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ESOL in the UK: a critical feminist analysis

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ESOL in the UK: a critical feminist analysis

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ESOL in the UK: a critical feminist approach

Abstract

This thesis examines the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for immigrant adults in early 21st century Britain from a critical feminist perspective to gain insight into the process of learning English through adult education in the lives of women with bi/multilingual children. Few studies in this field focus on gender as a central social category within a multi-dimensional analysis. This research in south east England from 2010 to 2012 involved twenty participants from a variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds whose insights into their migration and learning journeys, family relationships and local communities are contextualised and set alongside a critical discourse analysis of selected political and policy texts. These are examined for overt and subtle forms of discrimination which may exert a detrimental material and symbolic effect on women's lives and learning, primarily those which enter the local and domestic sphere in matters of community cohesion and family language practices.

This study challenges discourses which view English as a commodity to be acquired, immigrants as reluctant to learn English or linear progression routes to qualifications based on low expectations as appropriate. Research participants are committed to a multilingual future for their families and develop complex strategies to support their languages. A key finding is that emotional, internal transitions are at least as significant in their perception of themselves as successful language learners, mothers and immigrant citizens as are material resources and conditions. External life experiences and personal relationships are integrally linked to linguistic confidence and self esteem and although ESOL provision is vital it is currently constructed on a social deficit model which does not fully meet participant's learning needs. For many other women, there are considerable legal, financial and childcare barriers.

This thesis argues that provision which successfully supports English language development must recognise the complex multidirectionality of multilingual immigrants' family lives and the significance of gender in planning more holistic environments in which women's lives are more fully understood and their learning needs more adequately met.

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 English for Speakers of Other Languages: current context

Contemporary English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision has its roots in policies and practices which have emerged over the past century in response to the needs of, and political and public views about, the language practices of adult migrants into the United Kingdom (UK). The term 'ESOL' is used throughout to cover English language tuition for adult speakers of other languages on courses provided through public funds in England and Wales under the nationalised Skills for Life framework introduced in 2001 (DfES 2001). Rosenberg (2007) describes the vast range of English language teaching services which mushroomed during the twentieth century in response to diverse and growing populations of settlers, provision which she describes as often under-funded or voluntary. Their curricula, approaches, materials and teaching proficiency were influenced pedagogically by theories and practice of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and by the changing needs of learners arriving from different parts of the world in addition to views about the importance of multilingualism or monolingualism. Provision could be found in a range of settings from workplaces to community colleges as adult education spread. Difficulties in applying TEFL methods to increasingly heterogeneous immigrant communities led to a growing divide between ESOL and TEFL, with the former recognising the particular needs of settled, resident learners in a country with English as its dominant language. Strategic planning and research into student needs is made particularly challenging as 'One of the problems besetting research is that it is almost impossible to source reliable, up-to-date demographic data on immigrants and their language levels and learning needs' (Ward 2008:3). It was recently estimated that there were approximately 600,000 adults of working age with varying levels of need for English language learning in London alone (O'Leary 2008).

The national framework arose from the Moser Report on improving adult basic skills in literacy and numeracy (DfEE 1999), followed by *Breaking the Language Barriers* (DfEE 2000) which specifically addressed ESOL. Assimilated under the Skills for Life (SfL) policy framework in 2001, ESOL students benefited from central government funding for the professionalization of teachers, a national curriculum and new materials, along with 'direct access to a marketable qualification with national currency' (Rosenberg 2007:228) resulting in a significant take-up of classes:

> Nationally, ESOL enrolments on Learning and Skills Council funded provision rose from 159,000 in 2001/2 to an estimated 504,000 in 2005/6… The 2007-8 expenditure is predicted to rise again to around £343 million (Ward 2008:13).

Historically, ESOL has been influenced by social justice agendas with participatory, critical and advocacy work following Freire (1970) and Auerbach (1991, 1997) amongst others. For example Community Relations Councils ran over 90 voluntary schemes for ethnic minority women at home (CRC 1976) and contemporary approaches include 'Reflect for ESOL' a programme pioneered by the charity ActionAid (Moon and Sunderland 2008). However the tension between this and meeting demands of economic productivity have also always been present, and now 'skills have become the dominant discourse' (Ward 2008:10). The 'three 'challenging agendas' of skills, employability and social cohesion' (Cooke and Simpson 2009:19), together with immigration control, are presented throughout this thesis as not only discourses connected to ESOL but as its main policy drivers (Hyatt 2011) and it is in understanding how these work through a gendered lens that the contribution to knowledge is made.

The relationship between policy text and policy context is regarded as key throughout, including what Apple refers to as '"national filters" through which ideological movements have to pass before they become influential on educational systems' (1994:351). The location and period, within which this research is located, in the UK from 2000 to 2013, is one in which it has been argued that certain world events and political responses have been directly connected to the learning of English by immigrants (for example Blackledge 2005a, 2005b, Vertovec 2006, Cooke and Simpson 2008). These include fears for national safety from terrorist attacks and of domestic societal breakdown, the expansion of the European Economic Community (EEC) and movement of peoples within and from without its borders, continued and rapid globalisation and the economic downturn and severe recession. At the beginning of the decade for example, it is possible to trace a clear message emerging, particularly from the Home Office, that learning English is not only compatible with, but is a necessary prerequisite for, community or social cohesion and the route to responsible citizenship (Blackledge 2005b, 2009), thereby further politicising a field of teaching and learning already in the centre of public and political debate. These terms 'community cohesion' and 'social cohesion' are frequently used interchangeably. Definitions can be unclear as can the criteria by which they could be measured, which render them particularly problematical both conceptually and practically in relation to

English learner achievements. Included in the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's definition of an integrated and cohesive community were notions of people having a strong sense of shared contribution, rights and responsibilities, similar life opportunities, trust in institutions and strong, positive relationships with those from different backgrounds (COIC 2007). In 2008, this definition was quoted in full in an ESOL consultation document, followed by the statement 'The acquisition of English is key to achieving these outcomes' (DIUS 2008:5). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to do more than raise a concern that, however defined, they carry a host of widely-interpreted ambitions and intentions which are difficult to problematise, and that the connection between cohesion and speaking English has become formalised over this past decade.

