAL...

F Yes, yes

NF So is there a vision of how that might be used? Or is too early days...

F I'm not sure that I would put it as strongly as a vision, but there are kind of indicators of how it will pan out. The thing is as well that the leading teachers certainly stand out in terms of their subject knowledge and expertise and 'withitness' for want of a better word, I think because preceding that we had put in some training for them, because EAL is not a subject in its own right that you'd get leading teachers for it, we did put in some induction training. So we had all of that, plus starting to work in this way, so they came to TEAL just, you know, waiting for the next part really, whereas some of the others have started much further back. So in some of the schools it would be a matter of somebody is there who is co-ordinating and leading EAL provision and not just at an individual level, it's at a school level so that they are looking at the systems. It's all about getting the schools to help themselves. So they are looking critically at the systems they've got, they are changing things, they are disseminating things to colleagues, they are building capacity. And of course, the more schools you've got that eerm, you know, the more you can say 'why don't you go and visit so and so school, they have the same issues as you'. So it will have a knock on effect on other schools as well, and it's a 3 year programme so you know, we've got 2 more years to kind of build on this.

NF With another 11 in each cohort?

F Yes

NF So that's quite an interesting corpus of teachers...

F Yes, another interesting fact is that most of the teachers are secondary.

NF Oh that is interesting! I didn't even think to ask... so blinkered in my primary world...

F Yes, it is interesting that it has reflected a secondary need for capacity building. But the leading teachers we have are absolutely fantastic. There are three of them and one is a Headteacher, and one is a Deputy Headteacher, their contributions are just so spot on, so valuable in terms of moving other people on in their thinking. So they're brilliant, they're a fantastic asset.

NF I think that's all really, other than to say it's just been so fascinating, and puncturing my own expectations about what I thought I was going to see compared with the inner city. And one of the things that's going to be difficult about going forward with it is the disparate nature of it, which you are battling with the whole time. I think it's more likely to look like case studies of 'this is what it was like for this school and this is what it was like for this school'. There will be some common ground but it's amazing how different it is really.

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F: We have been trying to get a DVD together as well, so that other schools can see exactly what's needed and there won't be any school that can say, well I can't do that little bit because we haven't got anybody bilingual, so giving schools the whole set of tools that they need to be able to run the scheme.

NF: So when you kind of put it out into other schools, are those schools going to be selected on the basis of how many bilingual children they have got?

F: Oh no not at all, no, it's open to any school really and the secondary ones are very interesting that came along to the training to other day, because they are all really different. Some of them are pretty multi-ethnic but other ones have more isolated learners.

NF: Right.

F: But we are kind of...well the way of selling it if you like, but we didn't set out to do it like that, but the way it is coming across is really a good community cohesion type of initiative, so it's linking it into all of that agenda.

NF: Oh right so it's linking in with that.

F: Yes absolutely, and that's how people are seeing it, and what's nice about it is that it's not just open like we saw at KF, it's not just open to the bilingual children in the school, it's the English speakers as well.

NF: Yes.

F: And that's really important for the whole social cohesion agenda. That's something that's a joint initiative so, yes. So I'm hoping it will go well.

NF: Yes and that's very much the sense coming off that school really, that it's about that English language is so much...sorry, that language acquisition, first or second, is so much more about social happiness as it were.

F: Yes.

NF: And being settled, more than it is about anything else, and that's been very interesting in terms of my research, kind of unpicking that with the staff there.

F: Yes I'm not sure if you found a difference, obviously that has an impact at all phases, but particularly for key stage one in that phase, it's absolutely crucial and later on it's always interesting when you talk to new arrivals, they always will say, later on, it's the friendship the kindness that was the thing that made the difference at the start. You can't underestimate it but for all ages really, but...and for parents as well I think.

NF: So how do secondary schools respond to that sort of thing, because it's very different for them isn't it, the way in which they can do anything like that?

F: Yes well there is a, like you said, there is an interpreter scheme for the secondary pupils as well, and that as well is drawn from a number of different pupils, not just the bilingual ones. It's English only speakers with particular skills, with secondary for example and the things they have been able to do, is use gifted and talented pupils within languages, so English speakers who were learning German or French or Spanish, who are quite able at languages, or others who have particular social skills or particular qualities that would make them good communicators. Or even sometimes pupils who are fairly you know, they are well accepted by their peer group, so they help to facilitate integration for these new arrivals. Because sometimes they can obviously be very isolated so it's really good. And the other thing about the secondary one, is that we link it to the world of work as well, so we show a kind of economic advantage in doing bilingual or having language skills or being a good communicator, so we look at jobs you can do with interpreting or related to interpreting, so it's a kind of careers spin on it as well.

NF: Right and then clear link to every child matters outcomes in terms of achieving economic well being, so there is all sorts of...

F: It hopefully dovetails together.

NF: All sort of (...) there if you think about it.

F: Yes it does.

NF: So what was I going to ask you about it? So I was just wondering if there is an EMAS view or your own view really of the situation for Polish children in Hampshire now and if it's shifted or changed at all, since we last spoke. Because when we last spoke there was just this feeling that yes there was lots coming in, and then in my own conversations of teachers over the year it has been...there has been a sense of there not being so many coming in or of those children developing fluency for example, and therefore the issues seeming different, I wanted to know what your view of it was really.

F: Well I think one of the things that has happened is, we have fewer children coming in, we still have a number, a steady flow, some people have asked, or some schools have asked whether the Polish and in particular are returning to Poland, because you know that is something you hear in the news, that the migrant workers are now returning to their countries of origin. We haven't really experienced that in Hampshire as far as I'm aware, in that nobody has left, they have stayed. You know as far as I am aware nobody has really returned to their country of origin. Although speaking to some of the children you get the kind of impression that maybe that's the aim in the future, that they will return, but after they have become educated here, after they have developed their English skills and because maybe there is a lot of competitiveness with particular jobs and it obviously gives you an advantage if you have got an English speaking background perhaps.

NF: So the idea is that maybe they are developing English skills in order to take that home you mean.

F: Well some are.

NF: Take advantages at home.

F: Certainly that's older learners who have expressed that view. Ones who are wanting quite a high powered career, if you like. I suppose one of things I have noticed is that the children in the families that we had here, have been fairly aspirational in that they, you know they want something better for themselves, and who can blame them, and they want to develop skills, they want to develop English and the young people want to develop particular career choices. There was a girl I met the other day who wanted

to be an architect in Poland and recognised, although a little bit seeming to be reluctant to be here because the family had decided to move, she recognised that that's a very competitive field in Poland and therefore her chances are much improved by being an English speaker with an architect qualification, so there's certainly that.

NF: So there's not necessarily...there hasn't been a rise or fall, it's still quite steady in terms of numbers. Another thing we discussed was you said that they, in terms of community support and the fact that there wasn't a kind of established Polish community because they kind of get everywhere, so is that changed or is it still feel like they are everywhere?

F: Yes I think they are still everywhere, but certainly in some of the towns in the county there is a growing number of Polish speakers and you see that reflected in the shops and the you know provision available, delicatessen. In Basingstoke, for example, there is now a delicatessen, in the supermarkets you can get Polish products, all of that kind of thing which reflects more people in the area asking for those kind of facilities and products, so yes.

NF: So are you aware of any growth in kind of community support for Polish new arrivals or not necessarily.

F: Well I think there is support in terms of information available in Polish, certainly on web sites and things. I did a bit of research recently for a piece of training I did on migrant workers and, just trawling through the different web sites where you know they might access particular information, I noticed much more information available through the medium of Polish. So on council web sites, for example, a Polish option, not the whole thing translated, but certainly key sections translated. So I would say on-line there's quite a lot of support there. Locally, I'm not so sure if it's that visible but...

NF: Perhaps still there maybe through the Catholic Church or what we discussed before or you know things like that.

F: Yes I think so, yes. Community support definitely through the Catholic Church, moral support and that kind of thing, yes.

NF: And do you have enough, are you able to spread your bilingual assistants kind of thinly enough, because that also felt, a year ago felt kind of everybody needed Kasha and her colleagues all the time as it were. How's that gone, has that....?

F: I think it's definitely better now, it's still our second biggest language in Hampshire. It is better and then there are other initiatives, like I don't know if I mentioned last time to you, the phone line that we are running.

NF: No, no you didn't.

F: Ok well, we developed a phone help line for Nepali, no not Nepali first of all it was Portuguese, which we spread to Polish and Nepali as well. Because Hampshire is so huge this is one of the ways to make a Polish speaker available at certain points in the week to, it could be schools wanting information about schools in Poland and the differences between that and schools in the UK. It could be parents phoning up about all kinds of things like how to get a school place for your child, or it could be pupils phoning up saying I don't understand this homework, or schools saying can you phone such and such parents, there is a school trip, all those kind of issues, so that's been really good.

NF: Right, really good.

F: Yes it's a way to support...the other thing that's been happening, is looking at use of ICT to really support families who are maybe isolated So we have developed this kind of a web cam, web video conferencing type of technology, and it's called flash meeting technology so that you can have a school here with, I don't know with a group of parents or pupils, and then you can have a school over there, you know a long way away with similar language, and you can kind of share issues and ask questions. So we are beginning to do things like that to try and support.

NF: So that probably supports the schools that feel more isolated as well as the families that feel more isolated as well.

F: Yes definitely.

NF: That's interesting.

F: They don't feel so out on a limb then.

NF: No. And when we talk about those isolated bilingual learners in some of the schools in the County, are we mostly talking about Polish children or have you got quite a wide range coming in.

F: No we have now; I don't know what it was last time I was speaking.

NF: It was ninety last sum of languages.

F: Yes it was over a hundred now.

NF: Really, gosh.

F: Yes there is a list somewhere I can give you. Over a hundred languages, so many of those are going to be isolated learners, and I suppose that will always be a feature of somewhere like Hampshire, that you get just pockets of different languages. Some of the Polish are isolated, but less so probably now than other language groups I would say.

NF: Right ok. So one of the things that's emerging very clearly from every conversation I have really, or most, with teachers, regardless of how confident or otherwise the teachers are feeling about their Polish children, is this sense of a very positive reception of these children and their families, and that they develop English terribly quickly and they are terribly bright and the parents can't do enough, and are you getting that same kind of feel?

F: Yes it's very interesting because you don't want to fall into stereotype, because you certainly do have that about Polish workers, they are very hard workers.

NF: It's all in the news isn't it?

F: It's all in the news. And the training I did recently, we talked about...it was a little exercise where people had to put down positive things and negative things about migrant workers, and one of the positive things was hard working, and that was the whole blank...and when people talk about migrant workers they're often thinking

Polish, I think, maybe that's my supposition, but they're the kind of highest profile migrant workers probably we have now. So yes....

NF: Do they actually view them...I'm beginning to think that they actually view them as kind of different almost from other linguistic or ethnic groups, it's almost, I mean it may be the nature of the questions I'm asking people, but it's feeling that way.

F: It maybe to do with, well several things but, first of all the kind of Polish people that are coming over, or the ones I have met certainly, aspirational they want to integrate. And so much so that one of the comments about Polish families is, quite often you will hear, they don't want to use their own language at school, and that's quite difficult because that's one of the major strategies that we would suggest for all kinds of, you know, settling in and accessing the curriculum etc. But they don't want, they're not keen to do that, and they are so keen to kind of integrate so there is that aspect. And there is also the looking at the language itself and similarity, it's a European language, and there will be certain similarities which makes it perhaps less difficult to get to grips with English. Many of the Polish children that, certainly the secondary school ones, they also have a grasp of German and so they are good linguists.

NF: Ok.

F: You tend to get the impression that they are good linguists, so they pick other languages and certainly looking at the secondary pupils in languages, learning French and German what have you, they succeed very well.

NF: How interesting, that's very interesting.

F: Even if they are new arrivals they do.

NF: Right ok. So they perhaps, so the older children therefore, are coming over already perhaps speaking two languages, so English is probably their third, so they have got that metalinguistic awareness that I think children have.

F: Yes they have.

NF: It's very interesting.

F: It's just an observation but certainly the new arrivals that have come in to, even key stage four you know year ten and eleven, they have left with a GCSE in a language, and sometimes in "A" grade. It's quite bizarre, but just it kind of clicks for them, they find it quite easy.

NF: One of the things I wonder though is because they pick up English so fast, if the teachers then, you can't really know this, if the teachers then treat them almost as if they are first language English speakers, and I wonder if the support for those you know, more fluent second language speakers is there.

F: Well that's an issue across the board really. Once bilingual learners get beyond the beginners stage and it tends to be that they develop the conversational English the fastest, then that often masks perhaps a lack of vocabulary or more difficulty with comprehension or writing at length, all those kind of things really. And that's all backed up by research, that kind of conversational as opposed to the more deeper...

NF: Academic.

F: Yes the academic English, that certainly is an issue, and I would have thought that that would apply to some of the Polish pupils we have, in addition to across the board really, and that's why I suppose we have a big push on you know, support for advanced EAL learners in the UK at the moment, because that's not really understood very well.

NF: No, you talked a little bit about that last time, you were saying there was some schools that were already comfortable enough about their EAL (...) that they were engaging with those materials, but it was kind few and far between.

F: Yes I think for a lot of schools that's quite a new concept, EAL learners equals new arrivals and there isn't anything else, but actually they do need support for five years down the line, just to increase that depth of language and you know, just language competence and ability to use it in a huge range of situations, and so yes.

NF: And I kind of wonder how we get, you know get that through, because the other thing that is happening, is that I will talk to a school and say I would love to come in and talk to you about you know, your experiences with the Polish children, then they will

say oh well she is speaking English now, as if the fact that she is now fairly fluent means it's not interesting to talk about her.

F: I know what you mean.

NF: Not that I'm not curious about the children, about the teachers and what they do and so on. It's almost as if there is a little bit of a shutdown there, which is interesting

F: I think when I am in a training situation and I'm trying to put across the idea of advanced learners, I usually just kind of portray some of the features. I don't suppose you have any learners who you know they may...you think that they understand everything but suddenly they go off on the wrong tangent, or they've misinterpreted a question, or you give them a series of more complex instructions and they are lost, or they haven't understood something you assume they would understand, or their writing is very brief, or it's very repetitive. They just kind of give them the features and then they start to nod and say, oh yes so and so's like that, oh yes that's you know that's something I recognise. I think a lot of the time people haven't thought about it, they haven't considered.

NF: No and so the other really interesting thing that's emerging is that teachers...I go in .....and so the conversation we have been having has been almost entirely about oral language, we have been talking...you have been talking all the time but it's spoken English really, development of that. Whereas when I'm talking with teachers a lot of the time they pitch straight into reading and writing and they kind of conflate, obviously with literacy all the time, and I can understand how that's happened, I'm wondering if it's they are so anxious about...I don't know, attainment I guess and the way they measure it is through, you know use of written English isn't it.

F: Yes.

NF: That they are pushing them quickly towards some sort of written outcome before the oral has gone in, I don't know. I'm not saying this is actually happening it's just to do with their conversation with me is interesting.

F: It is interesting because working with the group of lead teachers has been interesting from that point of view, because we have a cross phase group, so we have key stage

one to key stage four. And one of the things that emerges from that, is the fact that in key stage one all the conditions are right for language learning, you have the visual support. But one of the big things is you have the huge emphasis on speaking and listening that kind of tails off and diminishes as time goes by, because when you get to key stage two you need the evidence of stuff in the books. Where is the evidence that the learning has taken place, it's in the book it's in a written format, and even more so for key stage three and four, which is a real shame because what we are trying to do, is perhaps encourage schools to look at other forms of recording, of pupils recording of what they know and what they can do. And one of the ways is through technology again which is what we really want to kind of get a bit more proficient at putting things, you know reading onto...I can't put it into a very technical way, just for example having a child reading and then you can kind of revisit it six months later, do the same thing again and then you just hear the difference, and that child hears the difference as well. And that's one of the ways, or hear them speaking about something that you can see their progress, and they can do more as well.

NF: Yes, that is interesting though, I'm wondering actually one of the conversations I had with one of the teachers has been about how the revised primary national strategy is actually advantageous, I think in terms of our second language learners, because it has a much greater emphasis on speaking and listening.

F: Yes definitely. Yes it's interesting that the way that everything has developed, is that the primary strategy now is, the model is now of one of inclusion, so everybody's needs are catered for within this particular model. But that presupposes a certain amount of knowledge and understanding on the part of the teachers, which is not always the case. So sometimes we have to re-emphasise certain aspects, but some of the DVD material that has come out of the strategies is very good and you can pick out and exemplify certain aspects of good practice for EAL learners and the new arrivals excellence program that's out, that's particularly good for that point of view, and you can kind of make the links with the primary strategy, the kind of main program, but you can just emphasise certain aspects.

NF: So is there an increase in teachers asking for training?

F: Well yes, I don't know about increase, there's always a big demand for it and the way that we organise it in Hampshire is that we feel it's part of the provision that we provide to schools, so it's free for them and we think that's quite...well I certainly think it's quite important, because it gets the staff out there and in an environment where you can't actually spend huge amounts of time with particular individual schools, then the training is quite important in delivering those messages and providing that support, so that's quite important. I'm not sure there is an increase but the types of training I think has changed a little bit. Whereas it used to be more groups of teachers or even individuals kind of conferencing one to one conferencing, now it's predominating whole school. So everybody wants to have that exposure to the training, because the nature of you know, EAL learners in your school is so unpredictable that overnight three families can arrive and you know you need everybody to be aware of the issues, and obviously being part of inclusion agenda, everything really it's a bigger higher profile than it used to be I think. And teams of LSAs as well, there's quite a lot of training for them.

NF: Yes I got the...it's interesting a lot of them, and there's one particular at the school we were talking about earlier who has obviously done a proper course, but certainly newer teachers in schools who are, I've spoken to one or teachers who have been there for the first time and had an EAL are quite dependant on their LSAs actually, you seem to have this kind of wealth of knowledge.

F: They do.

NF: About their second language learners.

F: We're very lucky in Hampshire; their quality of LSAs is phenomenal.

NF: Very high.

F: And the you know the colleagues we have had in schools that are LSAs have come to our accredited year long training, they're extremely knowledgeable, and they are doing things that are unbelievable really for LSAs to be doing, but they are managers, they are managing the EAL provision and then newer teachers are relying on them.

Because I think still, there is very little in teacher training, there might be one lecture or two lectures, there is very little to really explore those issues in detail so it's a bit...

NF: Also, I wonder if the subject knowledge for EAL doesn't go in until you're actually confronted with it in the classrooms, so I accept what you are saying about what we absolutely know we don't do enough of in training. But also if you have got teachers training in Hampshire where most of the time they are going into schools where they don't have second language learners, they don't have a context for what we are giving them, so it just dissipates. Do you know what I mean, it's like any experience has to be set within a meaningful context doesn't it?

F: Oh absolutely.

NF: So there is a real problem, there is.

F: We do get quite a lot of requests from...

NF: It's interesting you should say that.

F: It is interesting because obviously it's in the QTS standards.

NF: Yes it is absolutely.

F: And we do have phone calls and contact from student teachers who are desperate for, where can I go and find a school where I can see EAL learners. So quite often we are putting people in touch with each other, and you know using the lead teachers school, so that trainee teachers can go and have a look and get some experience, or shadowing us or quite often we have a contact with student teachers certainly.

NF: In fact I have asked my NQT's who are graduating now, I've put out a kind of general call to them to say if you get into school next year and have Polish children, please contact me again, because I want to watch how they cope, because I know how little they have had in school or with us.(...) [laughs] or what's terrifying for them.

F: Yes.

NF: One of things that's also interesting though is, although I've had some super teachers to talk with this year, it's quite an uphill struggle getting people to talk to me about it, and I wondered if you had a view on that kind of anxiety level. It may just be nothing, it may be just I don't want to talk to a researcher, because it's not high on my agenda. That's entirely possible, just entirely sensitive to...

F: Well there are differences in people's confidence, teachers confidence in you know, talking about issues relating to EAL learners, Polish included, and you do notice that in training and one of the first little kind of exercises we do, is a kind of quiz is to just find out what people know about it. And it's still very, very variable, in terms of knowledge of the whole area. So I think there is a tremendous difference in confidence. And another thing about that, and maybe I'm wrong about this as well, it's just my opinion or perception, is that a lot of the Polish speakers are in Catholic schools which...the ones I've been into I feel that they tend to have more traditional kind of approaches, and therefore something out of the ordinary is out of your comfort zone and therefore, you know, that may account in some way for perhaps a slight reluctance to be engaged with discussing them out, you don't feel confident, it's not part of what you do. That's just my perception and another kind of piece of evidence of that, if you like, is we are going to be doing a big project with key stage two in the next year, and the reason for that is that's where our data shows is the biggest under achievement at the moment. But we went for schools with over 15% ethnic minority and when we looked at the list, a number of them were Catholic schools.

NF: That's interesting.

F: It is interesting.

NF: Because there are hardly any Catholic schools in Hampshire, speaking as someone from East London where there are loads.

F: It's very interesting that a lot of them were, if I had the list I could tell you how many there were, but it was noticeable, you thought well is there a particular issue here. The reason might be, well you can hypothesise at the reason, but one might be that they have admitted a lot of Polish and certainly I know a quite a number of Catholic schools where there are lots of Polish speakers, and that's the reason for the increase in

numbers. The other might be to do with Irish, I'm putting Irish down because, you know as a particular ethnic group, so that might be it as well. But then when invited to participate in this all-singing and all-dancing project, to really develop and hone your EAL practice, I think we had only one of the Catholic schools who took up the project, and that's interesting as well, so that they are not wishing to be engaged with that kind of debate. And then the third thing probably to say is when I've done some training in Catholic schools, I've noticed more emphasis on what are you going to do about it, rather than this is an inclusion agenda, what are we going to do about it. So those are just my observations about that.

NF: Interestingly I haven't actually approached many Catholic schools, I think I told you because I myself I kind of didn't want to go in and kind of be thrown by statues of the Virgin Mary. But I am...so I'm actually finding it across schools to be honest. It's fine, I mean it's just I'm interested by just how much effort I'm making, and how little return on it. I think it's also to be fair I think it's you know, it's a very low on someone's agenda talking to a researcher, because you know, they have got so much to do, so I think they are just a normal kind of "good grief of course I can't do that" but yes it's been interesting. And also a definite reluctance within the interviews to explore how they feel too far, because there's a whole kind of "I don't really want to say whether I find that's too difficult or whether I find it burdensome" so you know people find it hard to be honest I think as well, but again that's all to do with inspection agenda isn't it, I think that and they're used to having to guess what people want to say.

F: Yes I think there has been a variety of responses when you go into schools, and you're the person who is going to kind of either solve their problem or you know. I think you don't get that so much, you either get a, give me your suggestions, or you might get quite a hostile approach you know, what are you going to do, how can I possibly cope with this group of children and the parents don't even understand me and blah, blah, blah, and it's very, it's a panic thing so yes...

NF: How is that Newbury School getting on by the way? That suddenly had nine overnight...

F: Oh!

NF: Was it Kingsclere?

F: Yes, as far as I know they're getting on ok, but I mean they certainly, that was definitely the reception I got there, when I went...

NF: It's hard.

F: Yes, and it was quite hostile from certain teachers who were not used to this kind of issue. But then you can't generalise, because the other day I went to another village school, near Winchester, a beautiful little school, village school, and they couldn't have been more receptive to every single idea that I put forward, absolutely engaged and receptive, so you can't generalise.

NF: No, you really can't, you are absolutely right, I am finding that too, even within one school I'll have four teachers giving me very different responses as well.

F: Yes, absolutely.

NF: You are absolutely right, you can't generalise.

F: But it's to do with the ethos of the school I guess.

NF: I think that, I'm certainly finding that, yes that's it's about other stuff really, which I probably knew anyway, but it is interesting, that it's not...the language thing or the ethnicity thing or so one, or how that's perceived or received; it's about much more complex things than I might have thought about I think, to start with. One of which though is the subject knowledge which is interesting you mentioned. So you've already alluded to the year EAL leading teacher programs, so that's going well there?

F: It's going extremely well, I'm very very pleased about that, they've been a tremendous resource for somewhere like Hampshire, where you can you know, you can direct people to go and see areas of good practice, which is real, it's alright for me to be talking about it but it's if you can go and see it, it's much more real obviously. Hampshire has slightly changed the...they formalised the way that the lead teachers work, we used to have a kind of fairly free and easy approach, very flexible, but now

it's formalised so that they have three days of CPD and then every other day that they are used by another school has to be bought in on a kind of very fixed way. Whereas before, it used to be, you can have this many days and you know, just find your own priorities. So what we have done, we really want to use them in our project so we are funding a day per project school of lead teacher time, and that will involve them going to the particular school, and perhaps planning with a group of teachers co-teaching, delivering some training etc. and then the other thing that is going to happen is that we are going to set up, what the maths lead teachers have done is a system of observation windows they are calling it, so a group of teachers come to see a particular little scenario lesson at a particular time, and we thought that would be really good for EAL practice, so you can come and see EAL and maths or ICT and EAL and or get interpreters at work at particular points. So we are going to use them like that, it's much more dovetailed into the strategies.

NF: So when you say project schools...

F: Sorry, these are the key stage two schools that we are going to be working with.

NF: Ok.

F: Of which there are I think fourteen, so we have to take the fourteen for quite a big projects which is quite good.

NF: And that's next academic year?

F: Yes,

NF: Right, that's exciting.

F: That's all very exciting. Good to happen soon.

NF: And what about the TEAL course, you still doing that at Portsmouth?

F: Yes, the TEAL course, the funding we have had from the TDA was enough to subsidise three cohorts, so we have completed two cohorts now and we are now recruiting for the third. We are trying to heavily persuade the schools in the projects to come on board, so that they can have every kind of advantage in terms of training

and they can use whatever work they are doing in the project as a focus for their assignment as well. But that's been really good because we have really emphasised it's got to have an impact on your practice, it's written into the learning outcomes, and that's one of the most important thing for us, it's got to have an impact, and some of the examples of things that have been achieved have been fantastic. You know, decisions that would have, or senior management decisions that would have negatively impacted on bilingual learners, reversed, through reasoned arguments backed up by reading and this is not a good idea, because this, this and this. It just puts those teachers in a position where they can argue their points...

NF: Right and teachers on the TEAL course becoming more...having a deeper subject knowledge in other words...

F: Absolutely.

NF: And therefore being able to make informed arguments.

F: I think that is one of the best features and a lot of teachers are not keen to do the reading, because it's extra time etc.

NF: Now are finding that with other...

F: It's a right struggle.

NF: Yes it is, yes.

F: But the powerful argument for doing the reading is that it puts you in a position of knowledge and power to put your point across in a confident way, and you know that's I think one of the big selling points about it.

NF: That's a good comment you have made there actually because yes I've just taught in another model, and not EAL at all but a literacy one.

F: Oh right.

NF: With some lovely English co-ordinators, and yes they are brilliantly able to engage with their practice and think about their practice, but getting them to read, again

was...it wasn't seen as a priority, because they are so busy and they are doing it on top of a full time job and it's just so hard, so I can understand why. So they are at a point where they are engaging in some super practice but they are not entirely knowing what it is that's so good about it.

F: Yes exactly, and in an EAL context they want, they are seeing something in the school and they are wanting to change it, but they're are not having the ear of the people who are able to, you know, make those decisions, and having that knowledge is a tremendous weapon really [laughs]. So that's been really good and you know we have got loads of examples now of assignments where you can say, this is changed and that has changed and that's brilliant, that's what we want.

NF: Great, that's very exciting. Wonderful.

F: We are very happy with that.

N F: And I mean if you move towards you know, Masters in Teaching and Learning and a Masters level profession and our PGCEs coming out now and Masters credits, I think that will shift, it will take time.

F: Yes I'm sure.

NF: It's going there now, which is good.

F: Definitely.

NF: So thank you, I've only got one more, which was, you mentioned working with other local authorities who had piloted a DCSF materials for new arrivals, has that kind of...

F: I read back on that, I can't remember what I meant about that.

NF: I think you said that there had been some authorities who had piloted the new arrivals materials and they four were going to become the kind of leaders of practice in that, and that other authorities were going to get kind of affiliated with them or something like that.

F: That's right. It was, it was not so much the new arrivals, it was the pack for advanced learners.

NF: Oh right ok. Yes advanced.

F: It was called the...excellence and enjoyment, was it?

NF: No it was excellence and something else, wasn't it; it was a kind of follow on from...

F: That's the one, it was that pack that the authorities that were the pilots for developing that pack. Yes, so they formed - as the national strategy likes to call them - little hubs of excellence, and we're joined to one of these hubs, we are joined to the South East hub, and in fact we spent a couple, well a year of doing quite wishy-washy low key type of stuff, but it's sort of turned a corner just recently and we're working now with, I think it's become smaller as well, so I think about four or so other local authorities, and we are working on some joint initiatives. And the initiatives are interesting because they exactly fit in with where we are and what we are doing. One is the use of lead teachers, that's one of them.

NF: You are already doing that.

F: Yes we are pushing that forward, so one is that and looking at all kinds of initiatives such as whether you know, a lead teacher and EAL needs particular qualities or there's you know, you could formulate a job description, various thing like that. The other one is alignment, which is a really key thing for us in that our work as an EMTAS Service sits too far, and this is comment many of the places, too far outside what the rest of Hampshire, HIAS, is doing, so it's looking at strategies to bring our work in line with HIAS and SIPS strategy consultants. So this is a bit of an uphill struggle for us. But the project that we are running, that's one of our main aims to try and just kind of bring that in line with the other work that is going on in Hampshire for HIAS. But I think it's going to have, I anticipate that it's going to have variable success, depending on the individuals involved, not the organisation as a whole, and then what we will have to do is look at the examples of good practice and publicise them and go for it that way. But it's very difficult; I don't know how we do it really.

NF: It is hard, I mean I was talking to the HIAS team myself about how they work and they are terribly isolated themselves aren't they, because one consultant, English consultant will have one area, and she will be pretty much on her own for weeks on end.

F: Yes that's right.

NF: So it's not as if they feel a sense of togetherness necessarily all the time either, so covering such a huge geographical area.

F: Although you do get local authorities where everybody is much more in tune with each other.

NF: Right.

F: We don't have that so much in Hampshire, maybe because it's so big, there are so many layers of different people and the way in which we work is a little bit different, in as you say that English consultant will have x amount of time, and x amount of schools, and that support will be targeted on the basis of need. But those schools may be different from the ones we are targeting, so it's very difficult to line it up really. But we are working with the other authorities on strategies to put that into place, so I'm quite interested to see what will come out of that. And a few other things which I forget at the moment but, it will be...oh the other thing is yes, the other thing is working with a targeted number of schools on developing the strategies within Excellence and Enjoyment. Our project you see is just perfect for all of these things, it ticks the boxes for all of these different things.

NF: Ok, so it's actually dovetailed with what you are already doing, you haven't had to do something additional, so when it says you joined, sorry I interrupted you, joined this South East hub, does that mean you're given guidance by these other authorities who piloted the materials, do they have a sort of leadership role?

F: Yes, they do have a leadership role, they pull everything together and we go to meetings where we can discuss different initiatives and obviously share ways of working. And because it's Surrey in fact, Surrey has been a pilot authority, they have been exposed to all the training, you know the first hand training on everything, so I

can call on them for example to look at EAL and maths, because there's a lot of emphasis on that at the moment, and I can access the training but they have worked through the pilot, they developed strategies. So it's much better if I can get somebody from Surrey to come and deliver that to our team and our schools as well, so that kind of support their expertise in particular areas, yes they do have a kind of leading role, but a support role as well. I hope it's going to be really productive.

NF: Yes great, it sounds really good.

F: Yes it's happening just about the right time for us.

NF: Yes.

F: It's all come together, it's been orchestrated in a way, all this pulling together of all the different strands, but I hope that's the way it will have the biggest impact for us.

NF: So next year's looking very active on many fronts.

F: Yes indeed.

NF: Very as you say in a very co-ordinated way, it's not that you weren't co-ordinated before, but it's a sort of really come together hasn't it?

F: Yes.

NF: Very exciting.

F: Yes I hope it will be very good.

NF: Great, I think that's it really, I think we have talked you to death.

F: No that's fine.

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH GINA AUTUMN 2007

NF: Everything you say is interesting to a researcher. Yeah, that's absolutely fine, if anything it actually makes it much more interesting for me, because my problem is that I've – well it's not a problem, it's absolutely wonderful to be here, but it is that I quite wanted to go into schools where people were not feeling particularly comfortable with the whole EAL thing, because that was what my perception of how it would be, and actually what's happened, they have got this lovely school and another lovely school in Eastleigh, who are saying do come in, but in fact you know, are quite confident in many ways. This bit just what ever you feel like, I know - don't worry (referring to signing the contract).

G: I don't want to do the wrong thing.

NF: Don't worry that's fine

G: I haven't got time for any thing like that.

NF: Nobody does (laughs) and the last one it's like do one if at all, thank you very much. Yes so my - the thing for me has been I been doing a lot of talking to teachers who actually feel quite like experienced at it and so on, whereas actually the thing that interests me perhaps most is someone like you who would be perhaps more typical of a teacher in the county, who isn't necessarily used to EAL and is then confronting it for the first time, so it will be really interesting to talk to you over the time and see, you know what your responses are

G: Yes definitely.

NF: So the interview is a kind of generally about the Polish children whatever you want to tell me, and I have a few kind of specific questions. So do you just want to talk to me just kind of get the picture about what you have got - your Polish children in class now and how that's going.

G: I've actually got two Polish children but they are not my only EAL children, I've got quite a mixture in my class, I have two Polish children, both boys, and both quite different. One is quite quiet, and I interestingly read your bit on your book about

children who are quiet, but he is becoming more confident, because he spent a long time in Poland over the summer, so it was definitely a bit of a shock, he came back and then the next day he's back in school again with a different class different teacher, because he won't even have seen me, because he was away the day I came to visit, you see. The other child is totally different, he is not particularly quiet, he is quite confident in both languages, his name is G, and the other is J. Although J seems to me is progressing with his English at a faster rate, written and the read word and the written word, whereas G has a real attitude to learning. He is more confident with his spoken word, and he is also quite confident at interpreting, and he is going to have a little job as an interpreter to try and you know, boost his confidence.

NF: Oh yes, Patricia and I have just been talking about little children interpreter schemes so I'm up with all that.

G: He is going into - interestingly Patricia and my classroom assistant Vera did the Polish club last week, and J shone last week.

NF: Really, and he is the one who you think is shy.

G: Yes, but I think he is of a brighter disposition than G, G has other issues as well, mum is very heavily pregnant, he also has an older sister, but he seems very indulged to me personally. Mum is also - mum stays for ages in the mornings - J is always late, so you know they have different leads into school. G doesn't like being told what to do, J doesn't mind, but G really doesn't want to do it.

NF: Right, so you have got issues that really we are just describing individual differences here, aren't we, which I'm finding arises all the time in my interviews with teachers, about our EAL children, it's almost as if we start off by thinking, well they are EAL that's the thing that makes them different but of course they have individual differences just like any of our children do.

G: Yes, definitely, and he definitely has a stubborn side to him, which I don't think is just down to the fact that he is an EAL child.

NF: Right, ok.

- G: There's other issues that, hands are in different places one down there, and one in there, and they are in there all the time, when they are, it's very hard to get him focused on what he is doing.
- NF: So in terms of kind of - I'll give you the last question first I think in a way, the key issues for you as someone coming in and talk generally about EAL and children, all your Polish children in mind, what is it - what for you are you feeling like, I mean does it feel hugely different from having a class where everyone speaks English? Or... talk me through that.
- G: No it doesn't feel hugely different because I'm used to having children with challenging behaviour anyway, so I'm always used to and I try really hard to be very literal in the way I speak to them, I've always been like that, or I've learnt to be like that, over the last you know, as I've become more proficient at being a teacher, I've become more proficient at being very literal, I never use ambiguities, wouldn't dream of it, not even with a class of English speaking children.
- NF: Ok, so are you saying that you're aware that your delivery generally has to be very clear in terms of where are we going with this lesson and so on?
- G: Yes, but I always feel that I would do that anyway, I am always you know, I would never you know, be like that.
- NF: Ok, so can you talk me through then what, if we are talking say about in your previous school where children were presumably all English speakers, what did you see as really key to the success of developing their language then? Or their speaking and listening or their reading and writing, what's the way in which you managed their curriculum?
- G: Well it's definitely modelling of good speaking, good writing and good reading isn't it, it's definitely a good model of all of those things, when you're writing on the board. I tell you what I have - and I learnt this at my last school we did a lot of work on (emergent) writing and how to actually get them to use their sounds, and you know when I'm writing on the board I just - we talked about it in our year group and I actually, I'm not doing exactly as they said. When I came for my interview, I wrote

very emergently as well for them, and I feel that works, and they said that's fine but show them how it's correctly written, but I've decided not to do that for the time being, to actually give them the confidence to use their sounds to help them write, and if they say to me, I can't think of anything off-hand at the moment, but oh, we were writing the word kitchen so we - and I get them to put their hands here, we are going to stretch this word, so I get them to all do this, and start off this is the word kitchen and it's itch, and we actually start it and they said it to me, k-I-c-h-I-n, kichin, and that's how I wrote it, I didn't change it because I thought well no I want them to have the confidence to do this first, and then as they become more confident at using the sounds, then I'll say well actually that's how it sounds, but this is how it's written.

NF: That's how it's represented. So have they got - is there a kind of systematic phonics program going on along side or -

G: There is a program called phonographics but I'm not really au fait with that program as yet, and I only have the children who are not any where near to that level, they are still learning their sounds, and included in that is the EAL children.

NF: Ok, so in terms of learning sounds are you using Letters and Sounds or Jolly Phonics?

G: Use Jolly Phonics for sounds, and they are improving at it, they know the actions and the sounds, but they can't actually use them.

NF: Right ok, is that all the children or do you notice any particular difference there in response?

G: G particularly, he's the stubborn one, he's not very good at using his sounds, but J is better, and J's got more confidence at writing, even though he's not the more confident child, or doesn't appear to be. I did notice however in my last school I had some Philippino children. Philippino children couldn't seem to use their sounds, they couldn't learn them and they couldn't use them, especially for reading. We just gave them a word and said look this is the word, this is what it sounds like and they learnt them in a different way.

NF: Almost went straight to word recognition rather than breaking them down. I wonder if - do you think it's to do with the difference in the nature of their language?

G: I think so yes, and I think that sounds are definitely different aren't they in different languages, and G was pointing out to me that something was different in his language.

NF: Right so it isn't one letter for example that sounds different or whatever.

G: No, and he is finding it particularly hard to learn to read.

NF: Ok, so in terms of providing a curriculum for your second language children, which is, you know going to develop their language, do you see it as going to need to be - at the moment does it feel like you're going to have to provide something different for them or not, not really?

G: Not really, I think in the follow up work, when they would be working at their table, then I quite often take it back another level, or we make it very hands on. Or I tell you what we have started doing now is, when we are doing writing, we actually rather than them write for example we've been writing stories you know, a beginning middle and end, rather than them write their own story we will write a group story. So then I've then talked to my class assistant about, we will write the group story together first, and they will sound it out for me and get their ideas, and then I will rub a bit off and say, right you have a go and see if you can write it, so they then have seen their story written as well.

NF: Ok.

G: Another thing we tried in my last school as well, was to say what they want to write first and to actually use multi-link to get one brick out for each of their words, so that they have got it stacked up and this is their sentence, they can't see it but they can move a brick every time they say, and that sometimes helps as well.

NF: So that identifying with words is it?

G: Yes, so if I've got five words in my sentence, I've got five bricks and when they have written one word they throw one brick away, so this is the word you have got, what's the next going to be? But that's in its early stages, but they are better when they are writing in a group story, individual writing is a bit of a no no really.

NF: Right so plenty of shared writing then in other words, with teacher scribing and so on, but when they are doing that they are in groups that are mixed with English speaking children, so in a way it's not something different.

G: No it's not just, it's not specifically no because I've got English speaking children who are working at that level as well, but can't write very well independently.

NF: Great.

G: So it's definitely interesting, but my classroom assistant will take the EAL children out to read the book first, before we I don't feel I have to do anything - we sometimes the week before, if we have got a big book, may share it as a class, because I think that gives them a bit of an upper hand and they talk. She says it's lovely because I've got two Polish children, I've got two Hindi children a little Turkish girl and a French Arabic, and she takes them all outside away from my class and she says they have a lovely chat and they talk endlessly about what they can see, not just the words, and she says it's really worthwhile.

NF: In English or in their home languages?

G: In English, she knows a few Polish.

NF: Yes I know I've spoken to Patricia about her.

G: She is really good, and you know so they know a few Polish things and they share, and G's very keen to share his words with us as well.

NF: J not so much? Because he's not feeling he wants to talk in Polish.

G: No he does, but he is much more quietly spoken than G, and we try sometimes at the end of the day when he brings his book, which is just an alphabet book, and he tries to tell us the words in Polish, and we try to say them, which is interesting, but then I feel I don't want to overdo it too much, because I've got other-language speaking children as well, and I feel I don't want to be totally biased towards, oh and I've got a little Thai girl as well whose English is not good at all. Then eventually -she has become, she quite likes that because she will try and tell us what it is in Thai as well.

NF: Yes ok, so that point you were making that you don't want to spend too long with the Polish children, it's interesting because I was talking with Patricia about this, in that it does seem as if they've got this very strong identity, very quickly here. I mean I know because I was talking with staff last year as well, and staff are learning Polish and the children had set up their own little club and things. Do you sense a kind of difference at all between Polish children and your other children with EAL? But it's early days, I'm just wondering if it feels different or - ?

G: My Polish parents, particularly G's mother is quite demanding of my time, as well as her son, whereas the two Hindu mums are quite different, they are much more .....reserved is the word, they are in a different way and the little Thai girl, I don't see her.. her mum very rarely speaks to me, and the other two mums they are both Muslim mums.

NF: Right so they are Bengali community, the established -

G: This is the Turkish.

NF: Oh Turkish, right.

G: Turkish Muslim. And so is my French Arabic mum. They don't come and speak to me particularly, unless there is an issue that they need to talk to me about, and I don't think the mum's English is that good, but we manage, you know we do manage, but definitely the Polish are much more, push themselves forward.

NF: Yes it feels that way, but I've got no kind of evidence base for saying these things, but everyone I talk to it seems to be the case, they have this very strong identity within the school very quickly, the teachers seem to respond to them very positively. I've been watching a program the other day about immigration into Britain and employers are responding very positively to Polish workers and it's an interesting phenomenon.

G: Interestingly enough my daughter's fiancée used to work at the Aquadrome in Basingstoke, and he said there was quite a few Polish people there, and he said they were real good company, they actually joined in and wanted to be part of everything that was going on, whereas a lot of the other people don't want to almost do they?

NF: I don't know, I don't know if it's what we are doing or how they feel, do you know what I mean, I can't, I don't know and obviously as a researcher I just kind of try and stay objective. I know it's interesting because I know talking to Patricia about the fact that some Teachers here are learning Polish, but in a way it's been pushed from the children, whereas actually, and I know it was exactly the same in my own school in East London, I didn't start to learn Bengali or Punjabi to support my Asian families, I didn't, and I'm wondering why didn't I? And I'm sure I might well have gone on to learn some Polish words, but why, what is this about? Anyway I'm going to pursue that over the next couple of years.

G: That would be interesting to find that out wouldn't it.

NF: Yes actually I don't know if there is an answer, or if the answer's going to be almost slightly uncomfortable as well.

G: (...)

NF: Possibly I don't know, you know I just -

G: You wouldn't like to think there would be, would you?

NF: No of course not, no, and you know it is interesting that, I feel everybody, from the things I'm watching on TV as well as what I'm talking to you, respond slightly differently to.. maybe to the Polish community.

G: Yet the other children, my two little Hindi children are delightful children.

NF: Absolutely of course, yes.

G: But they are quite humble, I'd say they are more humble in they are incredibly polite, and I think they are more humble than you know, the other -

NF: There is definitely a cultural difference.

G: It could be historical as well, couldn't it? There's a lot of history.

NF: Yes there is.

G: That goes with the different cultures.

NF: There is a lot of history, yes, whereas the history that goes with the Polish community coming here is only positive, the community that came over after the war seem to have assimilated very well and so yes, maybe that's it, you're right, I don't know it's an interesting one. The thing I'm trying to track apart from kind of responses to them in class, in terms of managing their English, is just kind of teachers' attitudes really, to having to teach children with English additional language at all. I mean how do you feel generally about having to do it?

G: I don't feel any difference at all.

NF: Right, you don't feel it's a kind of you know, an imposition on your time or -?

G: No I don't, they are just children that are in my class and I will do what's best for them whatever.

NF: Absolutely.

G: I do feel sometimes that I owe them something more, because I want them to succeed, you know I don't want them to fail, but I'm quite a positive person anyway in my teaching, and I use - always giving them stickers and things like that so and I want them to feel part of you know the class.

NF: Do you worry that it's taking you away from the indigenous British children, whose needs are equal obviously?

G: No.

NF: No.

G: Not particularly no.

NF: So in a way you are saying it just feels like a normal level of differentiation in a class.

G: Yes it does really, because I haven't changed, I haven't changed anything I do particularly, you know that little group at the bottom and the fact it's not just the EAL children, and in fact it's only two of them, because the others are able to cope in the

other groups with what I want them to do anyway, and I've got children who are working at a similar level anyway.

NF: Great ok, I haven't got anything else I want to ask you today, is there anything else you wanted to ask me or share with me?

G: No I don't think so

NF: Anything about the project and how that's going. So what I've done, I've just made a date with Patricia for March to do a follow up, and I'll again send you some kind of nature of the questions before I come, it's mainly how it's going now really and has anything changed.

G: I know my classroom assistant - she is going to be back anytime. She had an appointment this morning, she is really looking forward to talking to you as well, because she's much more expert in the Polish side than I would be.

NF: She is doing a course isn't she?

G: Yes a course with Patricia, she has probably got entirely different things to say.

NF: It will be interesting in a way.

G: Yes and also she has been here longer than I have, so she has got a greater history.

NF: Well thanks very much.

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH GINA

NF: You got the transcript, I'm sorry that the transcripts always look so weird.

G: I thought do I really sound like that.

NF: Don't worry about it.

G: I must be careful about what I say.

NF: We all sound weird, no don't let it inhibit you at all. It's because you realise when you look at yourself talking in print, that we don't talk in sentences at all, we talk in a string of utterances.

G: I know.

NF: But we all understand, but it's...

G: It's awful isn't it?

NF: But actually, I just find it really interesting because it just shows you how completely different spoken English is from written English and so in a way when you are learning it as a second language, that's one of the reasons it's so hard I think.

G: It's bad enough listening to yourself but I've never had the opportunity to read what I've said and it sounds just as bad as listening to yourself [laughs]

NF: No it's funny isn't it. Yes, try not to worry about it. I mean did you have a look through the interview, did it seem...you weren't unhappy with any of it [laughs]?

G: I did, no it sounded...no.

NF: Because what I...

G: V and I both decided that we had to be really careful what you say.

NF: No you don't, oh please don't let it inhibit you, just talk normally because what I do is, I don't transcribe them myself, because I don't have time. They just get sent away to a transcription service, so they are literally just writing down what they hear. It's

supposed to be intelligent transcription, which takes out a range of errs and ums. So you know, and I was, it always comes back and I get all these right and wow.

G: (...).

NF: Yes I feel the same [laughs].

G: I can remember getting told off for saying that, when I was at teacher training course.

NF: Never mind we just mustn't worry about these things. Did you fill in the thing that looked like that for me, a brochure?

G: I'm not even sure I had one [laughs].

NF: Don't worry because I am coming back in June anyway. Oh wonderful, thank you, it's just I need kind of background stuff for each case study.

G: I felt really awful.

NF: No, that's fine.

G: I haven't.

NF: No that's fine, no don't feel really awful, it's all just interesting. If you haven't, you haven't....

G: No, I haven't, not real specific.

NF: No. Have you always taught in Hampshire?

G: Yes, well I started off teaching in Essex.

NF: Ok, I mean didn't you get the EAL training there either?

G: No, but this was a long time ago and I taught secondary school then anyway.

N F: Ok.

G: I only taught there for two years and then I moved down here so.

NF: Ok.

G: I mean when I came out of teacher training it was different anyway wasn't it?

NF: I know I certainly didn't get any when I did it either, I know what you mean. No that's fine. In fact I'm sure I am the same, I can't think of any specific training at all, I only became interested in it once I became a head really and then it became more of an issue for me having to manage it I suppose. But yes, no I think we don't get it. So yes, today's questions are just follow up questions to the last interview, but also if there are other things you want to draw my attention to then fine.

G: Ok.

NF: So that's as relaxed as it can be. Because when I last interviewed you, you had been here for a very short time, I'm kind of keenly aware of that and how brave it was frankly for you to sit down and talk to me about your practice here, when it must have felt really new. So I kind of wanted to go a little bit back over, you talked about literacy generally for children in year one as being lots of talk, lots of modelling and so on. I wondered if having spent nearly a year now in a different setting with children with a second language, if your views on literacy development generally had changed or adapted at all.

G: No, I think it has just confirmed that what I thought has worked and has worked really well.

NF: Very good.

G: Because I'm just so pleased with them, you know they have just come on in leaps and bounds.

NF: Are you talking about the Polish children in particular or...?