The Cantle Committee (Home Office 2001), set up in response to unrest in towns in northern England, focussed on fractured communities, confrontation, and the primacy of speaking English, the use of which 'will become more rigorously pursued, with appropriate support. This will ensure that subsequent generations do not bear the burden of remedial programmes, and, more importantly, that the full participation of all individuals in society can be achieved more easily' (Home Office 2001:19). A year later, the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 introduced requirements on those seeking naturalisation to have 'sufficient knowledge of life in the United Kingdom … and sufficient knowledge of a language' (Home Office 2002 Part 1, Sec. 1 (1), (3)). The former became known as the 'Life in the UK Test'. Materials to support this learning were first introduced into the ESOL curriculum by Niace and LLU+ in 2005 but governmental concerns persisted. In April 2011, the Prime Minister in a speech to the Conservative Party about immigration policy asserted that:

> … when there have been significant numbers of new people arriving in neighbourhoods … perhaps not able to speak the same language as those living there… on occasions not really wanting or even willing to integrate … that has created a kind of discomfort and disjointedness in some neighbourhoods (Cameron 2011:2).

ESOL teaching and the lives of learners have therefore, as a result of political rhetoric of the highest authority and of associated laws and regulations, been placed centre stage in matters of immigration, community safety and citizenship, the recession and global economic changes. Simpson argues that, pedagogically, the increasingly constrained agenda available to institutions and individual teachers has resulted in excessive bureaucratisation, a rigid qualifications framework and a curriculum focussed on preparing

students for low-skill employment and the UK citizenship test (Simpson and Whiteside 2012).

1.2 Women students in ESOL: key themes

Surveys which record enrolments show that female ESOL students outnumber men by approximately two to one and that this rises slightly in terms of achievement:

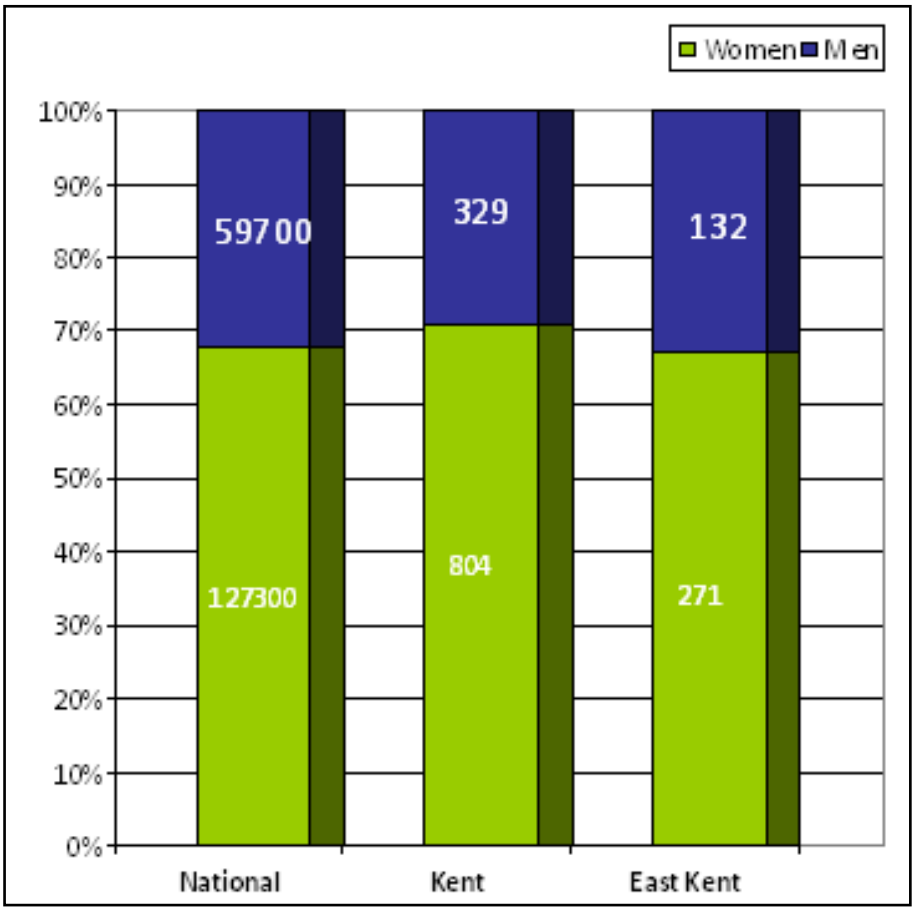

Figure 1.1 ESOL students by enrolment and gender
(sources: BIS (2011)Kent Adult Education Service (2010))

In 2010- 2011, 131,800 ESOL learners were recorded as achievers, of which 69% were women (BIS 2012b). Gender as a factor is highlighted as an issue in, for example, reaching isolated and vulnerable learners, but is rarely debated from the starting point of meeting the needs of women as the mainstream learner population who have specific issues arising from inequitable power relations, as noted by Ward:

> Gender is significant. Women often experience additional discrimination, and have particular difficulties that are often overlooked … Gender oppression, family opposition, lack of independence or other gender related cultural factors can restrict opportunities to take up learning (2008:3).

1.2.1 Migration and employment

ESOL provision and pedagogy has been based firmly on notions of permanent settlement and immigrants' entry into the labour market. I argue that this is part of an outdated discourse which purports to be gender neutral but impacts negatively on women immigrants who outnumber men but do not enter the labour market at the same rate:

> Among the foreign-born living in the UK in 2007 and who had not been in the UK a year earlier, there were 138,000 women and 137,000 men, or just over half women. The gender balance for those in work is quite different: there were 55,000 women and 83,000 men, or 40.4 per cent women (Salt 2007 in Kofman et al 2009:34).

Changes to immigration rules (Home Office 2010a) introduced a pre- entry language test for certain non-European (EU) migrants applying to enter or extend their stay in the UK as spouses, fiancé(e)s or civil partners of citizens and settled residents. It was recently estimated to affect approximately 25,000 families (ILPA & JCWI 2010). In 2009, 64% of successful applicants were women, predominantly from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Thailand, (Home Office 2010b). Non- EU spouses who enter the UK are ineligible as home learners for three years after arrival under current rules, forcing them to pay high fees as overseas students. Additionally there are proposals to revise language requirements with effect from October 2013 requiring all applicants for settlement to pass the Life in the UK test as well as a speaking and listening qualification at intermediate level (Home Office 2012), a much more stringent test than currently operates. It has been consistently recognised that those most affected, Asian women, have the fewest English language skills, are 'hard to reach' and are under-represented in education and training programmes (Mobbs 1977, Kennedy 1997, Cabinet Office Strategy Unit 2003, Heath and Cheung 2006).

In her examination of the 'feminisation of migration' concept and its implications for women in adult education, Cuban argues that this phenomenon 'refutes the binary notion that women move either permanently to countries in order to settle or they come temporarily' (2010:180). Although the national agenda firmly discriminates between EU and non-EU immigrants and there are considerable controls in relation to the latter, in ESOL classes this distinction blurs and women's needs, motivation and agency in relation to their learning and family plans cannot be located within these categories alone. In Chapter 7 I analyse how data from such reports have been used to generalise unhelpfully about not only Asian, but female, ESOL learners generally and mask important

differentiations in particular regarding class, national and ethnic origin, age and time in the UK.

1.2.2 Access and progression

The original impetus for this research developed from my observations of structural obstacles facing women with caring responsibilities, mainly for very young children, and the fragile status of family learning and other programmes both in funding and pedagogic status. It is well documented that lack of suitable childcare, flexible schedules and lack of progression from community to accredited courses can cause serious setbacks for women (Kofman et al 2005, Kofman et al 2009) but the removal in 2011 of full fee remission from those not on 'active benefits' [1]proved an unexpected blow to those receiving other benefits and led to questions in the House of Lords such as from Lord Hunt of King's Heath:

> Will the Minister look at the issue of women, particularly Asian women, in many of our major cities, who will not be eligible for the full grant because they are not on active benefits? (HL Hansard 2011, Hunt).

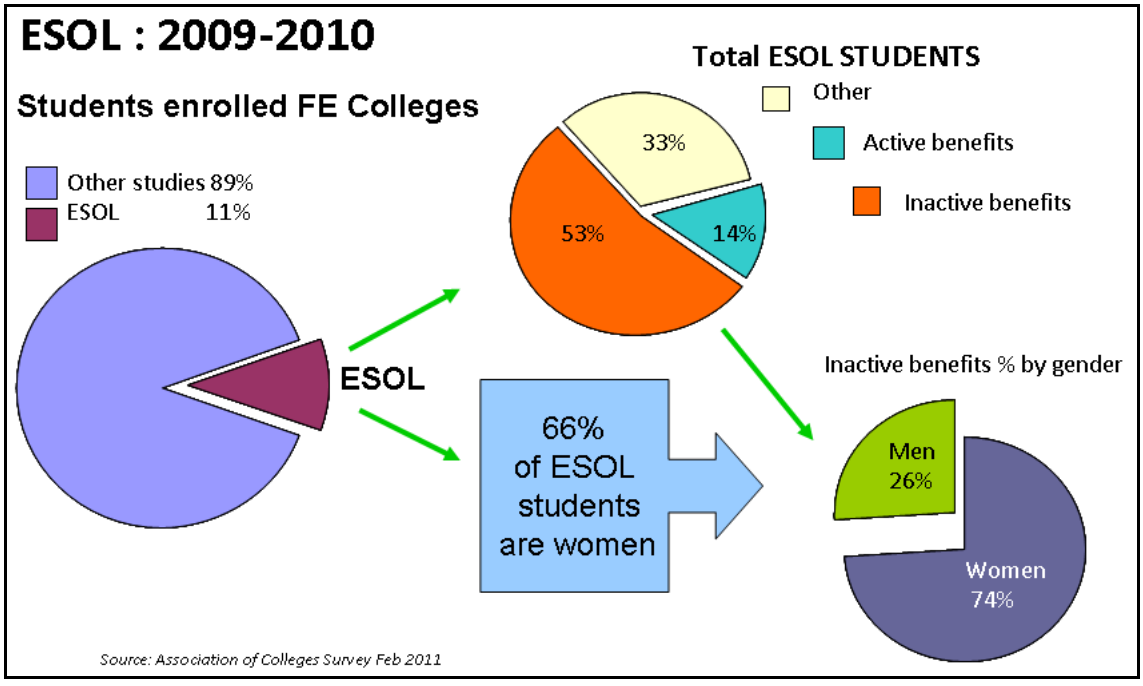

Figure 1.2 ESOL students by financial eligibility and gender

Despite minor concessions to this budget cut, such structural obstacles remain widespread at entry points and during courses:

> Research among refugees in Islington found, for example, that carers and parents of small children were at particular risk, not so much of not getting entry into ESOL but of not completing it because of the lack of flexible learning arrangements that would

[1] These include JobSeekers Allowance (JSA) and Employment Support Allowance (ESW)

enable them to take time out when needed (Kofman and Lukes 2006 in Kofman et al 2009:141).

Although 69% of ESOL achievers are women (BIS 2012c) there are many obstacles to progression into further and higher education and employment at all levels which remain invisible to ESOL tutors and providers and prospective employers (Cuban 2010). Again many of these are structural including care responsibilities, shift patterns in low-paid jobs or prioritising study time but this is an incomplete picture which should, in my view, be complemented by a fuller understanding of socially-constructed learner identities and symbolic meaning which women attach to language practices within their personal, subjective contexts of migration (Kouritzin 2000, Norton 2000, Kramsch 2009).

1.2.3 Family learning route

Outreach programmes have received inconsistent funding and are usually dependent on local priority setting and partnership arrangements (Rosenberg 2007, Ward and Spacey 2008, DIUS 2009) but Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) comes under a framework designed to meet the needs of low-skilled and under-resourced parents to support their children's learning. Again, ESOL was a latecomer to this provision which, though an important strand in flexible, family-friendly learning, is nevertheless open to critical debate; for example it may be used to mask the need for ESOL classes with a crèche, position learners as low-skilled with parenting difficulties, be short term and not available as an examination route with progression.

1.3 Research aims and questions

The significance of this research is that is uses a feminist lens to gain insight into the lives and English language development of women ESOL learners with young children living within this contemporary socio-political and economic context. Rather than starting with the classroom or their individual abilities, motivation or barriers to learning, this research begins with their stories, and asks how English use is becoming part of their family lives. It seeks to develop knowledge about their daily interactions and relationships in ways which illuminate how they experience and perceive multilinguality for themselves and their children.