G: I'm talking about the EAL children generally, but even the class, just to see their whole persona about the way you know when they actually go to sit and write. Because when they first came they really didn't want to write, they were very reluctant, "oh I don't know how to write", "I can't write this, because I don't". But I've watched them

because when I have got a student, so I am having a chance to observe them, and they all just went off and got on with it today.

NF: So to some extent that's perhaps because year one just is that really hard work year for a teacher, isn't it. I think in many ways it's the hardest isn't it? Because they come in and they are still quite emergent I suppose, but do you feel there are other things you do or you have done particularly then that have really supported that in them, in your approach or?

G: I think I have a very good, I do have a very good relationship with my class anyway and I quite sort of pride myself on that. So we do get on fabulously and they are such a fabulous class, they are probably the best class that I have ever had.

NF: Really.

G: In the whole of the time I have been teaching, and they are so responsive to all of that, you know the rewards and the positive praise and things like that, they absolutely thrive on it.

NF: Does that feel like because that's a whole school thing do you think, to some extent?

G: I'm sure, yes definitely it is, but I'm also very like that as a person as well you know, and we do the stickers and reward them for anything and everything, and they are really flourishing.

NF: Right, it feels like you are because you feel very kind of relaxed and that's really nice.

G: I do.

NF: That's very nice so you've found a comfort zone here as well then, so that's really nice isn't it?

G: Yes definitely, and I've really enjoyed having those EAL children.

N F: Right.

G: I think because I've learnt a lot from them as well I think, it's not just me teaching them, and how their characters have changed and developed and how they you know

they are ready to have a go. I mean thinking about just the Polish children really, the one little girl who's from Thailand, she's not really anywhere near being independent. She is independent in some things, but not, if we were just writing words she would be able to have a go at that but her understanding and building sentences and what the whole things meant to mean.

NF: Right.

G: You know, if she still doesn't know that this is a skirt in English, how can she possibly....So she still needs a lot of support for writing in context, but when she is her phonics group she's really, really confident, can build CVCs and things like that, but she can't use it in a different context, she can use it for what it is, it's word building.

NF: Ok.

G: And she, you know if she needs the word in, but she can't think of a sentence.

NF: Is she talking much in English?

G: She talks...

NF: Just because the talk impedes the writing doesn't it, so I'm wondering if it's that she talks less than the others.

G: No I don't think so. I mean she's quite a sociable little girl.

NF: Right.

G: She mixes with all the other children and I've got them in very specific talking groups, because after the follow up from Patricia's staff meeting on EAL about talking groups, I've got them in very specific, I'll tell you about that in a minute, yes talking group.

NF: Yes so we don't have to stick to this order, so I'll just refer to something, when I haven't asked something.

G: But you know she's finding it most difficult to write out of context, you know she can write words but putting them together. But we had a staff meeting on the EAL and Patricia talked about very much putting them in specific talking groups with your

group role models. I mean I have got English children who don't speak very well as well so, I've got them actually in specific talking groups with all my EAL children split, and it's working, it's lovely to watch them, fascinating.

NF: So when you said they were talking groups, so those groups that are, so is it like a kind of within an English lesson you've got the guide speaking and listening group or is it something that's done separately. How's it managed?

G: If we're doing work on the carpets and I know it's going to involve response partners or I want them to talk about something, when they come to the carpet I ask them to sit in their talking groups and they know... Sometimes if they are just sitting randomly, I'll say talk to the person sitting next to you, but if it is something more specific, then I will say to them, right I want you to sit in your talk...if it's got a real purpose to the speaking and listening, then I will ask them to sit in their talking groups. And it is fascinating.

NF: Right, so ok so that's happened and that's, and those are a mixture of EAL and monolingual speakers, all those groups?

G: And mixed academic ability.

NF: Ok, so some completely mixed in every way.

G: Yes totally, mixed boys and girls, the whole lot.

NF: So that's one really powerful way then of nurturing language acquisition. There were two things that you talked about in the last interview, one was the phonographics package and the other was about emergent writing, are they still a part of your...?

G: Well I have the lowest, because in phonographics the whole year group is split up for phonics, so that is three classes split about seven or eight ways and I've got the lowest ability group, with the Polish children in, the little Thai girl, and a couple of English speaking children. And when I first had them we weren't, they weren't even very confident with their sounds.

NF: Ok.

G: So we went right back to the beginning you know, we had the flash cards with the pictures and everything, the old jolly phonics, doing reactions, so we have learnt from those. I didn't do, some we just didn't bother with.

NF: No.

G: X, Y, Z, because I thought they are not going to need those particularly often, so we have just done the really important ones and we became really good at that. We then went on to CVCs, where I kept the onset, I changed the onset but kept the rhyme the same. So it would be hit and pit and fit, and then we changed, I think I wrote it on your questionnaire that I gave back to you, the order I did it in.

NF: Right.

G: Did I write it on there? No I can't remember whether I did or I didn't.

NF: Right don't worry that's fine.

G: I've written it down somewhere, but where I've written it...oh, I've written it on here look.

NF: Ok that's right.

G: Then we started off, I started keeping the initial sound the same, so then I had sort of like pin picked pig, then we changed, now the thing they found the hardest was when I started changing the vowel in the middle.

NF: Yes, medial vowel is awful.

G: So we had picked pats, but they've gradually...

NF: It's much harder to hear isn't it?

G: And the uh sounds they find really hard, the others they are not too bad on.

NF: So you are talking, when you say that are you talking about all your children or just your...

G: Just this group, this group that I have.

NF: In terms of the hearing, yes ok.

G: And they have become much, much better. So I then spoke to Anna, who's the year two teacher, and said look what would be the best thing for us to do? Because the next move on I think was CVCCs and I'm thinking, like jump and things like those, they are just not quite, I didn't feel they were ready to do that. So she said it would be best to just practice the key words because they are still learning year R words. So we are learning to write year R words.

NF: Ok.

G: You know the tricky ones as well, we've done see, she and me and he, those ones, to try and get them to hear the pattern and then there's said and going and all those horrible, and look, like, the. So she said it would be more use to her as year two teacher to have them writing those key words, so we are not going to go on to the next bit, we are going to concentrate on key words. And that seems to have really given them such a lot of confidence.

NF: Ok so you describe there, quite, in a lot of detail...so you plan that specifically for that group of less fluent, for whatever reason, English writers, but within that group you've got both EAL children and monolingual children who have just started progressing, so it's not something specifically for the EAL children, it's just...

G: In fact now I think I have only actually got one.

NF: Oh really!

G: I've only got one.

NF: Right.

G: What do they call it mono...

NF: Monolingual, yes

G: Monolingual speaker.

NF: Right ok.

G: And then sometimes it's really interesting to watch the way they build these words, it's absolutely fascinating, because their confidence has grown they really do sound them out...G especially, they sound them out, write them down and then when they have written all the words, I make them rub them out, but they then have got to read it to find it, so I say can you rub out the word that says and.

NF: Right, oh right ok.

G: You see them sort of looking through and rubbing out and. And then when we get to the last one, I say, what is the word you have got left? So they are very responsive.

NF: Yes, so tell me about J and G. I've got a little bit confused from the last interview about, sometimes about which one you were talking about. G was the one I think you said wasn't, I think you felt he had a kind of negative attitude to learning at that point, how is he kind of come on?

G: He has just changed, he has just changed, his whole attitude to school has changed, and he now believes he can read and write, and he says to me, I say do you need help? And he says "no I don't need help with that". And he is very emergent with his writing, but he doesn't need help writing anymore, not in the way that he did, you know before you would be sounding out everything for him, and even now he will say, "I don't need my sound card".

NF: So what's unlocked that for him do you think, what's changed his attitude?

G: I'm not sure that I can put, exactly put my finger on it. I think it's just the fact that V and I have worked really, really well together. We believe in the same thing and it's just giving him the confidence, improving his self esteem to believe that he can do this, and he now believes he can, and he can't wait to be able to read, he just picks books up and says I can't wait to be able to read this book. And it's...he's not a silly boy, I mean I didn't know at first, I thought oh you know he...but he's not a silly boy. There's actually a lot more there.

NF: So what you are saying initially was really poor self esteem perhaps really or whatever.

G: I'm sure it was. Because at the time J to me, seemed of a higher academic ability, but I'm not...

NF: So now...

G: I can't decide now, I think J still is, but he has also been away quite a few times.

NF: Yes so I heard you saying.

G: He has had five weeks off, and it's...

NF: Yes it's problematic isn't it?

G: He's a different child, he's not got the same level of confidence anyway, that G has.

NF: Yes you said that before, you were saying he was quite shy.

G: Quite shy and...

NF: So is it G that's in the young interpreters project, not J?

G: They are both in there.

NF: Oh they are both in it, oh ok, right.

G: But when we, because Patricia also organises Polish club, and I have been a couple of times, I think (J's) level of Polish is different to G's. Because sometimes if G says something and J doesn't quite agree, he'll say "oh no". And I guess that is different dialects and things isn't it, within the same language.

NF: Yes, I don't know.

G: I don't really know.

NF: It could be, yes it could be that they're from different regional areas and they pronounce some sounds slightly differently just as we do, in the North and the South of England or whatever, you are right.

G: But G is very much, he's...I was talking to him mum a while back, she never wants to go back to Poland.

NF: Right, that interesting.

G: She is here and they are here to stay. Whereas J's mum, they go back a lot, and she wants to go back to Poland. And J wants to stay in Poland, he doesn't see why he has to come here.

NF: So that's quite unsettling for him then, if he is going backwards and forwards a lot.

G: Yes I think it is a little bit,

NF: It is having a heavy impact on him.

G: And he's not reading, he is still a non-reader and he can't use his sound knowledge to help him read very easily. Because mum's not an English reader, her English, her spoken English is good, good enough to be understood, but she's a non-English reader. Whereas G's mum is making an effort, she retraining because she was a councillor in Poland.

NF: Ah, I see.

G: So she is doing study.

NF: Oh right, so has aspirations?

G: Yes, so she is here to stay.

NF: Ok, that is interesting what you just said there, because I think when I spoke to you in the autumn, that J looked like he was making more progress at that point. So that's rather a shame isn't it that you know, that nine months on or where ever we are, that he's not reading still.

G: No.

NF: No, so in terms of the rest of the class, where do they sit attainment-wise, are they kind of up with the average or below average. I know it's meaningless in a way to compare them, but it's interesting in a way to see where they are at reading and writing levels.

G: I'd say they are not as far down as they were and I think they're moving up closer to the average. But I think G, because when he writes and he sounds out, he will write the as 'du', 'der', because that's the way he say's it, so he still is not got that correlation between what you say. And you know he is still very phonetically writing, but most of the time you can read it, with a little bit of support.

NF: I imagine the 'Th' sound is quite hard for Polish actually isn't it, I don't know it exists in Polish,

G: I didn't imagine he would ever be as far as he is, because there are other issues that he's had to deal with as well.

NF: Yes, because was it G the one whose mum was pregnant, presumably she has had her baby now.

G: Yes the baby must be about six months now, and I think he found that hard, and they were all in a very tiny flat. But they have just, and there are five of them, because he has an older sister as well, who is a very bright girl apparently, Elizabeth.

NF: She was here wasn't she? She has gone to juniors now?

G: She is in year, she must be year four or five now I think, and they've recently moved to a house, so he has got his own bedroom, which he loves it, thinks it's wonderful, but they have quite a long walk, she walks about twenty five minutes to school.

NF: Oh well, good exercise, with the baby as well.

G: Yes, she wanted him to carry on coming here.

NF: Oh yes I see, of course that mean they have moved away, I see what you are saying, about they are still coming here.

G: They are on the other side of town.

NF: All the support, gosh! That's interesting. So you have got a lot going on with him, although he's had things like the baby to contend with and so on, you've actually got a mother who wants to stay here, and a mother who's clearly well-educated from home and now pursuing that here. So there's lots of kind of actually quite positive, quite concrete things for him in a way.

G: And J's mum is also now expecting a baby in September, but he's a little bit anxious because he wants the baby to arrive now, and he...

NF: Doesn't want to wait.

G: No. And we have also had another Polish, little Polish girl, did V tell you about her?

NF: Yes, with a name something with Z.

G: Well her name is S and her Polish name is Z.

NF: Z that's right.

G: And that's just changed things quite...

NF: Yes tell me about that, V was saying about it, it's really changed the dynamic and put the boys noses out a bit.

G: I think it did actually, because the boys got on really well. I mean when J came to me he did have a problem with hitting and kicking, possibly to do with being frustrated because he couldn't make himself understood, and that all settled down and he and G got on and were really good friends. But as soon as Z came along, it definitely changed the dynamics, her level of English is quite poor. She understands enough to get by on a daily basis, but most of the time hasn't got a clue what I'm talking about.

NF: How long has she been in the country, has she literally just arrived or...

G: No she has been at another school.

NF: Right.

G: She was in year R. I think she has done, I don't know whether she has done a whole of year R or quite how long. But mum said she was extremely unhappy at her previous school, so I don't know how she heard about us, but anyway she has come here. She knew her letter sounds but she wasn't quite sure of how to put them together and to build words. And she can do that now, as long as long as you are telling her what to write, but she finds it very difficult, she can't think of what to write because she doesn't know.

NF: Because she is not speaking, so therefore the talk for writing isn't there.

G: And we have had a real big issue because as soon as she arrived, it became a threesome, and it just doesn't work, it really doesn't work at all. It worked for a little while and the boys were very good at interpreting for her, but then after Christmas it started. Z was getting upset and she would say "G he me no friend", and then it would be "J he me no friend". Anyway it got so bad in the end I called all the parents in and got Kasha the Polish lady to come and interpret for them. And I think it was Z's mother does not get on with J's mother at all, it's a complete no-no.

NF: Right.

G: So if Z goes home upset and says J's done this, Z's mother gets really upset and comes in complaining about J's mother being stupid, her son's this that and the other. And I think there is an issue because Z's mother has told Z not to have anything to do with J, and then Z says well she want to play with him, it just got so out of hand.

NF: Yes.

G: We managed to sort it mostly, and really it was just, we said to the parents just leave the children to me and let me deal with it, and whatever comes home just say no.

NF: No that means...

G: And then I had you know, it all started again at the beginning of the week, because J has been away, so G and Z have been getting on brilliantly, so now J has come back and it's three again.

NF: Right.

G: So it all kicked off again.

NF: It's interesting though isn't it, so that means though that they, although they might not be getting on that well, they see their friendships with each other as important, they are still gravitating towards each other as Polish speakers. So is it not the case that say G or Zusa have friends from else...other friends in the class?

G: Some times they gravitate to the English speaking children and sometimes they don't. Because G and J are very friendly out of school as well, and also Z and G are friendly out of school. So Z won't invite J to her house or to his party, he feels left out, you know it's just a threesome that doesn't work. So I got cross with them at the beginning, I said look this has got to stop, you will not be unkind to each other, it makes people feel sad. And then in the next breath they are playing, the next thing they're playing beautifully together, and they've had a lovely time. So I got cross with them and I said right I'm not going to let you, you're not to sit next to each other on the carpet, you won't have the same zone bands at lunchtime, therefore you can't argue with each other, you can only play with each other at morning playtime. And that's...

NF: Has that worked?

G: To a certain extent, but then Z gets upset because she wants the same band as G, I said no you're not going to get it, I'm not going to let you do it.

NF: So that's quite tough for them really isn't it I suppose, because we I guess, you know that might be the case with any group of children mightn't it, that they might fall out or not get on, and we feel to just split them, but for those children they feel that pull I suppose because they really want to be with other Polish speaking children. But they can't quite get on socially so there's quite a lot of weight on them isn't there.

G: But I think there are times when they need to be together so they can just...

NF: Sometimes, yes just talk. Exactly, just to maintain that, yes I know, that's hard isn't it socially then, if that hasn't worked imagine it. But Patricia was saying she is going to

split them next year, so they will have to make kind of other arrangements for themselves.

G: I think G will be fine.

NF: It's so hard though.

G: I think he will be fine by himself, because he's got the ability now, and he, I'm not so sure about J, because he is a little bit more within himself, I think he might find that difficult, but then on the other hand he may not, depending on who sensitively will put him someone that he will get on with. But he doesn't seem to particularly gravitate to the English speaking children particularly, because even in his talking group, he's probably the most... I mean G almost takes control of his group, but J doesn't he doesn't seem to participate. So I think I might, I would worry about, I would like to put him really with G, but if I put those two together probably Susanna's mother is going to say "oh why have you put those two together".

NF: Yes, it's difficult isn't it?

G: It's a bit impossible really, you can't win whichever way you do it, because it's like punishing the boys but I know the boys will be fine together. But Susanna's mother did say to me that she had a friend in Poland who wanted to come over with her little girl who was the same age as Susanna, so I don't know whether that will materialise. But that could be worth putting those two together so that two boys can be together. But honestly the politics of it, and you can see the parents sort of outside, G's mum really, she said she's piggy in the middle, because she has, she is friends with both of them. And she'll have Susanna's mum on the phone moaning about J's mum. Whereas J's mum is very placid, she is a lovely, lovely lady.

NF: So that's hard for the family too isn't it because they are in the same situation whereby they are here, but again they're dependant on other Polish families and that, so the friendship with other Polish families have become kind of, I suppose more important than they would back at home, where you could pick and choose your friends and just not bother to talk to the mothers you didn't get on with. They don't have that choice I suppose they feel, that must be...

G: It must be quite hard mustn't it?

NF: Very hard I think yes, it hadn't really occurred to me, yes, because you are out of, just as if we had been moved abroad you gravitate towards other English people and you'd have to. I suppose make friends with them, whether they were people that you would normally make friends with at home in England or not.

G: If you didn't like them what would you do?

NF: Yes, so there is that.

G: It's a pity they can't find a common ground and you know, and think well actually we're...I don't think the Polish people think like that somehow, they seem quite aloof sometimes and want to just do their own thing. But that's up to them isn't it really?

NF: I would say yes. So gosh that's always, but it was interesting that flip over then, over time of you know the way in which you're speaking about the boys, that's very interesting, how they have changed, and again that's been about, a lot about individual difference that you were talking about last time and confidence really. Isn't it, so much about confidence and self-esteem that comes through all the time, and in the talk with lots of other teachers.

G: Interestingly enough J is more confident in maths, his maths work is really good, he is definitely within the average. And G's has really picked up, because when J came back from Poland, he had been away for five weeks. We thought oh my goodness me, we were doing money, and he sailed through it without any problem whatsoever.

NF: I think money is so hard isn't it, I think it's how much their parents let them play with it at home.

G: That's right, I mean money, oh my goodness money you either get it or you don't you.

NF: I know, money and time,

G: Yes, but I was just so surprised that he was as able to do it as he was, so that was interesting.

NF: So when we last met you were kind of, am I right in thinking you hadn't taught EAL children at all before you came here, was that right?

G: Only the odd...

NF: You referred to, I think was it a Filipino?

G: Yes I'd had Filipino children, but not such a mix.

NF: No ok, not so many as it were ok. So would you say, do you think there are things that you've developed in your teaching through the years, specifically for the second language children at all, like last time I came in you had decided for example to make visual cues and things like that. Are there any other things you can think of that, or not are you just kind of following the normal way?

G: No, I think I have just carried on as I would normally do really.

NF: Ok, I mean certainly from the conversation with V it seems to me there's a, what feels like a very strong working relationship there with V.

G: It is, and because of her knowledge of, because she has done the TEAL course, is it TEAL course? SEAL course.

NF: SEAL course hers is isn't it yes.

G: Because Patricia is the TEAL isn't it, you know her knowledge is excellent as well.

NF: Yes, sounds it. So to some extent it feels as if you are happy to allow her you know, it's very much a partnership, she almost leads maybe the advice about EAL or what would you say?

G: Sometimes, I think it is very much, it is very much a partnership, and you know I will ask her and see what she thinks, and I did actually read, take her file home, her course work that she had done on her SEAL course and had a look through some of that, so...

NF: So have you kind of developed in terms of your subject knowledge then really for EAL through the year from having them, does it feel more confident or...

G: Yes and I would certainly say you know I would like to have them again.

NF: Right.

G: Because I have enjoyed, I think they bring a lovely diversity to the class room as well, and I think it is good for the other children to hear them chattering in their own language or for you know G to interpret if he needs to. So no, I think it is nice having them in the class room.

NF: I think I have kind of...Oh I know there was just one other...very specific teaching tools that have been introduced last year I think through V aren't there, kind of the fans and things like that. And I'm just interested to know how much the teachers are using those or it's more an LSA thing, is it something she would do with them in groups or you know like the games and things that she has made?

G: She, yes because she also on a...is it Wednesday or Thursday, she has two groups with the EAL children working on specific things, with specific big books, and she has two groups.

NF: Ok.

G: And I think that's helped as well to support their language.

NF: So the kind of more specific tools that she has designed are more for kind of exclusion, not exclusion, sorry, groups outside, when she has taken groups out extracting them from the class room that sort of thing.

G I think they could be used for either. The tools I think would definitely be there, I probably would have used them more at the beginning , as a support but I think I found my own way, to use your expressions on your face don't you and things like that.

NF: Yes sure. So it kind of came more from your own experience and what you've got worked.

G: I suppose in a way I was fortunate having a couple of Polish children. Because then you know G would interpret because he understood enough English.

NF: Ok, so you were able to use him.

G: And the other children, the Hindi children have good understanding of English, so does the Turkish and the other little girl, who is French Arabic. The only one being (Poi).

NF: Who's Thai. Yes, that's just taking a bit longer.

G: Definitely it is taking a bit longer.

NF: So in a way the children had some level of fluency anyway, and also kind of support each other so there is that kind of use of them themselves as a resource.

G: And my class, they are very supportive of each other. There is some really nice children in there.

NF: The QCA have devised a set of materials obviously meant to be supporting new arrivals. I've not seen them in use much in the school, are you aware of those or no? It's funny isn't it. Yes, so QCA, in fact I was going to ask you Patricia, I forgot to ask that in your interview.

[Patricia enters room]

LP: Sorry just going, yes right, I'll go back down, there's two students in there if that's alright, apart from Sally there's the two (...) students in there,

NF: Are you alright, sorry, you go.

LP: I was just telling...

NF: It was this last bit; you know QCA have produced a range of materials aimed at supporting schools with new arrivals.

LP: Yes, I went to the launch.

NF: Right and you don't...but it's not something that you use in school or there not practical or?

LP: No (...).

NF: No ok I was just interested to have a look at them.

LP: No the stuff...because that will come in the new strategic plan, looking at the materials, that will be part of staff meeting and we will look through, the things look like things that we are already doing which looks awful doesn't it, it sounds a bit complacent but...

NF: No because when I read them myself I thought this looks more like an interesting discussion point rather than a practical...

LP: No, I went to the launch with (A...), but I wasn't that... it was quite interesting but..

NF: Ok. I think we are done really, is there anything you wanted to...anything I haven't covered. Well thank you so much for doing this especially as I say when you were kind of...

G: That's ok.

## NF INTERVIEW WITH JANA SUMMER 2009

NF: Ok that's going, I'll just leave that there. Ok so –

J: So when I picked up the EAL hat in 2002, there were sixty four EAL children on the list.

NF: And that was like a mix of all sorts.

J: Yes, it was mainly Filipino children at that time, a lot of them were Filipino children and then as the years have gone on we're now here, where we have two hundred twenty one.

NF: So that was sixty four in 2002.

J: I don't think that's the latest one, where's the latest one? Where is it? Sorry. Here we go, this is the one, sorry, this is the updated one. I wondered what had happened to the latest figures. Ok, here we go again, so it was sixty four in 2002 and it's now two hundred and twenty one. And roughly the percentage was a third in each year. We have about ninety children and around thirty were EAL. This year's intake now, 2009/10, already in foundation when we had a look it's going to be about 50% EAL, it's gone up.

NF: Wow, so that's in six years, seven years.

J: Yes.

NF: And that's – looking at your figures here that's interesting isn't it, so you've actually got a doubling at 2004, which is when the EU accession states.

J: Yes, that's when all the Polish children started arriving.

NF: A hundred and twenty eight, mm, ok.

J: So to roughly show you a breakdown of how things just change, I've done languages. We have about thirty four different ones, I mean it changes from whenever the thing

was, but you can see we have quite a lot of – now these are Indian children from Kerala in the south of India. They just happen to be Christian, Catholics.

NF: Oh I see, which is why they've come here.

J: But they are Indian children with everything that – the problems that Indian children have and that's a lot of this new intake is this community as well. I mean the Poles are the greatest number with seventy five.

NF: So was that always the case that there was always a Polish contingent here ?

J: There were one or two when I first arrived but the influx came and the numbers have got bigger. I don't have the – I've got it in files for previous years (...) but as each year has gone on, the number has risen.

J: We have quite a number of Portuguese children as well.

NF: And a lot is Filipino.

J: That's right yes, so they're sort of steady. And then we have quite a lot of African – I mean if you separate out the languages and put them into sort of continents, quite a lot of Africans. There's an awful lot of – because we have Bengali, then we Gujarati, then we have quite a few Punjabi. If you add all those up they come to quite a big group of if you like, Indian children in the school. So it's very much an inner city school with a cross section of everything. Because people sometimes think oh it's a Catholic school, they're all going to be sort of white middle class or whatever, but it isn't at all, we're from all over the city and they're bused in because they are Catholics, so they come from all over.

NF: So even Gujarati and Hindi speaking children are Catholic and not –

J: No, no, they're not Catholic, no they're Hindu, they're Sikh, but they come into the school here because I think talking to the parents, they feel that because we have a respected religion in the school, we will respect their religion as well and that does come across and again apart from my EAL hat, I have the EMAS hat on as well, so we celebrate the different cultures and different days as well to make them feel included

and welcomed. Just part of our community here at school. But we find that – and Muslim children we have quite a number as well, again because they feel that they will be respected here.

NF: Sure and there's obviously room for them as well, which is great isn't it? Because it's quite hard isn't it, being a Catholic school –

J: I'm surprised how many there are because now obviously the criteria are Catholic children, baptised Catholic and then Christian and then it sort of goes through.

NF: So I wonder if the influx of Eastern European children has subverted that a little, because you've got so many more Poles coming in –

J: Yes it must have and these (...).

NF: Right, so the Indian children who are Catholic as well, so you've got two communities coming in there.

J: Yes, which is interesting and the African children that we tend to get, they're Christian as well, coming in, so they of course look for this school.

NF: I'm interested in this kind of suddenness of the influx of Polish children, looking at your figures there, those are really interesting and so you're saying you had older – you had Polish children before, perhaps one or two. Would they have been from kind of the longer established Polish community ?

J: Well some just filtering in as normally, as immigrants do, before the actual borders were opened.

NF: Ok.

J: Just some families ended up here. But there were just a few and as a Polish school if I've got my Polish school hat on, then when I took over that seven years ago there were thirty children in the school, now this intake is going to be about three hundred.

NF: Good grief, a ten fold increase in six years.

J: Yeah.

NF: Good heavens, right.

J: It's going to be about that. At the moment we've two hundred that come sort of every week and there's two twenty on the books and we've accepted at least another five classes with fifteen. It's going to be around two eighty to three hundred that are going to be starting in September here at Spring House.

NF: So that's really changed the way the area feels, the city feels presumably?

J: Yes absolutely. It's now back to my childhood because I'm of Polish origin so if you like I think I feel an empathy towards these children because I've actually lived it myself because when my parents came they didn't speak any English either. When I went to school I didn't speak any English either, well nursery, I went to nursery first and then worked in the cotton mills in the north, so I learnt my English maybe at three or four. I was already translating for my parents at that age and so through school your English – and of course my education was here, but I do know how they feel. You still had oh the Polish, the food was different, the culture was different, the traditions were different, you were different. Even my skin, I was constantly being asked to go and wash but I was just darker skinned, olive skinned, it's just your appearance, it's not particularly dark –

NF: No, I can't see any difference [Laughs].

J: But I wasn't typically English.

NF: Right.

J: So I know how upsetting that can be, even though people now have no idea because I'm just English, I've been here all my life.

NF: Interesting.

J: So I went to Polish school, so the Polish school here in Southampton's been running six years. The (...) think it's a new school, but it's actually been established –

NF: Yes, that was one of the things that interested me was whether and I don't know if you've got an insight into it or not, one of the things I've heard is that the older Polish

community are less – are not so thrilled about the new Polish community arriving because – I was speaking to a Polish community member in Winchester, E, do you know E S?

J: Yes.

NF: And she was saying that – the way she put it was that the older Polish community are kind of more Polish than the Polish, because they've spent time obviously defending you know, the lifestyle, you know, it's Poland in England if you like. And so the new Poles that arrived, if one might call them that, were really quite different culturally and with different social values as it were and they found that quite –

J: Yes, but not all. And I think what happened was – which made me very sad, that I'd been working in the community and through the school, that the actual – the Polish school has been constant, where we have welcomed them all in and we were about to begin with, the only place that was welcoming because they didn't know them. Now we have got to know them and they are fabulous, you know, just normal, wonderful people, you get the good and bad in any society and the old ones are very set in their ways and want things in a particular way and if that doesn't come forth – so it's taking a while to integrate the news ones. And also they're very busy working and that's a problem we have here at school with the children; they cannot devote the time to the children that the children need. And we say please help them with their reading, please help them, read with them every night, help them with their spellings, help them with this and they're very, very willing and would love to but a lot of them are working, they work shifts and swap over and we have two families here, cousins, where there are two sisters and one does a morning shift, the other does the afternoon shift within the families. I mean there are dads around but .. so it's one that brings both to school and the other picks up both from school. So they've each got the cousin all the time and the age gap's quite big between them, so to help one and then help the other, they're not able to because their language is not that great either.

NF: So that seems to be an issue, yes.

J: Yes, well it's just a problem that – and they say at school “oh they never help them with their English”, well they can't.

NF: Mm, because they have to have multiple jobs because they don't have access to state benefits and so it's kind of chicken and egg.

J: Yes, no matter what the media tells you, it's not true, they're very hard working and within our community we're trying to get them to understand how important it is to give the children the time and a lot of them do, a lot of them are learning and realising that they just have to help them out and help them get through.

NF: It's interesting you saying that because I've been talking to teachers in schools across the county who have Polish children and they all have this very positive perception of them, they love them, love the families, love the children, but also commented that the families actually work very hard to support the children.

J: Yes, ours do, in the main ours do here. You find the ones that aren't thriving are the ones where it's difficult, not always. No, most of them I would agree, mostly I would agree completely, because they value education, they know that the way out of this, it's my parents, they knew that they were doing the menial jobs, the labouring jobs and the only way out was education, so they're very much that way – yes they must learn, yes they must achieve.

NF: I guess you've just got more haven't you, because mostly I'm interviewing in schools where they're a kind of isolated bundle of learners, so they've just got this one family that becomes this kind of model of – one of my teachers said she wished all her children were Polish. [Laughs]

J: A lot of teachers here will tell you the same, a lot of the teachers here, well most of the teachers here I think, will tell you the same but because we have such a large number you get more of a variety.

NF: Of course.

J: But on the whole they're lovely, I love them. And all the children, I find that the Indian community is very, very much for the children as well and very supportive and in fact we had an Indian day last year. Well I've never seen the like – parents just took it and ran and oh they were just so thrilled that someone was interested in their community. They brought food, they brought saris, they sang at the assembly, the

parents did, I mean it was just wonderful, just an amazing day and the children were just so happy to show their culture, their poetry, their things, I couldn't believe it. Of all the days we had, because every year I try to focus on a different community and so previous to that we'd had a Polish day. This year right at the beginning we had a Black history, in October, so we focussed things on that community. We had the Indian previously, the Polish previously and we'd had French. So every year we just tried to sort of have a running programme.

NF: Right. That's another really interesting thing you said there because in terms of Indian, I suppose I mean more Pakistani, Bengali parents. Again in other schools which had established Bengali communities over time there's been a feeling that that community was rather reticent and didn't want to take part. So it's interesting to hear this again that there's this totally the other way up.

J: This was just unbelievable, I'll just see if there's any sort of – in the files of bits from the assembly with the children, sort of different groups of children dancing, we all wore saris, the staff did. You can see the parents are there, I'm just trying to find one, these are some of our children, because in the afternoon there were lots of activities which the parents just ran as well, so we had the assembly in the morning and then the food was just amazing that they brought. I'm just trying to see, oh there's one with the parents, when they came in and sang their national anthem, oh one of the little ones sang. And then sort of throughout the day different activities that happened and then these were just sort of activities that went through that they did, so just sort of we try and keep it all together so if we ever do one again it's there.

NF: Great. Thanks, that's all really interesting as background to what you've got here, there's a lot.

J: Yes I mean just others that – yes, two did a Mexican day this year, so again it's not always – the school have now taken it on and it's not always (...) some of the displays from last year and what's phenomenal about this is the children did apartheid, the three different year 6's took topics; one was slavery, one was apartheid and they had a whole week where they delved into that and some of the poetry and the work that

came out of that was just brilliant. See, the Indian day – that was from that one, that's the one in the foyer. We've done St Patrick because they get very upset that –

NF: Well you have to celebrate your own faith and culture too.

J: Yes well this is it. So this was Diwali, that's the previous one, Ramadan we put up, we had a dance workshop a few years ago again.

NF: That's great.

J: So there's sort of all sorts going on in the school, we're having St George as I say. So again sort of over the years.

NF: So quite an inclusive feel generally.

J: We try.

NF: Yes. So did you want to carry on taking me through your slides or did you want to –

J: Whatever. So what were the aims? To enable each child to reach his full potential, I mean that's what I feel and then to develop the social skills within school and the wider communities. So how do we do that? To try and provide a welcoming environment –

NF: So these were all things you were talking to your governing body about in terms of .. ?

J: Yes, what we do, yes and how we try and do it. So how do we provide a welcoming environment? Well the first thing that we're doing now and (...) it's horrid in that colour but the first thing the office do now when children arrive, is there is this initial – I mean they do this in most schools but I've sort of rejigged it and we have our own. So as soon as on the yellow form they put a different language, the office give them this one and it gives us information like when did they actually arrive in the UK? Were they born here or have they just arrived or have they been here two years or have they been here five years, which isn't often on a form.

NF: No and it's so important.

J: It's vital. Have they just arrived or have they been here a while? Because this stays with the child in an EAL folder, it goes from class to class and the lounges at home and then do they actually speak and read their mother tongue or is it just spoken or can they – and how their English is, so again that's mostly off the other form but this is like do they go to Polish school or Bengali school or whatever. What else is there? And again this one which I think is vital where we put the parents and do they speak and read and write their own tongue? And do they speak, read and write English? So what support can we expect at home? So they fill this in, so we have a sort of a snapshot of the child. Ideally I used to do it with the parents, I could have the time and I could (...), so realistically that would have been ideal if I could have talked to each family that came but now it's just not really possible.

NF: Well not with that number now, no.

J: No.

NF: Because what's your total number on role? You've got –

J: Six hundred and something, so it's a third.

NF: A third of the role.

J: Yes.

NF: That's huge.

J: And then according to the normal QCA steps, their level. So this is this form and then the initial assessment, so that's just again it's like the QCA form and that's what I was doing. Now what I try and do is keep those – let me just pick this one up, this is a year three one, it's what level they were at here when they first came in and then the different colours, so can track on a sheet how the child's progressed each year or not.

NF: Right ok.

J: And we used to set speaking and listening, reading and writing targets but they're getting so many targets from so many places so we've now changed it with the head. We've agreed that I will only set speaking and listening with them and the reading and

the writing targets and all that will stay because they get them in class. So they're not quite the same as we would like for here but I mean they're reading targets, they're writing targets, so that's absolutely fine, because otherwise they're just going to have a table of targets and one child's not going to know really what it needs to be doing. But hopefully – and again rather than having it on this list, if I come out of there for a minute, what the school has set up is it's still called SEN – where's SEN gone? Oh there. Right, so the school has now set up these, so if I take oh I don't know, and so they have EAL as a column on here now, of the children who are getting any extra help. So they've got their writing comments there and the speaking is the EAL one now here. So rather than – I keep this anyway for me and for the head and it goes in the file for the teachers to see. But anyone can access it, so if we just choose a child, wherever their name is, and if they're EAL, so they've got this and they've got this, so it's all on one sheet of paper now rather than on separate bits. So the school –

NF: Right, so there's a coherence.

J: A coherence, a provision map of their needs and what we're all working towards. So each class teacher has got if they're SEN and EAL.

NF: Right.

J: So sometimes, some are SEN and EAL, some are just EAL, some are just SEN, but it's all going to be on one bit of paper now.

NF: So this is a way then of marrying up kind of expectations generally.

J: Yes and also what help they need.

NF: Right ok. And can I ask is there a specific reason why you would have said I'm doing speaking and listening as opposed to (...)?

J: No, the head decided that because the targets, we had reading targets set by the class teacher, we already had writing targets set by the class teacher, what we didn't have was speaking and listening. So this is the one and I meet with the teachers to set it, I don't do it on my own, I have to see every teacher, so again it's finding the time to do it that's always the problem. So ideally it should be quite regularly, every half term

would be the ideal, every term is about it and Easter I just didn't make it, they had so much on. So I'm now doing it and seeing every teacher about every child, at least for the end of the year and I think you just have to start being realistic about these things, you know, ideals are wonderful and we all know what we should be doing, but time –

NF: I mean for you as you said, you were originally were able to see parents individually but because the number has almost quadrupled hasn't it, from the numbers you've given me, in the six years, so has your time grown with that or have you had the same – you were full time before and you're full time now or no?

J: No and it's – I think in a way a lot of – I've always been part time because that's been my choice, I've wanted to work part time and I did have for a couple of years I had help, I had an (LSA) who covered other languages that I didn't. But she moved on to other courses, she went on to be a counsellor, so she left and then I was left on my own. And again, sometimes we're a success and therefore the funding stops, so in fact they can't even really fund me. I really, because I'm not a class teacher, I'm just the EAL support, so they've got to find money for me and it isn't enough because of the results of our children.

NF: Oh I see.

J: I mean you have to talk to the head but that's what I've been told. There isn't – they can't really fund me, so I am also used to cover PPA time, so I'm only actually doing my EAL work in the morning, so I can't get to all the children which has been my big frustration. And in the afternoon I'm teaching French.

NF: So you've got MFL as well, as another hat. How interesting because it is almost mirror images of each other aren't they?

J: Well this was how I started in the school, as a French teach, peripatetic French teacher years ago. And then moved on to all sorts of release and – because I've always chosen to work part time because of my own family.

NF: Sure.

J: So but it means that actually it's lovely because I get to every class and know lots of the children, but it sometimes is frustrating because I can see a need and I can't get to it and the head has again – well I say the head, but the management of the school have decided – I was used a lot in Year 6 before the SATS, which meant I didn't see the other children, so the theory was not to try and spread myself too thinly but really concentrate on one group and so that was fine till the SATS and now I'm in Year three exclusively. I was in Year 6 with a couple of lessons with Year 1 and Year 2 and then they stopped. So I think what we're doing is trialling that at the moment but it does mean that everyone else has to be on board and because I've been doing it this long now people know what to do with their children.

NF: Mm, because the systems are all there and yes –

J: The systems are all there now so the LSAs know exactly what to do and then if they've questions they come to me for support, but most of the time these children are just looked after in the class by the class teacher and the LSAs who are now so skilled at dealing with them.

NF: Right so that's a big part of it isn't it, you've got that team of support staff who also presumably have been here quite some while –

J: So they haven't got EAL hats on –

NF: No but –

J: But they're doing all the reading, the sowing, the phonics and I just pick up and support like with Year 6 sometimes I would work with them if there was any grammar that was missing, past tenses, that kind of thing, sentence structure, the whole thing, or I'd be in class with them.

NF: Mm and do you feel that with those LSAs even though as you say they haven't got EAL hats on, actually just by virtue of the amount of experience they've got they're actually sensitive to the specific language requirements of the second language learners?

J: Yes, yes I would say so, yes. And that's the only thing that sort of keeps me happy because I do worry about them. And when I get to a class and I see a child with a particular need, that's a frustration knowing that I can't go back and help that child because I just cannot, because I'm elsewhere.

NF: And one of the tensions that's coming up a lot in conversations with other teachers, in fact it's one of the questions here, is is this tension between what the primary national strategy requires for the teaching of English and the needs of second language learners. Do you feel that in a way the systems in school circumvent that or is it a permanent tension for you as well?

J: I think it is because a lot of things that they're asked to do they just cannot do, they're just not able at all. So what I try and do is I teach up here and I have groups that come out with me, so sometimes I support in class or sometimes I'm here and now I'm in on the Year 3 planning. You see I wasn't in on the planning with the other year groups, I'd have to wait for the planning to come through and then me having to play catch up all the time. I'm actually in on the planning now and I've said that's been invaluable because I know exactly what they're doing, I'm actually listening to what they're doing in class and how I can support that in my group. So I might be doing – if they're doing a comprehension then I'll find a comprehension that's easier and more accessible to my children or they're doing sentences and they're doing adverbs or they might be doing – let's get the basic ones in, let's get capital letters, full stops, let's get sentences and then develop them and work that way but make sure the basics are in place.

NF: Ok.

J: For these children because that's what they need. But some have done absolutely brilliantly, they're like little sponges and again I think it's your attitude, it's how you do welcome that child into your class, which the teachers are really good at.

NF: Yes, well if you've got a kind of whole school ethos that does that, yes.

J: Yes, so they really do and the children flourish, suddenly they think oh I can say that, no-one's going to laugh at me. I can say that, I can have a go and as their confidence

grows of course they get better because they relax and as soon as they relax they're able to – a stressed child can't learn. I mean preaching to the converted.

NF: No, no, it's alright, no, I'm pleased to hear it kind of across –

J: Yes, so if you can get a child to relax in the class, happy in the class, then they'll learn.

NF: Do you think because you're Polish yourself or were – sorry, you're English but you have Polish roots yourself, that you feel more affinity with the Polish children or is it – I'm wondering if that's an issue for you at all?

J: No, I don't feel an affinity with – I feel an affinity with all the children. To me it makes no difference whether they're Polish or Indian or – absolutely not. The only thing is of course I can talk to the Polish children.

NF: Yes, that's what I thought really. It must make a difference doesn't it.

J: Yes, a lot of the other children know enough English that I can communicate with them. I haven't had a communication problem with the other children, only with the Portuguese. I wish I knew some Portuguese, I tried some of my very basic Spanish but I haven't – but they have to learn quite quickly and I would say that's been a problem for the Polish children and if they don't make the progress they should it's because there are too many of them.

NF: Yes it's interesting. I was re-reading my interview with Jane last autumn, the one that I did with her last autumn and she was saying it had become an issue in the school. And also that because of that you have a kind of an English only in school policy. Is that still the case?

J: Yes, except when they're with me.

NF: Of course yes. And that's a tension isn't it of itself –

J: Well yes, it's English only in the sense of to get them to practice their English. I mean a lot of teachers are doing registers in all sorts of languages and things like that just to again to value the different communities they've got in their class. So it's not that but

we want them to speak English of course, just to practice, but of course they play together in the playground because it's easier.

NF: Of course.

J: But then some will find English friends as their language gets better, then they move away and they do start making English speaking friends.

NF: It's a difficulty isn't it. Yes. Did you want to show me any more slides or –

J: Yes, let's see what else I've got on here. Right so then this is what I'm saying, that I see them regularly. The planning, because of my French background and things, I started, so when they come in I run through these things and make sure that they know the greetings, things that are desperate first.

NF: So when you say because of your French background you mean in teaching and NFL?

J: Yes, so if you like I always teach greetings first and polite expressions and whatever. So I've gone through tick, tick, tick, can they do that, can they do that, and if not we pick up on that and I've bought some books of topics and sheets and vocabulary to support and the same for reading. But the reading now is done more with the LSAs and the writing, so it's mainly vocabulary work. Like today there was a comprehension about clothes and things so I thought right we'll go back and make sure they know clothes because yesterday they had to describe what went on and some of the children didn't know some of the words. So it's just picking up on that and doing that. So as I say there's lots, from very basic things, just to make sure do they know their days of the week, do they know their fruits? So with – when I was planning my lessons before we went onto this new system, I would always have a vocab topic and a grammar topic for each week that I would systematically go through and practice so that they could build up their language that way. So the whole school approach is how we're doing it. So sometimes they're out of class up with me here, sometimes it was just can you come and read the big book with them, because we're going to do this book today. So I'd go to whichever year group, take those children, read it through with them, translate it for them, then they'd get ten, fifteen minutes into class so that when they did the big book it wasn't a complete thing for them.

NF: Wonderful, so it was a completely supported (...) the text along with the rest of the children.

J: Yes so they could have a go, start repeating and learning their words because they knew roughly what the story was about. Again I would have loved to have been able to do much more of that but whenever it's flagged up that's what – especially with the little ones, year one and year two, to go down and do that. Sometimes I'd be in class and working with them and again I am for numeracy, it's mainly numeracy, for literacy I usually take them out because I can work with them in a smaller group. But with numeracy very often I'm in class just supporting them to make sure they understand. The other thing that I did, I did translate (half of the planning maths) strategy for the parents, it's mainly for the parents, so it goes from Reception for different levels and I built it up as it went along. So when I meet the parents initially I was having an initial meeting at the beginning of the year, mainly with the Polish parents it's in Polish because that's what I can do. And I explain the systems of the school and give them one of these so when they come home with maths homework they've got the vocabulary there.

NF: That's wonderful. So they've got a whole Polish maths kind of –

J: Maths vocabulary.

NF: Support book.

J: Yes. And I was working on the science but it's come to a grinding halt, but I must pick that up again next September. So trained LSAs, so they're doing that, multicultural staff – again there are more and more the head has brought in more multicultural staff. So if we have an issue with children and it's mainly the support staff, so we have Indian speaking ones and Portuguese speaking ones.

NF: Right, so you've got other languages amongst staff.

J: Yes, within the LSA community of the school and that's been done for that reason, so that our children can be supported and the lunch time supervisors as well. Now the homework club was and now isn't – because there's a morning club instead. They used to be able to come in in the morning at eight but now they've got a morning club

that parents pay for. But the Head has organised – there is a new EAL vocabulary pack for the computers that they can learn vocabulary to sort of access themselves.

NF: Right, that's a piece of software or .. ?

J: It's a piece of software, do I have it here?

NF: Well don't worry.

J: Oh that's part of it.

NF: Oh right, oh it's clicker, ok.

J: Yes, but there's all sorts in there, so first it gives them the words and it builds up and builds up into sentences.

NF: And that's for one to one for all children who are new to the school and English.

J: Yes, so that one's at school, but there's one at the supermarket, at the whatever – there's a whole stack of them. So again meeting with the parents to encourage them, so the children, a lot of children come in at eight o'clock, come into the computer suite and are working through this. So I couldn't get to them but they're doing that vocabulary work if you like before school. And so the school's supporting them that way and a lot of them are taking advantage of it and because it's been bought we've been able to put it onto their laptops so they can practice at home as well.

NF: Great.

J: So there's that and translations of tests. I'm a very big one and just again it was proved again this week. One child in Year four did abysmally on a maths test and the teacher said it's not her level and I said well did you call me? Did you say – so again it's finding time but you make time and I went through it again with her on her own, translating any words that she didn't know and she came up two levels higher than she was. It had nothing to do with her maths ability, it was the language.

NF: Right, interesting.

J: So if I can, certainly for SATS, the Year six SATS, I'm always here and they do them with me up here and I know now what I'm allowed to say and not allowed to say. Things like which of these is a pentagon I know I can't translate because the word for pentagon is which of these is a five sided figure.

NF: Right ok.

J: That's the word in Polish, a five sider or a six sider. So some things I know I can't translate because it's giving them the answer, so I just have to say you just have to know an octagon or whatever. So but certainly – but I try and do it throughout the school especially for the maths. And again there was a science one, a child did abysmally on the science one in the computer suite and I went through it again and it was just – oh is that what it is, oh yes I know that, you know, and it's just not being able to access the language. So and how do we support the parents? Well we have this information in other languages, there's one – again, because I can do, there's one in French and Portuguese, there's a Polish one. So as they come new to the school it tells you that's dinner money and all the rest of it in their different languages. I'm here on induction meetings, so meeting a new parent when the little ones come in and parent teacher consultations I'm here to translate.

NF: Oh right, of course, open evenings.

J: Open evenings and things and this first explanation meeting when they first arrive, we give them a couple of weeks to settle in and then we call the parents together – any questions, this is how you read with them if you want to read, this is how you fill in their reading booklet, this is what we expect etc. And again try and say that and find the time to do that. Any main letters and information, translated, so we get a bank of letters, so it goes out – the what, where and how, the fete, that kind of thing, anything that's happening in the school. Because usually these things, once I've got them done you can just get them out and again translation of the maths vocabulary. So this is an expert, so we celebrate the other cultures, so we've got Black history, Diwali – I told you that before. We always try and send a letter out for Ramadan saying we support the children if they're fasting. It's usually just Year five, Year six sometimes. So they don't have to go out to play and run around and get hot, so that letter goes out just to

say we know it's Ramadan. So this is just things we've done. Oh – book days and book weeks, so the school's very big on that as is every school. So parents are invited in so that's when we can get the different languages in. So we try and do that as much as possible and they just had a fathers and grandfathers day and again that could happen in different languages. Foundation just had a whole week of around the world they called it and they had different countries that were zooming in on, so again parents were encouraged to come in. So we try and big that sort of multicultural side in, where we can. Books in the classrooms, dual language books and dictionaries. And then because of the Polish Saturday school we've got strong links with that community and the Polish Chaplain was part of the school. I don't – because we changed priests in September and this one's not been in.

NF: Is it still a Polish priest?

J: Yes so he comes in so that they see him supporting in the school as well and then because of the thing we're in the community languages services, the Polish school belongs to the community languages, so –

NF: Ah so is that part of Southampton's education framework?

J: Yes, we are actually a community language school supported by the city.

NF: Ok.

J: Hence us being here and able to be resourced, at least with pencils, crayons, that sort of thing we get through the community languages service. And that's about it on that one.

NF: Gosh loads. [Laughs] It's really interesting to hear what you're doing, because originally – my own background is inner city schools, so I taught almost exclusively in London, so for me teaching children with EAL was the norm and I moved down to Hampshire five years ago.

J: Whereabouts were you in London?

NF: East London.

J: Oh lovely.

NF: Waltham Forest area was where I taught mostly and then started to train teachers in East London as well. And then I moved down here and I'm training teachers obviously in Winchester and mostly in Hampshire schools. I don't have so many Southampton schools because of course the University pinches them quite rightly and I discovered that my own background as it were, in these kind of very heavily diverse schools were not those of my students. So I was most interested in going into schools in Hampshire where they have got literally isolated bilingual learners. But then Jane said well come in here and it's been so nice for me to see another inner city school which obviously feels very familiar to me.

J: Yes, normal.

NF: Yes exactly, it is my norm and yet not in a way because every school is different isn't it. So it's very useful to talk to you, I mean the Polish thing generally is fascinating for me because of this kind of very positive reception by teachers, because it was so sudden and so on. Do you get a sense at all within the community of people going home? Because that's what the headlines are in the paper. No I don't get that either talking to teachers, none of my teachers have dropped out because their children have gone.

J: No.

NF: Over a couple of years. So there's a sense of them staying –

J: Yes I think especially the families, well I mean there's still even less work in Poland. They sort of go back and come back, they try and then they end up coming back here again.

NF: Right.

J: Some of them have gone back but very few, just thinking about Polish school very few have left and gone back to Poland.

NF: Right. Well yes obviously, if it's gone from thirty to three hundred in six years. I can't believe that figure, it's enormous isn't it.

J: I mean these are – the boxes, each box is a class with some different teachers and we bring all the text books from Poland (...) and we set about (...) six hundred and eighty books, Polish, and the children change their books every week and the most wonderful thing one child said was I read it, mummy read it and my granny read it.

NF: Oh lovely.

J: So and again we've got a librarian that comes to the Saturday school.

NF: So this community quite by chance has an unusually rich resource doesn't it? You must recognise that yourself. Obviously unusual to have a Polish speaking teacher –

J: I've literally just retired, I've stopped after twenty five years. I stopped this Saturday so I'm feeling a little bit bereft in a way. No it's been absolutely –

NF: What you've stopped doing the Polish school do you mean?

J: Yes.

NF: Is there someone else there who can take it on who like you is a trained teacher and Polish speaking?

J: Every teacher in the Polish school is a trained teacher.

NF: Oh right I see, it's not just a kind of –

J: But they are wrapping lettuces, sowing curtains, doing all sorts of horrendous work during the week and they come on a Saturday because they're teachers and it's the one thing I haven't had a problem with. I've had a staff of thirty, thirty on the staff.

NF: And these are qualified teachers.

J: Every single one of them, Polish qualified.

NF: But here they're doing menial manual labour, right.

J: Wanting to work in the school because that's what they are, they're teachers and they don't teach during the week, so they come in on a Saturday and teach.

NF: Right. I hadn't realised that that's how it was supported. And it's volunteer or .. ?

J: Mm, yes. I mean they get expenses but I mean it's nominal and I don't give it to them every week, I save them up or I did. And I used to give them you know, some money at Christmas and at the end of term. So it mounted up, it looked like something, but it was – I mean it's basically voluntary work and anyone who comes I say it's voluntary work, I don't even mention – it's always a surprise when they get something. Because I always felt that you get a different kind of person, you get a different type of person if you tell them this is voluntary work and if they agree to come as a volunteer you're getting a different type of person. Because some would come, you'd say it was voluntary and they'd say oh I thought it was paid and you'd never see them again, which is fine because they've obviously got that concern in their life and that's not a criticism in any way at all, but you know that the people that you have got want to be here.

NF: Fascinating. I think we've covered everything there, I think we've gone through all the questions.

[End of transcript]

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH JO AUTUMN 2008

NF: Ok, so you're in a Foundation Stage class of how many children?

J: Yes, of thirty.

NF: Thirty children and have you got an assistant in with you all the time?

J: Yes, full time.

NF: Right. Ok, can you talk to me about the make up of the class, kind of ethnically, is there quite a mix?

J: Sure, yeah, I've got two Polish girls, one is very bright and one is not so bright and her language is quite poor, I mean you can understand what she's saying but she doesn't speak sort of fluent English. Whereas the other one is pretty fluent. I've got two from the Philippines, I've got one Greek girl who's fluent in English and Greek and she's very bright. The two Filipinos are very bright as well actually. That's – how many have I got? One Chinese girl, who am I forgetting? One Icelandic, but he's fluent in English and I don't know if he speaks Icelandic actually because he's always been in this country and his mum and dad speak English to him all the time so we're not sure if he's bilingual. Who else is there that I'm missing out? I should have brought my file.

NF: It doesn't matter – no, no, it's just to get an overview of the ethnicity.

J: I don't think there's any Indian.

NF: So no children from Asian backgrounds, because you've got a huge population of Bengali haven't you, in Southampton?

J: Yeah, no Bengali in my class. There is in the other classes in the year. No, just Filipino, Chinese, yeah, so how many's that?

NF: I've got seven here.

J: I'm missing two, who am I forgetting? Oh Thai, Jasmine's Thai, but she speaks English at home all the time, so I don't think she's bilingual although her mum's trying to teach her some Thai. Who else have I got down here? Yep, that's it.

NF: Ok right. So as a percentage that's about a quarter of your class isn't it?

J: Yeah.

NF: That have EAL but it sounds like actually largely they're quite fluent.

J: Yeah, there's only one girl, Ying Lang, who is quite quiet and she doesn't really like to speak. She says odd words but she's – not my worry, but she's the worst and then Adriana, who's a Polish girl and she speaks in sort of broken English. But all the others are pretty fluent.

NF: Right, including the other Polish child.

J: Yes.

NF: Right, so do you know how long they've been in the country, the Polish children?

J: No idea, no.

NF: Ok, but obviously it must have been some time if she's come in in Year R.

J: Yeah.

NF: Do you have a nursery attached here as well?

J: We don't no. I know that they were born in Poland but I don't know when they came over.

NF: Right ok, because what we're getting now is a kind of difference between those who obviously are newly arrived and obviously some families have been here since 2004 when they could be legally from the EU accession.

J: Yeah, well I know that Emilia, the one who's really good at English, she's got an older brother in the school and I assume he's sort of been here since the beginning and he's in Year three now, so maybe they've been here since 2004.

NF: Yes, so they've been here a while and have clearly been using English at home as well perhaps.

J: Yes and when I had parents evening it was funny because mum and dad said when they want to annoy us they speak in English, because they're better at English than us.  
[Laughs]

NF: That's interesting isn't it. Ok so coming away from the Polish children for now, I'm going to go back to them in a moment, can you talk to me around your views or can you talk to me about how you in your class at the moment, taking into consideration all your children, how you develop their speaking and listening, what sorts of activities do you know develop their talk the most effectively?

J: Well they're encouraged to in their play, talk. Like we do quite a lot of role play, so you know, say in the afternoon, you know, they go in their role play areas and then we have in the morning, apart from in the inputs when obviously talk is quite important because we're talking about whatever, they have what's called a rotation system where half the children will be with the teacher and half the children will be on their own independently and a lot of the time in those end of activities, it'll be act out the role of – like at the moment it's Goldilocks and the Three Bears so there's a lot of literacy based activity, because our topic is Goldilocks and the Three Bears. What else do we do?

NF: So lots of role play basically?

J: Yeah we do lots of role play, all three or four corners are used on a regular basis and they love going in there and even when we're outside, because one of our rotations – there's five bases for each of the days and one day we're outside and there's houses out there, so we like to use the houses as role play as well.

NF: Right, so it's inside and outside.

J: Right. What other things do we do? Obviously in their phonics, they're not talking but they're saying the sounds and singing, so singing I suppose is talking at the end of the day isn't it. Singing the sounds and singing the Jolly Phonics. We're doing a play, so some of them do have to speak in that, but not very many I must admit.

- NF: What sort of things do you do, I mean I'm not only interested in English because obviously at Foundation Stage we're talking about a completely cross curricular approach anyway: I have an early years background so I do understand don't worry. So in terms of say you're introducing a new concept in maths or in knowledge and understanding of the world or something, how about introducing vocabulary? Is there anything you do around new vocabulary?
- J: No not really. I mean we do an all about me bag, which as you probably know, it's like a bag where each child gets to take it home and then they write about them. So that's quite nice because one person each day has to talk about themselves and we do show and tell so that's quite good. They love talking about that. Some of them are all eager and then they'll come up and stand there and I'm quite strict and I say well I'm not going to ask you the questions and you just say yes or no like "is it your favourite toy?" "yes." I say if you want to come and show and tell it's not just showing, it's telling as well. You have to tell, you have to stand up and say right this is my such and such, I like it because I got it from here, I'm not going to start asking you the questions, it's not me asking, it's you telling. So they do quite a lot of talking in that and I get them – and we do a prayer at the end of the day and grace and I get one child to lead the prayer so then that gets them to speak publically and they have to start with the sign of the cross and just to get their confidence up. But obviously I mean with vocab, I'm always asking when we're reading a story, "Do you know what this means?" kind of thing, but we don't have a system in place that when you come across a tricky word you do this, kind of thing. It's just you describe what's going on as and when you need to.
- NF: Right, so quite a talk based environment, lots of role play going on, lots of opportunities presumably when you're – so when they're on the rotation activities you've got adult led activities and child independent activities and presumably during the adult led at this end of the year a large percentage of that is oral or are they doing – what about kind of moving into reading and writing? What sorts of – where are they at the moment because it's very early in the year isn't it?
- J: It is, yeah, they are starting to blend and we do quite a lot of – like this week we've had a rotation, a teacher led activity where they had three dice with the sounds on and

you rolled the first red dice and you said oh it's a t' and then the next one was the vowel, so you're making a cvc word, so that's obviously phonics but teacher led and they're saying the sounds and then trying to blend them to make the word. We don't do handwriting as such. In our morning activity for the first fifteen minutes of the day at the moment we're specifically focussing on fine motor skills, like we've got lots of pegs and we're trying to get them to peg up clothes and they've got these – I put out big sheets of black paper with chalks and they do these like lines. I mean Mrs P's just said actually to me yesterday that she doesn't want me doing big shapes, she wants me to do the actual letter shapes instead of doing circles and like squiggles and ups and down mountains. She actually wants them to be doing a k' or you know, an L – sorry I always speak in phonic talk. [Laughter] Yes, so we're trying to now introduce handwriting because some of them can write and we don't want them to get into bad habits and we're trying to teach them the right pencil grip. It's funny actually because we did an assessment last week of pencil grip and the children that can write their name have a worse pencil grip than the children that can just colour and just –

NF: How interesting.

J: Yeah, because I think the children that can write their name have not been forced, but they've been encouraged from an early age and also at nursery they might have been encouraged to write their name but not actually taught the pencil grip. So you've got lots of them holding it with their thumb over or – I mean I don't actually think it's really that important.

NF: It really is, it really is, I can't tell you how important it is and it's got lost in the mists of time somehow.

J: I don't see – how is it though?

NF: Very important because when you write with a comfortable pencil grip and that is a comfortable pencil grip, it means everything else flows. So as soon as writing is complicated because you haven't got the right pencil grip, that starts to get in the way of all your creative flow and your working memory can't get out stuff about words because you're focussing on how tired your hand feels and so on. So for young children that pencil grip, I promise you, is really important.

J: But what happens if you're like with me, like I hold my pen on the fourth finger instead of the third and I've done loads and loads of essays.

NF: There's plenty of research out there that shows you, so you've probably got by fine but you might have got by even better had you had – and the thing is you've got a whole generation of which you're part, you've gone through life, including my own daughters, with what we'd consider a poor pencil grip, who now don't understand that or know about the importance of the proper one. And Jolly Phonics is big on that, because you were saying you use Jolly Phonics?

J: Yes.

NF: Yes, and they're big on that for that reason, it's actually a research based, evidence based finding about the whole pencil grip thing, (laughs) which is a whole other conversation.

J: Yeah.

NF: But yes, it is interesting to hear that you're working on that.

J: Yeah, I mean Mrs P's very, very you know, pencil grip has to be correct, but she doesn't hold her pencil grip properly.

NF: No. Well that's why she's worried! [Laughter] Yeah, it's one of those little things that people under – for all sorts of entirely understandable reasons, underestimate its importance. Anyway we digress. So you do Jolly Phonics with them. Moving into the EAL children in your class then kind of generally, is there anything that you do sort of differently for them in terms of work on phonemes or anything like that? Or does it feel like it's pretty much the same for everyone?

J: Well we don't have anything special for them, they – when I did my phonics assessment the other week, they did alright actually, so yeah they're all pretty much there. I mean there's no one, I mean actually the two worst were English people, like Louisa she couldn't do it, Danny's got speech problems I think, so he's being referred to a CN. But I mean that one, that one, Charlie was pretty bad, yeah, they're all English so to be honest the EAL are doing really well with their phonics, I'm really

pleased with them. We don't give them any different classes or anything, they're just in with the class as we do it.

NF: Ok and in terms of developing kind of spoken English, like you said one of your Polish girls is less fluent than the other, is there any additional support for her?

J: I don't think she really is, she doesn't need any more – I think she will catch up. I mean Emilia was worse than she is now, obviously at the beginning and she spoke in broken English and Adriana hardly spoke at all when she arrived and now she's doing ok, she'll say "need toilet, please" and she is really improving. I haven't been told to do certain support mechanisms, so no we don't. And it's only –

NF: Ok, and it's early days anyway isn't it, it's difficult at this end of the year but by the time I see you next it might well be that things have fallen in place. I think at the early stages of reception, most of us are quite reluctant aren't we, to start kind of putting things in places that might not be appropriate. So ok, so the other EAL children are just in with the crowd and in a way as you're saying, they seem if anything to be attaining at at least average if not more than your white indigenous children, or not white, obviously Polish children are white, but you know what I mean, British children.

J: Mm, I mean the three lower attainers are three boys, they are being taken on a daily basis for extra support with their phonics and their maths. But to be honest, like I say, they're not EAL, so there's three that are getting individual support every day and they are not EAL.

NF: Ok that's interesting, that's very interesting. So in terms of socially in the area then, what is it like socially in terms of the local population, of UK, you're looking at kind of owner occupier houses, you're looking at employed unemployed?

J: To be honest –

NF: Or is it quite mixed.

J: I'm not sure. I mean I know from my – I mean in terms of people on free school meals, which obviously –

NF: Are a good indicator.

J: Give a good indication of where they're coming from socially, have I got any EAL on free school meals? Ethan is the Icelandic boy, he's on free school meals. No, none apart from Ethan, of my EAL are on free school meals.

NF: But in terms of your class.

J: In terms of my class we've got ten.

NF: Right, so a third of the class are, but only one or none are – that's interesting because the more I talk with teachers about this and it would be the same in London as down here –

J: It's a very socially deprived area.

NF: Yes.

J: But then I think you've got the kind of affluent in with the very poor, you get that in cities though don't you?

NF: You do. But also, I don't know, you probably won't have a feel for this yet. One of the things that's emerging for me is that we talk about EAL as this big issue, as being this difference which indeed it is and of course we have to look after children's language development but there's also issues of social class all tied up with that and it's not really straightforward. So often, it's like you're saying to me EAL children are so high achieving, I think it's quite often the case that the children with English as an additional language come from backgrounds of quite aspirational parents, which often don't compare and it's certainly the same with the Eastleigh school I'm looking at, particularly favourably with the local population. And they've got exactly the same issue, where their Polish children are outstripping the local children and it's quite a strange phenomenon in a way, I don't think there's anything new about it and actually it's the same in East London where I've just come from, you get EAL arrivals doing better at the SAT at Keystage two for example, than the local population.

- J: Yeah and I think that is really down to a cultural difference of respecting the teachers and wanting to do well at school. You know, I'm trying to think about my EAL and I don't have any problems behaviourally with any of them at all. I mean they're just perfectly well behaved and the two or three that I might have problems with are the English children, so I think they have a different outlook on education in general. I don't know, that is probably a generalisation, I'm sure there are those that aren't that into it, but from what I have taken from it it's that they really want to learn, they get a lot of support from home and where sometimes some of the white, like you say indigenous children don't get so much support.
- NF: It's complex isn't it, it's not straightforward. I mean I've always known that anyway but it's really coming home with a lot of the conversations I'm having with a lot of the teachers, that they focus in on the differences, when actually it's not just about language, it's about other things. So in terms of the language then, they're just in with everyone, they're not given any specific support. I wonder if, and it's hard for you to know if this will be the case or not, if they come in say higher up the school, if you think it would have been different for them or if it's because they're in in reception and the way in which you manage your reception day makes just managing individual need easier maybe?
- J: I'm not sure actually. I mean I know that it's easier because if say we do have a couple of children that are definitely below the others, we've got that constant LSA there and that is a massive resource to have. I don't think they have that in the upper years, they have them in the morning and they're always doing guided reading or they're taking – they're in with the maths set that's the lowest set or they're in – they're always there, whereas Sheila, she is doing the rotation because she takes half the class but in my inputs she's not specifically needed to do anything, so unless I ask her to go and sit with a certain person and support them with cards or a number line or something like that, she – I ask her to go and take these three boys or whoever out to go and do their key words or – so I think there's ways of supporting them in reception to improve them. I mean I don't quite know whether it's going to affect EAL up at the top of the school because they don't have that support, because to be honest none of my EAL needs support at the moment, they're coping brilliantly. If they needed

support then it would be there, so they would have that support if they needed it. I don't know if you were any EAL child and you came in to year four, and you were struggling with the language, you would have that support because I don't think there's that amount of time for them. I'm not sure how much Jana does, because she doesn't do any time with our children and I know that I'm pretty certain that she does do things with the upper end of the school. So maybe there is quite a lot of support there, maybe you should speak to Jana about it.

NF: Yes, it sounds like I might want to, yes.

J: Yes, because I think she does quite a lot of – I was speaking to her today actually and she said although I am fluent in Polish it's quite tricky because I'll have a group of Polish children and then I'll have one Bengali speaker and I'm like oh I can't help you so much and it's really hard for her. So I think she does do little groups up the school but she doesn't do anything in reception.

NF: No, ok.

J: I mean she often does come in if I've got a Polish person upset and she explains what they're saying to me, because they just go into their mother tongue, but apart from that and that's only happened once, she's never around really.

NF: No, ok, but she's there if you need her, so you have got this tap on site which is nice and unusual. The schools in Hampshire get ten hours support for each child when they're a new arrival.

J: Oh wow.

NF: And there are two Polish bilingual assistants for the whole county.

J: That's not a lot.

NF: No, they can then buy into more, the schools kind of get that as a free allocation to start with but compared to someone on site, that's obviously very different. Having said which it's obviously – you're right, I do need to talk to her, it's obviously just a

coincidence that she has Polish and these Polish children have arrived and that's useful isn't it. So coming back to your Polish, it's two Polish girls you've got isn't it?

J: Yes.

NF: Talk to me about them then. Do they – I don't know, I'm always interested to know if there's any obvious difference between the Polish community and other children with EAL. Again it's hard for you to know because you've just come in and these are your class and you probably don't perceive them like that. But I'm just saying that because in the past year where I've been talking to another seven teachers, there's this particularly positive reception of the Polish children as if they're kind of I can't explain it, I don't know, how do you feel towards them or don't you really feel any different than you do towards other children?

J: I don't feel any different towards them than all the other children. I must admit watching Emilia who's my brighter Polish, when she is listening to say she's in a group of three or four and they're doing something, and the English people are speaking, she is like you know, just like this, she's such a sponge, you can just see it, she's trying to catch every single word they say. And her eyes, you can't – it's just amazing to watch, from one mouth to the next, to the next and it's just lovely to see and I think that's probably why she's doing so well with her language because she just wants to learn and she's so in tune and she's just 'in there'. But no, I don't feel any differently.

NF: Ok, so the way in which you might manage their education will feel the same as it is for the rest of the class, because you're just differentiating normally in the way that you would for the other children and they don't present as – and what about the parents, is there anything how they - ?

J: What do you mean with the parents?

NF: Are they particularly noticeably supportive or otherwise at the school? Or is it really not unusual?

J: I think, I would say the children that don't get help at home are one, two, three, well two of them that don't get much support at home are white and those are my two that

ironically are the two that aren't very good, so they don't get much support at home. And one of the other boys, his name's (Oaz Khan), so although he's not EAL, he's from I think it's Asian, Eastern European kind of stroking on Asia. I think yeah, I'm not sure what culture they come from but they're not English looking and they're definitely sort of from that Asian type place. But again I don't think he gets – but I think they've got problems at home and they've got a really big family and he doesn't get any help at home. So apart from that, I think all of them bar my one Polish girl, although the mother is very supportive, I don't think she's really in tune with what's going on all the time, because it was only the other day that she said oh are we supposed to be reading with the children? And they'd been sat at home reading books for like the last four weeks, so I think she's not very good on the uptake of what's going on, even though we send her Polish letters and things. But I think she is supportive, I think she's now doing it, I just think that she wasn't maybe that organised with it.

NF: Or maybe didn't have enough English for it or -?

J: Yeah maybe, I don't know, but she speaks quite good English, the mum. I mean in conversations and things I've had with her she seems ok. I would say they were as supportive as all the others.

NF: Yeah, but it doesn't sort of stand out as some sort of unusually –

J: Not overly supportive, no.

NF: No it's interesting. I sometimes wonder if it's more stark in a school not used to different ethnicities than in a school where it's more a norm for you anyway, that's why I'm exploring that bit. No, ok, that's useful. So in terms of communicating with Polish families, you just alluded there, you said you send out things in Polish for them or?

J: Yes, we do, because Mrs (...) can translate them for us.

NF: Wonderful.

J: We don't have that unfortunately for the other children.

NF: No of course not, because it's very expensive isn't it, that sort of thing. So yeah, so they do, the Polish families do have that kind of extra plus as it were, of that support.

J: Yeah. I mean the newsletter doesn't go out to them in Polish but you know, any sort of personal letters we're sending out, like about nits or I don't know, about bringing some clothes for such and such, anything that we've – that's kind of a year group thing we get Jana to translate it for us.

NF: Oh right ok, great. And last of all I just wanted to explore your feelings about – so you've come in, you've just come in, you trained in Southampton didn't you?

J: Yes.

NF: So does that mean when you trained, that you had experience of children with EAL before you came here?

J: I did but not much because one of my schools was in Highcliff and that was pretty white and one of them was in Hedge End, again very white. Where was the other one? Oh Totten, again very white and not that much I wouldn't say I've sort of really had that much experience.

NF: Right, so this felt quite new for you then as an experience.

J: Definitely.

NF: And how, can you just talk me through what those feelings were about it in terms of did it feel like something you didn't feel you should have to do or - ?

J: In terms of teaching?

NF: In terms of being a teacher, because it is assumed that primary school teachers will absorb a very wide range of differences, whether it's related to ethnicity or ability or disability in their classes and how did it feel? Did it feel like something that you should just take on as part of your role or does it feel like something that's burdensome?

J: Oh no, no not a burden at all. And to be honest I – yeah, I don't really even see it as a burden, I don't see how it can be a burden because to be honest ok if there was a child that I had to spend half an hour with every lunch, giving her extra support then I probably would think it was a burden but I don't really and maybe we're not doing the right thing but we don't support them any more than any of the other children and I don't know if like you say we're probably getting the school into trouble saying that but you know –

NF: No, no.

J: But to be honest, Emilia is no different to Katie who's white, so I treat them all the same and I actually like having the diversity, it's more interesting and I'm always like "can you say this for me in such and such" I love hearing them speaking their mother tongue. But no I mean I wouldn't say I would prefer teaching in a kind of non EAL school or I'd prefer teaching in a diverse school. To be honest I've always enjoyed the schools I've taught in and maybe I've been lucky with the schools, but I've just enjoyed all my times.

NF: Lovely.

J: Yeah, all my experiences have been great actually.

NF: I wonder if, I don't know if you've taught in Catholic schools before?

J: Yeah.

NF: I wonder if also with all the children in the school in a Catholic setting, you've all got, we've all got this kind of shared faith in common anyway and I wonder if that makes a kind of family feel that irons out some sense of difference anyway, I don't know. It's probably hard to reflect on that at this point.

J: I don't know because I think there are children in this school that – a lot of children in this school that aren't Catholic and although the staff and the children are really supportive of each other, I think it's more the staff that you get, that sort of feeling of family from, because they're really, really supportive. And I mean you do get that obviously in other – and I'm not Catholic, but you do get that in non Catholic schools

but it's specifically prevalent in this school, it's very supportive. And everyone's got time for everybody else and it's brilliant and I think that's like I say, very noticeable in the staff but I don't know if it's that noticeable in the children. I've got a very lovely class but I think you get people, children, being a bit funny towards other cultures and I think you're going to get that in any school, you know, even if it is prevalent, like in this school you've probably got about a third of the children EAL but you still get people looking at children funny. But that's just the way they are, you know, they're children and white children can be horrible to white children and white children can be horrible to Asian children and you know, Asian children can be horrible to Asian children. So I don't think there's kind of – there's no tolerance to it, if people are horrible, we iron out the differences but I wouldn't say that it's all rosy just because it's a Catholic school, I don't think it is. I think it's a very good school and the children are very caring, but I wouldn't say they're more caring than another school I've worked at particularly, I think they're all the same.

NF: Ok lovely. That's fine, I think that's all I wanted to talk about really. Is there anything you think I haven't raised that interests you about your experiences, that you want to share or have we covered everything?

J: I'm trying to think, no I mean unless there's anything, because you are trained in this area, is there anything that you would advise me to be doing?

NF: The biggest focus really for children with EAL is oracy and the more they can talk, the more they're going to develop their spoken English and I think there's no underestimating how important that is but the thing is in a foundation stage setting you're doing that all the time. So you're kind of on to a winner to start with because that's the way you plan and it's just giving them opportunities to articulate well in English and giving them opportunities to develop new vocabulary. So it's about things like not – I don't know, there was an interesting conversation I had in – I was at Botley Primary the other day and the teacher had a year four child who was actually really very fluent and very able, a bit like you're describing Emilia. But it turned out she didn't know what the word month was for example. So every so often you'll get these kind of words that they don't know, that take you by surprise.

J: Oh we get that every day, yes. Yes because Dimitra again, the Greek girl, she's fluent but she doesn't know all the words in English. So I'll say something like you know, I can't think what the one was today, but most days I'll say something and she'll be like "oh what's that? what's a cloth, what's a rope" and I'll explain it and she's like "oh great, I've stored that knowledge." But like you say whenever they do ask obviously they explain it, but yeah I think they do like new vocab don't they.

NF: They do and then there are things like I think it's easy for us also as teachers to assume once they're orally very fluent that that means they're ok, but actually they do still need a lot of help with the writing because there are lots of kind of conventions in writing English that are not necessarily there in other languages. But I think again, I think when you've got them from reception it's different because I think you're going to be teaching all your children those things, the PNS requires that you overtly teach and range of genre and things like that. So you're probably fine, you know, it's just the role of oracy is the number one really at this stage; lots and lots of oral, lots of opportunities to talk, lots of opportunities to develop new words, that sort of thing. But you're doing it aren't you.

J: Yes, probably.

NF: Yeah. It'll be interesting when I talk to you later in the year to see about their writing and how that's coming along, because obviously at the moment that's just emergent isn't it and there's not much to comment on.

J: Yes, it will be interesting. It's funny actually because Adriana is the other Polish girl and even though her speech isn't very good, she can blend words so well and you know, you don't know if it's just because she's had to really be in tune with the listening but you know, she's – and yeah, like Caitlin, all of my EAL it seems, are really good at blending the sounds, like what does p' - i' - g' say? They're all really good at it.

NF: They're tuned into it.

J: Yeah and I think it might because they've really had to be in tune with the language side of things maybe.

NF: And the other thing to remember I think, is that they're not yet, because they're only five or for some of them not even five yet, they're not yet completely fluent in their home language.

J: No.

NF: And the more fluent they can get in their home language, the better. So it's about encouraging families to carry on speaking to them in Polish or Chinese or whatever their home language is because the kind of hard wiring about how language works, happens in your first language and if you don't learn the first language properly first, the second language doesn't really stand a hope. So that's important, that's another one. Anyway, great, let's leave it there.

[End of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH JO SUMMER 2009

NF: Don't worry about it, I mean obviously nothing gets lifted wholesale off anything anyway and I know, and I feel the same about myself over the two years of doing this I've tried to stop myself saying "right, ok". Ok, so obviously as you're at the end of your NQT year now aren't you?

J: Yes, so...

NF: How's that been? Has it been ok?

J: It is exhausting, I feel like it's flown and I've learnt a lot, what else can I say? It's just been a bit of a whirlwind really.

NF: Sure. So in terms of pulling out how it's been for you in terms of specific children, you know, I'm thinking that must be quite difficult in a way because the experiences I think in your NQT year are kind of one big mess of stuff aren't they? So yes, but anyway is it possible for you to be thinking in terms of there were two Polish girls in particular that you mentioned in the last interview, are they still with you?

J: Yes, Ad and Am. What do you want to know about them?

NF: Just how they're doing in terms of kind of speaking, reading, writing, how they're progressing.

J: Well I don't know if I mentioned last time, but one of them was particularly good at reading and writing and she's continuing that trend, she's one of my top readers.

NF: That was Am wasn't it?

J: Yeah and she's very good at writing. She's very eager to learn. I mentioned last time how she wasn't that great at speaking to begin with, but she's really come on and she speaks in full sentences now and I would say she's fluent really. She's just as good, you know, if you compare her to an average child in speaking and listening, she's definitely up there, probably above, and Ad again her speaking's still not fluent, but she's really progressed in her speaking and listening and now she makes sense,

whereas at the beginning of the year she didn't make any sense really, she'd catch the odd word. And her reading's coming on, she's not progressed as much as Am, but they're two different children so I don't know if she gets as much help at home or she's just not as naturally bright. But again she's really eager to learn and she probably – I don't know, but maybe she hasn't been in the country as long, maybe that's an issue. I'm not sure how long they've both been in the country. But she's probably average I would say and Am's above average.

NF: Average compared to just monolingual indigenous children?

J: Yeah.

NF: Ok, it's interesting isn't it. So they don't by the end of the year, appear to be doing necessarily worse as a result of having Polish as their first language? They're kind of doing fine really on the whole?

J: Yep.

NF: And in terms of writing, are they doing writing yet or is it just too early days?

J: Yes they're writing sentences and they do a lot of handwriting now. So we do a ten minute slot everyday, I think it was back in January we started doing that. And they both really love to write, they're both really keen and Ad especially she, at the end of every handwriting session she always comes up to me with her board and says oh that one's the neatest, because I've got this thing where you point to the one that you think is the neatest and some of the children just sort of show and don't think, but she's always very particular about showing me, which is great. She likes to assess herself which is quite a good skill. And she will show me, say in plan, do and review, she will show me letters that she's written, whereas Am would show me words that she's written or sentences, so that's the difference in the stage that they're at. Ad has only just learnt to write her whole name but it's quite a long name and she learnt Ada to begin with, that's her sort of nickname. And Am knew her name and now she's even doing joined up, she wants to push herself and I think Ad does too but she's just at that step behind because you know, she's at a different stage in her development, she's in the last couple of weeks, she keeps on showing me her name and it's like oh you've

forgotten the one letter, because – and now she can do it and she's really chuffed that she's managed to write her whole name.

NF: So did either of them get additional help because they've got English as an additional language or not?

J: No.

NF: No, they're just coping along with the rest of the class.

J: Yes, well none of them are below so we only give extra help to children that are underachieving.

NF: Ok, so even in terms of spoken English they appear to have kind of as much vocabulary as the other children and - ?

J: Yeah, Ad did go on a (SELSA) course for ten weeks.

NF: What's that?

J: It's – oh I can't remember, I never know the acronyms, but it's speech and language therapy and it was just a ten week story telling thing and a few of them did it in my class who were struggling with speech and language and it has helped them quite a lot.

NF: Right ok. My next question was about this range, looking back over your interviews, you've got quite a range of different languages among the children in the class. Do you notice any particular differences in their capacities to develop English or has there been anything kind of stood out?

J: I remember mentioning last time that the girl that's Thai, half Thai, she's a high achiever and I would say in that sort of group, that sort of top set as it were, she's keeping up, but she's not keeping up as quickly as the others. I think it's still there is a few words that she will find more tricky because she hasn't come across them in English and I don't know if that's purely because with reading there's lots of words you haven't come across before and so she'll read them out and she'll find it slightly harder whereas others won't. But no I think they're all – my four poorest readers who are still really struggling, are all English.

NF: Right which was the case before as well. So that's maintained ok. Right, so there isn't apparently a disadvantage from coming into reception with English as an additional language then? From your experience.

J: No.

NF: Ok. Ok, you mentioned also last time that children get lots of time for role play and talk, that's predominant in your interview. I guess in the early stages of reception that's understandable. Is that still the case?

J: Yeah we do do a lot of role play, we've always got the role play areas and we change them every four to five weeks, maybe even more than that actually. So and they do enjoy going to the role play corners and just in terms of when we teach we get them to talk a lot and you know, all their activities involve some form of talking, like (...) review, we talk about them, when we plan they talk about it, so they're talking all the time and I think that's what they need at this stage.

NF: And so with some schools in reception, they tend to push the children towards a more formal, I don't use the phrase literacy hour any more because it's gone hopefully, but towards more formal English lessons, where there's more reading and more writing towards the end of Year R. Have you done that or - ?

J: No, we don't do literacy hours at all. What we still do is we'll do a reading or a literacy input for 15 minutes a day and that will either be shared reading so I'll read a big book to them and we'll talk about it or they'll read it with me or we'll do shared writing so once we've done the writing we might, if the book's been about a list then we'll write a list together and they'll help me to do that. It's funny because it's always (...), I mean you could say is guided reading part of a literacy hour? No it's not normally and most schools have their guided reading slot at a certain time and they do it and that's what we do, we have a guided reading slot and we have a literacy input slot and we have a handwriting slot. So they are always having some form of literacy input, you know, it's just not in a literacy hour. We don't read them something and then they go and write about it.

NF: Ok, so there's no kind of set formal – so that sounds quite useful for the children, particularly with EAL then, if you've got a specific focus on reading, handwriting and similarly presumably a similar focus on phonics as well, it's taught as little inputs rather than this kind of sense of the English lesson where everything was all stuck together. So the children have the advantage of very kind of focussed input then on a very specific part of English, of reading or writing or speaking or whatever.

J: Yes and I think it works really well in this school the way our timetable's set up, because we do do a phonics and a handwriting and all these different things and like numeracy inputs and then interspersed between those inputs we have like our job time where they will go off and use the skills they've been taught that are not necessarily linked but we might do a phonics input and then they might go away and do a numeracy or a creative activity but they're still going to have to use that phonics in their creative work just by writing their name. So I think it's because the curriculum is so sort of varied, they don't sort of think oh right now all I've got to think about is sort of literacy skills and if they're a bit turned off by those skills because they're struggling, then they're going to have a whole hour of struggles. So I think it's good that we have it varied every fifteen minutes to half an hour, we swap.

NF: Do you know what happens when they go into key stage one? Is there any –

J: No, I think it is more formal, I think. But I'm not sure, I couldn't tell you for sure.

NF: No, in some schools, some Hampshire schools in particular they're trying to kind of use the foundation stage model throughout key stage one.

J: I think that's what they did (to be fair) because when I was talking to my colleague actually the other day and we were saying do we need to start teaching the set literacy hour that's going to be happening in Year one and my team leader said oh no because they don't do the literacy hour in Year one, they do similar to what we do. So I think actually they do do similar.

NF: So hopefully not too much of a shock as they go through. Because it sounds like some of them are ready to move on anyway aren't they, which is great. So generally do you think that your – I mean I'm just interested to know about how NQT's developed

really, as much as anything. In terms of your teaching of language and literacy, have you felt a sense in which that's developed over the year? Because you did the PGCE didn't you, when you would have kind of done – I know because I teach them, a session on phonics and a session on guided reading and so on. Have you felt a sense of really getting to grips with how those work across the year or did you feel that your training got you ready for doing that as it were? It's probably hard to reflect on it.

J: I think I learnt a lot in my training in terms of phonics, possibly not numeracy so much because it's very basic in foundation and you're teaching them the very basic skills and we weren't really – we were taught games and things but we created our own games so that's slightly different. But in terms of phonics I did feel that I knew quite a bit.

NF: Right so a sense of a lot of subject knowledge then.

J: Yes.

NF: Supporting you when you first came in.

J: Yeah, but I was really keen because I found it quite daunting, the fact that you don't call an S and S, you call it a sss, you know, I'd forgotten how – I can't remember how I was taught to read, so it's kind of just re-learning it and I wanted to feel that I knew what I was doing. But you learn as you go along as well obviously.

NF: Sure. Do you use Jolly Phonics here?

J: Yes.

NF: So that's presumably supported, you've become a confident user of that particular programme presumably.

J: Yeah exactly. If someone said right you need to teach the games of letters and sounds or the phrases of letters and sounds, I wouldn't feel confident because I haven't got a clue what's in phase one or phase two, I follow the Jolly Phonics programme and I know that now, but you know, it'd be a slightly different ball game if someone said

right you know, look at the letters and sounds document and do that. I'd get my head round it but it would just mean reading something else.

NF: Has the school adopted letters and sounds further up in the year groups or do you use Jolly Phonics across the school?

J: I assume we use Jolly Phonics across the school but I can't vouch for that.

NF: You can't know everything can you. So in terms of EAL and teaching, having all these children learning English as an additional language, have you felt that influenced your teaching style at all? Or do you think that you do what you do as it were and - ?

J: Yeah, I don't think I've thought about – I know it sounds really awful but I haven't really thought about them and I think next year I will a bit more, but I think it's – I don't know, just in terms of say saying do you need the toilet, when I say that, I'll have by my chair pictures of things like a toilet. But to be honest in terms of teaching phonics I wouldn't change it, no, but just in terms of supporting and teaching scaffolding general questions, you know, things like I have a picture somewhere with a picture on it, just so they know right from the beginning there's a picture to go with that instruction. But all of them have picked it up because they just copy the person next to them, so I don't feel like I've disadvantaged them by not having the pictures but just for my own sort of self – I just want to feel like I'm not –

NF: Just an awareness that a visual helps really.

J: Yeah, especially the ones that are a bit slower, but I don't think I would change the way I taught phonics, to sort of help the EAL –

NF: I guess in a year R class you haven't got to develop more speaking and listening anyway because you're doing it all the time. Because when I'm talking to teachers for this project who have got older children in older year groups, one of the big issues they have is in terms of allowing enough time for talk, but I guess in a reception setting it's normal to allow children talk opportunities all the time. So it probably doesn't necessarily feel like an issue or even something that you need to address because it's there all the time anyway, that's certainly the kind of message I'm getting from other early years teachers I'm talking to. It doesn't feel that different from

normal reception practice really. There isn't – there's not a feeling of having to do something different other than these tweaks that you just mentioned, like visual cues and that sort of thing. Maybe articulating questions more than once or with greater clarity.

J: Yes (...) looking at you blankly then you re-phrase it don't you. But I think in terms of if you've got thirty children and you're trying to teach them the sss sound, you can't cater for all the different EAL children individually, so you get – you carry on doing what you're doing.

NF: Yes. I'm interested to know if you had any training for EAL as part of your NQT induction because Southampton has quite good support systems for bilingualism generally. I was just wondering if there was anything you did in your induction training?

J: We did have a three hour lecture on EAL.

NF: That was in your NQT year?

J: No. oh sorry, yes we did have a day course and I think was about half a day where we sort of watched a few videos and things but it was mainly just like reminding you to use visual cues and to - it sounds awful but I don't really remember.

NF: No that's alright, because you've got to absorb so much new haven't you. So and I'm asking you to look at this one tiny thing.

J: I don't really remember learning too much on that course to be fair, but I'd have to look back at my notes. We did have half a day on it though, so in terms of six half terms, that's a twelfth of the training in EAL, so it's quite a lot.

NF: Yes it is, yes. So in terms of support if you need it at all for EAL, that really is within the school in terms of who you can ask or what's there?

J: Yes. Jana.

NF: So Jana is kind of the key player.

J: Yes.

NF: You also seem to have quite a lot of actual resources here, I don't know if you access those at all for your children, because I think she works more with Year three children doesn't she?

J: Yeah, she doesn't take any of my children. So no I've not asked her for resources but again I think my sort of SEN or slightly underachievers haven't been EAL this year. Next year it might be slightly different if they were underachieving then I would probably say oh you know, are there resources to help.

NF: Ok fine. I think you've answered that question six there. Ok so tell me about the families of the Polish children? You mentioned last time this kind of culture of respect which is again the theme which I'm getting across all my interviews. Is that continuing, that sense that these Polish children in particular are really wanting to learn?

J: Oh yes definitely. Like I said they both really take control of their own learning and they really want to learn and they're so enthusiastic. I mean obviously you've got lots of children like that – English and Asian and all of the different cultures, you get a few that aren't enthused that are from different cultures as well, you know, it's just down to the personality, but I definitely do think that all the EAL in my class are really enthusiastic learners. I've only got one boy who's a bit – I mean he kind of goes in fits and starts with his learning, but I think that's to do with his home life. But his home does speak English and I don't think he's classified as EAL, he just comes from a different culture. But he's the only one really that's sometimes a bit sort of distant, but I think again that's down to his sort of personality and his home life. But no, all of my EAL are really eager learners and especially the Polish.

NF: Do you know if the two Polish girls go to the Polish school that (Irana) runs?

J: I know that Am does, I don't know about Ad. When I came in one Saturday, I don't often do that, but when I did come in one Saturday to do a rehearsal, I did see her, but I didn't see Ad, I don't think she does.

NF: Ok, I think that's all I had to ask really, it's just all follow up stuff. Yes that's it.  
Great, we're done.

[End of transcript]

## **NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH KATHY AUTUMN 2008**

NF: Ok so do you want to just take me through what your notes are before I start churning through my questions?.(This interviewee had made notes when she started teaching in in July)

K: This is what I picked up straight away, as I say when I came in and did some supply teaching, this was in a year one class and there were three or four Polish children and two of whom had very poor English language skills. And what was quite interesting was that the other Polish children automatically translated for the new children, straight away and that could be in group setting and often they would be deliberately new Polish child next to old Polish child, if you like. You know, a child who had been there for some time, good English language skills, so they would be deliberately put next to each other. The work's not necessarily differentiated for them, they were given the same work as for every other child. Now I didn't see how the class teacher worked in through that but from what I saw and what I tended to do was because they would then bounce off each other, so the more mature one if you like, would help the other. I also found that these children they'd easily disappear, they'd always be very quiet, always very well behaved, rarely asked for help, but –

NF: This is specifically the Polish children?

K: Yes and especially the new ones in, you wouldn't know they were there, they were angelic in a way. But then as they began to develop and this is the same with this little one I've got in my class now who was an elective mute, who would not speak to a soul and now he's absolutely, despite me, is coming out with answers; it's wonderful to see. Then so how I coped with it was to speak slowly to them and face on face as opposed to you know. I'd sometimes ask the other Polish children to help if there was something they were still not getting, although I wanted to try it first from me. But then I'd also ask to check their understanding by asking the Polish "now does so and so understand that?" and they say "oh yeah". The children tend to watch their peers to see what they would do when they were working, they won't necessarily copy but just a quick track "oh yes, I am doing the right thing". Often there was only an indication

initially of language problems when asking direct questions and they'd just give you a blank look.

NF: Right.

K: And a lot of the children would say "Oh it's alright Miss, he's Polish."

NF: Right. So this is still the Year one –

K: This is Year one, exactly and Polish children seated together initially and then weaned away gradually as they got more and more independent. And the policy here which is quite interesting, is if you hear children speaking in Polish on the corridors, is "English please."

NF: Right.

K: Which is quite interesting because I also came in with Jeanette and Jill to Polish school on Saturday to have a look and they have very long play times and we said why do they have longer playtimes, and it's for them to relax, to speak in their language and chill out basically. So that almost goes in a sort of slight contradiction to the "English please in school." And I can see –

NF: Sorry, who's having the long playtimes?

K: The Polish school on Saturdays. We just have fifteen minutes here, but Polish school on Saturday I think it used to be like twenty five minutes to half an hour.

NF: So you went and saw the Polish school as part of one of your assignments?

K: Yes, because we had one of our assignments about educating in Europe compared to ours over here. But what's funny and I've noticed it because when I worked here before there'd be one, two, three Polish, not very many Polish children – they had to speak, they had to integrate. Because there are so many Polish children here now you tend to get this little clutches, they always play together, which is then pulling back on their attainment of language skills.

NF: That's interesting, ok, so whilst we all embrace their need absolutely, to develop their first language first, you have an issue where you've got lots of Polish children and therefore a policy which says English only is perhaps the practical one.

K: It's practical because they weren't developing at the same speed as the other ones were and it was sort of pulling them back.

NF: How interesting. So how many have got in the school now? Do you know as a percentage of the roll? I could find that out from –

K: Yes because Jana she'd be the one to ask. We have a massive language spectrum, numerous different languages, all the different African languages, everything. But I can find that out definitely, the percentage of Polish children, it is very high because again it's a Catholic school, that's an added thing as well. And it's a very central school, you know, it's very much a city school now, but I'll find that out for you and let you know percentage wise.

NF: Ok so moving into your class, you've got how many Polish children in total?

K: We've got just one.

NF: And what year are you?

K: This is Year Three.

NF: Prior to reception intake, ok. Oh that's interesting, so we've got the beginning of Key stage two then, ok. So just one and that one's been here for how long? This boy or girl?

K: Now he came, he's a little boy –

NF: And he's the elective mute.

K: That's right. I think he's been here for – he was certainly here last year and whether he came last year at the beginning of Year two or halfway through Year two I'm not absolutely sure.

NF: Ok, but he hasn't been here for a long time?

K: No.

NF: Ok fine. Alright I'm going to kind of back pedal a little bit and then we'll come back to your – what's his name?

K: The little boy?

NF: Yes.

K: Conrad.

NF: Ok, so we'll come back to him. Can we just go back to thinking of your class now, so obviously you're an NQT, so the level of detail with which you can articulate what you think your pedagogy is will be as for an NQT so this isn't a test, I'm a researcher ok. [Laughs] So forget who I am and what my background is and just talk to me about what sort of things you do in class that develop the children's speaking and listening? Particularly talk really, vocabulary and things like that.

K: It is and I'm just trying to think because we did this great thing that it was that's right it was group work and they had to work in teams and that was it, it was developing a story because we have good old Pie Corbett, the story mountain and I hadn't put them into groups and I hadn't worked with them in that situation before. So put in these groups – very independent and I said I'm not here, you work it out on your own, so you choose the story mountain, they had sugar paper, I didn't elect a manager or a spokesperson, they had to work all of that out themselves and so that was most interesting to see who was the one who was doing the “right, you do this, you can do this, you can do this,” that was for them to sort out and it was interesting to see the dominant people and those who had taken very much a back seat and let them get on with it. And also those if you had say a group of five or six, three would hive off – “can we work by ourselves?” and the odd one that would say “can I do this by myself?” So that was very, very interesting. Also very much and I have to watch myself that I'm constantly yapping and that's always in my head to give them a chance for speaking out all the time, well not all the time, but more often than not I'm doing the talking and also focussing on those, because if you ask them a question and

they put their hands up, I'm a terror for picking on the one that hasn't got their hand up, who invariably knows the answer, do you know what I mean?

NF: Mm.

K: And also not asking the same child all the time, giving them –

NF: Ok, so lots of strategies then.

K: So those – I think that's basically for speaking and listening. Also you know the circle time we do, we're very hot on collective worship which again I try and combine with PHSE because you know the timetable is crammed solid, so if I can just pull a bit in there – And also with the girls particularly, having playground issues, you know, they're bosom pals one day and arch enemies you know. So we come in and then we have like a mini circle time then to sort things out. So there's quite a few opportunities.

NF: And things like, I mean during your introductions do you do things like paired talk and (...) -?

K: Yeah often, talk quickly, just recap quickly what we did on the last lesson or "I said this, what do you think that means? Talk to the person next to you." I did have this classroom set up very two by two in rows which that was good for paired talking, that was great because what I found with group work is again you get those who are instantly engaged and talk, so having two by two, that was good for that.

NF: So do you rearrange the desks do you mean, according to different lessons? You haven't got much space here have you, so it must be quite difficult.

K: I know and they need to be on wheels really because I'd move them around all the time. But it was basically like this when I first set it up and then I thought no I want them two by two because I like that way of teaching. However issues have been thrown up and I've thought no Kathy, this isn't working. So now it's back in groups and we do move the tables, I do as far I can, do mixed ability groups because that's fascinating, the ones that come up when you're not expecting them to be really, really good at certain things.