Throughout this decade there has developed an increasingly professional, regulated and informed teaching workforce. Critical discussion, research and dissemination of ESOL-

related practice is slowly becoming more widespread and internationally recognised (Barton and Pitt 2003, Roberts et al 2007) and networks built with those working for example in linguistic ethnography and multilingualism (Creese and Blackledge 2010) but it is as yet a largely unexplored field of practice, as addressed in Chapter 2. Few studies have analysed issues which have particular impact on, or resonance for, immigrant women with young children. In this thesis, I intend to show that these mothers from non-English speaking backgrounds can occupy multiple positions within UK society, being considered victims, vulnerable, excluded, oppressed and also responsible for integration and social cohesion. They may be held responsible for their children's language acquisition and being the family's key custodian and transmitter of 'mother tongue', culture and tradition, whilst also being required to contribute to the economic well-being of the country. If it appears that the political and media discourse surrounding such expectations has become increasingly hostile in a period of rapid immigration from Europe and economic hardship then this research seeks to understand how this group of learners experience learning and using English alongside home languages and sets this in the context of a feminist analysis of ESOL provision and its surrounding discourses.

My overarching research question is therefore:

- How do women with mothering responsibilities experience learning and using English as they engage in the process of language learning through adult education provision?

From this, I address a series of subsidiary questions:

- What are their family language practices?
- What are their stories of migration and plans to settle in the UK?
- How do they perceive themselves as English language users and members of the local community?

The intention of these enquiries is to understand the unique set of circumstances which brings each learner into the UK and how external conditions combine with internal processes to influence their language choices and confidence as developing English speakers. This detailed, personal focus is placed alongside a critical examination of the contemporary socio-political context of ESOL, in which gender is conceptualised as a

central social category within an analysis of factors influencing women's migration, learning, family life, employment and settlement.

This aspect of the research asks:

- How is ESOL, as a form of public education, and how are ESOL learners constructed in the political sphere?
- What values and attitudes appear to be dominant both in determining the purpose of teaching English to immigrants and how the learners are perceived in relation to this learning?
- Are there any particular views, attitudes or beliefs expressed about the position or needs of women learners, especially those with young children?
- Where and in what circumstances does ESOL policy acknowledge and address gender as an issue?

This dual approach develops knowledge about how gender, as a social category, operates with other categories such as ethnicity and class to affect, and be influenced by, planned and available UK ESOL policies and programmes. Such an 'intersectional approach' (Crenshaw 1989) which explores how social divisions or categories interact simultaneously, on multiple levels, and contribute in their different ways to social inequality, underpins my use of a gender lens. Feminist post-structuralism is my theoretical model within which to explore 'language acquisition in its social, cultural, and political contexts, taking into account gender, race, and other relations of power as well as the notion of the subject as multiple and formed within different discourses' (Pennycook 1990:26). This lays the ground for a feminist critical analysis of the discourses surrounding ESOL, introduced above as predominantly immigration control, promoting community cohesion, meeting the needs of the economy and focussing on permanent settlement. It is notable that relatively little space is afforded to the profession for pedagogical debate in the context of such powerful socio-economic forces as concluded by Jupp: '…the questions of how really effective teaching and learning can be provided in conventionally organised programmes for diverse groups of adult migrant learners have never really been settled' (in Rosenberg, 2007: xiii) and the impact of this is underlined by Lavender:

> I was struck by how ESOL is defined by its different purposes as much as by its administration, and that the language learning cannot be separated from the economic and social context in which the learning is placed (in Ward 2008: vii).

This thesis intends to contribute to such professional debate by considering the experiences of one such group in context, and the implications for policy and practice which may result.

1.3.1 Location and scope

The research is conducted in a coastal area in south-east England where there have been considerable demographic changes in recent years as a result of inward migration mainly from Eastern Europe but also from refugees and asylum seekers, many from Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Only 3.12% of the county population identified itself as black minority ethnic in 2001, rising to 6.3% by 2007 (Kent County Council 2012) but categories currently used do not register Eastern Europeans separately to other white populations. The area has not yet developed infrastructures of service support for many incomers. The contemporary minority ethnic population is also more diverse and more fluid than previously more settled immigrant groups, with different experiences of racism, integration, belonging and identity. Assumptions or conclusions about ESOL learners based on research conducted elsewhere in the UK, predominantly in large metropolitan areas, cannot necessarily be extrapolated to inform discussion about the lives of local young migrant mothers. Locally, there are two main ESOL providers: further education colleges, which predominantly meet the needs of 16-25 year olds and the county adult education service on which this project will mainly focus. Participants are all, except one, enrolled in the latter. The focus on women only does not presuppose a concept of gender difference or biological determinism; this is discussed in Chapter 3. An initial plan to interview those not yet enrolled had to be changed for practical reasons which I discuss in Chapter 5. For reasons of space, I do not address classroom practice, teaching and learning materials or second language learning theories but seek to 'bring the outside in' (Baynham 2006), linking participants' everyday encounters to their learning processes.

1.4 Thesis structure

The literature review in Chapter 2 places this study in relation to international research on immigrant women's learning identities but with a focus on contemporary national ESOL issues and knowledge. It locates the work within the field of critical studies in language learning and its contemporary methodologies.

The theoretical framework in Chapter 3 focuses on a conceptualisation of gender as a social construction which is understood as separate but not indivisible from other social categories. I discuss the contribution of feminist post-structuralism to studies of gender and language learning. Theorising relations of power and dominance from a social justice perspective underpin a critical approach to English language provision.

From this foundation I develop the methodological framework in Chapter 4 in which the two key strands of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and long term, intensive fieldwork based on principles of critical ethnography are seen as having an equally valuable and complementary contribution to this analysis. Fieldwork provides context and detail for the CDA, an approach which relies on this deep understanding of discursively-produced data with its temporal and spatial elements. Ethics and reflexivity sections are integral to this chapter. In Chapter 5 I present the research setting and instruments used for both the CDA and fieldwork. Working without interpreters or translators was a key issue which is addressed in some depth.

Chapter 6 addresses the key research question, focussing on women's everyday lives and stories. Participants' voices are strongly foregrounded in order to capture depth, nuance and complexity, or 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) and to fully develop emerging themes. As outlined above, this is complemented by a feminist critical discourse analysis of ESOL policies and related discourses in Chapter 7, followed by a discussion and evaluation.

Finally in Chapter 8 I set out my key findings and what I regard as my main contribution to this field of knowledge with recommendations for policy and practice based on my research. I consider possibilities for further research to be developed as a result.

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1 Research in adult ESOL

Barton and Pitt introduced their literature review on research into the learning of English in classroom settings by adult ESOL speakers thus: 'There has been little UK research, and relevant research from Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States is also included' (Barton and Pitt 2003:6). They concluded that a research agenda for pedagogic practice should take account of classroom practice and other settings, teaching and learning processes, tracker studies of learners in different provisions and 'a pedagogically appropriate theory of language and literacy' (2003:27). Their review was published by the newly-established National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) which subsequently commissioned a series of Effective Practice studies into teaching and learning in those areas covered by the Skills for Life (SfL) Strategy in England: reading, writing, numeracy, ICT and ESOL. This significant moment provided UK ESOL researchers with sufficient funding to undertake their first large-scale classroom research and ethnographic study. They examined agency and contingency in the classroom (Baynham 2006), learners' motivation, investment and agency (Cooke 2006) and assessment of speaking skills (Simpson 2006); and produced the Effective Teaching and Learning ESOL Report (Baynham et al 2007).

The paradox of ESOL research being driven by an organisation which did not have ESOL in its title was noted by key members of the team in their introduction to a special issue of Linguistics and Education; they suggested that issues arising from the dominance of literacy and numeracy within a Basic Skills Strategy were not only the paucity of research to support practice but also the distinctly heterogeneous nature of ESOL learners, the relationship between internationally-established TEFL literature and UK ESOL and the debate regarding the positioning of ethnic and linguistic minorities and a skills agenda. In the same year, the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) published its highly-regarded account of ESOL in England 'More than a Language?' and recommended that the NRDC:

> should be commissioned to continue and extend its programme of research and development work on ESOL as an essential complement to the thematic inspection of ESOL which we have recommended (NIACE 2006:9).

In 2012, UK ESOL research is still without a firm base despite Roberts and Baynham's belief that:

> It is a timely and exciting moment for working in adult ESOL research because there is a sense of movement in the tectonic plates of language learning and teaching research more generally, evidenced in the increasing strength of what can broadly be termed a socio-cultural perspective in Second Language Learning (2006:2).

The NRDC experience and findings led them to highlight the importance of research into the contextualisation of adult ESOL, re-focussing the theoretical gaze away from the narrow confines of the classroom, which is:

> one site amongst many in a complex sociolinguistic environment where adult ESOL learners face communicative challenges and barriers to access, as well as opportunities in their life and learning trajectories' so that research invokes in systematic ways the larger-scale contexts that shape and inform the here and now of the pedagogical encounter (Roberts et al 2007: 24-25).

I follow Roberts et al in seeking to complement my enquiry with analysis of research participants' socio-political context.

2.2 A Critical Approach to ESOL

My study is located within the field of critical studies of UK ESOL, in which research has been yet further constrained by limits to permitted topics and approaches, so that:

> Critiques of current provision and practice have had to be muted and theorising, and critical stances of language learning give way to general recommendations on practice and provision (Roberts et al 2007:28).

This arises, they suggest, through the 'dependence of substantial research on the NRDC' (2007: 28) which, though generous in its funding, brought tensions which deny ESOL a distinctive pedagogy, whilst it is also placed within political debates which closely, sometimes in a contradictory way, affect provision; for example government departments simultaneously raising the language bar for citizenship applications while cutting funding. Nevertheless, themes which the research team drew out included:

> an ideological stance that critiques the positioning of learners as 'needy' and 'lacking in agency' but also recognises that they are subject to social, political and economic pressures that produce a marginalised identity for them in the UK (Roberts and Baynham 2006:4).

Two key texts which provide a broad overview and insights into UK historical and contemporary provision are Rosenberg's (2007) A Critical History of ESOL in the UK 1870-2006 and Cooke and Simpson's (2008) ESOL: A Critical Guide. Rosenberg's unique,

comprehensive book includes how a 'series of migrations created the need for the teaching of English' and how the diversity of those arriving, particularly in recent years, 'has presented teachers with perhaps the defining characteristic of their work – heterogeneity of motivation to learn and of previous educational cultures and levels' (Jupp in Rosenberg 2007: ix). She sets out a broad range of contextual themes for her history, including immigration, racism and citizenship, government provision, influences on pedagogy and the learners themselves, weaving these together to show how ESOL cannot be adequately explained or understood without reference to these many, changing, factors. Rosenberg's contribution lies in her ability to provide sufficient detail and a coherent narrative over many decades within which contemporary research can locate its own part of the story. I draw extensively on her for this historical framework, especially in relation to provision for, and attitudes to, women learners since the 1960s and the political context within which these take place. This material has enabled me to show how discourses surrounding women students during this decade continue to be significantly shaped by events of the second half of the 20th century, and that this socio-political and historical context is key to contemporary analysis. She notes:

> most ESOL learners are members of communities and usually live in families, so that the experience of adults is inevitably coloured by that of their children in school… The changing of intergenerational roles can affect the motivation and responses of adult learners. This role reversal … is often counterbalanced by the maintenance of the mother tongue in the domain of the home, which can strengthen and reinforce the cultural, religious and linguistic identity of the incomers (2007:4).

These are factors which I place at the centre of my research to support a feminist analysis of women's first hand narratives of their learning and family experiences and the impact of discourses on these domestic practices; this 'domain' within which the maternal role may have been considered predominant and private is shown to be highly influenced by the public, political sphere.

Cooke and Simpson examine a range of politically contentious aspects of ESOL, including how 'imposed structures such as a national curriculum for ESOL and an obligatory testing regime can have negative as well as positive effects on teaching and learning' and they 'promote the notion that teachers and students can question prevailing ideologies by developing a critical consciousness' (2008: xi-xii). While addressing the aforementioned heterogeneity of the student population, they highlight issues which particularly impact on women learners such as the lack of available, good quality childcare, caring responsibilities

at home, the impact of people-trafficking through forced prostitution, family changes during migration such as women becoming single parents as a result of war, levels of low literacy and poor access to education. They also found that ambivalence towards home languages and the need to support children was a central concern for parents, stating 'one of the main motivations for parents to attend ESOL lessons is cohesion in their own immediate families, especially when their children are growing up' (2008:19-20). Whilst Cooke and Simpson considered how this demonstrated a need for adequate funding as an investment in the next generation, this prompted questions for my research: is overcoming practical obstacles to class sufficient in itself to encourage mothers' learning, particularly for those with pre-school children and do these learners receive a consistent message from teachers and childcare advisers about language use?