NF: That is interesting isn't it, so in a way it challenges your own sense of where their attainment levels are all the time.

K: Yes absolutely, especially like the science investigations we've been doing, mixed ability, and you think I never knew they were like that or they were so engaged in this or well yes they're really quite this or the other way, I would have thought they'd have done better at this and in fact not.

NF: So the science investigation is quite an opportunity also isn't it, for developing oral skills, so you've got children therefore that perhaps given the chance to talk more, show greater levels of attainment than you expected.

K: Absolutely and prediction and things. We did this one, we'd been mummifying (meat) – fabulous, so we unwrapped the (meat) today, we had the forty days, I won't show you, it's next door. But that was good and again what do you think's going to happen? Now I couldn't say anything so it was all them and that was great, all their ideas were coming out. So yeah that's basically –

NF: You were mummifying, were you doing Egyptians then?

K: Doing Egyptians and also science, material and their properties. So we put in absorption so absorbing and things like that, so I went to the butchers and got this meat and we covered it in salt and I was thinking Kathy, what are you doing? [Laughs] but it worked fantastically, it was brilliant, so I'm going to do amazing onions next time, where you put them in a box and you find their roots go all peculiar, so it's the next one today but I need to tie it up with what we're doing on our next science thing.

NF: So do you do – that's interesting to talk about planning for a bit then, is the planning quite cross curricular in the school? Is it thematic or is it subject based?

K: Yes, what we tend to do, when I came here the science planning is like given to you and like the history, RE, that's across the school, literacy we plan together as a year team, numeracy it's up to me to plan because we're set, so each teacher tells their own planning for the numeracy and but because I'm still unsure obviously, I lean on the

teacher who used to teach this group, this year group and that ability group and sort of focus, using hers and adapting it for me. So that's basically how it works.

NF: Ok, so in terms of English, I try not to get too hung up on English in the interviews because actually you know, developing children's literacy in honestly isn't just about English, in fact you could take English out of the equation altogether really. But just to come back for a moment anyway, are you planning for example using the units from the PNS or how does it –

K: Yes, we are using it for that and the new strategy that's coming through. I'm just – certainly with my numeracy I'm using the strategy that's in place before, looking at the new strategy now and saying well that's here, that's not here, I need to pull that across. So that's how I base it from that point of view. But yes it is based on that.

NF: So in English I'm just wondering if, you know how at the front end of all the new PNS units there's extended opportunities for speaking and listening, whatever year group you're in. Are you able to use those or is that not how your school planning goes?

K: No, it's there and then when I'm planning with the other teachers it's – I'll show you, can I show you?

NF: Yes do.

K: Yes I had all these little files, bits here and bits there, so that's we've got here, so that's basically the overview of all the subjects all the way through. (...) I'll just find a – here we go, so this is what we've been working on, the literacy planning here and we just go through that. These were the different groups obviously that we differentiate for.

NF: And it is quite oral here then isn't it.

K: Yes.

NF: And reading. And you have a daily phonics input.

K: Everyday, yes. The less able children they go out every day, fifteen, twenty minutes working on that. They also have – because the homework policy, it's spellings, it's

tables and it's reading, so with the spellings it obviously goes with the phonic that we're doing for that time.

NF: (...)

K: Oh it's lovely isn't it, they had some lovely letters, although their imagination wasn't that fantastic, I was disappointed, but it's coming up. I mean they are only seven which I keep forgetting.

NF: They're very little, yes. They've just come out of infants school as well and so it probably feels quite different.

K: Absolutely and this is a horrendously long afternoon they have now with no playtime.

NF: Yes that is long.

K: Yes, so that's basically – and then what I do, I take that and then I do my own daily one, just to get it into my head. [Laughs]

NF: Ok fair enough. It makes sense doesn't it. So in terms of moving into reading or writing, what do you think are the kind of main parts of your classroom practice at the moment that are working in terms of really helping those with –

K: Well it is really interesting because again being – most of my experience has been upper key stage two, Year five, Year six, most of it, so coming into Year three, my head is still in Year five, Year six and when I first start doing for example, a letter, ok, let's write a letter, ok we're doing this, off you go. Having talked about it, off you go. Whereas with these children, they need the modelling all the time to ensure you know, they know what they're doing, that was a big learning curve for me because I was still thinking they can't do this? And then I was thinking Kathy, they're seven, not ten nearly eleven. And some of the language they were using, they are a very bright class and so that made it make me take a longer time to understand that because the vocabulary they were using and their sentence structure is very mature for their age and so on that I was like well you can do it and in fact they couldn't. So lots of modelling and going over right, now you go away and do it independently yourself or let's do it together as a group and so backing off on the independent bit so much.

NF: So the modelling really making quite a difference.

K: Yes, absolutely, because as I say I assumed they knew it and they just didn't know. And then I'd think why isn't this lesson working and what's gone wrong? And then you think this is why Kathy. [Laughs]

NF: Right.

K: They don't know how to do it. So yeah, so lots of modelling and also just celebrating their work, this is a great one here – can you stop and listen? And you just see them shoot up with their confidence and they pick up often better from another child – oh that's what she's on about.

NF: Right. What are the things at the moment that you'd say have influenced your understanding about you English teaching at all?

K: Certainly looking at the way other teachers teach and they're great here, I mean the support for NQTs is brilliant here. Off you go, have a look, I've been to (Sholing school), I've been to (Cane's Hill) school, looking at literacy lessons. That has been very useful and obviously NQT training a bit, but certainly going to other classes.

NF: So it's having that model for yourself.

K: Yes exactly.

NF: And that then translates into a model for the children eventually.

K: Yeah and also say with Jackie next door and she'll say "now this is how I would do it" and it was because I asked for an observation for numeracy because I'm scared of numeracy and I said can you just come and watch and it was an unofficial one and she said to me "when you said this is how I would do it, that was the key that opened and they knew what you were after." And I've tried to keep that in my head.

NF: How interesting, so you got feedback that it's actually what you say in your introductions as much as a focus on one particular sentence.

K: Yes.

NF: And it can make all the difference. That's wonderful and so you're getting that support from your mentor here.

K: Yes and the other teachers as well because you know, and I'd say da, da, da, this is how I'm going to do it and they'd say yeah well I'm going to do it this way because of da, da, da and you'd think oh yeah I can see that and I'd steal it.

NF: So you've got that kind of fine tuning going on all the time.

K: Yes, that's it.

NF: Yeah, I mean certainly in my experience and prior research shows that it is what teachers *say*, and the plans of course are crucial because you've got to know where you're going and where your final point is, but what you say in that introduction just can make such a difference.

K: Absolutely.

NF: As well as what you do, what you say literally say, as they were saying, down to one sentence, can really unlock it.

K: Absolutely and also having the resources in (...) and they were absolutely fired up and they were killing themselves with laughter but it was the ignition, so that was quite –

NF: Right, so obviously you've got modelling and you've also got nice resources there that are easily shared at class level as well, which again is another form of modelling isn't it, it's not just you the modeller, it's the well let me just see what this letter looks like and you've got them both there.

K: Exactly because we had them in envelopes and we said go to the (...) and Mrs so and so said there's some letters for us, they brought it back and "ooh, who do you think it's from?" It was really great.

NF: Mm, so it sounds like you're also setting up a kind of interesting context there, you said they had to go and collect the letters and then –

K: That's right, make it real life, yes exactly. And as a result they keep saying I've written another letter to Mrs Palmer and you keep finding all these letters, but they're all complaint letters actually.

NF: Are they?

K: Oh it's so funny because (a child) went to a shop and there was obviously some sort of difficulty and he said "oh what's that place called, what's that place called?" And I said "it's not Trading Standards is it?" and he said "Yes, that's it, Trading standards." And I found one of his letters – I shall report you to the Trading Standards Office.

NF: Ok, brilliant. So that's an interesting exploration of your teaching generally and what works. So let's just talk about – you've got EAL children apart from your little Polish boy, Conrad?

K: Yes, I've got a Spanish little girl but she's going back to Spain soon and I've noticed it more with her than with Conrad, with her language skills and surprisingly she's taken far longer than my little man there, with his written language is very good, you can still hear the little girl, her Spanish coming through with her sentence structure, verb order and you can hear her speaking what she's written, you know, and that's surprising actually because I thought – again assuming is terrible, but I thought if you're in here for a term they all make great progress - no they don't all make great progress.

NF: So she's only a quite recent arrival as well is she?

K: She has been here, three years, two or three years. She's got an older sister in the school and that's surprising you see because she's just one of the very few Spanish children, you'd think she would whizz along but no, she hasn't made the same progress.

NF: Why do you think you thought that a Spanish child would make quicker progress than a Polish child or was it just –

K: I just thought is it EAL, you know, EAL they'll be away before you know it – wrong.

NF: It's very interesting actually isn't it?

K: Yeah, you think give you half a term, you'll be fine, but no.

NF: Yeah, it's interesting, I mean a lot of the conversations I've had with the teachers over the last twelve to eighteen months have been around individual differences and that there isn't one child that makes the same progress as another child. There are some issues that appear generic but on the whole no, it's a lot about character, personality, a range of other things, it really is.

K: Yes, but I think also with the Polish children here, I would say eighty percent make fantastic progress in a very short time. There's the odd one or two who won't and I think I sort of base it on that with my little one.

NF: Ok, so that's an interesting avenue to explore then. So do you think there's something different about – I mean obviously I accept that your experience is limited at the minute, but does it feel then that there's something different about the Polish children compared to other children with English as an additional language?

K: I don't know, that is very interesting. Because I don't know if Polish is very similar to English, like say in its sentence structure or anything at all. Is there something that's easily transferrable to pick up English, that perhaps Spanish doesn't have?

NF: Could be, that's an interesting –

K: I honestly don't know either.

NF: I don't know either. I just know – the reason I'm asking the question is in the interviews I was having last year, admittedly these were in Hampshire schools and there's far fewer children with EAL. The reception of these Polish children was overwhelmingly positive, there was this kind of sense of how lovely they are, I can't have enough of them, I'd like a whole class of Polish children and so on. Which interested me because I couldn't quite put a finger on why, what it was about Poles in particular that seemed so very attractive that made teachers want to teach them.

K: Yes, they are very – I mean there's the odd one or two polish child in this school who does perhaps have a behaviour issue, but again a high proportion, ninety percent, they are polite, they work hard, he will always do his homework, never fails doing his homework and what he does is of a really good standard, it's not one piece of paper or anything. And I don't know, is it perhaps an indigenous thing that education really really matters, they've come over here to better their lives perhaps and we're giving you this opportunity as well. I don't know. And the parents as well are very interested, have parents evenings, they're always there, they want to know.

NF: Again that's generic to all the interviews I've had.

K: Yes.

NF: And even parents with very limited English, I've heard making a huge effort to make sure that they get letters from the school translated, you know, so that children always turn up on school trip days with everything they need, even though there's nobody at home with any English, it seems extraordinary the level of aspiration and effort really.

K: Yes. The only thing I did pick up was when we were doing our assignment and looking at Polish schools, that the level of involvement of parents over in those schools in as much as if the classroom needs decorating they'll come in on a Saturday and they'll repaint the classroom and they'll do all the money raising, you know, fund raising activities. They seem to be very much involved and whether when they come will they bring that involvement too.

NF: Mm, so that's in the local polish school in Southampton, the Saturday school do you mean?

K: Well no, over in Poland, actually in Poland, they have a huge – and there was this thing, although I've spoken to people and they hadn't come across it, that a parent can come in at any time and be in the lesson, you know, and that's a right that they have.

NF: Gosh.

K: But they don't necessarily have the teaching assistants. I think that's changing a little bit, but that's the only thing that I've picked up myself, was I wonder, because they're so bold over there, it's the same here.

NF: They're bringing it here, there's an expectation of their role here.

K: Yes.

NF: Which we find lovely, very attractive. Ok, so in terms of let's just think of Conrad for now. So we've gone through what you do in terms of your planning for developing children's literacy in any lesson, is there anything that you feel that you do differently for him because he's not got English as a first language?

K: I do absolutely nothing. He does exactly the same as everyone else. The only thing I do give him and it sounds really mean, is extra time or I won't give him a real rollocking "is this all you've done?" I'm very aware because he is just say ten minutes behind the others in say finishing off, fair enough and that's – any other child no, you know, "you can do better than that" but with him that's the only concession I give him is – and I have to say I haven't noticed times where he has just not understood what he's been asked because again like these children, they'll look across and it's not a copy is it – oh yeah, I'm on the right task, I am doing the right thing, as opposed to just diligently scribbling down. But that's and I feel a bit mean actually, perhaps I should be but he seems to be coping.

NF: Right ok, so he doesn't need – he doesn't have a kind of additional language input or additional like building up vocabulary, that sort of thing?

K: Yes, he did initially because Irena she takes groups of children out and she'll go they're fine now and off they go. But they have a massive input when they first come.

NF: Ok and she's Polish speaking isn't she?

K: She's Polish speaking.

NF: Wonderful, on tap.

K: Absolutely and she runs the Polish school here on a Saturday, so these children are seeing her all the time, they've got a really good rapport with her. But yes, no he gets nothing poor love.

NF: Ok. And so do you think his Polishness, his EAL status, affects his written work for example? Do you notice less well developed vocabulary or anything like that or –

K: Sometimes. His handwriting is absolutely immaculate, his spelling is brilliant and his sentence structure is very good. The odd occasion and whether it's because he's tired or you know, I've had it now, it goes off a little bit and the sentence doesn't quite make sense, but that's the exception to the rule really. He's very careful with what he does and he is better than some of the others at that in as much of rehearsing sentences, reading back and making sure it makes sense and things, he's much better than some of the children.

NF: And so when you're teaching your writing with all of your children, you do that sort of thing, so they're rehearsing sentences, they're seeing if they can improve, redraft?

K: That's right.

NF: Ok, so all that's going on for all of the children anyway, at which point he would get input on better choice of vocabulary or different punctuation in the same way that any of the children would?

K: That's right.

NF: So it doesn't feel like anything extra.

K: No and what I did today was really interesting because there just wasn't time to go around to each of them, they'd say I've finished this – “right swap” and they'd edit each other's work and that was really, really interesting. And my little Spanish girl and Conrad used to be sat together and that was fascinating because he would often say you've missed a word and pick her up and he could see it. So that's quite interesting.

NF: Yes very, yeah. Right I can't think of anything else to say there, apart from – oh I know what I was going to say, sorry, big point, is you talk about him as an elective mute.

K: Yes.

NF: Are you aware that – and I'm just thinking back to what your group had and didn't have on the degree, because you were fast tracked, and you didn't have or did you have in Year three, a module that looked at children with additional educational needs in relation to English? I don't think you did.

K: I don't think we did.

NF: No, so that's interesting. So had you had that, had you done the four year course you would have had a lecture from me and a seminar and so on, on the phases that children go through when they're developing English as an additional language, one of which is a silent phase and it's completely normal.

K: Ah right.

NF: So it's interesting, so I wonder if he was – I mean obviously it's tantamount to the same thing, he's still choosing to be mute, but it's a necessary phase because the children need to listen before they can start articulating the words and sounds that they're hearing.

K: Yes.

NF: And for some children it's much more marked than others. So some children come in and gabble away in a mixture of Polish and English because they're so extrovert they don't mind, or they're younger for example. Coming into a Year three class is a bit different isn't it. Whereas he obviously made this conscious choice that I'm not going to say anything until I know it's right.

K: Mm, and that is how –

NF: Is that how it felt?

K: That is how his work comes through. It's got to be right and now he's lovely and in fact he did this demonstration in PE all by himself. Now when he first came in this class I was very aware not to put him under the spotlight and I would only ask him questions when I knew definitely that he knew the answer and he was ready to reply. Now I'll ask him anything you know, even to the extent he's not had his hand up. "Ok Conrad" and he will answer, so that's a huge stride he's made, he's very quite softly spoken, he's a quiet child anyway but it's great you know, bless him and he laughs at my silly jokes. [Laughs] He's come on so much, so I think it was, I think you're right, he likes to get it right. He's a whizz with numbers, numeracy work, top set and everything's got to be right.

NF: Mm, that's interesting. So that's probably what you were seeing there was this actually quite normal stage and I think that if he were four or five and coming into reception we would say he's just listening. But once they're older our mindsets are different aren't they? And I think we're so desperate for them to be reading and writing straight away that we perhaps –

K: We don't give them the time really.

NF: Exactly.

K: Yes, but yeah, no, he's fine now. You cannot say he's got any problems at all from that perspective which is good. And his parents, because his parents their English is not very good at all, so it's not as though he's got an English mum or anything like that. No he does really well and his little sister is round the corner and you know, if she's upset Conrad goes and –

NF: So she's in –

K: She's in Reception.

NF: With Jo or in another class?

K: I'm not sure if she's in Jo's class, I don't know, but she's very, very quiet.

NF: Yes and that's the other thing that's emerged a lot from the interviews is I think as I've already said, is children's individual difference and how that's going to impact, so if you're a quiet child to start with, you don't want to take risks and start talking and so – but he's coming out now, he's coming out of his shell?

K: He's brilliant, he is really, really good now, he joins in and almost to getting a little bit silly, do you know what I mean? Although he's not, you cannot say he's naughty but there's little elements there you can see, but no, he's making great strides.

NF: So in terms of support you've got Jana and –

K: Yes, she's EAL and we have a SENCO as well although he's not so much on the language side of things but he is there and also obviously the TA's done the foundation and those who have worked with him before, if there is a need there.

NF: Right, so you've got quite a support network really.

K: Yeah absolutely.

NF: Yeah and also a school that's accustomed to EAL.

K: Yes, very much.

NF: So there's a sense of what you do and appropriate pedagogy for it.

K: That's right because again Jana said don't push him, so I was very aware of that initially but no it's great.

NF: Ok, that's the end of my questions at this early stage. Is there anything that you wanted to share with me that you don't think we've covered that you've found interesting about the whole kind of NQT deal and EAL?

K: No I think it was the change in this school since working here before. As I said before, one or two or three or four, children, they used to have Polish school in a little church hall, well there's so many of these children now it's got to be here, there's over a hundred of them that come on a Saturday morning, and listening to because we have Polish cleaners here as well and you could be walking through and all you hear is

Polish sometimes and also this idea of you know, English please and I thought because I've got my book here, I'm building up, I wanted to put some Polish books in there – no, if they're here, they've got to get their skills up and running. Although Jana does have a Polish library up in her office, so they can access that.

NF: Ok, so it's not that they're banned, it's just to do with where they are.

K: Exactly. But that's the only thing that I've noticed and am aware of. But no, no, they're lovely children.

NF: Mm, because there has been quite an explosion literally in the last year.

K: I would say, yes, let me think, yes, three to four years it's just gone absolutely – and I'm really worried it's going to fall off because these children are lovely and I think they're a great asset because they just have a different style to them.

NF: Mm, so it doesn't feel like something that teachers shouldn't be asked to do? Teaching EAL, it feels like a normal part of practice?

K: No, a normal part, I think I have been lucky because of these two little ones and they really, really are – it would not phase me if they said you know, "Kathy, next year you've got fifteen Poles, twenty eight Spaniards all day long" [Laughs] That's fine, it doesn't worry me at all. However if these had been different and needed lots and lots, that might have been a bit different and constantly having to plan for them, that would be quite – constantly badgering poor Jana.

NF: Yeah, but why do you think they might fall off? Because you say you're hoping it wouldn't fall off. Is that because they're going back home?

K: Yes exactly.

NF: Is there a sense of that then?

K: It has been said, people have said it, I've not noticed it but it has been said and interestingly being here when we came on that Saturday, Jeanette and Jill and myself, we were talking to the girls in Polish, teachers here and because of their language skills not being good enough, they are teachers but they can't work here because their

language isn't up to the mark, so they're doing Tescos and all that sort of thing. And I was talking to one of them and she said if I had a family I'd go back to Poland, I wouldn't bring my children up over here because the family network is so much stronger over there and it's very important and I'm wondering as well does that have a knock on effect on why the majority of them are very well behaved, they've got that solid foundation, you know, they're not wanting attention because they don't get it at home or whatever, that could have an effect on it. But that was an interesting remark I didn't expect to hear, you know, and she said I look at the families here on a Sunday and you're shopping, you don't eat together and all these things and I think gosh, you know, you're right.

NF: So much more of a sense of a stronger kind of sense that Sunday is for going to Mass, Sunday is for eating as family, certainly not for shopping, values that were perhaps more prevalent here maybe as much as 25 years ago, in our childhood.

K: Exactly.

NF: But definitely seem absent.

K: Yes definitely and you can see it in some of my children, you know exactly why they are as they are. Heartbreaking really but – the only thing is, using Conrad's name, I'm just thinking, I forgot to ask.

NF: Oh no, everything's anonymised to death, don't worry, there's no way –

K: Brilliant.

NF: Oh no, don't worry and what I do – I'll turn this off now.

[End of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH KATHY SUMMER 2009

NF: Ok, so how has it been generally before we launch into these? [laughs] You have had a whole year and you have got to the end of it and...

K: I've got to the end of it I know it's amazing I can't believe...

NF: Well done.

K: Tell you those a bit later, anyway yes they are fine a huge learning curve, in spite of the fact as I said before being a TA and having I think got a notion of what it is like, oh my stars it is just huge it's absolutely massive, but no it's been good I've enjoyed it very much.

NF: Good, so how about the children how about your EAL children generally, I mean we will talk about C in a minute, which is a bit of a...

K: Yes because I think we have had another one, another child arrived who not only has language problems, because again he is Polish, but there is an EAL aspect, not EAL an SEN aspect as well which has really thrown us.

NF: Ok.

K: I think overall I have become more aware of their needs and to take the level of work down to meet them as opposed to me expecting them so much you should be up here now sort of attitude so yes I think my attitude has changed a lot from that perspective, the second boy P came who I thought oh no! He has come on in leaps and bounds, he just loves it here and that is reflected in his work, the standard of his work has improved amazingly. As I say the new little boy despite the fact that he has been in school for three years over here, you would think he has just arrived.

NF: Right.

J; Absolutely dire.

NF: Because there are other complexities there which aren't really to do with the EAL, probably complicated by them but perhaps not a root cause?

K: No, that's it, and again being aware for him and planning for him but...

NF: So in terms of C, he is operating at what sort of...

K: Well over.

NF: Well over average?

K: Yes well over average certainly with his maths skills, absolutely superb, his literacy skill you can still see he is an EAL child simply because the sentence structure, words he uses and it's all based sort of on...what can I say...rigid, there's not a flow that you get in some children's writing, punctuation he picks up quite quickly he takes a bit longer when he is doing comprehension, because that's where he is taking his time to read but his reading is very good, taking time to not only read but understand and then take that through to answer his questions, he is that bit slower, but certainly no cause for concern at all he is doing really, really well.

NF: Does he get support?

K: He does but what we set up quite recently is they have the sort of BA groups they go out every morning with phonics and all that sort of thing, and build up, and we have also introduced recently children, EAL children to go out...[ I'll just shut these windows }.Err...

NF: So the year three EAL group that's with Jana now is it?

K: That's it they go out and also with others and they focus on speaking and listening. Now Jana does more as well, she has just been brought in quite recently so that during our literacy lessons she comes up and plans with us in our PPA time, what we are going to be doing for literacy for that week, then she takes that away and she differentiates it for her Polish children within this year group and then she rotates from class to class to class, working though to enhance their literacy which is working really well.

NF: Is that specifically for the Polish children or for all the EAL children?

K: She is focusing on the Polish children for that.

NF: Ok.

K: Because out of all of them I would say those children are the weaker ones out of the whole EAL scenario, if you see what I mean.

NF: Do you think that is just because they haven't been here so long?

K: Um I don't know I think it is something that hasn't been tried before, certainly coming into planning with us she hasn't done, and she really enjoys doing that she feels real part of that and knows where we are going, what the expectations are, this this and this so she works towards that with them. So yes C does go out which is again useful to develop his language skills, because the other thing, with the new little boy poor love, we say in his reading record you must read more at home, you must read to an adult and talk about what you are reading, well if poor Mum or Dad's language skills are very poor you know it's a silly thing to expect, but it's just to sort of show...all the parents are very supportive of their children at home with homework and try and get it done, but we are overcoming that by them going out a lot with reading and writing.

NF: Ok so it's quite a sense of quite systematic support then going on then, particularly in year three. Why did the school choose year three specifically, because Jana had talked to me about it being a year three...

K: Well I honestly don't know, I know up until...certainly with year six, up until SATs time she was pushed into year six all the time to push through with their support for their language skills, whether it's because it was going to be developed through the year or not I don't know, I think it's where they use her where it's needed at that time.

NF: Ok.

K: So pace is right is what we do all throughout the year right or wrong.

NF: Maybe it's also in terms of a year group it's just kind of a sensible place to aim it in terms of the point of which they could dip at the beginning of KS 2 I guess?

K: Yes I think we have had, let me see, I have had two new Polish children in my class, I think another Polish child next door and possibly another one so we have had quite a few Polish children coming in.

NF: Coming in as well oh right so getting then at times other than normal start times. So how are they doing the other two, its boy/girl?

K: Right I had this C he has been here since I came here, then Piot came early he came about just before Christmas or just at Christmas time, and then Szymon he came in April, so as I say Piot's really taking off.

NF: And Szymon is the one with major problems?

K: Yes he really has, if you looked at his handwriting it's...the formation is poor and bearing in mind he has been in school all his school life, he has been here.

NF: Right so that's...

K: It indicates that something else...

NF: There are other issues, whereas P's a new arrival as it were?

K: Fairly new arrival that's right, I think he had been at another school just for a few months, perhaps a term or two but that maximum, before he came here.

NF: And he is doing fine?

K: Yes he is we are delighted with him.

NF: That same sense of kind of quite accelerated...not accelerated but really quite...that sense I'm getting from all the interviews of the children really making quite rapid progress or quite...and also being very keen to learn and all those other really good kind of you know, of things that teachers like, like the they behave really well and listen well...

K: Yes that's it, I mean certainly with P he has always wanted to play he has always right from the word go, wanted to put his hand up and try and you know perhaps he hasn't quite got the concept, I remember on his first day I was doing whole class read with

the class reading book, and he wanted to read and I thought oh my gosh do I let him, and I did and he did so well it was quite poor reading compared to the others, but he did it you know he was thrilled to bits, and he has really done exceptionally well.

NF: And socially how are they all doing, going on to the next question there.

K: Yes no fine.

NF: There was that thing about them all tending to play together and therefore it being a hindrance to language acquisition.

K: That is still happening.

NF: And Jana was showing me the figures. There were seventy five of the two hundred or so children with the EAL are Polish, so that's quite a community within the school isn't it?

K: It is and there's...it sounds awful there's no escape, because even...I do gardening club on a Monday and there's three or four Polish children in that, and again they chat chat chat Polish and then I say English now it must be English now, I feel a bit it's mean but it's trying to get them to develop their language skills, because you walk up and down the corridors and you hear Polish all the time, they just naturally go into it, I mean I would. [laughs].

NF: I wonder if it slows them down or whether it's support I'm not sure, it would be hard to judge wouldn't it, it would be quite nice to do a kind of controlled experiment wouldn't it?

K: Yes.

NF: It would be impossibly ethically obviously, kind of stop one completely and allow the other to see if it made a difference.

K: Yes and see what actually happens, because I suppose there is the other argument if they are trying to speak English all the time, they are picking up bad habits from each other as well.

NF: In terms of not...because they haven't got a good role model for English speaking so yes it's true.

K: If they had that then they would come out with...

NF: It's quite a tension isn't it? Yes I hadn't thought of that you are right you are absolutely right, that's another issue as well isn't it? So what I want to say...when we last met you were able to articulate how you chose to develop oracy and literacy in the children even though it was so early in the school year; how do you feel compared to when you just came out of training in terms of your teaching for English generally, does it feel quite different are you able to see a progression?

K: Yes I can I can see a progression, certainly I am more confident definitely which then enhances the way things are put forward, reactions all that sort of thing, so I think the confidence level is increasing and also knowing I have got the support or this extra support for what these children are getting now which they didn't have at the beginning of the year has helped so much, because where I'm perhaps unintentionally not supporting them as well as in a close you know, there's just a little group of them working as opposed to a whole class...well we could try it this way which perhaps is the way I hadn't thought about, that's brilliant that's the support there has helped a lot, yes definitely.

NF: So do you think there is anything that you do more of or do you think for example you do more talk or you know, is anything that you are conscious of giving more time to?

K: Yes certainly more aware of instead of thinking right put the three little boys together then C could help the other two and almost not exactly, well you can get on with it, but taking more time like I'm going to work with you and really make sure you understand and to take more of an active role in their learning.

NF: Have you had any support in terms of NQT training and EAL?

K: Not specifically no, I mean there was on this Southampton you know the NQT program...

NF: That's what I mean.

K: Yes we had a girl in to do some training, that was a whole afternoon we had on that again which is quite interesting but it was very...I suppose because the Polish issue is more stronger in my class because the other children although they might be African Indian, Egyptian, their language skills are brilliant.

NF: Right.

K: Compared and where she was talking more sort of whole EAL Indian children, African children and not targeting perhaps the Polish community so much, a lot of what she said I was thinking...mm.

NF: That's interesting because that almost sounds as if she wasn't really talking about language issues she was talking about ethnicity and....

K: Yes culture diversity that's right.

NF: So it wasn't really...how do you support language specific issues?

K: She did do a great bit of that.

NF: That would be nice.

K: That's right she did do you know...and she was saying about right looking at it would be the same old thing putting up a screed of this writing...I don't know in sort of Punjab.

NF: Yes.

K: And to let (...) work it out although those sort of things is what a child is faced with when they come into school and their looking...it's the same to them.

NF: Does that feel like a repetition of what you have got on your training?

K: Yes.

NF: Mm I was just thinking that.

K: Yes it was because I came away thinking...do you see what I mean?

NF: You know all that, so in a way that didn't...sorry I don't mean to be critical of anybody's training but that must have felt a bit frustrating because for someone who's been on a BA where you have had time to get that input you know, and you've got less than the 4 year route, that would have, that must have felt a bit kind of like that doesn't actually bring me on any more.

K: No it is things like...because I know there are and I would love to use them, interactive white board schemes where you...

NF: That's what you want.

K: Instantly comes up with any focus on any particularly language if you like, which would be great for Szymon, it was those sorts of things and it was like games to play and things and it was similar to what I had it wasn't any...oh wow I need to take a note of this,

NF: So in a way she was repeating perhaps with good reason because she has got that mixed audience of PGCE students as well who I know, and probably hadn't absorbed it and so she was really in way going over the more theoretical stuff that you would have got during your training was really for someone like you who had the BA route you need...you now want hands on.

K: I want resources.

NF: Practical, thank you very much.

K: Exactly that's right yes.

NF: That's interesting I hadn't really thought of it like that.

K: Actually what...I'll look out the stuff I got from the course and perhaps send it on to you.

NF: That would be really interesting actually just to see what happens, because we are at fault in you know, in as teacher trainers in some ways of not really knowing what is the follow on and wouldn't it be great if there was more of a marriage really of the two.

K: Yes exactly.

NF: There isn't you know it's frustrating really.

K: Resources, I'll take a note of that really.

NF: Ok so you really want practical stuff don't you?

K: Absolutely.

NF: We've done that theory, written those assignments now just...

K: Yes

NF: Now just some stuff that I can work with, it's like your tools isn't it?

K: Yes.

NF: Your hands on stuff absolutely, so in terms of resourcing...I've got lost here...are you...you've got Jana you've got...so really the best resource is people it seems to me.

K: Yes definitely.

NF: Of time and people and obviously in Jana you have got this highly specialised resources so an extraordinarily good one isn't it compared to what most school, have.

K: Absolutely.

NF: Rather than something to read, something to...

K: Yes that's right I'd much rather it be like that but as I say more...I don't know...progress, for all EAL children something that's as I say like practical activities and things, and also perhaps knowing how children especially older children if they are coming in year four/five and they have had some schooling in Poland, and the difference of structures of sentences and how they are taught, do you know what I mean to bring, oh this is why we do this, like they don't have the "the" in their language and you can see it clearly in their writing, not so much C he has picked up on that, but Piot...

NF: Right yes the definite article is a problem.

K: Yes 'the book she is lovely' because they put it actually in the feminine; I think what's she? [laughs].

NF: In many ways that's interesting again so it feels like the subject knowledge you need at this point is very much more specific in it's about my children and where they are from and what they need, rather than this kind of generic global stuff, yes I'm sure you are right, it needs to be country specific almost.

K: Yes.

NF: And in a way they have done that in Hants they have got the EMASS team there produced lots of booklets about specific languages and how they are different, and Southampton have done some things, have they got kind of language specific?

K: They did.

NF: They have got loads of stuff haven't they?

K: Yes that's right certainly I think this girls has talked about EMASS on the training course at East Point, and she was saying...

NF: I think the thing is on your NQT you have got so much to learn and develop haven't you, this is just one tiny strand.

K: This is one aspect isn't it, I'm juggling all these balls all of the time?

NF: Yes absolutely, now what have I got on that last...I've asked that one, I've asked that one let's look at this last question. Just coming back to visit struck me looking at your last interview that you knew quite a lot about the Poles generally now I wondered why...what it was that drew to looking at Polish children before you had even come here as it were, if you even knew why or was it just the same thing that influenced me, in that it seemed like a new phenomenon?

K: I don't know really it's just something quite different, I think certainly being at university and that was one of our assignments was to look at education overseas and

bring it through and I think knowing the high percentage of Polish children coming to this school and there's Polish school here in church there's like all the Polish masses, it's a lot of it about do you know what I mean, I think that was why, but I just find it fascinating for some bizarre reason. I mean I went to...I know this is slightly going off the record bit, but I went to the Polish first communion mass because obviously year three they were making their first communion, so I went to all of them, I went to two on one day, I know everything about Polish mass...speak to me, what I don't know isn't worth knowing [laughs]. And I went to the Polish one and it was quite incredible how different it was to the ordinary one, it is so different and it's so...in their culture in their blood and it's...the traditions going from birth right the way through to death it's the same for the parents, bring the baby to church to be baptised the parents have been to church to make your first communion, the parents bring you to church when you get married and it's all this on the...all the way through, it was amazing absolutely compared to the English.

NF: So culturally very different from an English Catholic first communion you mean?

K: Oh absolutely.

NF: Really!

K: Absolutely yes, really different, I mean for a start very simple all the children wear the same, they wear all white boys and girls alike, white gloves and like a gold girdle and you know...and there was...so there's no competition you know the girls with their veils.

NF: None of the brides then?

K: All anonymised in a way you are all the same.

NF: How interesting.

K: All children of God, I mean the girls some had little flowers and some had little bits.

NF: But on the whole...

K: On the whole you were all...

NF: A set kind of design of dress you mean and everything or...

K: It's like a proper white out...

NF: And it's just this one?

K: That's right I think they had a choice of three and the parents chose right we will have this one and they were all sort of brought in, the benches were all white and ivy...I mean it was extraordinary, quite amazing but just looking at the prayers they were saying, very deep thinking sort of prayers.

NF: They had different prayers as well? We don't know these things do we, we make assumptions about our own practice this is how it is and actually it's as culturally different from country to country I mean even within the British Isles I think.

K: Yes absolutely.

NF: Isn't that interesting.

K: I mean well it is two hours for a start which it didn't seem it at the time, but I felt poor children, but it's like they will give flowers to our parents to say thank you for bringing us to Jesus; and I mean I had Jana with me, it was lovely.

NF: So that must be nice, so you that gives you I guess it's what people love about church schools isn't it, is this unity between the school and the church so you are with the children outside the school gates and into these precious times related to the faith, obviously, and I suppose it's hard to reflect on it if you have not taught elsewhere, I don't know, but do you feel that sense of...this is something a bit different from what it would be like if I was not in a faith school?

K: Absolutely, I notice it going out on my first teaching practice to a school that was not faith at all and it was quite quite different it was almost empty in a way, there was not that...I can't put my finger on the word I need but it was just that sort of empty whereas here...and also in other church schools not necessarily Catholic schools but Church of England schools again there's been...the Vicar would come in and talk to the children and there was that something you know, and it's very strong here and it's

lovely where you go to church and you see those children..."Hello Mrs..." it can be a bit embarrassing.

NF: I wonder though because it's specifically Poles who are Catholic although Jana was telling me there is also an Indian community here.

K: Yes very big Indian community.

NF: That it then gives the staff an extra affinity with the Polish community, I don't know, do you think that is the case or is it hard to tell?

K: It's hard to tell but from my perspective it does, and the thing is they are so pleased if you make a step to them like say going to the Polish Mass, anything like that they are so happy that you are taking time out to do that, because they will do anything for us, anything at all they are very, very supportive.

NF: So that's still there that sense of this kind of energy and drive.

K: Yes absolutely.

NF: And with the new children as well with Piot and Szymon the same?

K: Yes absolutely we are very lucky from that.

NF: I think that is it really in terms of just kind of a catch-up and a how is it going, is there anything else you think I haven't said about.

K: No,

NF: Nothing particularly or haven't kind of covered at all.

K: No I think it's interesting having had C to practice on and then having P and now having Szymon you think Ah! Now I know how to do this now or I'm not so "Oh my word where do I go from here" I mean I know Jana is always there, so it's not always dire but you think Ah he is always better doing it this way or it's better if I split them, because I had them three together for support purposes but C is way above, he is very

much...Szymon still needs support where he is that much behind, I'm wondering whether to split him just to see if that would make it better for him, he'd have to work more independently but he is still...his needs are really great, so I'll have to think about that one. But no it has been really good.

NF: So what about next year will you have Polish children again next year?

K: No because I'm leaving Spring Hill.

NF: Oh! Ok shall we turn it off then at this point then?

K: Yes. [laughs]

[End of transcript]

**NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH NICOLA AUTUMN 2007**

NF: Ok, so can you just – sorry, you know about the project don't you because you had things through. Is there anything you want to ask me before we start about - ?

N: I don't think so.

NF: You're alright. Ok, so can you just talk to me about your kind of background? Have you taught here for a long time, have you – ?

N: Yes, I've taught here for about eleven years.

NF: Right.

N: In the juniors from Year 3 to Year 6.

NF: Ok and at the minute you're with year 6?

N: I'm with Year 6 at the moment, yes.

NF: Right and in that time has there been a rise in the number of children with EAL coming in?

N: Yes, the last couple of years, that's been the rise in the Polish children, but also this year in my class I have two Saudi Arabian children and I have three children who are Ghanaan by descent, but one's come from Sweden and two have come from Finland.

NF: Gosh.

N: And then I've also got two Bengali and one Indian child in the class as well.

NF: Right and so Bengali am I right in thinking; is kind of the established population round here, so they're probably second generation or so?

N: Yes and the Indian boy, he's come from India, but he has had a sort of English education in India.

NF: Ok, interesting, so huge range, it must be quite a challenge – wow. So prior to the eleven years here were you anywhere else that had children with EAL or –

N: I wasn't a teacher.

NF: Oh you weren't a teacher, ok, so this is your experience here.

N: Yes.

NF: And so that means that the experience of teaching children with EAL is as new as it is for the school, or however developed it is in the school.

N: Yes.

NF: Ok, alright so the first kind of question I wanted to explore was what you think you do in your classroom that teaches children who have English as a first language to develop their English in terms of speaking, listening or reading and writing. What you think are the most effective ways that develop language really?

N: Talking actually, language on the walls. Obviously as a junior teacher I think you have a natural inclination not to have so much on the walls, but I'm quite aware now that I put a lot more vocabulary on the walls, particularly mathematical vocabulary for the Polish children.

NF: Right. Do you have a maths background? You were saying that you were going to get maths resources after lunch?

N: Not really no, I'm maths coordinator.

NF: Oh you are.

N: That's right, maths coordinator, but I wouldn't say I'm a mathematician at all, but you know, I struggled with maths so –

NF: Ok, so kind of general language enriched curriculum and stuff like that.

N: Yes.

NF: Specific words.

N: Yes, the experience of the last two years has shown me I think that –

NF: Sorry I thought for a minute it wasn't recording, sorry.

N: I think you have to accept with children who are new to this country that they have to do a lot of listening.

NF: Right.

N: Before they can start to speak an awful lot.

NF: Ok.

N: In a whole class context, I think it's very difficult for a class teacher to be more specific in their teaching. If it's just you and a class of thirty one children and you've got a lot of other special educational needs as well, you can't possibly do the very highly interactive one on one or small group work. I mean the children who have got English as an additional language, they do small group literacy with my learning support assistant and that is more specific to their reading needs and their spelling needs. But in terms of other areas of the curriculum, it's very difficult to support them fully and certainly with the Polish children, when they first arrived, I would let them just sit and listen and I wouldn't put too many demands on them, because I think you have to go through that listening process before – you know, before you can have the confidence to start to speak and I'm aware that once you start to speak, you start – it all accelerates doesn't it, it all goes side by side, but in terms of the process I think it's quite daunting in a whole class situation to expect any EAL children to start answering questions very quickly.

NF: Ok, so that covers the second question as well. So in some ways do you think that's different from what you would do for English speaking children? Or do you think it's kind of the same thing but –

N: No it's different.

NF: Ok. So it feels like actual different planning for them?

N: Yes it's a different set of expectations, yes.

NF: And do you think that's – I wonder if that's in any way related to their age when they come in, because they're coming into you at Year 6, so it's hard to know isn't it? But I wonder if –

N: Yes, well yes you know, your curriculum for Year 6 is far more advanced and is far more complicated and the language and the vocabulary's far more complicated, so it's obviously a lot easier for an EAL five year old to incorporate into a class than an EAL Year 5 or Year 6, very much so. I mean the Polish children I have are very intelligent, one in particular I would say is a gifted child actually and so two years down the line, because she arrived at the beginning of Year 5, I would say she's making very good progress and she shows signs of achieving level four in her SATS.

NF: Wonderful with just the two years.

N: Yes, because she's so motivated, she wants to learn.

NF: I'm getting this generally from all the teachers I'm talking to, this kind of sense of the Poles as particularly motivated and aspirational, do you see them – does it feel like a specific attribute of theirs rather than others?

N: Yes, most definitely.

NF: So they feel different even say to other Europeans you've got in your class?

N: Well I wouldn't be able to compare them because I haven't really had any other Europeans, I've only had experience of the Poles, but I would say they're particularly motivated. I mean we've been focussing as a school, we've been focussing on the child's involvement in their own learning and for writing and literacy for example, we do these little 'prove it' stickers, so children can judge their own writing – "have I put three adjectives in my work? Have I put three verbs? Have I written in the present tense" and in my class of borderline children, because I have the middle, borderline children, I was going through with them again, rehearsing well why do we have 'prove its'? What's the purpose of them? Do we do it just for the sake of it? And it was only the Polish children who had a hundred percent understanding of why they were there.

NF: The purposes.

N: Of the purpose, because they're good in their own language, they know how language works, you know, they know why you have adjectives and verbs in your language.

NF: Fascinating.

N: And so they can apply that knowledge to the English language.

NF: That's interesting, so that means they'd learnt enough about their own language at home perhaps.

N: Yes.

NF: So they came to you completely fluent and strong in their own language, (...) awareness, understanding, knowledge.

N: Yes.

NT: Right so it's interesting isn't to hear that. Gosh and so that obviously felt quite a virtue, that kind of advantage is really what they seem to have.

N: Yes, I mean I look at my children and I think I wish I had more Polish children because it's so rewarding to teach them because they want to learn and they have a motivation. I'm not saying none of the other children are motivated, but some of the other children are not motivated to the same degree.

NT: I mean it actually sounds like you have to do quite a lot though. Does it feel kind of burdensome on top of your normal teaching load or does it feel like your job?

N: It doesn't now, it did when they first arrived, because you know, I would have – if they'd been the only ones in the class requiring attention it would have been fine because I would have in the afternoons or when we did topic work or science or something like that, then I would sit with them and talk to them and do things on a level that they could cope with. But the problem is the demands of my class are such that I've got other EAL children and I've got also children with quite severe special needs as well, so where do you put yourself. You can't – and you know, the frustrating thing with the Polish children is that if you look at science for example,

they are really hampered by their lack of science language in English to succeed at the level that they're quite clearly at.

NF: Of course.

N: I mean it's quite clear – one of my Polish girls, she's a level five scientist, but whether she gets to level five scientist will be dependent on her ability to acquire the scientific language.

NF: Absolutely yes. So (...) do to try and overcome that or is it kind of almost impossible in terms of the time you've got available?

N: Well I mean one thing will be going through science vocabulary and we do homework and they come to homework club and they have homework.

NF: Oh yes, you have that special one don't you.

N: Yes that's right, so you know, lots of things go on to give them extra and we have table mats with words on, all the usual sorts of things.

NF: So you're obviously doing tons, I mean do you feel that in terms of the onus on British primary school teachers generally, that it's – I mean how do you feel about that? About having to manage that language acquisition?

N: I don't mind really. I don't see that as being to the detriment of the class now. I see them as a positive contribution to the class, as I do the other children as well really. I'm not saying that what I do for them is the best, I do the best I can given all the other demands and needs and staff that we have available to us. But I don't see it as a burden. I think the reason I don't see it as a burden is because they want to learn and they have a positive attitude and that's what teachers want, that's why people teach.

NF: So the last question, I think you covered really, is about what you describe as key issues, the successes and barriers, I think you've covered those mostly in what you've said already, but one thing I'm actually – I mean do elaborate on those if there's anything else you think you haven't said, I think you've kind of covered what's gone well and what's been difficult.

N: Yeah, I mean I've been lucky I suppose because I've had Polish children who are quite able.

NF: Right.

N: I can't really comment on what it's like for other Polish children, I can only give you the picture I have.

NF: And Poles you've got two?

N: I've got two Polish girls.

NF: Oh and both girls.

N: Yes.

NF: Right that's interesting as well.

N: Yes that's right.

NF: Maybe –

N: But obviously the barrier I see for them, the difficulty is the acquisition of vocabulary for them to be able to achieve the level they are in things like maths and science, because you know, that goes across language barriers, but you can only succeed in your SATS test if you can understand the English language fully.

NF: Absolutely.

N: At a high level.

NF: And do you have anxiety for them for when they move on to Year 7?

N: No they'll be fine.

NF: They'll be ok.

N: Yeah, I think they'll be alright, yeah. I'm quite happy for them really. As I say I feel I've been lucky.

NF: It sounds it doesn't it.

N: Yeah, they're lovely, I wouldn't not have them in the class at all.

NF: Great.

[End of transcript]

## **NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH NICOLA SUMMER 2008**

NF: Ok so can you just...its two girls put in your class isn't it.

N: Yes.

NF: Can you just talk to me about how they have done since we last met, because I think they were already quite fluent weren't they?

N: Quite able quite motivated, and they have just continued you know the same way really, worked right up to the SATs, and as you know M has given you the SATs results, so they have done very, very well.

NF: And compared to the peers in the rest of their class?

N: More motivated, more willing to pick up actually, what you are teaching them.

NF: Right.

N: Everything you teach they want to devour, and put into practice.

NF: And in terms of the actual SAT levels they are operating at, I think M showed me that one of them has even got, was it, a 5c for reading or something really high. Is there anything you can, I'm just wondering how they learn that fast.

N: I think that particular child, I think she might be a gifted child actually, you know. I think she is going to turn out to be quite a star in all areas of the curriculum really. So I think that probably explains, but it just shows that, I think our guided reading probably really helps you know, the guided reading is very focused and it makes the children really look at the text, in that focused way and think about you know, characters and how they act, why they act as they do, and what might be the prediction, then inference.

NF: Oh really.

N: So I think the way we do guided reading probably helped them you know, to gain a deeper understanding of the text, and I think certainly the one that's gifted and who got the level five, she was very good at inference and understanding text at quite a

deep level. Because when she did the NEFR the straight forward nelson reading test, she didn't score very well at all, and the reason is because she doesn't know the words on their own. She knows in context, you know the whole story the whole idea, but just specific words on their own which are more challenging, she finds them very difficult to understand.

NF: That's very interesting, so talk to me about guided reading then, is that something that you have just developed as a whole school, do you all have specific...

N: Oh it's common practice, guided reading is common practice.

NF: Yes well, it's interesting, as a teacher educator, I could just share with you actually, it's unbelievably dispirit interpretation of guided reading across schools in the same street, never mind in the same county or borough, and so I am interested to know how that's..it that you all do it?

N: That's twenty minutes every day, it's not in the literacy hour, it's separate from literacy, but we had the advantage of being able to group by ability this last year. So I had them sort of middle ability readers and then within the class I would group them by ability in groups of six, so they would have a book that was well matched to their needs and then I would devise the questions, depending on whether we were looking specifically at characters or a particular genre or settings.

NF: Ok.

N: I only taught one of them, you know the girl who got the 5c is the one I taught for guided reading, and you know I think her motivation coupled with the guided reading did help.

NF: With a very structured pedagogy for it, yes. So you have taken it out of literacy hour, you plan for it to then, quite specifically, so it's not just about the reading obviously it's actually about the dialogue you set up with the children, so there is a lot of oral practice, for her then as well, this Polish girl in terms of use of language and thinking about...

N: Yes not always because sometimes you know, if I was with other groups she would just do that on her own.

NF: Yes but quite a lot. Is there anything specifically you do for writing then, that may have caused you know, anything that really helped them do so well in the SATs again.

N: Well the writing levels weren't as good, and of course the grammar isn't helping, it isn't properly developed, they are still having problems with tenses and first and third person and all that sort of thing. But we've started VCOP this year.