The social turn in second language learning (Block 2003) with an accompanying post-structuralist approach to identity informs my research project; Block (2007) notes how it is apparent in the work of, for example, Norton (2000) on immigrant women in Canada, Pavlenko, Blackledge, Piller and Teutsch-Dwyer (2001) on language learning and gender, Bayley and Schechter (2003) on language socialization and multilingualism and his own work on multilingual identities in London (Block 2006). He finds that, where identity is a key aspect, there is the need to balance an acceptance of structure without sidelining constructs such as hybridity:

> Indeed, the broadly post-structuralist approach to identity that has been borrowed from the social sciences by applied linguists has been poststructuralist in its embrace of hybridity and third place, but it has also included and retained structure (2006:24).

The relevance and significance of this becomes evident in Roberts and Baynham's conclusions above, echoed throughout ESOL research, of the necessity to attend to both the heterogeneity of learners and to the particular structural constraints within which provision takes place, affecting the agency of tutors and learners. This is regarded as part of a wider critical agenda (Auerbach et al 1996) in which policies and political contexts are examined for ways in which they support or restrict language learning potential. Although my study is not classroom-based, I follow one of the key strategies they use to engage with these issues, which:

> …we characterize as "bringing the outside in", bringing the life experience of ESOL learners into the curriculum while at the same time working to develop the interactional skills in classrooms characterized by student agency and teacher

> contingency … which will maximize their potential in an unequal world (Roberts and Baynham 2006:3).

I draw on this important political as well as pedagogical strategy to build knowledge about the lives of women students with dependent children. By focussing on the daily experiences and emotional processes of participants together with an analysis of ESOL discourses, I make this connection between their developing identities as mothers and learners and unequal power relations which is one aspect Norton regards as central to a critical research project; agreeing with Cooke (2006) that teachers need to make the classroom a stable space, she adds that they should also be encouraged to invest in each others' lives , 'to "re-imagine" the classroom community as a productive space for learning' (2006:93). Norton concludes by suggesting that a major challenge which still remains:

> concerns the investments of the target language community. While adult ESOL language learners may strive to make a productive contribution to their new societies, unless the host community is receptive to their arrival, they will struggle to fulfil their potential. Indeed, what is required in many English dominant communities is a fundamental shift of our investments in particular local, national, and global identities (2006:96).

Relations between learners and their host community are recognised as sites of immense struggle by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) and Blackledge (2005a 2005b, 2006), who suggests that whilst there has been research into the micro level of linguistic interactions as minority speakers negotiate entry into a majority-speaking society, and the difficulties that they face, 'rather less research has identified the ways in which such domains are constructed and their borders reinforced' (2006:22). Blackledge seeks to extend the field through the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to further describe, explain and interpret these relationships, arguing that a post-structuralist framework offers the potential to examine how linguistic identities are constructed within this political, socio-economic and historical context, not just in their complexity and shifting multiplicities, but also as sites of, for example, discrimination or resistance. Blackledge investigated 'discriminatory mainstream text in relation to language ideologies in Britain [which] emerged from political and media response to the violence … in northern England in the Summer of 2001' (2005a:26), an event which was also a key event in my analysis of attitudes towards women learners of English, and mothers in particular. In this area of my enquiry, Blackledge's work was significant in supporting a detailed textual analysis of those

political statements I considered especially relevant, and also in my discussion of the 'chain of discourse' which linked them intertextually over the first decade of this century.

2.3 Feminist approaches to migrant women's learning

I extend this work through an application of feminist theory and research which provide an additional analytical lens and experience of uncovering sites of discrimination and resistance. Such tensions are examined in the field of adult education and lifelong learning, (hereafter LLL) within which ESOL is largely situated (Leathwood 2006, Brine, 2006, Cuban 2010). Within the EU context, Brine traces how the discourse of LLL shifted from the development of personal goals and dreams within a local community to that 'of competition, of personal striving, of constant becoming, of inclusion and exclusion that continues to (re)construct educational and labour market power relations of gender, class, ethnicity and age' (Brine 2006:39). This move signalled the construction of European lifelong learners into categories of the highly-educated and skilled, resilient, continuous learners or those with low knowledge or skills, unemployed and poor. The latter, although also inhabiting multiple identities, are more likely to be defended, less open to flow and to have much less capital and agency. Barriers to learning, such as a lack of social or cultural capital are ignored or downplayed, and 'The lifelong learner is therefore constructed as a compliant employable subject, able to fit into the existing gendered, classed and racialised social order, rather than a critical thinker and citizen' (Leathwood 2006:49). Mojab argued in her study of Kurdish women in Sweden that they struggled to be heard and recognised, not as victims, 'supplicants' in need of empathy, but rather as active citizens, able to participate and contribute:

> In explaining this act of exclusion, it is important to remember that this alienating construction cannot be explained by immigrant women's class location, or race and ethnicity or even their gender. It is their total subjectivity, that is, they are gendered by capital, raced by capital. And they are embodied by this relation between labour and capital (Mojab 2006:172).

Following Brine, Appleby and Bathmaker critiqued the SfL strategy, finding that it was:

> rooted more in a response to what is perceived as the skills demands of a knowledge economy for global competitiveness than to issues of social inclusion and increased opportunities for lifelong learning. The result of this may well be the creation of new sites of inequality that affect older women and adult ESOL … learners disproportionately (2006:703).

The work of ESOL researchers in noting the impact of population 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2006), a concept which invokes complexity and unpredictability particularly in highly urban

settings and is central to developing understanding of multilingual societies (Simpson and Whiteside 2012), is complemented by feminist scholars' documentation of the pattern of 'the feminization of migration' (Castles and Miller 1998) and its relationship to education provision. Cuban concludes that 'while the adult education system could challenge "the downward pressures" (Walters 2000 in Cuban 2010) on women migrants, it creates instead greater stratifications through an assimilationist and generic approach that is void of gender and transnational issues and reinforces exclusivity' (2010:179). The worldwide increase in female migration (World Bank 2006 in Cuban 2010) and the neglect of gender in migration studies (Kofman et al 2009) form the backdrop to her international study into the needs of immigrant women in adult education whom she regards 'as a political group (where they are not seen as such) because they have clearly identified problems in society that impact their educational trajectories' (2010:179). Her findings are significant for my research as she contrasted the United States of America (USA) with England with an emphasis on ESOL, conducted both fieldwork and policy analysis and used a feminist analysis to investigate the relationship between education policies and women's progress.

Cuban notes that women migrants are often treated differently based on their nationalities, for example EU and non-EU, which I develop in detail in Chapter 7, and that they are ascribed agency differently based on such categories; as with Mojab above, I explore how certain groups of women in the UK, particularly Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani, can be positioned as victims and that this impacts on services to all ESOL learners. Internationally, it appears that the priority for gender-based programmes is access to basic level education, but that little provision is considered for those already well-educated or wishing to progress, so that many skilled migrant women are unable to overcome obstacles and remain in jobs significantly below their level of qualification (Kouritzin 2000, Kofman et al 2005). Feminist theorists contribute an analysis of women's complex decision-making within a migration and economic discourse which regards them as 'aspiring migrants [who] are happy to make easy money doing unskilled work and view it in the context of being an opening to greater opportunities' (Learning and Skills Council 2006:24-5 in Cuban 2010:180-181), a generalisation which fails to recognise women's invisible work including attendance in ESOL classes and supporting their children's learning (Reay 2004). Focussing on the education and progress of a group of sixteen care workers from different backgrounds in northwest England, Cuban used in-depth interviews and observation of participants at home, work or on a workplace programme and concluded

that they faced 'many obstacles to advancing that were invisible to the care sector employers and adult education policymakers' (2010:186). She found that '*policies rarely if ever mention gender apart from sex* as a variable in participation figures and women migrants tend to be classified and treated solely as either 'women' *or* 'migrants' or ESOL' students' (2010:186 original italics).

I drew on Cuban's study to develop questions relating to a specific group of learners who are further classified as 'mothers' or perhaps 'immigrant mothers' to discover whether gendered considerations went beyond childcare and flexible access. I widened my perspective to include national political discourses which impact on their learning potential, particularly that of community cohesion which became directly connected to ESOL through the policy 'A New Approach' (DIUS 2009).

2.4 English language learning and gender

Early researchers investigating the social and psychological factors at work in second language acquisition (SLA) developed concepts such as 'integrative orientation' that is, a 'sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group' (Gardner and Lambert 1972: 132) and found a positive correlation between such motivation and the successful acquisition of the target language. This is critiqued below in my presentation of Norton's work (1995, 2000). Others developed similar theories based on ethnolinguistic identity suggesting that members of those groups 'where the in-group identification is weak, in-group vitality low, in-group boundaries open and identification with other groups strong' (Pavlenko 2002: 279) would assimilate with the target population and learn quickly. In the fields of gender and language and of gender and SLA enquiry was similarly based on concepts of difference and dominance between women and men (and girls/boys) (Sunderland 2000, Litosseliti 2006). Lakoff (1975) theorised the dominance framework in which "women-as-a-group" were seen as linguistically oppressed and dominated by "men-as-a group"' (Pavlenko 2008: 165) and research focussed on issues such as turn-taking in classrooms and analysis of textbooks for sexist content. The difference model led to consideration of learning strategies, innate 'ability', motivation and achievements, based on an essentialist concept of women and men as homogenous groups, a position which has since been widely criticised, particularly by feminist linguists along with other feminist and critical theorists (for example Cameron 1992, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). Although such approaches made important contributions, they

were regarded as too simplistic (for example in attributing negative value to silence or lack of interruption by girls and women in class). More significantly, they can be criticised for basing their enquiries on concepts, not only of in-groups and out-groups, but of seeing language learners as having fixed sets of characteristics as a result of their group membership, which would change as they moved; this can be regarded as seriously under-theorising the relationship between individual and social factors and of the nature of identity and transition. In Sunderland's wide-ranging review of language and gender in second and foreign language education during the 1990s, she concluded that studies were as a whole moving from 'a 'differences' towards an 'identities' paradigm' (2000:204) and highlighted new complexities in correctly interpreting studies. Of relevance to my research is that she notes a 'growing recognition of the problematic nature of the binary' (2000:214) and of identity, which is key to sociolinguistic studies (for example Norton 2000, Norton and Toohey 2001, Pavlenko 2002). In the same period, a special issue of TESOL Quarterly (1999 Vol 33 (3)) included contributions on participatory education and feminist teaching but in UK ESOL during the first decade of this century, the role of critical feminism, the significance of gender and other equality issues such as sexuality, class, religion and disability continue to be under-researched.

A decade further on, Dornyei and Ushioda argue that the changing global reality has entirely altered people's motivation to learn a new language, especially global English, and that questions of the self and identity are now at the forefront of theorising second language (L2) motivation; therefore 'there is now very real potential for much greater synergy between L2 motivation theory and mainstream SLA and sociolinguistics than in the past' (2009:5). This becomes apparent in the studies discussed below, in which women's daily experiences, family and internal lives and socio-political contexts are considered central to learning.

2.5 Studies of women immigrant ESOL learners

2.5.1 Overview

Thirty years ago, McNerney asked: 'How is it possible to expect a woman to be the "keeper" of one culture, the recipient and supporter of another and the mediator between the two cultures when they clash?' (1980:30 in Kouritzin 2000:15), an issue which continues to be highly pertinent and which runs through much of the work which follows.

In an already small field, most studies focus on women, or women and men, from a single or connected ethnic or linguistic background (Skilton-Sylvester 2002, Mills 2004, Ward and Spacey 2008, Menard –Warwick 2009). Kouritzin (2000) interviewed nineteen mothers from a mixed group of ESOL students of school-age children for about 18 months during 1993-1994 in Canada to investigate themes of access to ESOL classes; I draw on her study for insights into their emotional constraints, including the dilemma and continuing struggle to commit themselves and their children to two languages, and also for her conclusions about teaching implications. She did not include those with pre-school children. In the same year, Norton, also Canadian, published her seminal work on identity and language learning, which had a cohort of women and men from a variety of backgrounds for the questionnaire and interviews, but in which she developed a rich source of data from five women who volunteered to write and discuss diaries. Women not able to commit time to this 'were either mothers in full-time employment or mothers of pre-school children, working full-time in the home' (2000:28), gendered practices which she recognised as part of the opportunities which affect women's access to learning. I draw on this study for both her methodological framework and theoretical development. Other studies to which I refer were conducted with participants selected by ethnicity or linguistic background: in the USA, Skilton-Sylvester (2002) followed Norton for her study of four Cambodian women's identities at home and work and their connection to the classroom whilst Menard-Warwick's (2002) ethnographic study was conducted in an ESOL family literacy programme with seven female and one male Latin Americans. She acknowledges: 'Although gender had not been an initial focus of my research, it was impossible for me to ignore that these narratives were highly gendered' (2009:5-6). In the UK, Mills (2004) explored language attitudes of ten bilingual Pakistani women and their children with a particular focus on mothers' bilingual language practices and construction of motherhood; I draw on her insights into how these women were agentive in challenging expectations and managing contradictions. Ward and Spacey adopted 'a feminist perspective which for us means framing the research within a conceptual focus on the gender inequalities and patriarchal power and control that affect women's lives' (2008:12) in their study of the learning journeys of one hundred Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women in England. They did not record how many of the cohort had dependent children but were able to draw conclusions from their data which significantly contribute to the overall picture of women's learning experiences, including barriers and constraints. My research is informed