NF: Right, which is?

N: I can't remember who...its Ross Wilson I think.

NF: Yes, I have come across it.

N: And that you know that's vocabulary, so focussing on vocabulary and you know that makes it easy for them. Again they had some more willingness to take those things on board you know, both of them, if you said right you know, our target today is to think of different ways of starting a sentence, and they wouldn't give up on that, they would try really hard. If you said well let's look at connectives and the way we join ideas within our sentences, they would take that on board, so you know they would devour every new way of doing things. So I think you know, there are still only another three writers, when I always think the norm is level four, but I think that's to be expected.

NF: Yes.

N: At this stage I think.

NF: Yes I'm sure you are right. So is that worrying in terms of going into year seven I wonder.

N: I don't think so.

NF: You think they will catch up. What's the liaison like with the secondary school, is it good.

N: It's quite good, yes.

NF: There is some recognition as they go up to secondary school.

N: Yes, oh yes.

NF: That they will continue to get some support for secondary language.

N: I don't know, secondary schools tend not to give a great deal of support, unless children are really struggling so, but I think they will be fine, I don't have any worries about them, because I think it's something you know, language you hear language you use language and you read language and at the very end of it you write language. So after two years in the country if they're reading really well, at a level that's appropriate for their age, I think that's fantastic and I don't foresee any problem with their development, their written skills.

NF: Which secondary do they go to round here?

N: Well they can choose, they can go to Quilly one of the Polish girls is going to Toynbee and the other one's going up to Winchester to Kings.

NF: Oh how interesting, that's so interesting in itself, so the parents are kind of buying out of the area, so a very successful child is (forward) on and the most successful Winchester comprehensive, are their choices, that's fascinating. Do you get many families in the area going up to Winchester?

N: No, not normally, it's a recent thing, about half our year group are going towards Quilly and then we have got six children going to Toynbee and six to Crestwood, so they are starting, now the numbers have gone down and the other schools have got vacancy's, some are opted to go elsewhere.

NF: Oh right so there are falling rolls so it is no, there isn't the same pressure on places.

N: Yes. I think so, I think that is the reason.

NF: So yes, my next question is about motivation, which you have already touched on a lot in the first question. I wonder if, and it's hard to unpick this I think for ourselves as practitioners, if it becomes a bit chicken and egg, that they respond well, so we respond well, there is a bit of a kind of a virtuous circle.

N: I think so, yes. I mean I have thought to myself maybe the other children in the class think that they're favourites for example, because you do get such a good response from them, and they are very rewarding to teach. You know as a teacher it's lovely to have two motivated Polish children in your class, and as you say, you respond well to them so you do have to be sensitive to how that's perceived by the other children.

NF: Do you think you respond differently to them, from the way you might respond to...because you have got another EAL children in your class haven't you?

N: Yes.

NF: Do you think there's a difference?

N: Only in as much as you know, the depth of my conversation might vary because of their desire to learn more.

NF: Ok. So you mentioned in your last interview, and you've mentioned further there, quite a range of things you do in order to support your EAL learners. So it seems you actually have quite a developed understanding of what they need and how it works as it were in terms of developing a second language. I was just wondering where that's come from in terms of training?

N: I haven't had any training.

NF: You haven't, ok. Where do you think it's based from then, that kind of knowledge of...so you're saying of course there is still difficulties with verb tense endings?

N: I was going to say, it's just the knowledge I have, have developed as a teacher of English.

NF: Ok.

N: So probably partly the literacy strategy, being more specific about what you should be teaching and also myself thinking about, well how do we develop as writers. Well it's you know how you use the different parts of speech, and maybe, I'll tell you what else it is, it's the realisation actually that when I was at school I struggled with a foreign language. To begin with I found it very easy when I was at the stage when I was

learning vocabulary, and then when you know it got trickier, and you were talking about grammar, I really struggled and I realise now I went through school where I wasn't taught about how to write, and I wasn't taught about parts of speech. Because it was the time when you just let children write and learn. And I realise now looking back the reason I struggled with a foreign language is because I had no idea you know. What was the function of these verbs you know, or prepositions or everything? So I do know that now, I know how important it is to understand the different parts of speech.

NF: That's interesting and that's. You feel directly as a result of the rigour really, and the detail in the initial strategy. How about the revised strategy, are you using that actively in school, that the most recent (...) are still using. Are you aware, or do you think that in your practice now, you've made any changes, because I think that the revised strategy has a much bigger focus on speaking and listening, at the start of each unit.. Do you think you've changed that at all?

N: Not so much this year I think, there has been a lot going on this year so I probably haven't sort of got into the planning of the revised framework. I think that comes with time. I wouldn't say that's been a big change this year, probably will be you know, probably you know, when there are lots and lots of things going on you know, I'm not just a class teacher, I've got lots of other responsibilities, so I've had you know, an extremely busy year, so you know, if you want somebody to fully take on a new way of teaching literacy and new strategy, you've got to give them time. Well I haven't really had the time to really plan properly, I don't feel as if I have anyway, so hopefully next year you know, I'll be that bit better.

NF: It's been a busy year for the school generally hasn't it, other initiatives so there hasn't been a focus particularly this year on English teaching or on the EAL or...

N: No.

NF: Nothing, so you have been kind of developing your practice for it in, I don't mean to say in isolation, because I'm sure you all talk to each other, but just at an individual level at the moment, as a result of the whole school thing.

N: Yes.

NF: So is there anything in particular that you think might have, I'm wondering if there is anything in particular that might have happened as a response to your two year experience of teaching these Polish girls. Has it changed, do you think anything has changed in your practice or anything in particular that they might have influenced, just because it seems to have been so different in a way?

N: Yes, not really I just respond to children as I find them.

NF: Yes, so it's still in many ways...

N: I think at the end of the day you know, if you're a teacher and you have to respond to a need, and you have to assess, and if you assess need correctly, then you give them what they need don't you, so that's all I've done really. I'm not saying I've done it well, but that's what I've done.

NF: Yes, it's interesting, at the last interview you said, I don't know that I've done very well, but actually it's interesting for me because obviously there's lots that comes out, that shows to me, like we know quite a lot. Like I wonder if, and one of the things that is starting to emerge now, for me from the range of interviews I'm doing, is that perhaps teachers who feel more...they have a more detailed understanding of how to do...of how to support their second language learners, are teachers who think a lot about just how they teach English generally, I wonder if...

N: Probably.

NF: Yes if you think yes, so in some ways, it's kind of going back to what we were talking about at the first interview, would you still say that your pedagogy, your teaching for your second language learners, is not really that different from what you do for your first language.

N: No I think what's happened is maybe, reflecting on it, the VCOP approach is an approach that is used to particularly support, well all English learners, but you know a lot of our children are quite poor, they have a poorly developed language, they don't have very extensive vocabulary. So I think maybe the strategies we're using for our mainstream children, are just right for the Polish children, and the Polish children take them up more readily, and with more interest and enthusiasm than some of the others.

- NF: And what about the families, is there still this sense of lots of support from family and it's more or less a package, isn't it?
- N: It is yes, yes well the package, you know they're aspirational families aren't they, so in being that way you know, they're passing their aspirations on to their children, and that makes them different, because not all of the other children are aspirational. And their parents are not that aspirational, but they certainly are, they are here because they want to get on, and want their children to get on.
- NF: Yes there is this thing about them being aspirational and I sometimes worry I guess, about press coverage of them now, which there was a press release recently which suggested that Eastern Europeans will do anything, work in any job, whereas our own white working class unemployed won't.
- N: Yes.
- NF: You know, I wonder if that affects the way in which they're received, do you sense any tension, or do you sense that the families were integrated in the area.
- N: I think certainly the girls are integrated into my class, you know they are, I mean they have gone now, gone on holiday, but they are well liked, I haven't sensed that.
- NF: Right, oh they have gone home to Poland have they for the summer.
- N: Yes.
- NF: Right.
- N: More for a holiday.
- NF: Right ok, in term time. Which was another gripe I am getting, yes from teachers.
- N: I mean I can't say it is a big problem because of the...
- NF: Where it is yes.
- N: It's not like some of the Bengali children going back for long periods of time.

NF: It gets very complex doesn't it really? No, Claire was say the little boy in her class, that the mother kind of seemed to go to great lengths to have a party you know, in terms of inviting everyone in the class, despite having limited English, and I thought that seemed an extraordinary effort really, to integrate, because it's so brave isn't it, really brave. Ok, I think that's kind of covered it all really, all the kind of bits I wanted to pick up. Oh I know there was...they did really well in science and maths, there we are, when M just now was showing me the SAT results, which went really well, but they've done, he was still quite (...) it was strong in the science and maths as well, and that's...

N: And that was without a Polish speaker as well.

NF: Right ok, so I wonder because the science and maths papers are still quite word heavy aren't they, well the maths one less so, but the science paper...

N: Yes I mean they could put their hand up for a reader, so they get a qualifying question, they didn't have a dedicated reader, because there aren't enough Polish support workers, so they couldn't have anybody so you know, they just had to put their hand up for me or somebody else.

NF: But they are still having to write lengthy sentences in English presumably to write the answers correctly. So they are coping well.

N: Yes, so the only thing they have not achieved the national norm for the age, is the writing.

NF: Is the writing, ok. I wonder with the science and the maths, because I remember you saying that you went to considerably lengths to give them addition vocabulary, in science and maths, did that kind of go on all year, were you consciously doing that, and that presumably again is just something that you would do for all the children?

N: For any child that needs help with their vocabulary yes. I think it depends on the sort of school; we have always had children that need support here, so yes we do have support strategies, but not necessarily specifically for EAL children.

NF: Ok so again, it's this practice for all children, seems to be supporting practice for obviously all EAL children. Ok, great, thanks I think that was all I wanted to ask. So was there anything you wanted to add?

N: No.

NF: That's covered it all thanks.

**NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIA FEB 2007**

NF So, you were telling me that you are on a TEAL course which is?.....

P Which is teaching English as an additional language. So I'm doing it as, eerm, a third credit towards a Masters, not that I'm particularly bothered about, at this end of my careers, doing a masters, but it was the element of the teaching English as an additional language...And that's come about because I was asked if I would be prepared to do some training to be a leading teacher in EAL.

NF OK, so did that request come from EMAS, from F?

P From F yes, because I've worked with them so closely over a long period of time. I mean historically in this school we had only Bengali children; we had the Bengali children of Basingstoke, because where they live is our catchment area. They live in B V. So when I first started in this school as part of the SMT which was 16 years ago, I had a lot of Bengali children in my class but with only a little support from EMAS, and gradually it's changed ....

NF Sorry to interrupt you, so was the language they spoke Sylheti?

P Yes, yes. And gradually it's changed. It changed dramatically particularly over the last two years. My biggest problem is so many languages but not a lot of children for each language, so it puts quite a lot pressure on you as a school and as a staff as well, because you're not talking about a big group of children who can then support each other if you like.

NF So, when you say that quite a lot of languages.... Well you've got Sylhetti then still, and you've got Polish ? (P gets out a printed list of languages of children in each year group in the school)

P (reading) Polish, Latvian, Turkish, Sylheti, Russian, Chinese, Nepali, Thai, a little girl whose Arabic, French, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Cantonese, Punjabi and Hindi.

NF So the full range. You've got south east Asian languages, and the Pacific rim and eastern European languages. So you are saying that forms about 22% of the school?

P Well no, in my nursery it forms about 22% of my cohort, in Reception it's 18%, Y1 it's only 9% - that's my smallest -and in Y2 it's 18%. But of those, my Polish children are fast becoming my largest group.

NF Well I think this is what interested me, and F at EMAS. It's the impact of this quite sudden influx, and that's why we want to chart it really and what's happening with these children in particular. OK., so just switching to the Polish children then. Have there been any particular issues that have been different, or has it felt the same?.. seeing as you are obviously very experienced in teaching children with EAL....

P What's different is (pause), that because they don't start school in Poland until later, it's been quite hard to say to them that they need to come to school from the age of 5. And there's eerm been issues with them going back to Poland, say for the dentist, and they go for a visit. They fill in a holiday form and then they don't come back for another week, and that's been difficult.

NF And had that not been an issue with parents of say your Bengali children?

P No. The ones that did it, they went off for much longer periods of time and we knew about it. So, they would go off on what we call an extended visit, and then we didn't know if they'd be back or not. But that was only one or two children, whereas this is quite a lot of them. The other thing has been...it's quite interesting....obviously we are delighted to have them in the Nursery, because we feel if we get them in the Nursery and then they follow through in school, it's obviously easier for them...but the little boys in particular, and this is probably a generalisation, but what we've found in particular is the boys are very spoilt and very unused to doing things for themselves. So like dressing and undressing, those sort of things, and that's been quite different from some of other children.

NF OK, so you're noticing some quite significant cultural differences in the way that the children....

P Mmmm (affirmation)

NF So you didn't notice that even in your say, Bengali boys?

P Yes, they are, they are quite spoilt as well. But, whereas the Bengali children, the parents just used to leave them and drop them and go, the Polish mums tend to fuss and stay.

NF And I suppose that that's in a way a cultural difference as well isn't it? Because, on the whole, traditionally perhaps Asian parents see the school as the teacher's role and traditionally keep themselves quite separate. Do you find the Polish parents come in more?..

P Yes...I don't have ... I have no problem at all and I like the fact that they're in.. but we had an incident with a little boy who wasn't in Nursery, he started in Reception. Y hadn't been in Nursery and he hadn't had any pre-school experience at all, and he just appeared, and they were very reluctant to leave him. We said this was fine but we had to stagger it so that he has got to realise that he's staying, and it caused quite a lot of problems. So we ended up withdrawing Mum from the classroom and I brought her down here and made her a cup of tea, and it worked very well because she actually went on in to the Nursery where there were four Polish children crying, and she went in there and sorted them out. And it enabled her little one, who just screamed and screamed and screamed and then he fell asleep, but when he woke up and she wasn't there he was alright. By the end of the session he was joining in. It's taken a long time for him to come round but now he's fantastic. But they're very supportive...

NF The parents are?

P Yes, yes. I don't have a problem with....this is a stupid generalisation again as they come from quite mixed backgrounds... but very quick to learn, most of them.

NF So you notice they are picking up English quite fast then?

P Very, very quickly.

NF And you feel that's faster than, say, Turkish or Hindi, or is it hard to judge?

P It's hard to judge. The little Turkish girl had no English and she'd had no pre-school experience. She cried and sobbed for nearly a term, but, now she's speaking in complete sentences now. I think they fare particularly well in Reception because children are very accepting. They are very accepting all round, but they are all new together. There's support in the classroom with a Learning Support or TA full time, so there's always a minimum of two adults in that classroom, which does help.

NF So the environment itself is perhaps...

P I think so, I mean I'm trying to think back. E, she started in year 2 last year, not until October/November time.... She found it very hard, incredibly hard, when everybody in year 2, you know the friendships are set up. However, saying that, I mean obviously I've been doing some reading about what is the best age to start reading another language...We make this assumption that 'Oh they're better off coming in to the Nursery because they then will follow through', and to a certain extent that's true, but it's not thinking about what they know in their own language. And E, only within our school for such a short time, I mean the progress she made was phenomenal.

NF And is that because she'd been to school in Poland, and so the concepts she had she'd already got in her first language?

P So I would say, I mean I haven't got enough evidence, because obviously E is the only one we have had in year 2, but her rate of progress between November and July was phenomenal.

NF That's very interesting. So, maybe, because she was so secure in her home language she wasn't having to think of things conceptually for the first time. Therefore it was only a words difference rather than a concepts difference.

P Yes, and I think it showed up particularly, not so much in reading because that was hard, you know, like learning to read in English, but things like mathematics, when it came to problem solving, once she understood the language the concepts were already there, whereas for some of the others that's been a harder slog. And that's something I haven't actually considered until I've started this course, from my reading and she fits well in to that bracket. I think she's a bright girl anyway, but she's flying at the junior school.

NF Yes, that's very interesting. I am sure I would have assumed that the younger they came in the better...

P I think socially it is, and I think they make progress; I'm not saying that... I just think we should bear in mind what they've done previously. I mean you know yourself, if we're talking about a 4 year old that comes in, conceptually they've only done what they've done. So second language children ... and we're also expecting them to learn another language as well. So that's interesting.

NF Yes, that's very interesting. So, although you're saying that you haven't got much evidence, that's really an interesting case study.

P Yes, she would be. Now, it will be quite interesting to see because her brother was in Nursery, and he's now in Reception, doing really well, but not making the same rate of progress she's made. But of course she was that much older and more mature...

NF So how are staff responding to this sudden influx of Polish children? Presumably they are quite relaxed about EAL generally anyway because it's a fairly normal part of the school?

P. Yes, well we have it on our strategic plan anyway, and we just literally had another in-service day that F came and led for us, yet another one, just to top up, because obviously you have staff ...staff come and go. One of my LSAs is doing the SEAL course, that's SEAL Supporting English as an Additional Language. So she's working alongside F and people at EMAS. They're doing this course and it's a year's course; keeping journals and essay writing and case studies, that sort of thing. So T's a key person in all of this. Eerm, we've got, as you can see, we have the signs around. We've got, everybody knows about how they assess; so we look at the assessment for new arrivals.

NF Are those systems that the LEA has set up or you have set up yourselves?

P We've set them up. We haven't had any support to that at all. We use EMAS for our new arrivals, but you only get 10 hours of support though. But it is good, it does give you a baseline of if the child is good in their home language. You think well that's useful information, because then at least you know whether or not you are dealing with an incidence of special needs. That can be really hard. We had an incidence last year of a little Bengali girl, and we know the family really well, and the two aunties I taught and one is training to be a doctor and the other to be a lawyer; high flying girls. The older sister didn't go on to higher education; she stayed at home and looked after her Mum and Dad. She went on to marry and had these two children, and the little girl, there were huge issues about her special needs. She's actually in the process of being statemented now, but it was really hard to know did she just have a language need or was it a learning difficulty. However, what we knew about the family in terms of support, we felt quite early on it probably was a special need.

NF So, to go back to our Polish children, when you have a new arrival, you get 10 hours of Polish support? Polish speaking?

P Yes, 10 hours of a Polish support assistant. I mean K comes in, she was a teacher and she is really, really good, she comes in for an hour a week over 10 weeks.

NF Do they give you materials to work with, or do you tend to use your own things?

P They tend to work within our curriculum, but giving us guidelines as to what would be the best thing to do. I mean we all know about not putting them in a bottom group, giving them a good role model, making sure they are sitting by somebody whose going to model good language; it's much harder to do that in Reception because you haven't levelled the groups at that point any way..

NF .. and the children themselves are more mobile, freer...

P Exactly, very different. So they do that (thing above) and we have a yellow file which had all the ... an EMAS file, and so every time there's a visit it gets tracked in there. (Gets file out) So this is Y... So they have an initial assessment and then they have one that comes every time, so background and recommendations. This is the first one and then after that it's a single sheet.

NF So has the assistant who comes also spoken with his parents?

P Yes it's always that the first visit is offered with the parents. Yes.

NF Some of the other schools that I'm going in to that are perhaps feeling less secure...

P Sorry, I have to take this ( children come in for an award 17.50 – 18.30)

NF Where were we? Schools that are perhaps feeling less secure with the whole business of EAL than you are feeling this desperate need for some kind of package commercial or otherwise.... that you could somehow buy in .... I mean, you presumably?...

P I think we've ridden through that. The trouble is, I think that one size doesn't fit all. Probably a few years ago I would have said the same thing. I think we just have to, you use your initiative, and that's what I say to staff. I say, if we're looking upon them as children and as children in our care, you tend to instinctively do the right thing, and if they are worried they come and find me. We have got mechanisms in place that I provide a booklet, I've got stuff from MANTRA. I provide a school

booklet in the home language with photographs. So the parents are given that; things like the time school starts and finishes, my name, my admin officer's name, the class teacher's name and the class they will be in, how much dinner money is, PE, all those practical things and that's in their home language.

NF So how's that done?

P On the computer, it's a package.

NF Oh, a piece of software. I've not come across that.

P Oh, it's wonderful, I can show you, (goes and gets it out). I had to do a surgery for teachers with F last week, so I have put one together.

NF So it's a piece of software that ..oh I see... its got a welcome booklet and it translates it in to a huge number of languages..

P And I take the photographs ... and then... the original one of these was only in their language, but this is good because it shows it in English as well.

NF Which is great for any teacher wanting to go through it with them, because they are not excluded from the content!

P Exactly ... ( reads through the contents) it has when school starts, about registration, about mathematics, literacy, lunchtime, income support, health check – the fact that we are an all embracing school, information about learning English, ...parents and carers are welcome to come,..... oh and code of conduct, so they know what they.....

NF So that breaks down barriers immediately, you are removing the little niggles that might set in that would be about language difference rather than being about anyone not wanting to cooperate.

P We, I always do that. The other thing we do have is we have books, dual-language texts, that they can borrow. They are very expensive so we are just gradually building up a library of them, but they are in a zippy folder and they take them home to share with their parents. These ones, these are from the new Treasure Chest pack, and these came last year for the first time to Reception children and each Reception child gets a treasure chest. Inside it's beautiful; inside there's a book, a colouring book, pencils, crayons, whole pack and all of a sudden they were all given them, and then I had an email to say did I have any second language children and would I like a second language book, so of course I said yes immediately and how many I needed. They didn't think they could supply all those... but they did!. And then, this year, they are doing it as of... eerm .... that I could request dual language books for children entering Reception class.

NF Is this a charitable organisation or ...

P I don't know... it's a DfES thing because they are doing it for new borns as well. I've got three Polish to follow... they're giving me... they are not all languages unfortunately but this is what they've sent me so far; Turkish/English.....

NF Oh, they're lovely books! I always used to find when purchasing dual language books for my own school that they tended to be slightly dull, not great texts like Handa's Surprise

P No, these are all ones that are in the boxes, so they've got the same ones. And that's nice. These are gifted so they've actually got an English one in their treasure box, but they've also got this as well, so that's a new thing, but you have to make sure you are on the ball with that. And so at this surgery I did say to .. the teachers were going "Oh?" and I said " well your Headteachers will have had them" you know, an email about it. But of course I am in a privileged position because I pick the emails up myself. We've also got things like these letters that I do (shows them to interviewer) .. a series from this site of translated letters... these are Polish these....so I've got a school attendance once... these are great because it talks about the actual legality. So this, these are new and have been giving these to Reception parents this year; so I've

got them for the Bengali, the Polish, the Turkish and the Portuguese parents, Unfortunately they don't do all the languages that we would like.

NF So this has come from EMAS?

P No, a colleague, one of our lead teachers, having fiddled around on the internet and found them.

NF Oh, so you are also building up a network of support with other teachers. Let me just take you back to something. So the TEAL thing is?...

P The TEAL thing is with P University but it's a spin off, the money was put in out budget for us as lead teachers, and it would pay the fee for us to do the TEAL course.

NF OK. So, to some extent you are building up networks with colleagues on that and these resources are shared.

P Yes ( turns back to letters) So we've got school attendance, closure dates, accidents.... And this is what I showed at this surgery to give to other people. (Interviewer sees something that makes her laugh – not clear why)

P But you just have to look around, one size doesn't fit all and you have to be sure that the information on these is correct, so you know it's quite dangerous, you have to look at every single letter to ascertain whether it's right or not. And the other thing we have, that one of my other colleagues has done, is she's done... she's been through and found some super websites... and I'm just in the process of making a set of games in Polish. There are some really good websites, and I was just having a go at some lovely games for when they first enter schools. Putting things like the names of rooms that they'll find and what might happen in those rooms. So I'm just in the process of photocopying those and laminating them for use by an LSA.

NF So it's feeling like you personally take on quite a lot of the administrative role and finding out role for your staff. So are you essentially the EAL co-ordinator on your staff?

P Yes, and it's something that I enjoy. I think because I've done it...because when I came here 16 years ago and it was just a small group of EAL children, although I'd been teaching a long time I'd not had EAL learners in my class and it interested me. But when I look at what everybody else has got to do, it's perhaps better that I do it, because I can give the time to it.

NF It certainly raises the profile of EAL high if the Head is so engaged in it. Certainly that was the case in earlier research I did in successful schools in London. It was very much to do with the profile it had and its status among the staff.

P And I think it's to do with the fact that you can take everybody along with you, because there is any element of ...I mean my staff are fantastic, don't get me wrong.. but there is an element of "well we do have other children here", you have to be careful and be careful how you package things up...

NF Gosh. Rich source of stuff going on here! I'm just looking to see if there's anything else to cover, but you've covered an awful lot. You talked a bit on your reply slip about age difference and I think we covered that, and that's a potential area of interest. Now, seeing as you've started to read about it so that you kind of have a theoretical as well as a practical level at the minute, is there anything in particular that you identify as something that is worth watching over time with your Polish children?

P What I ... I've got to produce obviously an essay, and, having done my self evaluation, well there's two things that come out of that for me, for the school and for these children. One is, I still don't think we do enough with the parents, to include the parents, and that's something I'd like to do. One of the other things I would like to do and it may well be a spin off, thinking about Elizabeth and her rate of learning, is I would like to set up children as interpreters. Now I know it's been done at KS 2, but I haven't ... I was talking to Frances about it and she says she doesn't know where it's been done by KS 1 children. I think it can be done because I think people underestimate Infant children ...so I think it can be done. That's... I mean I probably haven't answered your question...

NF No , not at all, I just wanted to know where your thinking was... because you're quite a long way down the road already, I was just wondering if there was anything in particular that would be interesting for someone like me to watch over time.

P Well, I assume, if this is going to continue and I assume it is. I mean the trend is that each year we are getting more and more, and also they're not catchment children. It's " You're a nice school, my friend has told me so we're coming to you", so they're coming. At the end of the day the Polish parents, the Mums and the children play outside here. The other parents are in but these ones stay and it's lovely. I've just had a gazebo erected and it's lovely, they're sat in the gazebo chatting and the children are all playing and they are talking together. And I think... I need to do something with that, I don't know what, but I need to do something with it. To me it's a source and I don't quite know what to do with it. Sorry this is sounding really vague.

NF No, no, that's OK. We're all feeling fairly vague I think. It's a new phenomenon and they've come in an unusual way I think everyone's thinking "What happens here?"

P Unfortunately for me, the majority of those are Year 2, and that's ... so they'll be moving to the Junior school. Which is why for an interpreter type thing, I should think of Year 1 children. Although, I should train them up to be interpreters really because they are going to be going to the Juniors, but I don't know if I've got time. Having said that I've got a little boy in year 1, C, who joined us in Reception with no English at all, nothing. And he, a very different kettle of fish, bright eyed and bushy tailed, I mean there was never a tear with him, very vivacious character – he's lovely, he's quite cheeky really but he's lovely. I was showing some people round and he's a wonderful ambassador for the school, so he will just switch, he will just speak in Polish; most of them won't do that, they won't speak their own language, but he will. In a way I need to harness that, but I was showing some people round who've got one EAL child in their school and they're getting panicky, and I just said " Oh this is C and he's very clever, and if I need help he will go anywhere I need him in the school and he'll help me". He was drawing a picture and they said " Oh, what a lovely picture"

and he said “ Oh yes, this is my car. It is a Corsa. Name Corsa, surname Vauxhall.”  
(Both laugh) I just thought that was wonderful, phenomenal.

NF So he’s thinking about language structure in a very sophisticated way because he’s operating in two languages.

P Yes, I just thought that was great! I’ve never thought of a car before in terms of a Christian name and surname before! But, when I’ve had a few problems in the nursery he’s gone down and he’s quite happy to go down and sort it out for me. And the little girls, in particular there’s two girls up there - Ev and F in Year 2 – and they’re very good as well. They will speak for me. So that’s where I see myself.... In a sense they are a rich resource....

NF And it’s how do we build a community of learners which becomes a little bit interdependent and self –sufficient and benefits everyone...

P Yes, and they are because we always make ... you do it without realising it... but I suppose it doesn’t happen in other schools and you feel a bit sad. But as far as I’m concerned our ethos is most important. We don’t have the brightest bunnies in the box here, it looks lovely but we’re a very mixed catchment; I have a third special needs in my Nursery and the women’s refuge in my catchment, it’s mostly social housing... But they’re fabulous, but if these children come up, like in achievement assembly it’s always we say “ well these children are extra clever because they are doing it in two languages”, I can’t speak two languages . So amongst the community here it’s raising the profile, so we don’t get the racist comments, because we do have parents here who ..... but you’ve got to then tread a very fine balance because they’ll say “well you are doing more for that community than you are for your own.”

NF That’s certainly an issue in London schools as well because it’s very mixed. You’ve got to be careful to also value the culture of the white indigenous children as well.

P Which is why we embrace everybody, but you’ve got to do it without just paying lip service ....it’s like holding on to things that are dear to you and what you consider

important... and for me it's that I'm a Christian, a committed Christian, and Christian values are very important to me and as far as I'm concerned they slip over to everybody and are important in our school, but I also respect the Turkish children and the Bengali children who of course are Muslim children. So, therefore, although our assemblies are predominantly Christian based, we do recognise... so if they have Ramadan... that we are inclusive. It's treading the line between.

NF It seems to me as if you are seeing the children's language as part of their identity and that the identity is not just about language difference it's about bigger issues as well like family and faith.

P Yes. The Bengali children... there's one family where we've always been invited to their Eid. I mean that's been for years and it's just really, really nice; they don't shout about it but they just always consider it important to invite me and the teacher who's got their child in her class at the time and it's lovely. But it takes a while to build up relationships like that.

NF And I suppose that's going to be the tension for a lot of Hampshire schools, suddenly getting these Polish children, perhaps not having had any at all, and not recognising, as you've got a wealth of other experience, that this isn't going to happen over night. It is going to be a bit of a struggle and ...

P And I think it's also about you know .... I don't know whether it's easier at KS 1, I don't know, the perception is that is might be...but we take them where they are. I wouldn't dream of these children being in a bottom group for the sake of their language. I was quite horrified that that's what happens in other schools.

NF It's a kind of panic response perhaps?

P Well they say that they need the support, but they don't always ....I mean C won't be in a bottom group, J is so he can learn his sounds, but he now knows all his sounds and he's best in his group and he's being moved on. I think that's fantastic.

NF That's all great, I think we'll stop it there.



**NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIA AUTUMN 2007**

NF: OK, I'll pop that on there. Is that all right?

P: Mm, fine.

NF: So, if we just talk about the packs and what's in them and (the order) to give them, that's absolutely fine.

P: To be honest that's quite good that you've started it because I'm in right at the beginning.

Yes, you are.

P: Yes, you are. If I can just – I can give you the background and how we went about – we decided, because we'd heard they were doing it at Key Stage 2, at a school in Basingstoke –

NF: Oh right.

P: Fairfield School.

NF: Right.

P: And VW, who's the lead EAL teacher there – because we all meet regularly –

NF: Is she on the TEAL course with you?

P: No, she's not doing the TEAL course, [BOTH PARTICIPANTS SPEAKING AT ONCE] she's just, I shouldn't say 'just', she's a lead teacher for EAL. And she decided not to do the TEAL course because she's only into her second year of teaching.

NF: Oh good grief. [LAUGHS] Yes, OK.

P: And so she decided, yes exactly. And when she was talking about it, I thought, "We could do that here," because of the number of children we do and we have done it. I do use children for help, I mean, I do that quite regularly because obviously you're

quite stumped if you don't know what they're saying and you have children who are quite willing, they're quite interesting, the Polish children are very willing to translate; the Bengali children aren't.

NF: So they're kind of shy, quieter, perhaps.

P: Yes.

NF: I mean, that's a very cultural stereotype.

P: Yes, but it's very noticeable.

NF: It is. It seems to be noticeable, right.

P: Yes, that they aren't so keen. And so what we did was, I talked to the children about what it was like for them when they came into our school, not knowing any English and what were the sort of things that would have helped them.

NF: How wonderful.

P: And they all said that a good friend, somebody who looked after them, was really, really important and somebody who could tell them what was going on and communicate with them.

NF: So you started with the children.

P: So we started with the children.

NF: Lovely.

P: So that was our starting point and they said about people smiling at them. It was quite interesting, the importance of people smiling at them and them knowing when they'd done something right.

NF: Right.

P: And this is quite young children articulating this. One little girl in particular, who's, she was a Year 2 last year, so she's moved from our school now, a Portuguese child who was in Year 1 when she came and she was wild, she really was a wildcat and her

turning point was when we had EMASS involvement and we had somebody who came to speak her language. But running alongside that she had a little friend who was just fantastic with her and she sort of defused everything and she said that that's what made the difference to her.

NF: Right.

P: But they all could articulate that it hurt inside; they felt bad. And they all said that.

NF: Gosh. And these were across Year R up to Year 2.

P: Year R up to Year 2.

NF: So even the youngest, the little ones.

P: Yes, now (Semba), who's a little Turkish girl who cried non-stop for a term, she was able to say that she just didn't like it. She didn't like it because she didn't understand what was going on. But the big thing for her was a little girl called Macy who was her friend, who was just wonderful. And it turns out it's Macy's sister, China, who was the good friend to the other girl, so this is a family that have something: their pastoral support. They're a real family –

NF: Yes. And these are a white, indigenous British family?

P: Yes, yes.

NF: Yeah? OK.

P: Very ordinary. Very sort of – it's a horrible thing to say, but – 'nothing special'.

NF: Yeah, yeah.

P: Except, they're a real family. And both these girls, their PSHE skills are excellent. So that's how we started and then I met with Debbie, who's also on my TEAL course who has EAL children at her school and she's in an infants' school as well in Basingstoke and we decided perhaps we would work something out together. And so we decided on the groupings – and obviously it's dependent on the children that you

have in the year group – so of course our big influx of Polish, if you like, who were in Year 2 have moved.

NF: Of course.

P: But we still have some Polish children, but we only have one Polish boy in Year 2 and then we have two in Year 1 and then we have another group in Year R, but we felt it was important to include Polish as part of the Young Interpreters scheme. And Caspar is just amazing, that's the little boy who's... 'Vauxhall Corsa'.(laughs)

NF: Laughs

P: And he is brilliant. So we decided, we each decided who we were going to have and I went for two Polish, one Portuguese, one Turkish and then two English speakers as the support mechanism. And one of these English speakers is the little girl who was so influential and she's only in Year 1, so it means we've got her for another two years. So I have six and they're going to have two training sessions and they're going to have training sessions about what does it mean to be an interpreter, actually revisiting all the things they told us about how they felt and how can they change that feeling in other people. And we're going to do a lot through role play, a lot of role play with them.

NF: So how have you – this all sounds very creative – has this come from you or has it come from talking to the other two EAL teachers? It's not something you've seen piloted somewhere else?

P: No, no. And I think you know the sort of things intuitively because when you teach very young children, in a sense there's no difference from the very young children starting our school, who are scared and worried and everything's different for them, to the children who come with no English. For some children it's traumatic, even having English, so you know the sort of things you would do with them to work alongside them. And so that would be part of the PSHE programme, so –

NF: And so in a way.. you're seeing...just listening to you talking about it, you're seeing that the language development as really first and foremost, really caught up with social development and personal of being, really.

P: That, the sense of belonging, I've just done actually for my TEAL course. My essay that's gone in to Portsmouth University was about self-esteem and identity impacting on progress.

NF: Right. In language development or just full stop?

P: Just the whole thing generally.

NF: Academic development.

P: Yes, because otherwise – but if you haven't got the language you can't actually achieve anyway. So to me the language acquisition is really, really important because unless they've got that and they can communicate, they don't move on. But obviously the big thing you have to be mindful of as well is what they already know.

NF: Right. What...in their own language?

P: In their own language, yes. So it's not coming from, not this assumption, which I think happened years ago, that just because you speak another language you actually don't know anything.

NF: You don't know anything, absolutely.

P: And I think we're much better these days but there is still a danger that some children can just be put in bottom groups because they're second language children.

NF: And its treated as an SEN rather than something really quite different?

P: Yes, yes.

NF: That all sounds brilliant. So the stage you're at now is you've identified the children you've –

P: We've identified the children and the parents have had a letter to say that they're going to be part of a group and that there will be a training and then they will be invited, when the children receive their badges – they're going to have a badge that says Young Interpreter – and when they get their badge, we'll have a big assembly.

And the parents will come along to that obviously because we want to make something of it.

NF: So it's going to have a kind of 'launch', as it were.

P: Yes, but there's also going to be another launch that Frances is organising and we're going to be launched under the Healthy Schools guise, in the ... health bit because that's where they think it sits.

NF: That's where it sits and where it, yes – I suppose in terms of wanting it to get maximum publicity, I suppose that's quite, that's very interesting.

P: Yes, and about children, yes. So it's actually going to be, so it's quite subtle really.

NF: Yes, it is. [LAUGHS]

P: And that, I'm not quite sure. Frances's... there's some dates flying around at the moment, but obviously next time I see you I can probably fill you in a little bit more. So it's been picked up by the Hampshire Healthy Schools team and that's Glyn Wright.

NF: Right, OK.

P: But what that's going to involve, I don't know. Whether, I know it involves workshops, but whether we take children or whether it's just us talking and saying what we've done.

NF: Talking about how you've worked with the children, yeah, yeah.

P: Yes, and how we've set it up. Now, one spin-off in a sense, but I think it's part of the same thing, for the Polish children is that we now have Polish club here.

NF: Oh right, OK. This is a new development, isn't it?

P: This is a new development. This came about because - I don't whether when you came last – four members of staff went on the ten-week course to learn Polish.

NF: That's right. I remember talking to your nursery staff about that.

P: Yes. I'm one of them, two nursery staff and Vera, who you'll be talking to as well. And we started, just in the morning, to say to the parents 'dzien dobry' and little, odd bits that we could say, and the parents were absolutely amazed and delighted and so they started to talk back and say things to us. And then Caspar said, "but we could help you, we could help you with your Polish." So they met us one lunchtime, and this was of course when we had all those little Polish girls as well in Year 2, and started this little group and they said, "well, we'll see you next week then," and so it came from them. So we've picked up again and we had one last week and it's much smaller so we have, it's all boys because we've lost the little Polish girl that we had, who bounced in and bounced out, bounced in and has now bounced out again. So we have Caspar in Year 1, sorry Caspar in Year 2, G in Year 1 and J in Year 1 and that was all we had. And then in the middle of all this we had a little boy arrived, a little Polish boy, who'd bumped his head or somebody had hurt his head, and the dinner lady couldn't understand what was happening because he just speaks to you the whole time, he doesn't stop speaking in Polish. Doesn't care that you can't answer, he just talks to you the whole time. And of course the Polish speakers, so the Young Interpreters as it were, were in with us and so he came in, like, "oh, didn't you see it, Marcel," and I said, "can you ask Marcel," so of course they're all [WHISPERS]. And of course they got it back, translated for us, so he stayed as well. Well, he had a ball and he kept saying, "po Polski, po Polski, po Polski," and it was really lovely; he couldn't believe that all this Polish was flying around. And we've bought – I don't know, have you seen the Badger box for Polish?

NF: No, no. Sorry, just before I look at them, the Polish club is for children in school?

P: Yes, it's for our Polish children.

NF: The children, they've created their own little club?

P: They've created their own club under the sort of auspices of helping the staff, the four staff, but what it's doing is, yes it's helping us, but the self-esteem thing, which is I think the key to all of this, is whoof! And where we weren't going to include the little ones, I think we probably will now because, looking at Marcel, and what happened with him –

NF: So he's Reception?

P: He's Reception. He's the one who speaks Polish the whole time. And then there is Alan and there's Emil.

NF: Who's Latvian. I met her in ....

P: Oh no, that's Emilla.

NF: And there's Nina, I'm sorry [Laughs].

P: That's Emilla, oh she's fine, yes. Lithuanian, she's gorgeous. No, there's Emil and there's Alan and Marcel. Oh no, sorry, no Emil's gone; it's Caspar. It's Caspar, it's a new Caspar. So we have three in Reception and I think we'll include them as well because if we're talking about self-esteem and about language and feeling safe and secure in an environment, then this is one way we can offer it.

NF: Isn't it fascinating, the thing that's starting to fascinate me a bit although it's completely off the point and I'm not supposed to be writing about it at all –

P: Would you like milk?

NF: Yes, thanks. Is that, and I'm sure it would have been exactly the same in my own school, that you had Bengali children for a long time but this same sort of thing hasn't happened. It's so different. [BOTH PARTICIPANTS SPEAKING AT ONCE]

P: No, and I've tried with my Bengali children, because we had Bengali children that used to cry and whatever, and we used to say, "can you ask them what's wrong?" And they'd just clam up.

NF: Right. It's just a massive cultural difference there.

P: Yes. The only one we've had in this last year was Alisha and she did, she did help us with the little one, but she was a particularly bright little girl and very confident. So,

no, they're not interested. They'll talk to each other in their own language but they're not prepared to share their language with anybody else.

NF: Or just have very different view of – certainly from my experience in East London, it would be that the families didn't feel it was appropriate to, kind of, push their own language forward at school because they wanted their children to be operating in the English language medium. So just a very different attitude to it really, perhaps.

P: But in a sense you could, particularly as an infants school, you know, where you're so open and they're seeing this actively happening with other children – I mean the Turkish, because I'm using Sema now, because there's a little Turkish girl and she's, it's her cousin but I mean she's speaking Turkish and English to her. So it's got huge spin-offs really. But they are funny, they are funny.

NF: ..and they're all boys, are they?

P: Yes.

NF: Yes, so that's interesting.

P: I've lost my girls, because I had three girls you see –

NF: Yes, right. But it's boys creating this social little network thing. I mean that in itself is interesting, isn't it.

P: This is the – You've seen this.

NF: Oh, that's the Badger thing, the Badger reading box.

P: This is the Badger box for Polish.

NF: OK.

P: This is the infant box. They do a junior box as well.

NF: And you can get these in a range of languages, presumably?

P: I've not, no, I think this, I've only seen it in Polish. And I think this is a new spin-off because of what's –

NF: Because of the number of new arrivals.

P: Because of the number of new arrivals.

NF: Really? Gosh.

P: And some of the stuff is in English but there's lovely – there's, like, a picture dictionary with the Polish words in and they love looking at this.

NF: I'm sure they do.

P: Because of course it's very different for our children, because they can't read the Polish but we try and say the word and because they know it they can then give us the correct pronunciation. They think it's hysterical.

NF: I'm sure they do. [LAUGHS]

P: And we're doing things like, we use these, these flashcards, this is their favourite, and they all have a pile of these and then they hold up the Polish and then they have to say 'Co to jest?' 'What is this?' and we have to say 'To jest' and say what it is. Well, of course some we do know, but trying to get –

P: Yes, but they're all a bit funny, but they dispute some of the things that they are.

NF: Ah.

P: Which is really quite interesting.

NF: What's on the picture you mean and the word P: Yeah, well they dispute the word that's been given.

NF: Yes, yes, absolutely. It's like L is for sheep, have you come across that?

P: And I'm like, (...) so now you don't know what's – so then we're saying “oh, that's not what it says here” and then they go (cross sounds of children) It doesn't matter at all.

NF: Well it's speaking and listening really.

P: Exactly. So we do a lot of that and they're just quite happy to do things, I mean it's not a high powered club or anything like that, it's much more a social network really.

NF: So the club is a little bit kind of self sustaining, where the children are just meeting and they just play with each other or there's a –

P: No, for all of use who learnt Polish, yes, because they're there under the auspices that you know, they're helping us.

NF: Right, ok. So how did you get to know about that? Did that just come through or - ?

P: It came as a flyer, because we have Badger books.

NF: Right and Badger's the reading scheme of course?

P: Yes the Badger boxes.

NF: Right, ok, interesting.

P: They certainly do a key stage 2 one as well.

NF: Right.

P: So that's sort of, you know, that's what we use, but in a sense it is all part of the same thing, because what I want to do is to create a climate where these children feel that they can speak their own language, but that also they're valued because we need them

to speak Polish for us and then to also speak English for us too and that seems to be working.

NF: So just to move on, I don't want to take up too much of your time.

P: No, that's fine, sorry I get a bit –

NF: No it's alright, it's so interesting.

P: So these are their folders and we've got six of these in different colours. So they've got a nice (snappy) note book and a pencil in there, so this is their kit as it were and stickers which they haven't got in there at the moment. So they're going to have a set of stickers, so they can give out stickers to people that they think have done something well or have they stopped crying? Or that sort of thing. So they're in charge of that sort of thing.

NF: Ok.

P: Then, these are our golden rules. And we've tried to make them visual as well for them and this is our behavior policy, so it's really important that we try and get them to understand that these – it's all the positives that they're going towards. So if they know what the golden rules are, they can tell the children, the other children what the golden rules are. And this is what – when we brainstormed with the children, the sort of things they said that they thought would have helped them. So this is what a Young Interpreter should be, they should be happy, give eye contact, be a friend and be helpful. I know it's quite simplistic, but for this age group –

NF: It's perfect isn't it.

P: This is it and then usual –

NF: And would it really be so different in Key Stage 3 or 4 in a way?

P: No it'd just have more sophisticated language, wouldn't it.

NF: So really that's what basic human social interaction is about isn't it?

P: So then it's use your note book to draw or write what you want to say and then the other thing that there are in the classrooms, and they will take, are the fans.

NF: Right.

P: You know the fans?

NF: With – I can think of phoneme fans?

P: Oh have you not seen the fans?

NF: Not for translation, no.

P: Oh right, well they're basically fans with just pictures on.

NF: Right.

P: Vera, we've made packs for the LSAs, I know Vera wants to show you some of those because she's very proud of everything she's done and we've got packs of – and all the fans have gone into the packs, I thought I had some spares in here. They're basically, I think we downloaded them from Sparkle Box.

NF: Right.

P: Have you seen the Sparkle Box stuff?

NF: No.

P: Oh it's a wonderful site, oh yes it's fantastic and you can get games and things. Vera's got all of that, she must have them and it's got, I think there's twelve things on the fan, so there's toilet, there's a picture of a toilet, there's drink, there's I feel sad and there's some tears and there's I feel ill and all those sort of things. So that if there really is a problem the children can use the fans.

NF: Right ok, that's a lovely example of something really supportive isn't it?

P: Yes and they're in every classroom and every classroom has a pack and in this pack there are all sorts of things, but the fans are in the pack.

NF: Right. So can we talk about the children as translators then, how is that going to move forward? So you've got these six in the school, they're going to –

P: They're going to have their training.

NF: And then how will it kind of work do you think?

P: Well it'll be that, what I want to know, I want other members of staff as well as children to know that these children exist and that these children can be used and particularly in reception or in the nursery, that if you have somebody with that language, or you need somebody like Ciara and Macy to go alongside somebody, then they can.

NF: Right, ok.

P: So that's how we see it and particularly for new arrivals.

NF: Right, so they'll be used within the class that they're in basically?

P: No, no throughout the school.

NF: Ok.

P: No, I don't want it to stay in the class.

NF: Right.

P: Because there may be somebody with that language – you know, as part of Young Interpreters we're not using any reception children, because they're too little, but it's in reception they often need somebody to go and interpret. Like the dinner lady bought

this little one in, so they will know, the dinner ladies will know if you like, oh gosh, I need to speak to Caspar or I need to speak to G.

NF: Ok, and do you have any worries about that affecting the progress of the children who are the translators? So if they're being taken out of class or - ?

P: No I wouldn't just take them out like that, no we would wait until an appropriate moment.

NF: Ok right.

P: Until we've sort of started, it's hard to know.

NF: Absolutely.

P: But no I don't envisage them coming out of lessons. I mean playtime is a good time or assembly time is a good time and lunch time, so no they shouldn't miss their lessons.

NF: And what about the parents, how have they responded?

P: Oh absolutely thrilled.

NF: They're pleased?

P: Yes very much so.

NF: Good, that's nice.

P: So they will obviously come then to the assembly when we launch it and we want to make quite a big thing about it.

NF: Yes. If I can, I'd love to come.

P: Oh yes, we'll let you know, we would like the press there as well.

NF: Absolutely.

P: But Debbie and I would quite like to run it at the same sort of time, because we said it's not – we don't want it to look as though it was just one school.

NF: So you've got this other school, this is not –

P: This is Southview.

NF: Right.

P: Infants, they've got a nursery as well.

NF: Ok.

P: But they've got Chinese and Nepali families are much more there.

NF: Ok.

P: Although saying that, you see we've got – our Nepali's have gone up as well.

NF: Yes, because one of them's an example in the chapter) isn't she, it was Mary who comes out as Kanti in the chapter..

P: Yes, I mean I've got now – yes we're up to – we have fourteen percent EAL in the nursery, nineteen in reception, eighteen percent in Year 1 and twelve percent in Year 2.

NF: Right.

P: And out of those I mean it's Bengali, Polish, Hindi now and Nepalese.

NF: Right.

P: Are our growing -

NF: It seems to be a thing across the county of the Nepalese actually.

P: Yes.

NF: I mean there have always been Ghurka families here haven't there?

P: Yes, but we've never had them, we've sort of go five now.

NF: Yes.

P: All little girls actually.

NF: Right. Ok that's great really. Is there any way I can photocopy or anything, any of the resources in the packs?

P: Yeah of course you can, yes of course you can.

NF: Because it would just be lovely to just talk to – I've got this lecture in a few weeks time to my students.

P: I can't.

NF: Never mind, but if I could just say – do you mind if I name the school?

P: No.

NF: It's nice to sing your praises really, and say this is what's going on, it's a lovely example.

P: So if I photocopy those two?

NF: Yes that would be great, thanks.

### **NF THIRD INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIA SUMMER 08**

NF: Fine ok right, so you got the questions through.

P: I have yes.

NF: Obviously these are follow up's to the interview, and if there are things you want to say. Oh and you've done the...thanks that's great, that's the background thing. Lovely, brilliant. That's the kind of statistical stuff about each case, lovely. Were you happy with the transcript?

P: Yes absolutely. Oh what did I put?

NF: Apart from the fact that it looked so silly, was there anything that you felt hadn't got picked up, that...

P: No, the only thing, does spellings matter?

NF: No not at all.

P: That's fine.

NF: No spellings don't matter, and obviously, at the minute it is not anonymised, but if it were to go anywhere near anything that were to go into the public domain, obviously everything would be completely anonymised. Just for me at the minute, if I anonymise everything I don't know what to call everybody.

P: No that's absolutely...exactly that's fine then, I just thought I would check with you.

NF: At the moment I need to check with your names, yes that's fine. Hang on to that. Ok, so the first thing I wanted to focus on was the children as translators project, and if you could just talk me through how it's progressed.

P: Right.

NF: The young interpreter's project.

P: Yes, so we have completed our training, and we had four sessions with the children, and they lasted about twenty to twenty five minutes I suppose. The first session was very much related to feelings and how they felt when they came to school. It was really important to try and get through the idea that everybody feels sad, it doesn't matter whether you speak the same, you know speak a different language or not, what was really interesting that came out of that was that Zusa, who joined the school later, had no problem, well not no problems, but she came into school very happy because there were children who spoke her language.

NF: Ah, so you are already seeing some kind of spin off already, right, so when did she... she's come in since I saw you?

P: She came in October.

NF: Right.

P: September or October time, and of course, but I hadn't done this, so I didn't know, it was only when we started the training that we decided because she has actually got quite good English, but she is also quite a sensitive little girl and we thought she would be somebody who would be quite good with Polish children. And she actually said that, her words were that she didn't feel that sad, and it was because she had the help from the other children.

NF: Oh I see, what it says here is, I like speaking to other children in Polish and speaking to Gabriel and Jacob that made me feel happy. So that's interesting isn't it so she had the benefit of an established group of children here.

P: Yes. Whereas the others didn't, although you see Gabriel said I quite liked it in the nursery but I was happy to come into school because I could speak some English. And there was this notion that because he could make himself understood, that it was a lot easier. And it was nice that they realised that the two English children also cried, so the English speaking children said 'I cried'. And Macey said that she was scared, and she didn't like lunchtimes, so, and they thought it was really funny when Mrs V said that she cried, and she missed her mummy. So we just did this whole first session

on feelings and we talked about how important it was to have somebody just to look after you.

NF: So this was exploring it for them in order that they could then emphasise with new arrivals themselves. And these answers, Zusa is year one?

P: Yes, we have only got Uri and Kiara are both year two and the other children are all one. We decided to use two year two children, Uri has just made so much progress and he also, his self-esteem has got better and better, it was a really good way of raising his self-esteem. And Kiara is just, well Kiara is Kiara, she is a wonderful little girl, yes. So obviously they are not going to be here, so we will start again perhaps with a couple more, although we can run with these children, but we already have a little girl in reception earmarked for being...taking the place of Kiara. An English speaking child who has just done wonders with a little Nepalese girl and a little Polish girl who just would not speak.

NF: Was that Mary from?

P: Yes.

NF: I know Mary from the nursery.

P: Yes, Mary is talking.

NF: Oh hurrah! That's wonderful.

P: Mary is only just talking. There is a lot of reasons, we have a specific EAL group working on the story sack and she's been out in a very small group, and she has made a huge bond with one of the LSAs. And it's gradually, she has got braver and braver and last week in achievers assembly she was chosen to be the achiever, for talking, and she came and sat on my chair and I said are you going to say something. And in a big voice in front of everybody, she said 'Hello Mrs P'.

NF: In front of the whole school?

P: Yes.

NF: Gosh that's an extraordinary achievement.

P: It was wonderful, everybody was Ohooo! So you know it's worth, you know, a hundred level three's and goodness what else.

NF: Absolutely, sure.

P: What we are here for.

NF: Lovely.

P: So, but one of the other reasons as well she is speaking, she is a lovely little girl called (Demilee), who is going to be another Macey, another Kiara. So I'm thinking that I may keep this group as it is, and then just bring in another English speaker, because it will make a group of six, which is a nice little group.

NF: In fact that was one of my next questions, I was wondering whether it was home languages or personalities or what?

P: It was a mixture.

NF: That decided the criteria for selection.

P: Originally the criteria for the selection was that we seemed to be getting a lot of Polish children, so therefore we decided we would have more Polish speakers. And we also, in fact had a few more Turkish children. And then when we talked about it, V and I, we decided that perhaps it was going to be a mixture of both. And we were going to have six. And the seven came about because Zusa joined us, so six is a better number. So when Kiara and Uri go, we probably will replace with Demilee, and keep...so we will only have Polish and Turkish. However, should the need arise, depending on what we've got coming in in the nursery, but we have got some Polish, we have got Turkish coming in.

NF: So you still have got Polish new arrivals?

P: Yes, very few now.

NF: But it's because the news seems to be suggesting that they are all going home, but I wondered if that was just the younger, we can't know can we, if it was just the younger ones who have come to kind of work for college, or I wondered if the families were staying, have you any sense of that?

P: Ours seem to be...the only one that we had that went home, went home for financial reasons because they actually came into money in Poland.

NF: Ok.

P: But none of our others have gone. They've either, they have either transferred over to the junior school or they have moved somewhere else and transferred to another school. I know we have got two coming in reception.

NF: Ok right. So it's the first and then moved on.

P: We moved on the purpose of the second session was also about feelings and about the importance of visual, using visuals.

NF: Right.

P: And so I decided to use the story that I could read. I mean my French isn't wonderful, but I could read the French, and so I chose "The little red hen" in French and I covered up the cover, and well no actually, sorry I digress, I started first of all, and I spoke in French and I introduced myself, Je m'appelle Madam Perry, and then they went round and we modelled and so by the time it got round to Zusa. Who was the last one, she picked up straight away and she said Je m'appelle Zusa, she understood. And then we did numbers, so we gave them number cards and we did un, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six and then were doing them in order. There again she was very, very good, she seemed to cotton on very quickly, but there were a lots of blank looks. And then I did "The little red hen" in French and I didn't show any pictures and I just read the first few pictures, that was really funny their reactions. I mean well they were, "how could I understand that when I didn't know what you were talking about". You see Sema said I needed some pictures to help, so that's from an EAL point of view, Zusa said you said my number in the story, well I did I said trois.

NF: Right.

P: So she is somebody very attuned to language.

NF: Ok, yes.

P: Tells us that she has got a lot of that. Then I read the story again showing the pictures and they began to join in. And when I said “it is not I said the cat it is not I said the dog” in French, they began to chant it.

NF: Right so repartition came in the rhyming as it were, yes.

P: And then I said well you know, did it help when you saw the pictures, and straight away, “I said the pictures would help I know that story”, and Jacob, “I know that story in Poland”.

NF: That’s interesting isn’t it, so it’s a traditional tale that crosses boundaries by the sounds of things.

P: We had that story in our class, when I was saw the pictures I understood better, and Kiara, “when I saw the pictures it helped me remember some of the words because they were the same”. So this idea of the repetition, so that was actually very, you know, they said it was easier to follow if they had a visual clue and we talked about how important it was when someone doesn’t understand. And they confirmed...the EAL said that was what it was like when they started school, it was, it was just what it was like for them, not understanding, so that was a really good session. And Kiara actually articulated what it must be like for the EAL children.

NF: So she is in perfect empathy there.

P: Then the third session we did like little role plays and we had three scenarios exploring feelings and we divided into two groups, so the first scenario was a child had started in your class and you see them on their own at playtime, what can you do? And this is, we were talking about EAL pupils, we weren’t talking about, although it could be any other children as well, and we broke them up and we just brain stormed on a piece of paper and then we got together to share the ideas. And they were very

much, it was show the friendships stop, and the playground friend hat, smile at them and get them to play with you, draw a picture in your notebook and show the fans, act out what you want to say.

NF: So this was things coming from them?

P: This was all from them.

NF: Wonderful, so they really picked up, they had understood what you know the things that you were modelling for them.

P: Yes so what we had done before, and then the bit about the scenario two, a child doesn't understand the word car, how could you help, show a model of a car, they were really, really good, draw a picture of a car, act out driving a car and say the word. If they speak your language, say the word in your language and then in English.

NF: Fantastic, they are little teachers aren't they?

P: They are, they are wonderful, but all they are doing is modelling what they are seeing happening every day in their class.

NF: Right.

P: You know which is really important. Then the third scenario was, you are asked to speak to a child who speaks the same language as you, there is a problem that needs sorting out, the child does not speak English, what could you do? And there was 'speak in your home language, ask what's wrong'. This is an interesting one, two of them said this, 'tell them there is nothing to be scared of.'

NF: Right.

P: So obviously this idea that there's a...you are scared if you don't know what's going on.

NF: The fear of not understanding.

P: Which I thought was you know that was quite powerful.

NF: Very interesting

P: And then it's get its actions in your notebook, and then about sharing a text with a child who can't read English. And it was all about the visuals, and then tell them what the pictures are about and use actions, they were really into actions. And then the last session which we've literally only just done, was really just to recap on everything. So we recapped on, because in a way it's been difficult because three of the Polish pupils went away before the Easter holidays, we had a break, we managed to do the first three sessions three weeks in succession and then there's been a gap of about four weeks.

NF: Right.

P: So we have recapped on absolutely everything and they haven't forgotten.

NF: No, it's been quite good in a way hasn't it to go over it again.

P: We would have had a recap session, it was just it would have been easier if we had been able to get them out there going. The big thing for them is they can't wait to get the badge, their young interpreters badge, they are really excited about that one, and we had to look at them, and ooh and aahed them, because you know they have arrived, and then we went through the packs and we decided that it would, before the assembly, it would be good if they had a little go, so we are starting on this next week. They are going to have a little go at being interpreters.

NF: Great.

P: And use their skills, and it's really very much in its early stages, so it's, you know we are just... obviously this time next year we could be telling you something quite different.

NF: It will be really interesting to see how it comes out won't it?

P: Yes so obviously it will be on the evaluation, it will be on the strategic plan.

NF: Great.

P: It's on the strategic plan now, but it will be on the strategic plan again, for obviously monitoring.

NF: And it's felt like a lot of work, but you're already starting to see kind of you know, spin off's and you know. I'm wondering about the Bengali children, and whether they might come in to it at all.

P: I'm hoping they will, they...the Bengali children that we have, tend to speak quite good English, they are children, they are sort of second generation and third generation.

NF: Ok, it doesn't feel...the need isn't there, it doesn't feel so urgent.

P: Even though they do speak to each other in their home language, out in the playground, but they show no desire or wish to be used to interpret, if there has been a problem, it's actually been a problem getting them to talk in their home language.

NF: Ok, that's very interesting, and I hadn't realised, I hadn't, well you had told me and I just hadn't kind of clocked it, of course they are not the new arrivals, obviously they are not, they are second generation.

P: And their families...

NF: So their families are particularly...

P: And their families that are known to us as such that perhaps Aunties and Uncles have been through our school.

NF: So it's almost like an indigenous population, rather than...

P: Yes and it's not that we would exclude them.

NF: No the need isn't there, so completely different.

P: And some also for some of the other children, where you've only got one language, so we have a little boy who's Italian, well he's no more ready to be an interpreter than fly, because he's still very, very much struggling. I mean he is still you know, repeating everything you say, which is wonderful, so he's just, as it is he is just

holding his own, doing what he is doing. I'm trying to think, the Nepali children, now Rebecca, Mary's sister is somebody we did think, but she has struggled a little bit with just keeping her head above water in the class, but it maybe that we say in September, because we do have quite a little Nepali group, that we say Mary would you like to be part of this group. Because she is actually very good at speaking her own language. Whereas another little Nepali girl who transferred in, who is an absolute card, she would be wonderful, she will not speak it at school at all.

NF: Ok, so there's lots of individual difference things that you have to take into account as well as the languages, yes right.

P: As part of that, they are going to be filmed on that day when they get the badges, for the Hampshire pack, and there's going to be, F has organised, and this is like a draft, the Hampshire young interpreter guidance pack.

NF: So this is part of an authority wide initiative in fact, but you're, or are you the kind of catalyst?

P: No it has never actually been done, at the stage one before, no we are the new...what happened was two people within our TEAL group, no sorry our leading teachers group, V W at F School, has got it at key stage two, and they were the first to do it at key stage two in this area.

NF: Oh that's, yes I got your thing about...that's the kind of partner school you set it up with.

P: No, no, the partner school I set it up with is South View Infants school.

NF: Yes ok.

P: Vicky does it at key stage two. And it was when she talked about it, we said ah, we could do that at key stage one. And [Alari] has done it for the secondary sector, she is part of our group as well, so it is something that has come from our leading teachers group if you like. But it's going to be known as Hampshire Young Interpreter's Scheme Guidance, and it goes right up to, we put the training in, we have put all the links, cross curricular links. so the links to citizenship the links to PSHE and then it's

key stage three, so this is the...everything that we have done and there will be a DVD to go with it, which our school will be on the DVD.

NF: Lovely.

P: For the key stage one, so that teachers will be able to access it.

NF: So that's being produced over time at the moment?

P: Yes this is our latest, this is what we are working on at the moment as a group.

NF: And is it with a view to it being published, what during next year?

P: Yes I presume F will, I think F would really like it up and running next school year.

NF: Really that's quite a short time.

P: Well we are virtually done, I mean all our training is done. The filming, I mean the filming is retrospective, so we will set up scenarios again, but the children will know what to do. And we will see you know, what happens.

NF: It's really fascinating isn't it, I'm very lucky that I came in on the beginning of it.

P: Yes, it's quite exciting.

NF: It's a nice coincidence there.

P: Yes, quite exciting and F is very pleased because obviously there was some money that came for lead teachers and also for our, well obviously we've got to earn our money as it were well, F was saying you more than earn your money if you produce something like this. But it's also been good to be part of this as well.

NF: Absolutely, so where I am saying here, tell me about the response of the local authority, actually the local authority is part and parcel of it, isn't it?

P: Yes through EMAS.

NF: Yes ok.

P: I mean F has very much driven this.

NF: Right. Be interesting to talk to F, I wonder if there is anyone else in the Authority beyond EMAS who is kind of engaged in it, any of the English team or anything like that.

P: I don't know I don't think so. I would think Ian Massey might be.

NF: Yes I think so too.

P: But I think very much it has been left to...

NF: Well it's their brief isn't it?

P: When I went to the leading teacher's conference, we were very much, Vicky and I went and we were very much the poor relations. People were like, how can you be a teacher for EAL you know, I'm a lead teacher for English, and it was a very much...

NF: Really.

P: I did go up and speak to Trevor I think it was, Trevor Walker, and I did speak to him afterwards, and say that I felt that you know, I didn't like that very much.

NF: Well that was, sorry that was other leading teachers in other subjects you mean?

P: Oh yes.

NF: As if how could you be a lead teacher with EAL because...

P: Because it didn't really matter, I think was the sort of...

NF: OK that interests me.

P: But that's what you felt?

NF: Yes sure.

P: And nobody particularly wants to work with us, they all felt that their subject was far more important.

NF: Right because this all felt a bit, oh well touchy feely.

P: And I only have, I mean the number of times I've heard "oh it doesn't matter to me because I only have two in my school", and you just think, well what about those two children. So obviously they are not being catered for.

NF: Because you wouldn't say it doesn't matter if I only have two children who are autistic or two...if it was a more in your face special need.

P: In fact it matters more when you have only got two, because actually it's a head ache isn't it.

NF: I think it must be much harder, it's the kind of reason for doing this research to be honest.

P: And we know that, and we've struggled all this time, and we've struggled without any help at all, but you just put in place as much as you can. I mean I've learnt huge things since I have been the course, certainly the TEAL course, you know.

N F: It's been good hasn't it?

P: Yes it's been wonderful, yes.

NF: What about the club the Polish club?

P: Well yes we, it's, they're a funny little lot they really are. It's very social, it's not intended, to me it's very much about self-esteem and they really do feel that they are helping us, you know. So when we say things in Polish, they laugh at us, and make us say it again, then they fall out with each other because somebody says "oh no you don't say it like that, say it like this". So it's quite amusing really, but it is lovely and they do enjoy it.

NF: So in terms of, you mentioned the, I put it down in this question here actually, this relationship of language development and self-esteem a lot, and is that, that's, isn't that something you are pursuing in your..?

P: No I did it, that was my first essay, my essay that went in, and yes it was about raising standards for EAL pupils and one of the ways that you raise standards for them is, by raising their self-esteem. And I mean that's the same for everybody, but one of the ways of raising their self-esteem is of course hearing their language spoken, and it being valued by people.

NF: So do you...was that something you brought to the TEAL course and you already knew do you think, just from your work with those children.

P: I think it was, yes I think it was, what it was I did know it, but it was a case of actually then finding the evidence for it.

NF: Right, so then engaged with a kind of research basis about it.

LOP: It was very small action research because it was only, I mean it's so few words that you had to do, I think it was only was it three thousand words, which isn't very much. So it was just a small part of action research, and that's what I chose to do, because in fact what I wanted to do was, I wanted my findings to bear out my hypothesis as it were.

NF: Yes ok, ok.

P: Which it did, and you know making sure as part of the self-esteem it was the parents being valued, things that we can do in home language, you know when is it...when should we be doing letters in the home language and when should you be doing letters in English. Trying to get the parents in, because you saying about the Bengali families, now we have worked, we have always had a really good relationship with them, but they are, they tend to step themselves back a little bit, one or two mums have been you know, they have come forward and offered things. Today for the first time in all these years that I have been here, one of the mums has just asked me to do all their passports. I've got four passport to do, and she said "oh I've got a friend who would love to come in and talk to the children, I know you do about Muslims, I know Ismail's mum does it and he will be going to the junior school, so you won't have her anymore, my friend will do it for you".

NF: Wonderful, that's great isn't it?

P: After all those years I've laboured to try and get somebody.

NF: So perhaps slowly there is something developing there, and I sometimes wonder if they're are kind of aware of other things going on, I mean you know, and the stuff going on with Polish children, I wonder if it makes them feel they can come forward.

P: Yes and whether also, yes it makes you know, and the last thing we wanted to make as if it looked as if we were a Polish ghetto school, because we are not, and that's, I mean I have got a lovely display up, down the corridor of maps and pictures of all the children and where they come from and the languages they speak. And a lot of response from all children and parents.

NF: Lovely.

P: Very interested, now whether that has helped as well, you know they do value them.

NF: So I wonder in terms of, so there has obviously been a kind of a mixture of, you already had all this kind of prior knowledge and experience with the children will the EAL in school, and then you took it to the TEAL course and that's made you, presumably feel quite more fine about it, and so on.

P: I think it's because I've done a lot more reading, so I think I understand more.

NF: Right.

P: I think I knew what I knew, and I knew a lot of things intuitively, which sounds a little bit big-headed, you know.

NF: But that's how teachers operate though isn't it.

P: You know I do...

NF: Intuitive, isn't it.

P: Also you know you gradually, you grow with it, and it always interests me, from when I was actually teaching rather than you know being the head teacher. However, the background reading you know, scales fell from my eyes, when I actually read things, that I understood better, so things like you know comings and all the research made

sense to me. So actually, the course, the TEAL part of the course rather than the essay writing is incredibly tedious, but the actually TEAL part of the course was superb.

N F: And so do you think, it's hard to see because you're looking from inside as it were, that your own enthusiasm for and excitement about the whole provision for EAL thing, has rubbed off on all of your staff. And do you think, do you feel confident that your teachers feel like you do about it, as it were?

P: I don't think they all feel like that, but what I would say now is that EAL children in our school, it wouldn't matter which class they were in, they are all getting the same provision, which I don't think happened before. You still have one or two who perhaps are a little bit, well they have just got to do what the others are doing, and you will always get that. However, we have had you know, a change of staff and gradually as people come in it's on the school development plan and it's on now, as far as I am concerned it's always on, with an ongoing.

NF: Ok.

P: So that's good, we have a wonderful closure day, beginning when we came back after Easter, so that was the twenty first of April. We went down to the intercultural centre, at Southampton and Minnie did us a day an insect day and the school paid for the coach, we went by coach, and lunch, and I took everybody, all my LSAs as well.

NF: Great.

P: So everybody heard the same thing and although it was about diversity rather than particularly EAL it's all part of a rich...

NF: It is.

P: It all goes into the melting pot.

NF: Oh I know, absolutely, as you say when the whole self-esteem language thing is about diversity, cultural identity, language isn't it, yes it's very hard to separate actually.

P: And that was wonderful and it was lovely to see staff so excited about resources.

NF: Great, that's the Southampton one you went to?

P: Yes the one down at (S...) Warren.

NF: Rather than the Hampshire ones, so you were kind of going out of authority there.

P: Well all the Hampshire schools use it, because what they do is, you can borrow anything. It's all free of charge and you can have thirty items, and you have a return label and you take it to South Ham library, and then you can order anything else and you can pick it up from South Ham Library.

NF: Is that from South Ham library.

P: Just round the corner.

NF: Right I didn't realise there was that as well.

P: Fantastic.

NF: Ok and that's kind inter authority?

P: And Dillon, do you know Dillon Theodore.

NF: Yes I've met Dillon.

P: Well Dillon's in one of the sessions.

NF: Great, he is very powerful isn't he?

P: Yes he's quite amusing.

NF: Yes.

P: And Minnie is fabulous.

NF: Yes, I haven't met Minnie.

P: Oh she is wonderful, well she is very passionate about it all. And what was good about it, it did raise awareness of what's in your book corner. I mean we know the library's because you know [Nish] is quite sensitive to that because obviously,

originally the English was not her first language, so she's you know she is incredibly sensitive to the type of books we need. But you know, it's when you go to the library, for your library change, what are you looking for.

NF: Yes ok, so you have got that sense of staff, because you have got, you spoke about a lot of resources when I was last speaking, using the sparkle box and so on, all-sorts. .

P: Oh yes, yes so every teacher...

NF: Are they used across the classes?

P: Yes every teacher has a pack which V as helped make, and every teacher has got the fans and they have got the QCA, the aid memoir that V made, and anything else that we get is shared at a staff meeting and then it goes into the pack.

NF: Ok, so people eyes are opened first and then it's given out, ok. And do you get a sense that teachers are using these fairly consistently or?

P: Yes I think they are.

NF: Or Ta's are or...

P: Oh the TA's more than the teachers, because often, it depends whose group they're working in. We do try, G obviously has the majority of the year one and EAL's in class and that was done deliberately, and it was done because of V as well, because she's done the SEAL course, and very supportive, of course what it has done is, G just thinks it's wonderful, so she is totally on board.

NF: Right.

P: So that's a new member of staff who's never actually had EAL pupils, totally smitten by the whole gambit of it.

NF: Good, that's great isn't it, so she's, yes, and that's really interesting to know as when I last spoke to her, she had only been in four weeks I think, so you know.

P: But she will tell you the same, I mean she has had awful problems, she probably will tell you about, there has been a problem with the three Polish children, when Zusa

arrived, that it's put Gabriel and Jacob or Korbush, as he like to be known, put his nose out of joint, so they're always falling out and having problems. And it is going to mean that next year we are going to have to split them, because it's caused so...

NF: Socially it's been difficult.

P: So yes, and I think we just have to, yes we know all the rationale now about, they are better in the same class. However, whether their language has come on such a lot, I don't think it will hurt them in any way shape or form.

NF: Great, and then I think the last question I have was about, because you have got a kind of expanding number of languages and ethnic groups, do you think it's affected your medium term planning, and the sort subjects you cover or anything like that?

P: No I don't think so. I think when people are planning, they are very mindful of who there is in the class, so if there is a way of using, you know a cultural background, ethnicity or whatever, that would become part of the planning, but I don't think so, not particularly at our age.

NF: No, yes I suppose that might influence a curriculum perhaps more at key stage two?

P: Yes.

NF: You might decide to do different historical things or whatever.

P: Yes exactly with different sort of role models for the children, very much for us, because we are doing the basics.

NF: Yes.

P: I don't think it affects, I mean I think it's what I said to you before though, that what has changed is being more aware of diversity and the way we've decided to tackle that as a school is to actually be looking at how PSHE plans. And so to go in that way, because obviously if we can get some of the tolerance and the we are all different, regardless of you know, where you were born, but we all can bring something you know, and "I'm good at this" and "I'm good at that". But so it permeates right through. G and myself and Anna are on the PATHS course, which is sort of a nurturing part of

training for PHSE, and on the second day we have got to take our plans and we've decided that what we would like to do, is to have a look at them for the diversity aspect.

NF: Right so in a way it has, you are thinking ok we need to look a little bit at what...yes is it to do with looking at it in terms of the coherence of it across the year groups and what...

P: Yes and actually there is good continuity, so it's not just happening in pockets.

NF: Yes ok, great I think that's all I wanted to ask today well it's an awful lot actually. Is there anything else that I haven't covered that you...

P: No that's fine.

N F: Good, lovely, ok.

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH PETER AUTUMN 2008

NF: Ok I'll just leave it there and it picks us up. If you could just sign that one and date it that's useful. [Pause] Great, so we'll just try and keep it as conversational as possible really and I guess what's useful is if you just talk to me about your background first, because you already alluded to the fact that you've got some experience teaching EAL already.

P Yes, I taught for a few years in the London Borough of Haringey in Primary schools and there were quite big groups within the schools I taught in, who were from different ethnic backgrounds, different linguistic backgrounds, children who were recent, well immediate arrivals from far parts of the world so it wasn't just the odd child like the situation I am now in, mind you that was a long time ago.

NF: Ok so talk to me about the situation now because when Sue rang me I think in the summer when I sent the letter expressing interest, she said you have got one child who has come in, is that right?

P: Yes in this class and my class there is one Polish speaking child and all the other children are English sort of...

NF: White indigenous.

P: Not mixed families or anything or even from particularly different parts of the country really.

NF: Ok and she is just arrived or she has been here a while or -?

P: She has started in September, she made some visits in July, one or two visits in July, I'm not sure why in a way she did not start - well she may have been in the country from about June, her father has been working here for perhaps two or three years and now he has been joined by his wife and by V, and V's brother or sister, I'm not sure which, he's a bit younger.

NF: Ok so is that child kind of gone to infant school or down to the junior's, in the infant school.

P: Yes.

NF: Ok right so really no English at all or almost no English when she came in September for you then?

P No, no English really, I mean her Father speaks a bit but it's - his language is limited to the vocabulary of, well he's working at a camp site at the moment so he's got very good vocabulary to do with calor gas heaters and how they are fitted and so on, but you know it's limited that way, his wife doesn't speak English she's only just come over at the same time as V so -

NF: What about the school, has the school got much history of having children who don't speak English in?

P: No.

NF: No, none at all?

P: Well there's a child in year six who started in year five almost the same as V, he's from Thailand and I haven't done any teaching with him but the school has had that experience of one child, as an individual and how you try and help support him in the school, and also it is interesting seeing him from my point of view a year down the line and seeing ok how far it has come, but also the problems he still has, you know even that far down in terms of accessing the curriculum and really sort of learning and being able to express himself and so on.

NF: Right ok so that's really interesting for me because the other schools I've been into haven't quite such a stark contrast as it were, to the one child arriving as it were, which is kind of what I was expecting to find, so it's really nice to be here. The way in which I want to explore this to some extent, talking with teachers around their classroom practice for English generally, or the way in which, I mean thinking of English both in kind of specific sense and in a cross curricular sense, and then talking with them around how that's difficult or different as it were for EAL, so just to kind of break that down. Thinking of your children if V isn't here, if you are just teaching a whole class of white indigenous English speaking children, what are the sorts of things

that you would usually do that would kind of encourage speaking and listening for example?

P: Asking children to explain things, asking children to read things out and say what does it mean? Talking with each other, and by year five there is a lot of written material; either giving instructions or to work with and manipulate so the spoken and the written language is so dominant and quite extensive by year five, the vocabulary in year five and also I mean to a certain extent my mind thinks further than just the English but think of maths or Science, the vocabulary is so specific and unique it's to some extent it's a completely new to the English indigenous speaking children. But you explain it by relying on their extensive vocabulary and you know using similar words that perhaps will help them understand what the new technical word is.

NF: That's an interesting point of view, so you are saying that generally children by year five have got quite a sophisticated, or need to have quite a sophisticated level of vocabulary to access the curriculum but at introducing that as you said you know that they have already got X years worth of introduction to other vocabulary beforehand, which I mean is going to allow them to understand that new concept and that new vocabulary, ok. I have got no sense of what the catchment's like here in terms of what children arrive at school here with, socio-economically as it were.

P: I haven't got any technical knowledge you know sort of what goes on in pips and things that get sent off to OFSTED but it's a, I wouldn't say middle of the range, it's not a particularly deprived area although almost like everywhere there are little pockets or families who you know, there are various forms of either financial or social deprivation, and you know some very tragic sort of circumstances with children and their families as well, but broadly speaking they are a bit more settled than that, that they have got extended family beyond the nuclear family nearby.

NF: So you don't necessarily have children coming in who need support with spoken English, it's fairly kind of. – attainment's fairly average then?

P: Well yes ok.

NF: I'm not trying to put words into your mouth I'm just trying to explore because sometimes in schools -

P: It's partly how much you want me to extrapolate as well.

NF: No that's alright. I'll come back to that later anyway. So in terms of reading and writing what would you say are the kind of main things you do or in terms of getting children reading or getting children writing when they are just operating in their first language, is there anything you can identify as kind of characterising your English teaching?

P: Well if I pick up some English planning just as a way in -

NF: Yes that's useful.

P: Today's planning or two or three days next week the English planning has been looking at some different written English novels and looking at how the authors open the books and introduce the characters, and it's quite complex strategies that they use, they are using dialogue or what the setting is or if it's just descriptive writing, so you know when you look at this and you think of a child like V you think well how do they, they can't access that on the surface they can't access that. On the other hand if you like a principal of what I think I need to be working with for her, is to allow her the same experience and the same access as the children in the class are having, but some things are quite profound to turn it round and make it meaningful.

NF: I mean by year five you have got children who are quite confident writers haven't you? Quite fluent writers I mean obviously that's a terrible generalisation, I'm sure you have got children in here who need support as well.

P: Yes a big range.

NF: Yes, so do you still include a lot of kind of talk for writing or role play or that sort of thing, in order to get them writing for example, a way of building up vocabulary or do they -

P: Well those strategies are used, but when you say a lot, a lot relevant to who, what, where, I mean, yes you know quite a lot of chatting with each other in little snaps, sometimes role playing things, not just in English but in could be History or in Geography or whatever, so those techniques are used but in a way because the children by and large, and there exceptions in every class within the school and mine as well, you can rely on the children being able to access quite a lot of learning through the written word, either reading it and interpreting it or you know writing it themselves, so possibly on a relative scale beyond the confines of this school it may be that there is more of a sort of nuance towards a lot of written -

NF: Because they can read it in other words.

P: Because they can deal with it.

NF: Yes they have got that level of fluency.

P: Yes.

NF: Ok, great, and one of the things that has been interesting for me is watching the difference between how teachers are dealing with new arrivals in key stage one and the differences between that and key stage two. So let's move on to V now, so you have already said a bit about if she is in your lesson, you are worried about the extent to which she can access things, so are you kind of overtly doing anything in particular to support her access to English or...?

P: Well there is a little bit of both planned provision and trying to put some structured learning in place, I have a teaching assistant with me for some of the day, but her time isn't allocated for V.

NF: No sure.

P: But she can either allow me a little bit of space within the classroom or she can do a little bit of work possibly one to one, possibly including V in a smaller group where there is some language support going on, so there's a little bit of support that way.

NF: Right so was there any support from EMAS isn't it the...?

P: There's ten hours.

NF: Right has she had that yet or not?

P: She has just had her third hour, which is a bit limited really.

NF: Ok.

P: Although she obviously finds it quite useful just because the time the person from EMAS comes during a Maths lesson, which is quite useful from the technical language point of view, but it means I'm not actually getting the experience of what she is doing because V goes to a different Maths group from the one that I teach.

NF: Oh right so the setting is a further kind of removal as it were.

P: Yes just across the corridor. But that is the only you know direct expertise, the Thai child that we have at school has and has had for the past year a Thai speaking person who has come in and worked alongside him one day a week, and that's still continuing.

NF: Now how is that for a whole year then, is that funded or you've managed that slightly differently?

P: I don't know how that happens, I mean ok at first the EMAS did it, I think it was in hand but it wasn't happening at first, that's now up and running, and my query is well why or how perhaps do I access or V access whatever funding arrangement there was for that.

NF: Yes, because that's interesting because I know because I spoke at length to Anwen who leads the EAL team for EMAS about this and I know that basically there is ten hours tied to I think almost all languages, certainly Thai and Polish would be among those and that's what everybody gets there's nothing over and above that, so I'm not -

P: So quite how this has come about I don't know.

NF: No, right, well maybe that's a local decision your schools made is it?

P: It may be yes.

NF: I mean are there other Polish people in the area at all, is there anything that this family can access or are they really quite isolated in here?

P: Well they are isolated in the school, in the sense there isn't a Polish community we know of families within the school, but I mean people over a larger area perhaps will get together, I'm sure there is a little community that they can network with, but how close they feel to them I don't know.

NF: No, no it's interesting isn't it because it's not uncommon for some of the Polish Families to have moved into areas completely alone, so they kind of buck the trend of the ethnic minority moving into -

P: Well these ones might, I mean he's not working I don't know, in agricultural work with other Poles, the father isn't, you know in that sense he's found himself I think a couple of jobs while he has been here, moved on, so it could be that he's isolated or they are isolated.

NF: So when V's in class how is she coping generally?

P: She's a very shy girl and the Father has said she was shy in Poland at school when she started school later than they start here, but you know she was very quiet there and I think to a large extent coming in here was quite overwhelming in many ways for her. There have been a couple of girls in the class who have - well we have had what three months now of school and you know they are very good pals within the class and you know really do enjoy each other's company. First of all it was "will you please look after V", but you know it's a friendship that's lasted and they like to play together and they will explain and take their time about work and other children do as well, and she by her nature is somebody who doesn't make other children's hackles rise in any sort of way so she has some disinterested respect and some respect just for herself. You know she's not made fun of or pointed at, although there have been one or two occasions where somebody's been possibly or definitely unkind apparently, but virtually nothing and she does express herself to me, she does come and try and communicate with me or bring a friend with her to try and talk through.

NF: She is talking? She is speaking some English, kind of isolated words?

P: She is, but today I was delighted with her simply because she has come up to me two times spontaneously and tried to say something to me, and she is a very reluctant speaker, partly because she was terrified at first of saying anything, particularly in the class situation, and partly because that is her nature from what I gather and her own insecurity in the language, but when she did speak to me today spontaneously, although I thought "oh great" I had enormous difficulty really understanding what she was saying, so the clarity of it is you know missing, and it's not very long sentences, well it's not sentences really it's just a couple of words, but there are attempts at sentences. There still often presumably structured in a Polish sort of way. She's learnt some of the English and it's in the wrong order, so you think well she has got the vocabulary up to a point, but it's no way near the kind of vocabulary that is being used in the class room.

NF: So does that worry you on her behalf as it were?

P: Yes.

NF: In terms of how she will fare in the future or?

P: Well how she is faring at the moment you know I see her sometimes sitting in the classroom and I can see she can't participate in what we are doing and you know she is daydreaming or something else, just looking out the window whatever because - and I know that's a situation that's there and while I try and provide something meaningful for her one way or another throughout the whole day, I know there are times when that doesn't happen, and think how tedious and unsatisfactory that is.

NF: So it's not great for you is it, because it make you feel presumably like you wish you could do more, I mean in an ideal world what else might there be do you think that would support you, that would make it easier?

P: Well literally more expertise and more support, well support in terms of, for instance the equivalent of the Thai language speaker who comes in or more access more opportunity, easier access for me to find the support materials that would be relevant to the particular things we are doing, because there's quite an intensity to what you are providing in any one day, to think ahead a week you can plan certain things but I still

find there are holes where the way the planning has worked out isn't quite in practise what you thought it might have been in terms of thinking how much she will be able to participate in it, well completely perhaps 70% would be good, or only 5% and therefore you need to have something much more targeted at her.

NF: Is it possible to kind of assess how able she is or is that impossible because you can't assess it?

P: Well EMAS do an assessment but their assessment was well she's quite strong in Maths and in Art and while she seems to have quite a bit of confidence in those areas, on a relative scale within our school she is not achieving, it doesn't make her a high achiever, she's a child who wants to learn and is trying her best to learn so.

NF: A sense of motivation come across all the time actually almost 100%, kind of all the teachers I have spoken to in quite different settings and different levels of experience, they talk about this kind of sense of willingness and motivation amongst the families really and the children, I mean it's hard to tell with a sample of one, do you get that sense of that she does want to work as it were, that she does want to learn?

P: Oh yes.

NF: And how do communicate with the family if they don't have much English?

P: Well the father is the person who communicates; I've only ever seen mother from a sort of distance really. The father's been prepared himself early on in particular to come in and talk to us about different issues, so that he has seen or perceived not in any you know belligerent way, in a very constructive way, come in and clarified for himself how we are doing things, because it is obviously very different from the Polish system, and some of the thing we send home are so complex really and sophisticated, the language is complex and sophisticated and sometimes the ideas are.

NF: In terms of a letter, do you mean in terms of V's work or letters to parents or?

P: Well we have homework sheets to give children homework, but it's as wordy as this piece of A4 paper really and for English speaking parents take a while to see what it's

about, basically it's the same each week but when you are first presented with it you know, it's mind blowing really trying to cover all the bases.

NF: So are they managing with that? Do they come in and ask you for help or do they get help do you think from other family members or is it hard to tell?

P: No I don't think - I think there is somebody who helps him because he did say somebody had translated or tried to help him translate some literature we had sent home and found it difficult, he may have direct access to a computer and he seems to have translations on the computer but they can come up with weird things, because V did something and it was the word *like* we typed in and it came up with the Polish word for *item*.

NF: Right, completely meaningless.

P: It just and actually it was V who demonstrated that to me, because I had no idea obviously, so he tries to access things in that kind of way and we have invited him in specifically about one or two things as well to talk through beyond sort of the normal parents coming in.

NF: Ok so you have had to make that additional kind of time and effort as well yourselves then?

P: Yes a little bit.

NF: Yes, so I mean you've obviously had experience in Haringey as well anyway you were saying, are you able to draw on those experiences at all, in terms of managing or does it just feel like completely different?

P: I think it is a long time ago it was a very different world, there were staff support within the school who would work with the children, would have support materials would spend their time creating support relevant support materials, there was an element, quite an element of withdrawal probably and that's obviously a bit of an issue these days how much you withdraw a child how much you include them in.

NF: That's interesting what you say because that's exactly my perception is that those of us who have got experience teaching in inner cities where EAL is more of the norm actually have lots more support systems, people who do things resources around and...

P: I mean I suspect you know we are devoting a bit of concentrated time for me to also think and reflect right now you know, and I'm thinking you know in an ideal world really I might have found more resources for EMAS for instance they must have a lot more and they have visited the school and we have got various bits of support material from them, but yes I'm sure that if I sort of was more - spent more hours or whatever you know researching into it, I could get sort of more relevant materials that they must have some really good things.

NF: I think people do -

P: But also you want to make it relevant to what you are teaching so as well as having the abstract 'right here's a linear way of learning English or something', well we are not just teaching English we are teaching...

NF: No, no, no.

P: We are teaching you know all sorts of concepts within English.

NF: Absolutely, and that's the nub really isn't it, it isn't just about English and the language itself it is about, yes, conceptual stuff particularly by year five. Absolutely and how do you manage the whole lot really all at once its hard isn't it? I think you are right, I think they probably do have more but there's a sense of the teacher in a setting in a county setting having to go and seek that on their own, which is hard isn't it? Whereas when I was in you know East London or you were in Haringey there was someone there.

P: Yes you could just talk to a colleague up the corridor.

NF: Yes exactly and that was kind more, not on tap but there was a sense of you knew who you went to didn't you? Whereas it feels more complicated when you have got enough else on your plate really just teaching year five, that's hard.

P: Unfortunately.

NF: Yes I mean do you feel there's in any way that it's too much to ask teachers to take on children with EAL or?

P: Well no I don't think it's - I mean she obviously needs education and is entitled to it, you know, there's no problem there you just wish as a teacher there was more and more support, you appreciate you have got to go out of your way yourself to create materials for all your children but it's an extreme stretch but that's the nature of teaching in Britain really.

NF: Yes it is I mean in a way I wonder if it's - does it feel similar to say having a child, I know EAL is not an SEN a special need but does it feel any different from your normal levels of differentiation for other children who perhaps have you know particular learning needs, either very able or -

P: Well I feel sort of a bit frightened of thinking or allowing myself to sort of equate her experience with that because she's not SEN in any sort of way.

NF: No, no, no not at all.

P: I don't just mean in this conversation I mean an idea that floats into your head in teaching, well you think you know I've got this child is getting support and going out or getting somebody in the classroom, special materials to do this work but you know there is a difference, you know and I want to try and make sure that I'm not in any way sort of, I don't know, confusing the two for the children.

NF: Yes absolutely and yet in some ways a lot of other teachers I've spoken to, they absolutely acknowledge what you have just said, but they'll say that in a way the way in which they think of differentiation generally, the differentiation they are providing for their EAL pupils is just another form of differentiation in a way, or does it feel like something bigger than that really?

P: Well I'm aware that she's as far as we know, in the assessment that has been made and what we see her doing, that she's at least an average ability child, I mean she doesn't appear to be greater than that, but she's an average child, bright child in other words

you know who can think through complex concepts and am I allowing her to think and develop those concepts in her learning, in the depth that she must be capable of, and in the logical building blocks that again she is capable of she as far as I know she hasn't got any particular...I partially know that but I don't know that earlier bit of it, so therefore I've got to go back and do this, you know she seems a competent or I assume her to be on the face of it, a competent person but she's not allowed very often to express and discover and learn in that kind of structure and way.

NF: Because the language is always that kind of barrier really you mean or?

P: Yes it's very difficult to explain the concepts depending on the subject you are doing, you know sometimes you think there are certain things that are more visual or just numerical if it was maths or some kinds of maths, but the language does tip in, the art and the technology and the maths comes to mind as something which you think well here's an opportunity for her to really shine or ICT in many ways, to be able to really express herself so there are areas where strengths can be allowed, well can be explored more profoundly than in pure literacy.

NF: Yes sure absolutely. No it's a difficult one isn't it ok. I think I have kind of covered everything I had on here is there anything else you wanted to talk about in terms of how it's been or -

P: Well it's more, you've spoken to lots of different teachers in the same situation you know, are there any particular things that seem I mean I would imagine it's nothing to do with your study it's more for me personally that salient points that people are approaching their support and so on and they're teaching with certain ideas that you think, oh well those appear to be quite successful ideas, that you could pass on to me.

NF: Yes absolutely I mean basically the teachers I have spoken to see the oral aspects of English as been useful for both their white indigenous, sorry they're all white aren't they, their indigenous UK children and the Polish children so the more speaking and listening they involve in their English lessons, sorry you are quite right to point out it's not just English in any lesson, the better. So things like introduction explicit introduction to vocabulary which you are probably doing anyway from what you are saying, it doesn't sound like you know -

P: Yes sort of focused at times on different topical vocabulary and sent that home.

NF: So that sort of topical vocabulary, they are using perhaps more things like paired talk more role play and so on in English or History as you said in terms of exploring and so on. I think also though there is just a kind of, for some of them, two of the schools in particular they have had an existing small population of Bengali children for like a generation, so although the Polish phenomenon is a new one for them, because the Bengali children mostly are speaking English now, they have to a level of confidence I suppose with it, and it's partly a kind of being able to relax into realising that it is going to take a few months as well I think, and there's no magic wand and there's no magic bullet. They do all get their ten hours from EMAS and then beyond that I think EMAS can offer additional support, they have for example a team of leading EAL teachers that they are just nurturing at the moment, I don't know if that might be useful getting them to visit you or seeing if you can visit their schools. But basically there is nothing...it's interesting because my prior research to this when I lived in inner London was with teachers in Tower Hamlets where schools are formed a bit like Haringey hugely bi-lingual, and then we didn't between us when we were exploring pedagogy we didn't really identify anything hugely different between pedagogy for EAL children and good pedagogy for English speaking children, and it was about, I suppose it was about recognising yes things like speaking and listening things like overt teaching of specific conventions in English writing and so on, things that you are probably doing because the National Strategies ask you to do that as it were, so there's nothing, there's no one thing.

P: No but there might be you know, something for me to reflect on is this notion of role playing and speaking with a partner and so on and structuring that a little bit..

NF: Certainly oracy was a big part of it yes.

P: You know whether I am doing that as much as you know is beneficial to all concerned really, whether there is a bit more mileage in that.

NF: And one of the things that key stage two teachers have been saying is that the way the revised strategy works as opposed to the old strategy, bearing in mind as you quite rightly say, it's not just English. The way the units work is that they do tend to have

quite a focus on oral and kind of exploratory talk first don't they I think, if you look at the units up on the web site, so they have found those quite useful in terms of getting them to focus on how you might develop more talk at the beginning of a unit for example. Another thing they found useful is having, they tend to put up words around the classroom a lot more than they might have done, that assumes that the children can read it of course doesn't it? So you know -

P: Well that was something we weren't too sure of right at the beginning how good her reading of Polish was, and she won't read Polish words to me and say them to me when I come across them, I think you know pronunciation is quite unlike the pronunciation that I expect letters make in English, so I know I must be way off when I attempt to say them but she is, well for whatever reason I don't know, but she - I can't get her to say the word so that I can show- look I'm learning and you know, it's difficult for me as well that sort of sympathy type side of things.

NF: Yes I think that's quite common that often children don't want to use their home language in school.

P: Well I almost thought she'd been possibly told not to do anything so that you know...I mean there are certain things we were doing some Geography and the map up there was somewhere else but we were doing...we learn Spanish at school so we've got an issue there of whether we introduce her to Spanish now and the thought is not at the moment, but where is the Spanish speaking parts of the world, where is the Polish parts of the world so but she didn't seem to be particularly forthcoming you know in terms of talking or -

NF: Because she's just very shy.

P: But she did - I suppose she pointed out where Poland was.

NF: No it's not - there's no kind of set way of doing it, it's all about and also there's huge focus amongst the conversations on individual difference, so if she is shy to start with that does make it harder for you and for her, because she doesn't want to jump in and use her English but she probably is listening all the time because children developing a second language or any subsequent language have a period of listening, and often have

complete silence when they won't communicate at all as you probably know from your Haringey days, you know.

P: I was just thinking when I did teach abroad I travelled to work on a bus and I would go past - it was Greece so the alphabet was different and I'd look at hoardings I mean I hadn't learnt any Greek really sort of abstractly beforehand, and I'd spent months and months really looking at it and sort of it was only after a year when by the end of a year that there was some speech coming out meaningful speech anyway, and also reading and using the language and as you say just from my own personal experience that I spent a lot of time reading things and mulling over what on earth they might be pronounced like, looking if there was similarities with, I suppose with Polish as a European language and some of the words, you know, quite a lot of the words have a connection.

NF: They do but it's getting towards being almost kind of Russian isn't it?

P: Possibly, well you have to be probably fairly I don't know, linguistically sort of gifted or something to see the connection between I don't know what mathematics is, but it's probably very similar word in Polish things like that, that often young children would actually see that that's - they might when you point it out.

NF: And so the other things they're doing is they are and I guess...until I'd spoken to you, one's a primary school and the others an Infant school so because you are key stage two I don't know how it would work for you, but they definitely give then specific phonics teaching in the same way you would on early reader. Obviously it's difficult because some of the materials are too baby and you don't want to insult nine and ten year olds with that but they definitely give them kind of you know, regular phonics input in just the same way you would at key stage one.

P: Well she does take home (...) what happens at school, tapes and CD's, books so that she can hear English spoken clearly and even if her Fathers speaking it it's not actually very clear English as a model, so...

NF: I mean do you have a Phonics or spelling package like THRASS or anything here that you use for the children.

P: Well we don't use Thrass, although it is used in the Infants school, but some of the children go on to, the SEN children I suppose, do have programs of support and there may be things there but again, well there may be things there that are useful and we have access to some of them and use some of them the materials, like those programs.

NF: Yes I mean I do think, I can quite understand and respect your desire not to equate her with SEN and you are absolutely right, but I do think in terms of a reading and writing program for key stage two it might well be really useful, because she can't really access, she doesn't know what the phoneme sounds like, do you know what I mean, she can't really access the language in terms of reading and writing very well.

P: Yes we have done a bit of work a consistent bit of work on the alphabet sort of abstractly in terms of names and the phonemes of the -

NF: I mean if there were any way that she could have, I don't know, a kind of regular kind of five to ten minutes a day (...) input from someone that would help I would have thought, it's difficult though isn't it because you are -

P: Well she does have a little timetable of extra support one to one and so on, but there ways of making it happen as well within the class.

NF: Well you could literally use I mean Letters and Sounds you know the most recent phonics package that goes with the primary strategy is fairly user friendly I would have thought for a teaching assistant to pick up and try her with, if she worked through the introduction of the phonemes used in that order as it were or the making up you know CVC words and all that, would probably be useful. Certainly what other key stage two teachers are doing and because the children obviously already have a certain level of confidence and ability and understanding of their own language anyway obviously they make very fast progress, it's not like doing it with a five year old, so it's worth trying probably.

P: Yes.

NF: It's all more work isn't it but you know...

P: Well yes, but all of these pointers are helpful.

NF: Good, yes ok so what I generally do next is just leave you alone for a bit really and then come back in the summer and say how has it been? But I mean if you, if I find anything in the meantime from my conversations with other teachers that I think would be useful for you then I will email them through to you or through to Sue because she passes all on doesn't she?

P: Yes.

NF: Great ok and I get the interviews transcribed and printed off and so on so I'll send at some point, it isn't done quickly.

[end of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH PETER SUMMER 2009

NF: There we are. Ok so you got the questions through, I sent them through a bit last minute, I apologise for that, but on the other hand I think people are so busy at this time of year that I'm sure that they would hardly have been top of your agenda anyway. Did you want to talk to me at all about anything first? Rather than me just go straight into questions, was there anything you wanted to comment on about Veronica or anything really over the year?

P: Yes, I mean she's V..... was one technicality, with a V.

NF: Ok that doesn't really matter in terms of the transcripts.

P: I didn't know if you knew something that I didn't know about –

NF: No I was just going by what you'd said. And eventually names would never go into anything anyway, but it's good to know. So we'll give her a V, there we are. I had a Klaudia last week who was a K and not a C. So in reading the transcript it sounds like it wasn't great for you, or you didn't find it that wonderful an experience, is there any particular aspect –

P: What, meeting you? [Laughs] Of course I found it a wonderful experience.

NF: But I mean was there anything in the transcript that made you think that's changed or I'm surprised I thought that?

P: Yes well it's interesting to see where you were, remind yourself of where you were.

NF: Yes.

P: At the beginning of the school year or earlier on. What's the date?

NF: It was November I think, November 08.

P: Yes a long time ago and early on for V.

NF: So how's she doing now anyway?

P: She's grown in confidence tremendously through the year. I mean as a personality she was and is a shy person, she's very cheerful and she was very shy in terms of talking to adults, to me, but also to other children. And it was almost a coincidence perhaps, but two children who were similarly turned out to be quieter children were her pals at first and the three of them got on well; the two who'd been in the school for a while were good at looking after her and being friends and playing with her. In fact one of them happened to live in the same road very close by, and the parents got a little bit of contact. But then three is not a good number of people to be friends sometimes.

NF: No, especially with girls, they can be funny like that can't they?

P: Oh awful. So as time went on, that three, I began to think something's happened just here or you know and mostly it was ironed over but actually in a way it was V finding her feet and finding out who she liked and getting to know other children and the other two were two people who were very close in a way to each other and V had become the third person in the relationship.

NF: The spare part.

P: Yes and you know, maybe a little bit of rivalry there and really I think she was beginning to find she and they didn't have the rapport and the need for each other that the two local children had. So the friendships, the natural friendships started to not be as strong and also I felt I wanted to help her come out of herself anyway and so I started putting her with other groups of children socially and academically.

NF: So you made a conscious decision to kind of –

P: Help her meet others, yes and find her feet which she has done and so in that sense she's grown in a lot of confidence in how she deals with herself around school.

NF: So when you say academically you mixed her up with other children as well, was that with other children who were like her academically or did you not take account of that because obviously her issues are different.

P: Well we do grade children I suppose, we have sets for maths and more recently this year we've gone to sets for English with two other classes. So she's mixed in there

anyway but she has tended to be in the weaker group of the three groups that they become, although she's doing quite well in maths now but there's the handicap of the language, the vestiges of that anyway and having to make explanations but yeah so the academic was both in mixed ability situations but also in ability levels and sometimes that's meant that the ability level might not have been the same as her thinking, logical thinking and reasoning level.

NF: Has her spoken English come along? Because it really was early days wasn't it when I last saw you and there wasn't – I think she was just starting to string bits together wasn't she? How's that coming along in terms of how she can communicate with you, or the other children?

P: Well she was very quiet and almost silent and wouldn't speak at first, then she would say the odd thing, the odd word and I would sometimes need to get another child to interpret for me, one of her two friends at the time. I mean she's still friends with those, you know, it hasn't broken down to any terrible extent. And then she started to speak in sentences, again I found her voice very quiet. I've got old ears and I reckon I can't hear, particularly when there's lots of other noise in the classroom, I haven't medically got bad hearing but I suspect my hearing isn't as acute as some. And then I began to realise when she was speaking English, she was lisping and not pronouncing certain letters. I can't remember whether that was something we talked about before or not?

NF: No that hadn't come up.

P: So that sort of came up around before Christmas.

NF: Oh right.

P: And I thought ah well and then she said that she had been having some support, I mean she didn't say it quite like that, but in Poland.

NF: Speech therapy or something in other words?

P: Yes at some stage so then I spoke to the father and he said yes she had, but the specialist that she'd seen said her tongue was rather large for her mouth and this was

the reason and as she grew up she'd be ok and they sort of signed her off. And I said well I've noticed it, me and my colleagues have noticed her speech is not clear and it's not just because she's speaking another language it's because she seems to have some kind of impediment or difficulty so we said we'd appreciate it if you'd go to your GP and get a referral to speech therapy. So he did, they didn't send a report as such, well but more or less – they didn't say her tongue was rather large but they said it's something that they wouldn't be concerned about and that she would not be handicapped by. So they didn't offer support, the parents were quite happy to go and see if it was something of concern, something that could be supported, improved, dealt with. But it didn't help me in terms of hearing her and understanding exactly what she said. But she's just very talkative really or –

NF: Good, so that's a kind of double whammy for her isn't it really, so there she was trying to learn a new language and she had this speech impediment as well.

P: Mm, I can't judge whether she is self conscious about it or not. I mean some children you might be able to realise that they are anxious about it, but she doesn't seem to be.

NF: Well that's good, that's a blessing really given all the other things going on, that would have been really the end. But maybe that's why she speaks so quietly, don't know do we.

P: It could be.

NF: Ok, so that's an interesting kind of other layer to things isn't it? And it's interesting isn't it how, I was thinking as I was putting the questions together all about how's she coping with being Polish in England and of course she's got individual differences just like any other child has, that easily get overlooked as if the linguistic difference is the only difference, when of course there's all this other stuff going on as well. What about reading or writing, because I'm not sure where that was last time, I think we talked a lot about her speech and not much about reading and writing because I don't think they were really going very far in English. Obviously she was probably doing it in Polish.

- P: Well she's done some writing in Polish, perhaps to a greater extent earlier on in the year and the new year, sometimes writing larger tracts of writing in Polish from the class's point of view on the task in hand and then we were using some of the support time to help translate one or two parts or just using a translator on the computer and getting the gist of what was being said.
- NF: Right so that's also new from when I last saw you isn't it? Because you didn't talk about that either, is that something that's developed across the year is it?
- P: Yeah I think we were aware that there were translation sites on the internet and we were using them for individual words, I mean they're not very trustworthy but they're helpful to a point.
- NF: No I've heard that about them myself, yes.
- P: And English, Polish dictionary type thing she's got is really good. It's got some quite technical words to do with let's say geography, words like meanders and valley and things like that. So that's quite useful to have that as a book and a photograph of the thing as well.
- NF: Right so did she bring that in or have you found that somewhere or is it a resource the school had to buy in? [Pause] Oh gosh it's great isn't it, because it's kind of graphic and -
- P: That's right and it's got quite a huge compendium of words in it that you can look up.
- NF: So that's hers basically and she works with that?
- P: Yeah.
- NF: Great. So when she's writing, you said she's writing chunks in Polish –
- P: Well no, we went through a phase where we did that but then she's moved on from that to where she can write less large amounts of writing, but she can express herself in sentences, fairly simple sentences, but she can structure them to express up to a point certain things. But it is limited still.

NF: So things like do you do the non statutory stats in Year five here? So was she put in for any of those or did you just not?

P: No well it's QCAs.

NF: QCA tests yes.

P: Yes she did do those.

NF: And where's she operating?

P: In maths she's doing – she's on the weaker side of average. She's doing well in the group, we've got above average, average and below average groups, not exactly down to numbers but and her results in the QCA terms were quite high for that below average group which and the area that is obviously difficult for her is problem solving and articulating and understanding the nuances of a complex mathematical question. With the QCAs she was supported, I've got the results. If you want to [recording stopped]

NF: Ok so 3C for reading, 3C for writing. And you were saying –

P: And 3B for maths.

NF: And you were saying that's actually –

MF: For maths she's obviously getting closer to her mental abilities that her reasoning allows her, she's closer on that than undoubtedly she is with the English language side of things but with the English language side of things she's getting a grip, she's overtaking some children.

NF: Right, so you've got her operating already within only, oh it's now a year she's been in the country isn't it because you were telling me she'd arrived last June, got her operating already at test levels higher than some of the local indigenous children, right?

P: Mm.

NF: Wow, that's quite something. Ok, and reading then, I mean reading presumably developed alongside writing or did it develop faster or it's hard to tell I guess because you've got everything going on at once in Year 5, you've got to try and pack it all in.

P: Yes, I mean she was prepared by Christmas to be writing little bits. I mean she was certainly prepared to copy stuff, she was certainly sort of copying something, but and discussing what it might mean, only a sentence or two. But independent writing she was quite ready to get into really by Christmas time, before Christmas and then in the new year.

NF: Ok good. What about – we talked around kind of using more talk based activities and things like that in the last interview. Did you use any of those sorts of things to try and get her where she is or did she just make this obviously pretty good progress as a part of –

P: No I think I don't know, what you do with teaching develops all the time and something in a bigger sense than just V within the school developing teaching styles really as a school is looking at speaking and listening and working groups collaboratively and different ways of working collaboratively and that has helped create a situation that's probably encouraged to pair children and they do a couple of sentences about something and then they discuss what they've written, so they articulate it to each other and that gives her the opportunity to be reflective without an adult necessarily being present.

NF: Right, so that supports everybody.

P: Yes, and it helps her. I was looking at your question 6 – has the experience of having V in your class made you change how you teach English? I don't know if it's particularly – it's helped consolidate an idea that we've been developing within the school, the importance of speech and thinking oh well there's a connection there with V actually, you know, talking with a partner, talking within a group, taking a role on to talk about something and ask questions about, is helpful.

NF: Mm and so has that felt that that's improved all the children's writing as well in terms of putting in more talk or has there been a sense –

P: Yes well children learn in different ways, you've got the VAK analysis thing and some children will learn visually and all that. So well does it help children? Yes generally. But it probably helps children that learn that way, it's another way of consolidating, going over the same point from a different angle, they might have seen it on the interactive white board, they might have written it and then they're speaking it.

NF: Ok, so she's made this what seems to me remarkable progress in a way, if you think she's gone from nothing to 3C in a second language in the space of a year, it's really quite something isn't it?

P: Well I don't know, I haven't got anything to compare it with really.

NF: Well if you think about it, not even comparing her with other people, but it always seems to me that's a remarkable leap and I'm sure I'm not a 3C in French for example, having tried at it for years and so on. So it seems very quick. Do you think, I mean you were quite worried last time, just looking at this question two about this gap, there's a lot of anxiety around what she knew and what she needed to know to operate successfully in Year 5, how are you feeling around that now?

P: Well it still concerns me. She's able to engage in things to a greater extent but I still realise when we get into some subjects that one, she may not have grasped what's really being asked and challenged of her and she can't express in a more sophisticated way her response, her thoughts and reflective response or be challenged again on it. So it's definitely a significant conceptual gap between what she can do with something and what another child in the class can do with it and what she's capable of.

NF: Right so you feel clearly aware that there's a kind of what she could do in terms of her intellectual capacity and what she is able to demonstrate because of the linguistic capacity then is kind of at odds with each other in a way.

P: Well it can be. It depends what you're doing and how you're doing it. Some of the science activities can be much more practical and demonstrate and illustrative in a three dimensional sense than she may be able to express and communicate and explain her understanding because it's more physical and something that is purely written.

NF: Ok, so there's that feeling that she's still got that kind of ways to go, with that third question when you talked about support as well in the Autumn it felt at that point as I think it does for all teachers who've got a new arrival in their class, it just didn't feel like enough in a way. Has that – have you been able to arrange more or has the school been able to arrange things for her or hasn't that been necessary?

P: Yeah well we do have some AT's working within the year group, several of them and at different times, different schedules have been set up with one or more of them supporting her at different times, nowhere near a hundred percent and having specific one to one opportunities with her as well, but they're not – it's not that they have an expertise in that area, but it might be something that I put together that they'll follow up and I've talked through with them.

NF: So are you having to plan separate things for her then? Are you –

P: Well sometimes with particular little bits of work or how we attack a particular piece of work and might have planned to do it in a certain way and thought well she's really not grasped this or we've done this, let's try and get- you know, she's got the opportunity for a little bit of one to one with somebody, she can have the opportunity to express herself potentially a bit more. What else was I going to say there? And we have the ten hours and we actually broke that up so we'd had about five or six hours regularly and then had a little break and then two or three weeks later had (Katya) come in again to support her or to link in more with what we were doing and we did a period of time (Katya) was working, first of all it was the English language and writing and reading and so on and then she was supporting V in maths, which was a maths set with a different teacher. So she had a bit of support with that and then back again to more general curriculum.

NF: Mm, so are you able to organise that with EMAS, they're happy for you to plan the hours as you choose them?

P: Well ten hours doesn't last long.

NF: No I'm sure it doesn't, but it sounds like you were quite strategic in how you used it.

P: Well it became that, it wasn't. Whether I'd have done a bit more had I anticipated how things would work out, whether I'd have done it earlier instead of waiting for week six to say ah, I think we'll space things out a bit, I'd do it slightly differently, have half an hour with you rather than an hour.

NF: That's the frustration in a way isn't it? But then how could you know because you hadn't.

P: (...) or thought of what the benefit of doing that would be.

NF: Mm, I'm sure it must be the same for any of us having a new arrival, is like you use what's there and the situation itself is so kind of high stress, thinking well how to use what's there is another thing isn't it. So it sounds really useful to have done it in that way though, to have split it up like that, because obviously all the teachers I talk to talk about their ten hours and they see it as this thing you get at the beginning and then it goes away. So it's interesting to hear it used slightly differently.

P: Yes I suppose she's moved on potentially, you hope that she's moved on a bit, to the point where the person from EMAS that comes in sees some developments as well and is able to communicate those.

NF: Yes so that must be quite satisfying for them as well.

P: If you can try something else you discuss with them for a period of time and then see them come back and give a bit of perspective on it.

NF: Yes so did that actually happen? Were they able to give you things and then go away and then come back and see how things have worked? Was there enough time, was there enough slack in what you had left?

P: I can't think specifically, having said that, but we did have discussions about what was going to be done, what we would be doing and how to go about it, I can't think specifically what it was.

NF: So the support's there isn't it, it's just it seems to me it still feels too small.

P: Well it was there, it seems a long time ago now.

NF: Sure. Have any other second language learners come to the school during the year? No? So you've still got the one Thai child was it and V?

P: Yes.

NF: And that's it is it?

P: Well there's a Spanish speaking, an English child who speaks pretty fluent Spanish because they've been living in Spain. He has been at a Spanish school. There's two or three children who are bilingual at home.

NF: So this next question I'm asking because – I know it looks a bit kind of odd, about you talked a lot around a lot that you knew really in the last interview it seemed to me, that you had quite significant subject knowledge for, about second language and how second language develops and so I wondered if you felt that that's what teachers need, that they need subject knowledge about it or that – and that that's what's then fed what you're able to do with her, or is it that they need people and things when they have a new arrival?

P: I'm not sure what you mean by subject knowledge.

NF: Subject knowledge, so it seemed to me you have quite a detailed understanding of the fact that for example you're able to articulate that she needs more complex vocabulary than you know, than she actually has, because it's Year five, you talked to me about the fact that when you introduce new subjects with your children you were introducing new vocabulary but you're laying it on a bed of vocabulary that they already knew. So you've got this understanding of how language develops in other words.

P: Right, doesn't everybody?

NF: No interestingly, not necessarily, I'm not sure – it's interesting because just this morning in conversation with a colleague I was beginning to wonder if as teacher trainers we do very much about language acquisition at all with children any more. And it seemed to me that your understanding of it was quite detailed as it were, compared to inexperienced teachers I'm talking to. And I wondered if that was – if you were aware, but we never know how we know things do we? Whether that's kind

of a training thing or an experience thing or I wonder where you think that's come from?

P: I think it's an experience thing.

NF: Probably thing.

P: I don't think it's training. When I went to college the training was very different from the sort of stuff that's around now anyway and I would have thought now there was well to a certain extent a lot of – perhaps it's systems now rather than concepts.

NF: Yes I was going to come onto that in the next question because I think that's interesting. But so it's interesting that you say that you think we all of us as teachers have that understanding of language acquisition, because actually I think there's a tension at the minute and I'm not sure we do. I think certainly younger teachers or teachers who've come into the profession more recently, see language acquisition as something you teach via the primary national strategy, do you know what I mean? They don't look at it in terms of development of the child separate from any sort of systems as you're saying there.

P: Right, well it sounds like you're relating it to how education's gone in the last thirty years really.

NF: Yes.

P: Philosophically or practically.

NF: Yes, so I wondered if – so in a way coming back to this complicated question four, so if you feel that we just have that subject knowledge anyway or you know you do, in terms of the support that you need for a second language learner then, does it feel like it needs to come from the teacher and what the teacher just knows how to do or does it feel like it needs to come from somewhere else, or that it's a combination of the two?

P: Oh I think it's a combination of the two.

NF: Yeah. Ok and there any PNS support materials for bilingual learners, have you come across those at all? They've come up quite recently.

P: I think I've had some materials through, I haven't used anything specifically, I think I might have looked at a site on the internet or something somewhere.

NF: I'm not finding teachers are using that at all either and that interests me in terms of you get this printed guidance but actually the reality is it probably is more about someone coming in and talking with you and then going away and then coming back isn't it? Like you've had from EMAS or whatever, and drawing on existing what I know about this or –

P: Well yeah. It's when you recognise a need for something, you go out to find out what is there, but you may be given something and think well why's that relevant to me, I'm busy doing this, that and the other, I can't see it's got any relevance to me or V at the moment but then two weeks later I suppose, you're maybe looking for a particular thing and then that becomes relevant or –

NF: Yeah, I think timing's everything, I think you're right. I think a lot of things have come out in the last few years.

P: Yeah, you'd read everything that – oh yes, I must sharpen up on that.

NF: I don't have time to read them and I'm not even in the classroom all the time, no. Ok so coming to that fifth one, there is this tension between what teachers see as having to deliver the strategies or the strategy for English as it were, even though it's got more relaxed and wanting to do the best by their bilingual learners and I wondered if you feel that or if because you're more experienced and you've been teaching a long while, like me, you know, we're pre NLS people who knew another time as it were, I wonder if you feel that tension or if that doesn't really register on your radar as it were as a problem?

P: Well it probably does register. But also well in terms of V, we now have sets for English literacy, so she actually goes out of my set so I'm not concerned with her directly in that now and also I don't plan the literacy side. I mean I follow what is planned, so I'm not going into it in such a theoretical – or looking into the documentation, the organisational perspective of it I don't go into that so much because within the team that is prepared, thought through, it doesn't mean that there

isn't any dialogue and yes you are given a wodge of paper with learning objectives on but you know, there's discussion about how they'll be delivered and what it actually means to have that learning objective and what the resources are and how to go about it and what you're required to do.

NF: Mm, so when you're talking about V's language needs, you're talking about then a completely kind of cross curricular way then at the moment, rather than just within an English lesson? Ok and that's how you're thinking of her in terms of her language needs, it's not just about what does she need in the English lesson, it's about what does she need to access all of the curriculum then? And I think that's – maybe it interests you to hear, that's the difference in many ways from the way other teachers more recently trained might feel. They tend to focus entirely on English as a subject and therefore not speaking English is all about the English lesson which of course –

P: Mm, well I suppose they see education as a prescriptive thing and I was trained not to think in that sort of way and you know, I've got to follow the system as whatever the system is basically. But perhaps I do come from a time mentally when the thinking was slightly different and the bias was different.

NF: It wasn't it and I sometimes wonder if those of us who've been around the block a few times as it were, kind of feel that we're able to make more choices therefore. I mean some teachers I who to that are more experienced, feel perfectly confident to do what they feel is right in terms of philosophically what their training led them to twenty five years ago or whatever and others still seem to feel quite kind of hamstrung by the strategies in terms of what they're allowed to do.

P: Oh yeah, you've got to do what you're told to do these days.

NF: Right, that's how it feels.

P: That's how society is.

NF: Yeah. It's a difficult one isn't it. But Ed Balls seems to have decided that they're going as well. I do wonder what that'll all lead to.

P: It'll lead to winning some votes somewhere.

NF: Yeah, no I mean I'm equally cynical when he said it. Ok, so we're kind of there because you talked to me about that last one, how's the experience made you change your view? You talked a bit about the whole school focus on speaking and listening.

P: Well it's something that I think's benefited her. The relevance of us looking at that and that being a little bit of an issue has found resonance in the way in which she's supported in the class, I think it really does help her particularly and I think it does help other children.

NF: Right ok, so immersing her, when you say relevance you mean the relevance of the speaking and listening things you've done.

P: Mm.

NF: Ok and have the speaking and listening activities been tied in with other topic type work? So there's –

P: Yeah so it might be some geography, river erosion for instance because that's what we're doing at the moment and looking at it, well as I say, on an interactive white board, looking at it on a sheet of paper or a book, text book and then perhaps making a sketch drawing of it yourself or labelled diagram of it for instance or writing a sentence about that concept and then talking with a friend about what you've written and drawn and what's going on.

NF: Right, so kind of immersion.

P: You know, communicating with each other, I think in the school they're willing to talk academically about their work, it's not a big problem that they go off and start as soon as you say right you can talk to your friend about this and then they're talking about what they're going to do at play time they do talk about it genuinely or they'll say about somebody's writing or something, that's something you've done well or that's something you could think about improving.

NF: Mm.

P: So they accept doing that and they respond to it pretty well. I'm not sure to what extent V can make suggestions about how they could improve it.

NF: No, so that's the step at which she's –

P: She has those conversations about this is what I've done, what have you done and if there's a misunderstanding there's an opportunity there for her to be channelled into a greater accuracy of understanding of what the concept is. As you say that's not English teaching.

NF: No but it's language development which is what matters isn't it, because without that – but it is the development of her language and her capacity to communicate, which is actually what matters isn't it.

P: Well it depends.... not if the government say you've got to do 'this'.

NF: Yeah no, definitely the thrust of everything that I'm analysing at the moment is about this kind of tension, this kind of – I've got this image of this tug of war of kind of the child and the language development need on the one side and this prescriptive curriculum on the other, but it's funny isn't it because it doesn't kind of add up for me at the moment, you've got all this stuff about how to support second language learners as well. The messages feel mixed to me to teachers at the moment and indeed to any of us at the moment, about what you do. That's great, I mean that's the end of all my questions that arose from the interview, is there anything else that you had noted down that you wanted to say?

P: No I mean some of the notes there are some of the support sort of things we'd done with reading, that was all, monitored reading scheme using tapes and things like that with books and so on and that she'd been making progress and spelling similarly, she does with other people.

NF: Great ok, I think we're done.

[End of transcript

## NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH ROSIE AUTUMN 2008

NF: Ok, so perhaps an interesting place to start really, before we start talking about C, is your response to children who – just your ordinary English teaching. Ok, so if you could talk to me, I know it's very new, do you think at the moment, it's early in your career, is it possible to articulate what sort of things you think (...)

*(S comes in to the room) I've just spoken to somebody who knew about C when she first came to the school and she came with no English at all and her father had a bit and her mother had none, so that's where she started from.*

NF: Lovely, thank you for that S, that's great. Yeah, is it possible for you to try and articulate at this stage in time, trying to think of yourself say as a teacher of English, so also accepting that English goes across every subject, what do you think you do at the moment to try and encourage children's talk generally, any children's talk, never mind EAL children?

R: We've started doing a bit more partner speaking in school, following INSET training, so I do sometimes say to the children, speak to your partner and talk about your ideas, which I suppose that's a skill isn't it, verbalising ideas and not just conversing in every day speech. So thinking, I think this or my idea's that. We do a lot of the De Bono hats, so communicating that way and offering support or ideas in that sense. We've done some drama work where the children have sort of been using speaking and listening skills a little bit more, so I'm quite conscious of – I mean I quite like talking so I'm conscious that that's an important aspect to their development and it's not just about writing for them, particularly in the English lessons which we teach as a streamed subject in Years three/four.

NF: Right, so you're Year three/four are you?

R: Yeah, we're a mixed Year three/four year team, there's three classes and I take the middle ability English group.

NF: Ok, so in terms of planning for English then, does school use things like the PNS unit plans that are up on the web site? Or in fact S was talking to me about how that's actually difficult to mix in with your cross curricular planning?

R: Yeah, because we teach them integrated curriculum here it's a little bit tricky and to be honest I don't have a really in depth understanding of how the items are chosen. I think it's a case of while trying to cover each of the areas, the key areas, we say well that one would fit in with this theme, so when we're doing our B School in Bloom theme, we do instructional writing because that fits in with 'right this is how you should plant up a flower bed.'

NF: Right ok, so it's –

R: It's a bit different here, I have worked at another school for four weeks where they taught completely differently and it was more a case of right we're going to work the year through each of these schemes of work and deliver that at that time and it might be that it was completely irrelevant to the rest of whatever was going on.

NF: Ok, but a much more integrated approach here.

R: It's completely integrated here, yeah.

NF: So that means that children's literacy experiences generally, tend to be hung on something else that's going on.

R: Yes exactly.

NF: So there's a purpose for reading or a purpose for writing.

R: Yes, so we're doing letters at the moment because they are writing to authors to find out information, so we're writing persuasive letters and that's how they sort of twist it to make it fit.

NF: Right.

R: But it gives the children or the idea I suppose is that it gives the children a purpose and a reason for writing, rather than right, this week we're going to do this whether you're

interested in it or not basically. Whereas by giving the children a hook at the beginning or the reason why they're going to be doing that, they get a little bit more involved and I do think that that works, although it is quite restricting in other areas as well.

NF: How's it restricting?

R: I think say something's happening in the news or if it's book week or poetry week, we're not able to suddenly drop everything and say right well this week because it's happening nationally and you're going to see it on Newsround or you're going to see it here, there and everywhere, that's why we're going to do it, we're going to be able to do it. And I came into the profession I think, thinking that's how it would work almost. So yeah, it's a little bit different, but I can see it working both ways.

NF: Right ok, yes, so maybe your own memories of primary school that your teacher was able to respond to events more fluently.

R: Yes, although we were taught by theme, I mean it was quite a long time ago. [Laughs] But I remember more of the theme stuff rather than the actual sitting down and writing aspects.

NF: So how's reading going in terms of managing in class, how do you generally do that?

R: Well we have reading sessions for half an hour every day after lunch time and the children are grouped by level into small groups. And we do four different activities on a rotation all day or all week sorry, one a day and on the fifth day we do a reading challenge. So their children would do guided reading with the teacher, fiction, non fiction and then their reading book that they have from school. So for fiction and non fiction they can either choose a library book that they've got out or they can use our book corner. Guided reading, I lead that and I choose what we're doing and in fact I've just this term, last week was the first week we've started doing listening to story tapes as part of that. So understanding that that's sort of a skill as well and talking about it, what's happening in the story that way.

NF: Ok, so in terms of reading then, are they tending to access whole texts all the time or how do you – if you're doing reading at a whole class level for example, what are the sorts of things –

R: If I'm doing guided reading, then we'll take a text and we would read that through and then discuss it and ask questions, I'd be continually asking questions and listening to the children. I'm finding a balance between asking questions and interrupting them and actually also hearing each child reading and sort of trying to make notes on that. That's quite a difficult balance when you only get them for sort of 25 minutes once a week and they're in a group as well. So in terms of one to one reading, I don't personally hear just the one child on their own with me, it would always be in a group setting unless it's a case that maybe half the group's off ill in which case then I would maybe be able to do that.

NF: And are there any kind of principles that you can recognise in your teaching yet, that set up an effective session where you're doing reading or writing? Is there anything that you do when you're introducing that you know is going to set these things up successfully for the children?

R: I don't think so far, I think that one of the areas I've been working on myself professionally, is trying to think about how and what I do in that half an hour reading so that it's not a case of – I think that staying on the chair at the front and having the children come to me, I really don't know what they're doing at the back of the classroom, so it could well be that they're not actually reading. So how can I get the children into that and excited about that? And about actually engaging with the books and learning how to read and take in what is in front of them. And I think that's quite a big project really, particularly with the Year Three/Four children, we keep forgetting that actually these children are only seven, some of them are only seven and that's actually quite young.

NF: Yes it is, yes.

R: And to be thrown into an older, a group of children who have already been in key stage two for a year and who are much further on than they are, socially, it's kind of a big step for them. So it's about me finding ways to manage the children while they're

supposed to be independently reading, I find that's quite a challenge really but it'll come and I find ways forward for that. One of the things I've set up with a parent who's a very keen reader and has a very fond keenness towards books, is that she's coming in on a Tuesday and we're going to start those sessions tomorrow and she's going to do some different accessing with books. So she's going to look at some author interview books with the children, some atlases, dictionaries and just doing some different work with them.

NF: Right in different genres as well by what you're saying there?

R: Exactly. Newspaper reports, you know, actually sitting down and looking at newspaper reports which perhaps at the moment I just don't have time realistically to prepare the work and she's very keen to come in so I think it'll work very well with the children and offer all of the children an opportunity to look a bit more deeply into texts and sort of get a bit more involved in them, which might enthuse them a little bit during their reading time.

NF: Ok, so that's a lovely interesting exploration of where you feel you are now. Obviously it's very early in your career, and not long with this class, so let's move to C now. So C came in in Year R effectively, so she's been here for quite a while now.

R: I don't believe that she came in at the very beginning of term, either I think that she appeared midway through the term, but I don't know which term. I could confirm that later if you needed to know.

NF: Ok, that might be interesting.

R: Yeah.

NF: So interesting conversation with S about how she's actually already identified as gifted and talented in fact, within her year group.

R: Yeah.

NF: But some issues emerging through which you could clearly identify her as EAL, I mean where do you see her as developing? Let's just break it down, let's talk about

her spoken English, how fluent does that feel say in comparison to a monolingual English, you know, native English speaker?

R: To be honest I think that she speaks extremely well, she sometimes won't use quite the right word, I can't think of an example now. She maybe wouldn't use the right word or she'll come up and say I don't know what this word is. But in terms of her speech I think that she's pretty good and I almost don't register that she is EAL, almost, although there are little traits that she has, like she'll only – she will call me Miss Walton, but most of the time she'll call me Mrs, which isn't my name and isn't my title so she's not quite identifying that different people have different names. And I did think well maybe in Poland children call all female adults one, a generic term, so she's just translating that in her mind. But she makes me giggle a little bit when she says "Mrs."

NF: So there's still some areas where vocabulary feels –

R: It's not quite there, yeah and a lot of the time I think it's because she doesn't know the word or she hasn't come across it. She didn't know the word cotton a few weeks ago, which was one of the words on her spelling, she didn't know what – she could read the word but she didn't know what it actually meant so and I mean it is quite an unusual word for an eight year old I suppose. You'd think, well why would you use that –

NF: Well particularly in a second language it's probably quite an unusual word, it's not exactly high frequency is it, in its use.

R: No. No, so there are certain things and it came out last week that she didn't know what a month was, that she didn't know that word, so you know, we've sort of dealt with that now.

NF: Ok, so in some ways there are probably – I wonder if it's the case that there are words that your average three, four, five year old absorbs from home, that if you're dipped into it in a second language you've actually missed that bit, I wonder. I don't know.

R: It is possible isn't it, because you think children that are at home, when they're little, they are like sponges, they just pick everything up and as their speech develops when they sort of hit one and a half, two, they just begin repeating. I don't have any

children of my own but I do have friends with children and I do find it amazing how much they just repeat what you're saying and that must sink in somewhere and be used and if you're at home and being spoken to, that's how you learn to speak isn't it, from hearing and then practicing yourself. So if those words haven't been there then you wouldn't know them naturally.

NF: Absolutely, so if you're learning in a second language, it's almost certain you're learning it outside the home, you haven't got that constant repetition going on all the time, so yes. Bits get missed and whereas teachers can't know which bits are missed.

R: Yeah, I think as well where she's so bright and keen to learn, she does try incredibly hard, you can see her listening really intently and it's almost facially she's showing you that she is listening and trying very hard to understand what you're asking her to go and do, that you do forget and don't realise that she's maybe not understanding things.

NF: It actually takes up to seven years to fully develop a second language fluently.

R: Really?

NF: Yes. And I was talking to S about this as well, in fact there are some support materials out about it as well, that there are children going through the system who hit a level of really quite impressive oral fluency and their teachers start to think well they're alright now and actually because we then leave them alone, their writing then stops catching up and that then starts to explain a kind of underachievement you might get say by the time you get to key stage two sats, because they have insufficient vocabulary as it were, to tackle some of the more complex writing tasks you might be setting them.

R: Mm. She is an amazing little sponge though. I think and it may not be the case with all children, particularly those coming from another country, that it does seem to be that I have to show her things once or explain things to her once and that's it, she's got it. Now I haven't tested that in any way but I mean it's only been sort of seven, eight weeks really that I've had her in –

NF: [Laughs] And you're trying to get your head round a new job.

R: So I'm trying to get my head round it as well.

NF: Fair enough.

R: And try and remember as well that she does perhaps not understand things fully or can't put things on paper, but I mean I have taken her work to show S who was her previous teacher and she said she looks like she's doing fine in her written work and things. So –

NF: How have you found her reading? Because S said that last year they picked up a mismatch between reading and writing, scores wise and I'm wondering how that might –

R: Oh right. Well for her reading, she does have extra reading support from our LSA. We have one LSA for the year group, so the time is very short, but she does get a couple of sessions a week with reading and that might be reading books, words or doing just activities outside of the classroom to sort of support her and I know as well that they've been doing some sort of theme words if you like. So at the moment we've been doing some science and we're looking at materials and I know that the LSA has been working through materials words to just try and extend her vocabulary which those kinds of words might well be properties of materials, words that might well be missing from the vocabulary. So to support her there, which in turn would help her reading.

NF: Ok, so who decides – you decide each week what she gets from the LSA?

R: I don't no. The LSA is very experienced and so she is kind of running her own show out of the classroom which I don't know, as a class teacher maybe I should be more involved in that, but she just seems to be so competent at doing it, I have been reluctant to sort of get involved and sort of say well I'd rather you did this, because it seems in my mind, it just seems that actually she's doing the right things anyway. And I have seen and sat down and looked at the work she's doing, just so I'm aware of how she's being supported.

NF: So the LSA, if she's attached to a year group she's aware of what you're doing in science or whatever, that week?

R: Absolutely.

NF: So she is consciously alerting the children to new vocabulary that's related to the class projects and topics anyway.

R: Yes and she's very involved, I mean not in so much as the planning process but certainly very involved in the overview planning for the term or the half term, because we do the integrated curriculum approach, we know exactly what we're supposed to be doing in the full six weeks ahead.

NF: So does she have the additional reading support because how is that kind of – how is that got to, is that children operating at a certain level that are given reading support? Or is it because she's EAL and you recognise that she might need more?

R: I think it's because she's been flagged up as slightly behind with her reading and so that's where she falls into the extra support category and then what is delivered to support her reading is down to the LSA that's doing that support. That's how I believe it works in the school. I mean probably I ought to go and find out, that's my fault for not doing that but I think that –

NF: You have enough to deal with.

R: Yes I know. [Laughs]

NF: Don't be too hard on yourself.

R: Yeah, but you think oh blimey. But Sue, the LSA worked with S's class last year so she was very involved with the two children, so we're actually very fortunate that she's been transported up here with them as a one class transfer and they've been then split into the three / four classes. She knows all the children very well and so can therefore push them on from all of her experience with them directly last year.

NF: Right.

R: Which is a god send really because if we had somebody different, you know, you almost think well the first six weeks they're still trying to work out who's doing what.

NF: Right so you've got a nice continuity there of staffing you mean?

R: Yes for the support staff.

NF: Right, well that must work very well.

R: Well I think so. I mean it's a great idea isn't it, that they move with the children almost, it's lovely. We're very fortunate, I just wish we could have more LSA staff.

NF: And I wonder if it means to some extent then that the sort of planning that anyone needs to do for C becomes absorbed into the general way in which you might differentiate for children with any specific need. Or does it feel different for her?

R: I don't know that it feels different in any way. I think there's a little girl who's in year four, who came from, I think she's from Bangladesh and they do a lot of the key word work together. So in terms of that, the provision for her isn't – it's not unique to C. Is that what you're asking? Sorry I've lost my train of thought.

NF: Yes, I was just asking does it feel like there's a differentiation in terms of what any of your children might need, but you're saying actually she is paired up with another EAL child. So some of the time that planning is specifically for them to target a language need as oppose to a kind of learning ability/need.

R: Yes, so they're getting the language support if you like, but it's like a tiny, tiny amount of the day.

NF: Sure, but it is there.

R: Yes we are supporting their needs and I think that those needs are appropriate to their level. It's not too much and it's not too little, it's right and I don't think that any other of the support that's designed or given, is tailor made if you like, for C, because she's EAL, I think it's more tailored towards her needs as a child that's maybe a little bit behind with her reading, as are other children within this school that are fluent English speakers.

NF: Right. So that would just be part of a normal curriculum.

R: It is, there's nothing that's being delivered, we don't have any polish speakers in school, so there's no work done with the language there, but because she's been in school for what, two, three and a half years, she doesn't necessarily need that directly and I think that mum speaks Polish or mum and dad both speak Polish to her at home, I know that and I've given her some maths vocabulary that I got off the internet somewhere, off of a maths web site that's in Polish and English and I've given her the days and months of the year, days of the week and months of the year in English and Polish, just as a print off, so she can practice at home with mum and dad as well. So that they're getting an understanding of the vocabulary that we're using too.

NF: Ok, that's great. So despite that she's been in three and a half years, you're still recognising, the school is still recognising that she still needs support with languages, she hasn't kind of been left. Because it would be tempting wouldn't it, she's already in the gifted and talented group for example and she seems to be altogether very competent, it would be tempting to leave it. But it seems to me like there's quite a lot of fine tuned support going in for her.

R: I think that we're definitely aware, conscious of the fact that she's EAL and it's little things, like for example last week when she asked her English teacher, sorry her maths teacher "what's a month? I don't know what a month is" And Jo had said to me that she doesn't know and that's when I went on the internet and there you go, that sort of my from my point of view she now knows what a month, but now I've also supported her by giving it to her in English and Polish on a printed off the internet.

NF: So how do you feel about that? Do you think it's the role of us as teachers to manage language acquisition in second language learners or do you think it's a problem in English schools or - ?

R: I think it is our responsibility to provide for those children. How that's gone about is I think dependent on the teacher and how much they want to go about supporting that child with that area because it would be quite easy to just say well you're in my classroom so you get on with it, you know. She's quite a difficult case because she is so fluent, it's not like she's come in now into the classroom directly from Poland and I'm sure there are children that just do turn up at school and are like you know, I

haven't a clue what you're saying to me, I really don't know. It must be horrendous, in fact I have experienced it myself. I've been travelling, I travelled in East Africa three years ago and being dropped off there on your own is – it is quite intimidating and you really don't know what anyone's saying. So as an adult I've experienced that so it must be particularly difficult for children.

NF: So it doesn't feel like – I'm most interested in pedagogy in developing language but also in kind of teacher attitude to just to kind of what looks like a burgeoning number of children in Britain who are not English.

R: Yeah, I think that there needs to be a good point of support on the internet. Now maybe I'm missing it but when I've looked for things like that print out for her, you know, hundreds of websites came up with translations but whether Hampshire would have or would provide something, I think that would be useful. It would be for me, whether everybody would use it.

NF: Are you aware of what there is in Hampshire? Are you saying you had a teacher from EMAS?

R: Yeah, I'm aware of that as a facility, but I haven't seen it, I haven't looked on their website if they've got one and apart from –

NF: They have.

R: Yeah, apart from –

NF: Yeah, they have got a website and they have got some things about Polish children in Hampshire schools as well actually.

R: Well it would be worth me looking. Or if there is going to be a continued influx of children from eastern Europe, because it's not just Poland is it, then it would be useful to maybe publicise that around schools, because it probably would be quite interesting. I know we're supposed to have – well we have had labels up on the doors when we've had – there was some Bangladeshi children came, so labels up on the door. But for C I don't know whether it's suitable to have Polish words up around the classroom that say things like door, because she knows it's a door in English.

NF: She knows it's a door, I wonder if it might be interesting for the other children though, to see it written in Polish and for her to see her language valued.

R: Yeah.

NF: You could ask her couldn't you, it's interesting.

R: If she'd like to, yeah.

NF: Yeah, if she's fluent enough to express how she feels about that –

R: Absolutely. I will ask her actually.

NF: Yeah. I mean I wonder if actually you might get EMAS training or something from them actually, as part of your NQT training with Hampshire?

R: I don't think there is anything, I think you can probably opt – I don't think there is, I've got my NQT file down there, you can have a look in a minute if you like. I don't think there is anything there. I think that from my point of view I trained at Reading University and this afternoon being talked at was all we got, so that's as much as I know really.

NF: Right and that's probably common to GTP isn't it, because that's partly the way it's managed isn't it.

R: Yeah. And of course in the school you're training in it really depends on whether there's anybody that is in those – has those particular needs, so if I'd been working in Basingstoke maybe there would have been a high majority of Polish children or something –

NF: There are more certainly.

R: Yeah, so maybe then it would have been more prevalent in the actual school, so I'd have gone and done something about it.

NF: Yeah. So for you then, it wasn't something you met on your training at all, it's kind of –

R: Not really and I was supposed to go to a school in Southampton – Mountbatten School is it? I think, who they've got a high number of EAL children there, there's an Indian community I think in that area, I'm not entirely sure but I was supposed to go there and just observe the children and see how the teachers provide, but I think the end of the course and it all just was final placements and things, it all just – you just run out of time.

NF: Yes, I also think it's hard for you to see it, if you just go in and look and you haven't got someone explaining to you, look this teacher is doing this and that and the other, you don't actually know what you're seeing because you haven't got that kind of subject knowledge, does that feel scary? I mean obviously this child you've got is terribly fluent, so that must – I imagine that must remove some of the anxiety around it?

R: I think if I had a child who maybe just turned up out of the blue, which I know that does happen, here's my child and they're going to come to school now, I would probably panic in the first week thinking oh what do I do, what do I do? But I do know as an NQT and having received that training, that there are places to go to get the support and I don't think that that would be – it would be a learning curve for me, but I don't think – I wouldn't be frightened of going and trying to find out and putting in the extra effort to find the materials to support that child. Now how I'd go about getting them to understand if they really had no sort of basic English, I don't know.

NF: You'd have other colleagues I guess in school, wouldn't you, because they had, S was telling me, this small population of Bengali children over the years so there must be people on the staff perhaps, who feel particularly maybe in foundation stage two who are used to –

R: Yeah, I know there was one boy who went down to foundation stage to kind of get the basics even though he was in year four at the time, so he went there and got that input, but he's actually gone to another school, I think he had SEN as well, so he

NF: Right so it was more complex.

R: Yes, his particular case was quite sort of in depth and detailed and things, so –

NF: Great. I think that's kind of it really, I think we've covered everything I had to say and it's been really interesting to hear about your early experiences, I must say. It's not often you get the opportunity to explore with an NQT.

R: Yeah, I mean we've got both here, we've got S who's obviously got years of experience under her belt and is an expert in English as well and then you've got me who's kind of like just trying to survive every day [Laughter] it's like aaaagh. (...)

NF: It's very tiring isn't it.

R: It is, it's exhausting but I am enjoying it and I just want to make sure that all the children really are happy and are making progress in their year with me. Because if they don't I think I'm in the wrong job. [Laughs]

[End of transcript]

## NF SECOND INTERVIEW WITH ROSIE SUMMER 2009

NF: Ok, so it is C isn't it?

R: C.

NF: C, that's how you pronounce it. When we last met she was doing certain things in reading and writing and so on. Do you want to fill me in on what she is doing now it's the end of the year?

R: Yes, she is improved massively really in term of her writing capabilities. I don't have her exact levels on me but I can get them for you, they show a huge improvement in terms of what she's capable of doing, and through seeing what she is writing during the English lessons, you know, it's almost like she can really get a grasp of the concept of what we are doing or the genre and then she is really running with it and she is starting to now race ahead of her peer group in terms of the structure of things, so she is writing in paragraphs now.

NF: And she's year three?

R: Yes year three.

NF: Gosh.

R: So she is able to do that, not always in the right place but pretty much and her presentation is stunning really and she's just making massive leaps really,

NF: So in terms of her writing generally it's above average for the year group?

R: Yes she is -

NF: As a mono speaker as it were, in terms of English?

R: Yes it is, she is still a very intent listener to the input, she really tries hard to understand what's being said and anything that needs clarifying she will come and ask, rather than sort of shy away like other children do, whereas it's almost as if she wants to - she knows she wants to do well and some of the other children are just kind of -

“Oh maybe I don’t quite understand it, but I’m just going to try and do something so I don’t get told off.” I’d rather that they came and ask, so in terms of what she is producing she has made huge improvements this year.

NF: So when you say improvements, are we talking about improvements - it’s probably difficult to see the difference - improvements that would be normal for an English speaking child, or are you aware that the improvements are specifically related to her second language, you know position?

R: No, more in terms of where she is in comparison to her peer group. She still makes errors with some of her phonic spellings, I don’t know whether that is down to her EAL or what, because obviously she - I think she did come to school in reception but maybe the mother tongue being Polish at home and things in the earlier days. We haven’t been able to support her with that, and the other thing is her tenses she gets that very muddled.

NF: Still muddled ok, it’s taking time.

R: So those two areas are areas for improvement, in terms of what she is producing is of very high quality and she is picking up about the connectives and the adjectives and she is constructing her sentences very, very well. Punctuation is there, it’s just those two areas, the tenses and the spelling.

NF: Right, so what about her spoken English, is that quite fluent?

R: She is fluent yes, she is ever so quietly spoken, I think that is more her personality than not, she is happy to speak in front the class to do show and tell and she is very keen to do that, and the children don’t really bat an eyelid about the way that you know her pronunciation, the way she is saying things. So you know, I think that’s a really positive thing for a child to come and because she feels one of the class you know, we don’t single her out or for anything so -

NF: And the other children respond to her as if she were an indigenous local as it were?

R: Absolutely yes, although they will sometimes say “oh you know you are from Poland” or “This about Poland” and she will just respond to that, so they are aware of it.

Whether they have any concept of what that actually means I don't know, and the fact that she speaks English as a second language I don't know. But we have got another bi-lingual child in the class who is English and French so -

NF: Oh, right. Was that the case at the beginning of the year, oh right I'd forgotten that.

R: Well she is English, but Mum's French so she -

NF: She is bi-lingual as opposed to the EAL?

R: Sorry yes.

NF: No that's me picking up the wrong end of the stick not you. Ok so for the children there's an awareness of difference but there's no rejection of that difference.

R: None whatsoever.

NF: Awareness and sense of complete kind of assimilation of her.

R: Yes acceptance she is just another one of the class.

NF: Right, I remember reading was more of an issue and you had to support her more with reading.

R: Yes.

NF: How is that doing?

R: She is still gaining additional support for reading, although again with all that extra support and her natural desire to progress and learn and to develop, she has made really good progress with her reading as well, still a bit behind expectation for her age but then -

NF: I find this interesting because on the whole we think of children as becoming readers before they are writers.

R: Yes.

NF: So are you aware with your other children of writers, good writers whose reading is not as good as their writing? It just interests me in this particular issue for her.

R: Maybe a handful of children but not, but in the year group - but not I wouldn't say that is a massive thing, because as you say it would be the more natural route wouldn't it? That you read to and -

NF: But it's not - maybe it's not and maybe there are exceptions and I'm just making generalisations.

R: Yes, it would be interesting to find out.

NF: Yes, it would wouldn't it? So how about your own practice of teaching English? When I spoke to you back in the Autumn obviously you were feeling very new [laughs] and you were talking a lot about in general terms about how much support you had and so on and so forth. Do you feel your own - have you got a sense of your own practice having kind of developed?

R: I think my own approach to English lessons has changed, I don't feel I have cracked it yet.

NF: I don't think I ever did [laughs].

R: But then I spoke to our literacy co-ordinator and she said that every year when she teaches different things she still learns, and she has been doing it twenty years, so I'm not feeling quite so bad now.

NF: Kind of comes with the territory I think.

R: Absolutely.

NF: Yes, are there things like I don't know, use of the strategy or anything like that, national strategy or do you not use that here? I have forgotten you use kind of integrated curriculum with them don't you?

R: Yes.

NF: There are things like that that become clearer or less clear or you don't do it anyway?

R: Our approach to English is going to change next year, partly with the new curriculum that's come in, but also we feel very much that the children making the transition from key stage one to key stage two, they are almost catapulted into a very structured key stage two approach to learning, which for year three children is no way is that appropriate, and that's kind of come out this year and we are having a complete change around of staff. I am staying in year three/four and our Deputy Head is coming from five/six into three/four, so we have kind of put the foot down and said we want to change this, and we are going to have a very key stage one approach to literacy, changing our time table certainly for the first term. Maybe we will change after that, so rather than trying to teach the structure of genre to children as soon as they come in the door up here, we are going to have you know much more of a phonics, spelling, reading and literacy hour time in the mornings. So the children have a longer approach and it's a little bit more fair for them. With our timetable at the moment we have one hour, it's the end of break time, it's just before lunch time, and by the time you have got in here you have done your twenty minutes input you've done an activity, go and start writing another ten minutes. By the time they have got a pencil and book, you know, five minutes of writing time doesn't really work.

NF: No.

R: Especially when you are trying to get them to produce something that's you know, of a much higher level approach than perhaps they are used to. So in terms of that we have noticed that we will be making changes for that area, which I think is a good thing, actually it will be interesting for me to see how that compares to this year.

NF: Yes and then it was the announcement on Friday of the doing away with the strategies.

R: Yes I heard something about that but we'll wait and see.

NF: Mm.

R: Wait and see. There are lots of things that are said aren't there?

NF: Yes you're right, they are said and then you wonder well what will they do about strategy standards and - ?

R: Or just the press reporting it, you know...

NF: Yes you are absolutely right.

R: In the wrong way, or somebody said something. I think quite frankly at the moment I just want to get to the end of the year and have survived.

NF: Yes I'm sure.

R: And you know, I'm quite keen to develop my practice in the literacy though, I do feel that particularly having the experience of C here. But other children as well you know, that trying to encourage them to get the most out of them, which is what we - that's all we are trying to do at the end of the day. A lot of them say, you know, I don't like English because I have to do a lot of writing, but it doesn't have to be all about writing, it can be lots of other things and we need to engage the children in that really.

NF: That's interesting isn't it, because of course they are writing all the time in other subjects as well, but because we call it history or geography or science they perhaps don't see it as writing, but of course they are. Its funny isn't it?

R: Crazy.

NF: It's all to do with the perception isn't it? So moving on to that third question, because C is so fluent, when you first got her I wonder how you might respond to that, but do you see in her a tension between the need to deliver a kind of set things in English about whatever your objectives are for that week or month, and her needs, has there been an issue at all about that?

R: I don't feel that I differentiate specifically for her. What I find, which I think I mentioned before, is that her understanding of individual words is sometimes a bit ropey but it won't be me that picks that up, it might be occasionally if I see her face kind of going well I don't really you know, like she is looking like she doesn't understand, but at other times I do feel that I pretty much leave it to her to come and ask for extra additional support or explanation of what a word is, and she will do that you know, she is not afraid to come and ask.

NF: Ok.

R: I think one of the recommendations you suggested at the end of the meeting last time was a dictionary, I said that to dad at parents evening, and he has just brought - come back from Poland and has just bought her an English/Polish Polish/English dictionary and she has brought it in and she is really keen to use that to develop her vocabulary and understand it.

NF: Oh good.

R: So that's like she - it's a nice thing for her.

NF: That's useful yes.

R: It is yes, but there is nothing that I do for C that I differentiate for her language needs at all.

NF: No, in the reading supporters you have said is something she would get anyway because she is not at an age related level or whatever.

R: There has been some comprehension work that's been done with her outside of RLSA but I'm not involved with that at all, she is just been sort of hoicked out the class for that.

NF: So who plans for that then? If -

R: That's RLSA.

NF: But RLSA plans on her own or how does that work?

R: Yes she would do yes, I'm not involved in that at all, and she might do it alongside the head of the year group, but I haven't been involved in any of that.

NF: So is she extracting children from different classes then, to work, who have like needs as it were?

R: Yes exactly.

NF: Ok, but it's kind of like a separate little program for them?

R: Yes it is.

NF: But their needs are not necessarily EAL needs there, it's just to do with the level they are at rather than -

R: Yes exactly.

NF: Ok.

R: And she does - forms a part of that.

NF: Great, ok, and then this next one you teach in this integrated way here and I wondered if there were any ways in which you felt this supported vocabulary development, it's probably hard to see if you haven't got a comparison having taught in a different way elsewhere yet?

R: I do think that she - her vocabulary is extended and she is a child that will again clarify what the word is and then try and use it, whereas other children won't do that, and that's not just our theme stuff, that might be to do with the science or whatever, she will try and use those words in her writing and learn how to spell those words correctly as well.

NF: So maybe the phonetic approach kind of consciously throws up vocabulary that we might not otherwise (...)

R: Yes if used yes.

NF: It's quite useful.

R: But I mean we have just done our hanging baskets, a science based theme, the children had to play and carry out an experiment and she was beginning to use lots of different words. I mean I'm sure she has heard "thermometer" and "temperature" and "experiment" before but I felt that in her written work those words you know, were being used more than say other children. So there must be some impact there because she is being offered the opportunity to hear and learn and understand those words and therefore use them.

NF: I'm sure. So this next one you kind of half answered, you didn't feel there was a difference between teaching bi-lingual children as opposed to second language learners and I guess everything we have said up to this point in the interview has confirmed that?

R: Mm.

NF: So for you in terms of this year with this experience of this child...

R: I think with this child I don't think that I haven't made any conscious effort to alter my teaching to accommodate her needs, other than being very encouraging of her if she comes to clarify something. I do feel that if I was in another school where children - where there was a range of children, or I mean they can turn up on the day can't they, any day and you could be thrown in at the deep end, of course there would be a change there and a need to accommodate for those children.

NF: So in a way you think it's her level of fluency almost makes it feel like not -

R: But you don't really notice that she is -

NF: Although you are aware aren't you, of the differences, because you have said that there's the verb tense endings, there's the range of vocabulary and so on, so you are sensitive to that difference but in fact but it doesn't feel like something you have to do differently for her somehow.

R: No, with the tense it's just providing her with additional work when we come to that stage, you know. At the moment we are writing, so we need to keep that going and that will be addressed, it's just on the downside they integrated quickly so you have kind of got to keep the pressure on, that they produce this piece of work and actually we could stick with a need if there was one there, and again she is not the only child that gets it wrong, so there are other children of course, it's a difficult thing to be thinking. It's interesting though, I'd say last week when I was reading some work out to the children, English speaking children as their first language, if you read exactly what they have written to them they will say oh I have used the wrong word there and correct it, she may not do it as quickly.

NF: Right so she is not necessarily spotting the errors?

R: Yes the tense particularly the tense, so that's quite an interesting thing.

NF: But I guess what you are saying in a way is that you're responding to that need as and when in a way, because if you're sensitive to that, you are already sensitive to this list of things you've said in the interview and the last interview, so you are in fact taking account of it. I suppose maybe what we are saying here, I don't want to put words in your mouth, it doesn't feel like it's different because you would be differentiating for children all the time anyway, does that kind of sum it up in a way or not?

R: There is a difference there but particularly with her there is no kind of anything significant to identify I think and really -

NF: No details?

R: Yes I think that's a fair comment.

NF: Ok [laughs] I was really interested to know, so presumably did you have NQT training from Hampshire this year?

R: I have yes.

NF: And was there anything in the -

R: If there was I didn't choose it.

NF: Right.

R: We had a big list of different options of things to do, I didn't choose that, I had an hour and a half or something similar at Reading University doing my GPTA training so I was aware of where you could go to get resources should you need them, but I haven't taken on board any additional language awareness training or anything during my NQT year no. I have however looked at the EMAS?

NF: Mm.

R: I have looked at their websites and I have done a web search and there was loads and loads of resources on line, sparkle box or anywhere else.

NF: There are aren't there, yes.

R: So if I was ever put in that position I think that you know, using my own initiative I'm sure I could manage to knock up a few labels and posters and things, There was one thing actually talking about that, is it came up during spellings, no Maths it was, C wasn't aware of what the months of the year were. And so I just very quickly went on and printed something off for her, and those resources are all available so there hasn't been any training but there are resources available.

NF: Yes that's the impression I am getting from other schools as well, that there is an awful lot there now, which I have to say is really very recent, just a little as three or four years ago I'm not sure teachers were able to do it.

R: But then the influx of migrational workers has kind of extensionally increased hasn't it? And now people are saying well we actually are going to go back home now because there is no benefit to us working here.

NF: No.

R: In fact C's parents have said we you know could go back.

NF: Oh really, they have discussed that with you?

R: Yes, he said I don't know how long we will be here and could go back at any time. But they - an auntie and a cousin have come to work here now, they go to a Polish church in Southampton, they are part of that community but how long they stay I don't know.

NF: Yes, I was wondering about that because anecdotally it seemed to me that a lot of the younger people who came over here perhaps to earn money to go to university back home, weren't coming because there is just no work for them, but their families seem to be still here. I mean just by virtue of the fact that all the teachers I'm interviewing are still seeing me a second time because the children are still there.

R: Still here yes.

NF: Yes so, I wondered, it's interesting me saying that, yes times are hard aren't they, so -

R: Yes and they may quite well find that life is - you know needs to learn to go home. Actually I think that mum and dad, they both work, C is in a good school, they are very happy with the school, how she is progressing. She is an only child, whether there will be another one I don't know.

NF: Have they said anything to you about schooling? Because another thing that's cropped up is that the Polish families really love English schooling.

R: Oh right.

NF: Because it's far less kind of (formulaic and ...) than the Polish system.

R: Right.

NF: And much - and they find Polish at English schools warmer and more about the child and the individual.

R: I'm sure that is probably the case, mum is very - struggles a lot with her English language and she is much better than she was apparently, but I don't really get much of a conversation out of her, it's more about is C ok or if she is feeling poorly, I can communicate that and that's fine, dad is a bit better with his language but there is no real discussion about the school as it were, as opposed to you know, they just want to be reassured that she is ok, she's happy, she's got friends and she is doing alright in school, and that's as far as I get with mum and dad really, saying that I find them very approachable and really nice and very dedicated to C as well.

NF: They come to Parents evenings and all the - ?

R: Yes her dad usually comes along, they have been along to the different performances and you know, they always come to pick her up, either mum or dad and yes they are a very nice family actually, very nice.

NF: Lovely. And this last one might be difficult for you to answer because you feel quite supported here anyway and because again because C was quite fluent, I mean do you think - had you wanted more support you could imagine how that might best have been given to you? I'm interested in what teachers see as the most effective forms of support for them.

R: I think historically here we have had Bengali children?

NF: Yes.

R: In the school and with basically zero language English language there is an LSA that has worked with those children specifically I think that would be my main port of call in this school.

NF: So that's another person rather than a kind of printed guidance material?

R: I haven't seen anything that's printed. As I said the first thing I would do if that happened to me is to go to EMAS, phone them up or go up there or get online and just find something for the child to sort of do, and the plan would fall into place because you know, we would have to consider about if they have got very little English language skills then how would they be able to participate in our integrated curriculum basically they wouldn't.

NF: No.

R: We would have to, you know, really provide a separate curriculum for that child and so I think that the Head Teacher would be very supportive but it would be a lot on my back to go and find out for myself what I needed, that's how I feel.

NF: Yes and that would be fine? That would feel like the role?

R: Absolutely yes, it is totally providing for every child isn't it, that's the whole point of doing this job and regardless of what I think, I panic but I'd probably quite enjoy the challenge of doing that along with everything else, but it would be very interesting.

NF: It's always very interesting for me to hear teachers talk about this particular issue, I've often asked them what would be the best thing for support and like you they always

talk about other colleagues really being by far the best form of support. And it's particularly interesting for me because there's a load of stuff printed by the primary strategies, the old NLS and UPLS about how to support bilingual learners, but I'm not aware of anyone reading it or drawing on it or knowing it's there or -

R: I think partly because a) they wouldn't know it was there because they haven't needed to go and find it particularly, I wouldn't necessarily read that at the moment if I saw it lying on the side somewhere because it's not directly relevant to what I need at the moment and I've got enough to do without kind of going and finding additional reading material to send me to sleep at night. And that's probably why I'm sure it's in the school somewhere like many things it kind of comes in at the office, I do feel that sometimes that these printouts come into the office they go into someone's pigeon hole and then disappear into their cupboard and if you are looking for something, I mean where am I going to find that?

NF: And the person who has put it into the cupboard is also incredibly busy and hasn't remembered they have put it into the cupboard either, I don't think anyone does these things deliberately.

R: And the SENCO, we have got a very good SENCO here and it may well be that if I needed to she would go "Oh yes we have got this whole cupboard full of EAL" here you are come and help yourself.

NF: Mm, but as you say it's an as and when so it's a when you need rather than when a new initiative comes out and then you absorb it then, because I think these things came out say in 2004 or 2005, if you don't need it for two years you are going to forget it came out aren't you?

R: Yes and also that's before I even trained, so any of those materials, you know, I'm not even aware that they are there, I mean a quick search on the internet and they will pop up but there's nothing you know, no need for me to go and specifically find that at the moment, as I've said I have got enough to be doing.

NF: Yes [laughs]

R: She huffs [laughs]

NF: Yes, I'll take it out if you like. Ok I'll leave you alone that's great.

[End of transcript]

## **NF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH VERA AUTUMN 2007**

V: The SEAL Course came up and they said to me, we had a discussion about the EAL and because we've got so many different children in our school now from many different backgrounds, very multi cultural school, I found it very interesting and I said I'm going to have a go, it was six modules, this course and I have passed all six.

NF: Wow, well done.

V: So I was really pleased.

NF: Yours is called SEAL rather than TEAL?

V: Yes, that's right, supporting English as an additional language. Liz is doing the teaching English as additional language. So her research and her investigation into it is still the theme is of it, but she has to do far more, it's on a higher scale–

NF: Right, in terms of a dissertation and things like that.

V: Yes. I still have to keep a journal, so I have to keep a journal on things that happened within the class room, observations of children. I had to have some general sort of observations by a tutor.

NF: So you had to observe the children who had EAL?

V: Yes and do specific work with them, but it's really interesting because now we've done that and we particularly went on and did the ten week Polish course.

NF: Yes I've heard about this.

V: And she gave us quite an insight to how the children really feel, because you don't get that feeling and when we were all on the course, that was really interesting, because when you're asked things – how you sort of clam up quite quickly and that really makes you understand how some of the children might feel.

NF: Absolutely and I was talking to your staff in the nursery about that in the summer, they were saying just that, the not knowing bit and I hope she doesn't ask me and that response, yeah great.

V: So that was – I really enjoyed that and I mean we've not learnt a huge amount, I can't speak to any of the children fluently but I can talk to them when we're trying to work out what they know – colours, numbers, singular words, some phrases, so that was nice when they all started in September because I was able to introduce who I was and we've got a very good relationship with the Polish parents as well, they like to come and find out things and you know, they talk to me. Because I did do an interview with one of the Polish mums for one of my presentations, so that was really interesting, I worked with a Polish mum and a Muslim mum, so it was very interesting because I approached my interviews quite differently because of the cultural barriers and different – I was very careful about what I thought about, having learnt quite a lot about the Muslim faith and different parents, that was really interesting because I was quite careful in my approach so as not to offend. Whereas Polish, since you know, we joined that European Union in 2004, I did some research on that, six hundred thousand Poles coming to us.

NF: Wow, so you know more than I do at the moment actually.

V: Yeah it was huge, but they're very chatty, very what you see is what you get, they're not quite as – where we're quite careful about how we say things, they are very forward.

NF: Right.

V: So you can sometimes feel that oh you're a little bit taken aback because the English are quite reserved aren't we, in that manner and they are very different. So some people might find you know, sort of think ooh a little bit taken aback by how they are, but that's just their general reaction, so that is really interesting and you've just got to look past that, they're quite upfront about everything.

NF: Right, oh great, ok, so there's definitely this sense of difference and this strong sense of Polish identity kind of coming through quite strongly, you know, and the fact that

you've learnt some Polish, whereas do you know of the other languages of the children?

V: No I don't, no. We've got a little Thai girl, a Turkish – I expect you've spoken to Mrs Gaitskell haven't you?

NF: Yes I have.

V: So you know the children we have, and some of them speak quite good English, so but you can still see in their writing that that is – they're still trying to get sort of to grips with writing English. So although they might speak quite fluently, they still need so much support. We are trying to work, we've sort of split our groups a little bit because we've made a folder and a pack now.

NF: Yes talk to me about the things you've – so you've made these specifically in response to the SEAL course really.

V: Definitely.

NF: It is something that you wouldn't really have known about before that?

V: No and I think in general, these were made for each classroom, a pack, with different things in, not just for supporting our Polish, even though they're our biggest amount at the moment, they're our biggest majority, these are in general, we made for children that are new to our reception or our nursery. We made some lovely fans for the children that come in and don't have any English, so they're just general signs to show them where to go and if you're having problems. I thought they'd be lovely for reception actually and nursery because most of the children are coming in to start, so that's good actually.

NF: It is, isn't it, coming in at the normal time of admission to school. So they use theirs to express how they're feeling or you use them .....either way is it?

V: Either way, yeah that's what we thought would be really helpful. We've got some strategies we found for the classroom, to help support the teachers in thinking when they're doing their planning. For readers, for when they're LSAs, as well as for

teachers, I use these listening to readers. And they're little things to look for. I feel at the moment particularly with our Polish children, really not trying to bombard them too much with words as such, we're trying to develop their sounds and how we build words. So we're using a lot of picture books, I think looking at the books with them is lovely and particularly because I know a little bit of Polish, we talk about it in English and Polish, so we might pick out a house. I know that a house is a dom, so they will say the words in English and in Polish, which is fantastic. But we still do the same with our other EAL children, we will start with picture books and build those sounds and words, because they find it so hard, their alphabets are different. In some languages they don't use certain letters, they might not use V and W.

NF: Yes absolutely, their letters are pronounced differently or they don't have prepositions and things like that.

V: Yes, that really helps, so it's looking at all those things and I've passed on quite a lot of my knowledge that I've found out, to all the other LSAs.

NF: So this pack is for the teachers, it's a support that you've put together really for staff.

V: For all staff, as well as supply staff that might come in.

NF: Right, oh ok.

V: We have regular supply staff but it's quite helpful we've got our ICT); and we've also got a lot of dual language books in our library, so we made a list and made sure that teachers and LSAs know that we've got these books to hand out to parents and we actually hand those over and explain, so that they do come back. I made an aide-memoire, which was aimed at supply teachers in general, because if they come in and they don't know our pupils, it was a quick reference I felt. People don't want to sit and read lots and lots of things, so they were just about how to support them in the class room as well.

NF: This would be terribly useful for your students – I know you've got student teachers coming in later in the year, I mean this sort of thing, would you share this sort of thing with student teachers?

V: Oh absolutely, yes, definitely. Well it was really interesting when I made that, we had a student teacher in and she said “oh would you mind if I have a copy?” and I said “no, not at all”. Well I’ve learnt so much that has been so interesting, it’s lovely to share it now.

NF: Yes absolutely.

V: We have made some games. These were from what Mrs Perry said were Sparkle Box.

NF: Right, Sparkle Box is the website?

V: That’s right and we’ve got some interesting websites on the back of my aide memoire for teachers or students that want to look for translation, supporting, there’s some fantastic translation websites – Babblefish for one is really simple, easy to use on the web. If you want to find particular words, so we can use that for our other children, for other languages. If we needed to find something specifically. But we made these games for children coming in, we’ve got simple dominoes, matching the colours and pictures and one for a school game, so that was we made the board, put them together so they can travel round.

NF: And so you would have got this, literally these sheets off Sparkle Box? And you just downloaded it and then done your lovely laminating.

V: Yes.

NF: Great so they’ve got the picture, sentence match there, the dominoes to go with it. They’re great aren’t they?

V: So you could play that in a big group as a collaborative activity as well. So you could include all different languages with that, it doesn’t necessarily have to be just Polish or –

NF: No, no, lovely. They’re great and you’ve got another, there’s a big game there as well, which is –

- V: Yes well this is to put with some counters, if we can find some counters and play together. You've got little things that you can talk to them about what they've got to do, so it's all practical.
- NF: Yes, and lots and lots of language, lots of speaking, listening and social interaction as well. Lovely.
- V: Yes, so we thought actually I did think with a couple of my Polish children in Rabbit class, that we would play more games, particularly we were trying to get them reading, but rather than just sharing a book, I'm going to try and get them involved in the games a bit more, to get them sharing and understanding.
- NF: It's about development of expected behaviour, not as much as it is about language, yes interesting. And so obviously you've done loads here, I'm just interested to know before you went on the SEAL course, you presumably were doing support for English, for all children. Do you think there's – well what sort of things do you think you were doing that were supporting the language development of your English, English children as it were? Your just normal mono-lingual speakers, was there anything in particular that you think you were doing that worked well with them?
- V: Well I think you're always modelling language, all the time. I mean we've got some children that are English that may have particular speech problems or will say words and not always the proper sounds. So we're trying not to say "no, that's not how you do it", we just remodel it back and you're always speaking properly in the class room and showing an interest in what they're doing. So I think that always helps your second language children as such, because if you're putting them with good role models of English as well and you're always speaking back. Sometimes they do need some thinking time, so remembering if I'm talking to them particularly, I will try and talk to them in as less language as possible, so that they're understanding rather than you're jabbering on and they're looking at you as if to say "I don't know what you mean".
- NF: So do you feel like you do something a bit different for the second language learners, or does it feel the same but adapted?

V: I think you're just a little bit careful about how you talk to them, so that they've got time to listen to what you're asking them. You've got to give them a little bit more direction and you might need to repeat as well. But some of the English children, I think having different languages in the class room, for those children is wonderful.

NF: Right.

V: Because they're learning so much that they wouldn't normally learn. We talk about singular words sometimes in their languages, so they know what hello might be or goodbye, so they're getting a broad experience as well.

NF: And do you think in a way maybe it makes the children who are mono-lingual speakers think about kind of the structure of language and what's different between languages, I wonder if that becomes quite apparent in it? Because if you're talking about the difference between how we say something in Polish, we were saying there were different tenses and the letters are said differently, so it probably raises that kind of knowledge about languages as well doesn't it?

V: I think so, yes. I think the English children, they're happy and they realise when we say "look, some of these children, English isn't their first language", making sure that they're all included as well and they're not left on the side lines. We do a lot of speaking and listening in literacy now, so that we might choose partners so that we might particularly put a second language child with a very good role model, that's a good speaker of English, so they get to share as well those ideas and then they're always hearing that good language all the time.

NF: Right, so in a way it doesn't feel like difference then, it's to do with an awareness of – so the SEAL course has made you aware of what the differences for the children might be?

V: Yes I think so.

NF: So in a way you're adapting what you might already do for mono-lingual speakers to accommodate the second language speakers really.

V: Yes.

NF: Rather than creating a different, something different.

V: Oh no we keep them included absolutely. Sometimes if we're working on a book for literacy, I may take those children just to give them just that little bit of extra support, just to share with them, so that the next week they've actually looked at it, so that's giving them that little bit extra, but when you think you have twenty eight children in the class, I don't give them more of my time. They all have my time equally, but you do, it does make you more aware of how you approach, they might need to hear something twice for it to actually register, especially with that part of the language, but I don't spend more time, they all get fair time.

NF: Right, that's great.

V: So that we're stretching our able children, our English children, we're stretching our children that need some extra help with support that are English children and they're not grouped just particularly. We say that we're very fair about where we group them, about what they know, we don't just put them in a lower ability because they speak a second language. So we've got some very able second language children in our classroom.

V: I mean we have got some Polish children that do want your time, they're very demanding actually, the boys particularly (LP "The boys in particular are very spoiled"). So we have to – I make sure that (Gabriel) doesn't consume my time, because he could very easily do that, but he needs a lot of consistency and we are working really closely together, me and Mrs Gaitskell, to keep it consistent, because he does need to have – behaviour wise he can be a little bit of a pickle if you let him. [laughs] He's quite demanding.

NF: But in a way I guess that could be an issue for any of our children couldn't it? It's not necessarily that he's Polish, I sense that maybe you think there's an element of it?

LP: I think there is an element of how they're brought up and I mean the boys in particular, they are quite spoiled, particularly when they're the only one. Now he isn't the only one, but he runs rings round them doesn't he? I think it's quite a free household, which would be the same then, whether he was Polish or English, but because he's

Polish, I think he's probably bright enough to realise that he can get away with things because we don't understand.

NF: Ok, so it becomes a bit of a lever, ok, I see what you're saying.

LP: And I think he is actually and I think you know, he pushes all the time, but because he knows that we don't actually understand, the bottom line is we don't actually and I think he's bright enough to know, knowing what Elizabeth did as well. But she was a completely, I mean she was hard work, but she had a better work ethic, but she'd been to school in Poland.

NF: Was she his sister then?

V: Yes, she came in Year two and she'd been to school in Poland and I think it made a difference that she'd already had schooling and schooling in her own country and because all the Polish parents say to us how much nicer schooling is here. So she'd had quite a hard time I think and I think for her although learning English was very difficult, she liked the structure of our school and she liked the freedom, whereas apparently in Poland it's very regimented.

NF: One of the things I need to do is talk to a Polish family actually about differences between the systems, that'll be really interesting to find that out.

LP: And it's the same, I think it's in all these eastern European countries, because (Emila's) mum, the little Lithuanian, when you talk to her, she's said "oh you just wouldn't believe it, you just wouldn't believe the difference", she'd be a lovely person to talk to, she's a very, very highly intellectual lady but she's lovely to have a conversation with about things like that.

V Interestingly enough, I had a conversation with a Polish mum when I was picking my children up from school Agatha's mum. Agatha was here and she's now in Year three and two of the girls, Evelina who's here as well, she's gone to a school in Hartley Wintney and Victoria has gone back to Poland after being here for –

LP Well since she was in nursery.

V: Yeah, that's right, and I asked her how she was getting on and she said she was finding it extremely difficult after being here and going back to Poland.

NF: Oh really.

V: She was very confused, she was really finding it difficult. But she said to me, she'd picked (Gabriel) up last night for the mum, because (Gabriel's) mum's pregnant and she said to me that sometimes she doesn't always understand (Gabriel).

NF: Oh really.

V: Because he speaks quite quick Polish, but he's not always getting it right, so that was really interesting.

LP: But remember what they said to us down there in our little Polish Club, because they used to argue about who saying it (...)

V: Yeah they actually do and sometimes they might say something completely different, don't they, and you think well that doesn't sound the same at all.

NF: And that's another issue isn't it that we forget for them is that actually they're not fully operational in their home language.

LP: Exactly.. and this is why it's quite hard for us that and this is why it takes so much longer for them to do these things, because we're expecting them to have, to do if you like, the expectation if you like of the national curriculum, the end of key stage results is that they've done the same regardless of the fact that they've had Polish baby talk and learning all that through Polish and in a sense they're very early in learning acquisition aren't they, compared with like the children in the nursery.

NF: Absolutely.

LP: And how much more we're expecting of them.

NF: Absolutely, so that's a whole other issue really isn't it. Gosh. So you're doing tons, it was really nice to see all that, thank you, absolutely lovely and I'll go and have a look

at Sparkle Fish myself. What I want to do is come back in March and just kind of catch up and just see how things are going if that's alright.

V: Yes that'd be lovely, it'll be interesting to see - we really want to make some progress with those children hopefully by then. They are very warming though and they do warm to your help.

NF: Great.

LP: I think their parents they are very grateful aren't they?

V: Yes.

LP: I don't mean in a silly way, but they do recognise, I mean that was the one thing that in our Ofsted it is mentioned about EAL children.

NF: Good.

LP: Oh yeah, well it was hard work trying to get them to acknowledge it.

NF: Really.

LP: I don't know what they expected.

NF: It's interesting isn't it, because in terms of the whole every child matters agenda, you would have thought that would be very high up on their agenda.

LP: But I mean what we do here is huge compared with a lot of schools...

V: I've talked to... The people that were on my course, they weren't doing very much at all and it was lovely to come back and have so much support from Mrs Perry and a lot of the schools weren't really sure what their LSAs were actually doing so I feel I'm really pleased and very lucky that I'm working here.

LP: Well and it's also (...) like with the LSAs as well isn't it?

V: I love it.

LP: I know you do.

V: I really enjoy it, and we also use the QCA scale as well, a language in common, and we made up a chart that was a bit easier for the LSAs, I haven't got one in here because it's actually in my cupboard on the wall. We're just trying to plot –

LP: Here we go, these are the spares.

V: That's it, we're just trying to plot, so I've put a couple of children on there.

NF: Ok, so that would another interesting thing to follow up maybe when I come back next time.

V: Yes.

NF: So you've done additional things here or is this just –

V: No we've just blown it up and made it (...)

NF: It's quite inaccessible in a way isn't it, I find.

V: I think so and I think if we had said to put one of those in the folders, this is just so much easier to look at.

NF: It really is.

LP: This is something we've done as well, I don't know whether you'd like that. That's ways of helping your children in Polish, how you can help your children.

NF: Ok.

LP: So I'll do you a photocopy.

NF: Thank you very much, that's really useful.

V: I gave those out to two of our Polish parents, Gabriel's mum and Jacob's mum. We did have Gosha as well, but she's actually left us for another school, but that – actually it was very sad when she went, because we were just starting to get somewhere, she was smiling and being happy. So that was really helpful I think, because some of our

parents don't quite understand the reading system, when you give them all these things to take home it's so daunting, so we have actually only got that in Polish at the moment because we did get that translated by a Polish teacher, that was fantastic.

NF: Ok, was that the LSA you had from EMAS?

V: No we had that when we went on the Polish course to do the language, a lady from BECOT she was just really helpful with that. But we do use, I'm sure as Miss Perry said, we do use Mantra to do our booklets and different languages as well.

NF: Yes you showed me those translations, they're good aren't they? It works well.

V: I did make a game as well for one of my collaborative activities on my course and I made it as a flip chart for the interactive white boards, so the children could use it up there. It's actually on our shared resources, so LSAs can use it if they've got a bit of time, just to get children together to work on it and it's really to help with colours, we found a lot of – when I asked around, we found a lot of the children don't always know their colours, so that's really helpful.

NF: Ok.

V: And we chose to do it in fruits because we're a healthy snack. [laughs]

NF: That's great, it's been lovely this morning, thank you, so helpful.

**NF INTERVIEW WITH V**  
**2MAY 2008**

NF: So yes, I mean I really thought your last interview was a really interesting one I have to say. I have really enjoyed listening to you, because it just threw up lots of kind of questions as you know that I've got here, and I just...so really the purpose today is just to go over things that have been thrown up in interview for me, but also if there are things that you just want to tell me about the Polish children or how it's going for you as well then.

V: Yes ok.

NF: Just kind of jump in with that as well. So what interested me was the SEAL course and the fact that you had been selected to go on it, and I wondered how that had happened. Was it your interest or you know, how was it used?

V: Yes it was really, but we got some information put up in the staff room, by Mrs King, and a lot of people had a look at it, and I liked the idea of the second language, finding out a bit more, and I don't think there were too many other LSAs that were too interested. And I did come and talk to Patricia about it and I did feel that some of the content put me off a little bit, because there was different units, and you had to do so essays and some presentations, power point presentations which I'd never done before. But I also felt that it would be a bit of a challenge for me.

NF: So when you went on it, did they support you with things like that, they were sensitive to the fact that people hadn't written for a while and you know, they were supportive through that.

V: And they did lead us a little bit more to the information we needed to get hold of, for what they were asking for, so that was very good, and I met some really interesting people on the course. Some other LSAs which was really interesting to find out what they were doing in their schools. And actually I feel very lucky here, because Patricia has done the TEAL as well, we are both putting input, and she's not just...it's not been one of those courses which I was thinking it might be, just another course that you do

and it's put on the back burner, and actually she has been brilliant, because working with Patricia, we've put lots in place.

NF: Yes it sounds like it.

V: And I'm also doing a session a week now with the EAL children, I have two groups and we are following through with a story sack, so its lots of activities and story, so it's remodelling language, repeating words.

NF: So is that children from a range of classes?

V: Yes.

NF: That you are pulling out.

V: Not just the Polish children, I've got different children so I mix up the groups actually, and so that was really the course. I mean it's been brilliant, I did only do the first year though, there is actually two years to it.

NF: Oh yes there is another year ok.

V: But I felt a year was enough for me, and enough for this age group.

NF: Right ok.

V: I think if it has been looking at furthering my education as such, possibly I would have gone on, but I have sixty credits, with Portsmouth University.

NF: That's great.

V: And my certificates up out the front, so that's quite nice.

NF: It is worth furthering your career, because I was wondering if it had kind of made you interested in maybe pursuing something else at all, but for the moment not.

V: Not for the moment, I mean I have two children myself and I've found that quite a pressure on my family.

NF: Huge yes.

V: Because I did do a lot of work, I stayed in school to finish, till six o'clock at night.

NF: Right oh wow!

V: There was a huge amount to it actually, especially for me probably, I found it that little bit harder because I've not really done essays or anything since school, so that was a long time ago.

NF: So when you were saying sort of to take you right back to, you were attracted to it because you thought it was really interesting, because it was EAL. Is there...the thing that really arose from your last interview was this lovely affinity you seem to feel with the EAL children, as if you know, you seem to be really switched into them, and I wondered if there was, if you felt there was a particular reason for that or, you haven't got a kind of a second language background yourself?

V: No, not at all.

NF: Your husband or anything like that.

V: No not at all, in actual fact I didn't do any languages at school, and it's not actually until now I've realised how wonderful it is, to speak, and I would love to speak a second language. And I think that was why I was quite attracted to the Polish lessons as well, when Patricia suggested it, I said oh yes that would be brilliant, and it was really good fun actually. I've realised how much, I think it's different though when you are doing it at school, at the time when I was at school, I was quite afraid of another language, whereas I think possibly now that might be something I would maybe choose to do now. But yes I just find them fascinating.

NF: I know, I know what you mean, why I do as well for research and there is something extraordinary isn't there about young children and they're incredible, the speed with which they pick up that second language, and the way they operate between the two, I know yes so that's what I enjoy too.

V: Yes and I think when we did the Polish lessons, even though it was only ten lessons, I felt I could really put myself in their position, and see a...and how they feel when they come to us. So I just find them fascinating how quickly they pick things up.

NF: Right ok.

V: And also there difficulties and how frustrating they must feel, so I kind of warm to them a little bit with that.

NF: Do you think working with bilingual children a lot has in any way changed the way you work with monolingual children, are you aware of it kind of changing the way in which you think about how children learn language generally. Do you think it kind of you know, changes the way when you are doing reading and writing with just English speaking children as well? Do you think you're doing anything differently that you might have been?

V: I think I might have yes, I think I'm trying, I do try to speak clearly all the time, because I think even with those children, I mean I worked with a group today that has a Thai little girl, a Polish boy but two English children, and they both need that equal time, but I am very clear about what I say, I think, I think it has made me think about talking slower and precisely, about actually what you want them to achieve.

NF: Right so the way you choose your words, yes.

V: I think so, yes definitely.

NF: And another thing that really came up from the interview was, you have really quite substantial understanding about the needs of EAL learners, and I wondered if that, is that coming entirely from the course, or did you actually have that from your time working with children who were bilingual, before you went on the course.

V: I think the course has enhanced that.

NF: Right ok.

V: Has definitely, I feel more confident; because I now have that knowledge and I know what I'm doing is right. I think I was always quite sensitive to those children anyway, and I think definitely the course, the things I know now, I just...it's just backed it up really.

NF: Ok, so there was actually already quite a lot of understanding before you went on it.

- V: Yes we were already doing, but I think what's nice is you can actually say, this is definite evidence of what we're saying, and I think that's quite nice to have that knowledge. Oh I definitely enjoyed the course.
- NF: That's interesting because Patricia said something very similar, that she kind of knew what she was doing, but it was nice to read it and have that kind of confirmed in what you were reading.
- V: Definitely.
- NF: It's interesting isn't it, it must be quite a human response then, we don't quite trust our own instincts, because you obviously were doing the right thing, but we want to kind of have someone say, yes, that's the right thing.
- V: Yes, I think we do, I think definitely for me, it has given me a huge amount of confidence with those children, and my class teacher Mrs Gaitskell, who I work with, it's been the first year that we have worked together, and we've really jelled, but it's really nice, she is happy, she has taken on board everything that I suggest. So that makes me feel it's really been worthwhile, because she has, and we have worked together and we have only just been talking about how far they've come since September.
- NF: So that's really useful, so you have felt you have almost had kind of a leading role there in some ways.
- V: Yes. It actually has been really nice for me, because I'm only an LSA in the classroom, and usually, obviously you go with what the teacher plans and the teachers suggestions, but we've adapted sometimes with that particular group, and I might say, I think they might only be able to do this today, compared to what the other children are doing. We will go with it you know, she might say to me, you choose the way you think might work better, and actually it's really, I think we are starting to get the rewards now, I think.
- NF: So she has been able to really draw on you, as a really, really valuable resource, and she hasn't felt that's a problem and you've been allowed to lead, and so that sounds really positive doesn't it?

V: I think it's worked really well, I mean obviously I don't run or say what we are doing, we just adapt the planning a little bit maybe, to that particular group of children. Our expectations, we have still got an expectation of them, but they wouldn't be what you would expect from your able children maybe.

NF: No sure.

V: You've got slightly a lower expectation, no that's not the right word, not lower expectation because obviously we are pushing them all the time, but we say what we are thinking we feel that they are able to do now, and sometimes they are exceeding that.

NF: So it is a different expectation, because it's about language rather than ability isn't it.

V: Yes it's different more than lower, I think lower is the wrong word.

NF: I know what you mean, yes. That's fascinating really, really fortunate isn't it. So you made an awful lot of resources as a result of the course, there were fans things from sparkle box, aid memoirs things I remember you were talking through, are there any in particular that you have found more useful than others, or that you think that you know, others are tending to use more?

V: I think the games are quite valuable, and we have, I have played those games fairly often, I have a later day that I stay on, on a Thursday so we are trying, I try and use, even if it's only fifteen minutes, because obviously it can be quite difficult to fit all those extra things into your already busy curriculum. And I don't like to feel that some of the children are missing out on PE or anything like that, but we do sometimes feel that some of those games might be more beneficial at that time. So I do feel, and I feel that the aid memoirs are quite useful. I actually had a comment from a student I've got now, we've got a teaching student Sally .

NF: Yes off my course, I know her well.

V: And she said she'd spoken to another lady whose is doing the same PGCE as her, and she'd mentioned my name, and said about my aid memoir and to talk to me, so actually I was really pleased, because I do feel that it's very useful if we do get some

new staff or new supply. I mean at the moment we've got regular supply, so they are all aware of it, but I do feel the games if anything, and we have set up, has Patricia told you about our young interpreter?

NF: Yes that sounding very good isn't it.

V: So they will all get the fans, and I think they may come in a little bit more useful in September, if we do get some new children, they will be really helpful for those children.

NF: Right, it will be really interesting following that, I hope I'm going to follow that next year, the young interpreters, because it could really take off hopefully then, won't it very interesting.

V: Yes. We have just been doing the little bit of training at the moment, so they haven't actually had anybody to try it out on yet.

NF: So do you have time at all to talk with the other LSAs about whether they use the resources or you know how it is for them with the EAL children in their classrooms?

V: Yes, we have a meeting, an LSA meeting, every sort of half term or whatever, and we have talked about the resources, and the teachers I know, that the year R teachers and the LSAs use the dual language books. And everybody's more aware, I think it's more year R and year one, that have those books, because once they have had them all, then they...I think once they get into year two they don't need those quite so much. But yes they do talk to me and they are aware that I've got the knowledge, if there is anything they want to come and ask me. I was talking to Mrs Smith the other day, because she's doing an EAL group as well, she is doing the year R.

NF: Right she is another LSA is she?

V: Yes, and we were talking about a little girl actually who hasn't spoken, and she has just started speaking to her, and I will obviously have those children next year. So yes I think there is an awful lot of general you know, discussion about those children, so we do share a lot of that, and they are aware, they do come and ask me things if they have a problem.

NF: So to some extent you have become a point of information and resource for people, for not just your class teacher but perhaps for the team of LSAs as well?

V: Yes I think they do and I think Patricia has made that point that we...to come and ask either her or me, and obviously I'm probably easier to get to if we are up in the classrooms. Yes I think, I feel pleased with the resources. I think people do use them, and I think people are thinking about their strategies and the best ways to help those children in the classroom. And I think we have brought more in, we had a super day out at the cultural centre in Southampton and I think that was a really nice day as well, because if you are just keeping it up all the time, so it doesn't get forgotten.

NF: Yes and Patricia was saying also, it's kind of a priority on your school development plan, so that you know, it's kind of always there.

V: Yes, but I relaxed into it this year I think and we've used it and it's working, so me doing the course and the things that we are doing all the time with those children,

NF: And then there is the families too isn't it, because there is another thing you said, which interested me, which was that you had interviewed mothers for your SEAL course. That was a Polish mother and what was the other one, I forget now.

V: I had Polish mother and a Bengali mother.

NF: Right.

V: And I did arrange an interview with them, I have to look out what I did actually ask, because I thought about it quite carefully actually, because I wanted to find out how they felt about access to all the curriculum. I also asked them general things really, about the Polish community, places that they go, I wanted to know where they went at the weekends. If they felt that access to places to go, they found was quite easy to find out, being Polish, and actually the Polish lady I had a much more easy going discussion, very up front as I think I have told you before.

NF: Yes.

V: Happy to chat and she did, I mean there's so much more now you've got the Polish food shops, they felt that places they go to, they go to Legoland, activity parks, they go to all the theme parks, they go to places and I think they find it quite accessible. I don't feel, they didn't feel that they have come here and weren't a part of society, they didn't feel that they didn't have access to things. That was my main thing and I also wanted to know how they felt, they got access to the school curriculum, if they felt they had any problems. And actually they think that the schools, English schools give out a lot of information, they felt that the information we give was accessible, because also we use the (...).

NF: Yes for the translations.

V: And they were really happy, they felt we were all very approachable.

NF: Great,

V: And really quite happy, as we have said before, we used to have a set of Polish mums that used to meet in the playground. I mean obviously they have moved on these mums but I still think they meet at the juniors, because some of the children went on to the juniors. And I do see the mums after school when I pick my children up and they stay and the children play together. So they do have a lot of time, I feel that they do do that, they are quite a supportive sort of community and they meet up and they have other places to go.

NF: So did it feel different talking to the Bengali mum then?

V: Definitely, because also the Polish mum said about discipline, at the Polish schools they are more disciplined.

NF: Yes I have heard this from other people.

V: The only other thing she had that I felt was negative, was that she felt that our PE wasn't, they don't do quite as much PE as we do,

NF: Oh really.

V: As they do in Poland, they do more sports.

NF: Yes, they thought it was a bit limited here?

V: Yes, but quite a difference, as you asked me with the Bengali mum. I was quite careful because I didn't want to offend, because I don't know much about the Muslim community. I know they're very private and I was quite aware about what I wore as well, I made sure I covered my arms, I wore a long sleeved top and long trousers. I was quite aware because they're quite particular about obviously covering the body.

NF: Yes covering, yes.

V: And I asked her if she would be happy to do it, she said she would love to. I had to look at what she had actually said, I did a lot of looking around myself and I looked on the internet for services. There wasn't a huge amount of information available,

NF: Really, for Bengali families?

V: Yes considering they have been quite established in our community.

NF: Yes because Patricia was saying that you have second and third generations children here.

V: Absolutely.

NF: They are indigenous really, to some extent.

V: And the lady I spoke to, she'd been living here for twenty years, and she would just answer questions, I talked about a school that she went to, she said she went to a faith school.

NF: A Christian Faith school presumably because we haven't got Muslim ones here.

V: She talked about things that they don't study, they don't study music, art and drama, and she said that they would carry that on. She has got a daughter and she said that if her daughter wanted to study those subjects they would probably say no.

NF: Oh say no.

V: Probably say no so they are very...they seem to, even though they are all here, they have been established here, they very much continue their faith.

NF: Yes and in a particular set of values.

V: Definitely, that hasn't lapsed at all, whereas I feel the Polish have sort of just slotted in to the English way of life.

NF: Terribly quickly, yes.

V: They will...

NF: Except that they have got their own shops haven't they.

V: Yes.

NF: I mean it's, to some extent they have, but they somehow...the growth of Polish shops and so on, has been incredibly fast, staggering really.

V: Yes.

NF: So there's....

V: I found that out when I looked on the internet, and there was reams and reams of websites and shops in London particularly. I was really surprised, but there is the same for Muslims, there seemed to be an awful lot of, for the food shops for getting food. But I also felt that she said to me that there was, the Bengali parent said to me that she felt there was a huge problem when her daughter had some problems, some learning problems and some special needs in school. They do find that quite hard to accept and I think that the family find that quite hard to accept. And for a long time you know, accepting support and help for the daughter, found very difficult, but they still go to, the children go to a school on the Saturday, but she still has, she feels it's very important for those children to play, so, but she was saying that the woman don't go to the Mosque.

NF: Right at all?

V: Because there was all those things I was quite interested in finding out what she actually does, and it does seem to be a very dominant male society, quite different to Polish.

NF: Right.

V: I think the woman have just as much say, two very, very different...

NF: Fascinating.

V: I think a lot of the Polish are Catholic.

NF: They are mostly, yes, almost entirely apparently.

V: Two very different communities, very interesting, but I was careful. I think because the Muslim parent she wasn't readily available to give me too much, she answered what I asked her, and didn't give me any more information as such. Whereas the Polish mum, she answered my questions but she gave me more, lots and lots and lots.

NF: Answered more than you wanted to know.

V: She was, she would have talked all morning as well.

NF: Really.

V; Was happy to quite different..

NF: Ok, very different then, that's really interesting. And the last thing that I wanted to just focus on was that you made a lot of comments in your interview about how you felt there was a strong link between how children were settled socially and their language development. Do you know what I mean? The kind of the relationship really between being happy and being able to develop. You know speaking and reading and writing in English.

V: Yes.

NF: Is that a comment you have made, a thing you thought just from your own observations of the children over time, but it felt this mattered or was it something that came from the SEAL course or...

V: No I think just from my observation and working with children, I think, I mean can I say names.

NF: Yes, no it's fine because everything gets eventually.

V: Well Gabriel for instance, although he's been with us since the nursery, he came with us in year one, and now he was quite a low self esteem, he wasn't very confident he could do anything. I can't do it he would say all the time and if you look at some of the things he has done now, he is starting to read, he's using his sounds, his phonic knowledge, we've got him on phonic books so he can sound them alright, and he can read. We have just started him reading, it's taken a long time, but he's almost pleased now with what he is doing, and I think he needed to be settled and he needs that security consistency in the classroom all the time. And although he's got two other Polish children, he is starting to mix with English children a bit more, so they are not relying too much on each other. But even though he's happy, I think he is happier now, he is more confident in what he can do and he will tell you about it all the time, and he wants to show you something all the time. He didn't used to be like that, so I do feel that they need to be happy and settled before you...then they start to give you something back, but I do think that they're...I think he used that time to listen and look and use the visual things that were going on. He was taking it all in and now that he is feeling happier and settled you're starting to get more back from him. So I do think that's really important. I've noticed that with lots of children that have come from maybe another school and they need that settling time, they need that just quiet time and I think possibly that's happened with Mary.

NF: Yes I met Mary when she was in the nursery.

V: She has taken all that time and now she's just starting to chat, as Mrs Smith said, and she knows lots of things.

NF: That's interesting, yes you are noticing once they start talking that actually the amount they knew is much greater than you thought they knew.

V: Yes.

NF: Because their silence stopped you being able to assess what they knew, it's terribly, sobering really isn't it in a way. Do you think it is hard for us, I mean do you find it hard as an LSA to kind of wait patiently while they, you know while they're not saying anything and don't appear to be doing anything, it's hard.

V: I think originally when I didn't know so much about it, you could very easily think because they're not talking to you or answering you they are being quite rude and not wanting to get involved. And I think now that there is that understanding and everybody knows that those children have that silent phase, everybody is happier to just let that happen. And I think it's that you don't get the wrong impression of the child. And I think that course, doing the SEAL course has taught me huge amounts about that, that I probably wouldn't have known before.

NF: No, yes that's great.

V: Yes I think it's important to know those things, so that you don't just think, oh I've got a child, she doesn't want to say anything, what are we going to do. I think you have just got to let them settle at their own pace.

NF: Difficult though isn't it, you can see how if you were in the juniors for example, and they came in year five, it would be quite difficult wouldn't it? Do you know what I mean, can you imagine it, it would be...I guess people would worry more about them not making progress, whereas when we were in the infant end we have got kind of, we feel we have time I think to let them...

V: But I feel that's another thing for schools, to make sure they've got that information about children and that those second language children may behave in that way, and not to just think that it is their age, or they've come in. Because it must be so difficult specially as a teenager even, to come into a secondary school from another country and just have to cope. I do feel that...I'm hoping that there is more information now,

I've not actually been to a secondary school to find out, I would like to find out a bit more about it.

NF: It would be interesting wouldn't it, yes to go to your feeder (...) or something yes.

V: And what they've got in place. For those children, I do think that would be interesting.

NF: I shall look (...) a lot from you.

V: I think my second, my eldest son is starting secondary school in September, so maybe when I've got a little bit more, obviously I will be going to school a bit more, I might even find out a little bit more information, see what they've got definitely.

NF: Ok that all I had to talk about today, it's enough anyway isn't it.