by, and extends, these studies by focussing on the experiences of mothers, all ESOL learners from different backgrounds, whose children range from babies to young adults.

2.5.2 Participation, motivation and investment in learning.

The language that Norton used in Canada in 2000 to describe the limitations of theories of language learning motivation could be applied to contemporary UK ESOL policy and procedural guidance, followed by a similar critique of their narrow frame of reference; for example the concepts of 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motivation, which referred to learners' desires to, for example, participate in the target language community and gain employment, continue to predominate in assessments. These 'presuppose[s] a unitary, fixed, and ahistorical language learner who desires access to material resources that are the privilege of target language speakers' (Norton 2000:10). I would add that this can also construct the material resource as a fixed, bound entity and when this is a language, this is a false premise to which both native speakers and learners become attached, with damaging consequences, such as regarding it as a product to be acquired. Norton argues that this framework fails to capture the relationship between language, power and identity, whereas the concept of investment:

> conceives of the language learner as having a complex social history and multiple desires. The notion presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space (2000:11).

Of particular importance for this study are her insights into ethnic, gendered and classed social relations which mean that women and men, and those from different ethnic and social backgrounds, have different access to, and a different experience of, language learning. She followed feminist theorists and writers such as Weedon(1997) and hooks (1989) to locate her concern with 'not only the silencing that women experience within the context of larger patriarchal structures in society, but also with the gendered access to the public world that immigrant women, in particular, experience' (2000:12), attending to the question still raised by Pavlenko: 'Is gender truly relevant to the issues I am interested in or would my results be better explained through other factors?' (2008: 172).

Following Norton, the question for researchers, teachers and programme evaluators can become an enquiry into what the target language means for that person, and how that

relationship is socially and historically constructed. She acknowledges the role of critical educators such as Freire (1970) and Giroux (1992) in showing how language teaching is not neutral but highly political and clarifies her understanding of power to mean the 'socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated' (2000:7), including both the macro level of institutions and systems but also the everyday social encounter. Social exchanges become a site where both these resources, intimately connected, are desired by the learner and generally controlled by another and analysis of the interaction can show how this control is distributed and learners' agency is available and used. Following Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital as the most socially valued, and arguably also misrecognized (Bourdieu 1991) as superior within a society, Norton further developed his view that 'speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it' (Bourdieu 1977:652). Therefore language and speaking exchanges are inseparable from an understanding of the social networks operating in a particular place and time which define who has the 'right to speech' or 'the power to impose reception' (1977:75) and I draw on this to develop my findings in Chapter 6 in relation to current family language practices and community engagement.

Kouritzin's study begins with a recognition that power relations, integral to learners' social and cultural contexts, must be taken into account in any enquiry into learning patterns and provision. She highlights three interlinking factors: time, ambivalence and contradiction. Stating that 'the focus of this article is not the gendered or systemic inequities which complicate the lives of immigrant mothers, but rather the cultural conflicts which constrain their access' nevertheless she continues to see cultural aspects as 'themselves often gendered' (2000:25) and presents her interview data accordingly. These include prioritising a caring role at home over personal learning, not being consulted about important family decisions, being responsible for maintaining the home language and culture and not expecting to use a stranger for day care. She concluded that:

> 'many, though no means all, of the restrictions to these women's participation … are embedded in the cultural power dynamics which exist between men and women' and that 'By so conflating access to education with availability of education, we deal only with the surface aspects of access and fail in our desire to provide relevant, timely, and appropriate English language education' (2000: 29-30).

Kouritzin's conclusions usefully inform my research about why some, and not other, women attend and progress in class. She cites previous researchers who argue for

increased provision in order to overcome structured gender inequalities, and suggests that this alone is not a panacea, unlikely to improve take-up and standards without an accompanying, more sophisticated, understanding of how dominant language teaching is provided. She notes the damage of emphasising English at home to the cost of the family, an issue highly significant in my own data. She does not, however, place her study within an analysis of how and why any particular group of women may be unduly affected by various kinds of institutionalised discrimination. The powerful stories told by participants provide illumination into their family lives, journeys, and personal cultural perceptions and experiences, but these insights are not available to view through a macro- lens of national or local policies which impact differently on them, for example in relation to ethnicity or linguistic or religious background.

Ward and Spacey's (2008) study focuses on the most disadvantaged of women learners in the UK, who also experience less secure employment and less participation in social and civic society. They argue that challenges 'must be tackled in pursuit of a more equal and just society in which the most excluded Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women are empowered to move from the margins and gain more independence and equality' (2008:7). Their social justice agenda calls on the government to 'sharpen the conceptualisation and language relating to social inclusion, community cohesion and the role of ESOL' (2008: 24-25). They enquired into the learning journeys, attitudes and constraints of 62 women not currently in education and recognised having few English skills was a major factor in social exclusion. They present their findings into learning barriers following McGivney (2001) as: personal, cultural, practical, psychological and institutional, using a gender lens to develop a more nuanced and detailed picture of external circumstances than is available from Kouritzin, including reference to immigration and funding rules which determine access for many. In relation to my own study there are interesting questions and tentative conclusions about why some women don't join courses when they face the same barriers, especially around childcare:

> Answers might lie in the nature, intensity and interactions of different hindrances to learning … 'They are more likely to get married than women from other groups and marriage is associated with lower participation. They are more likely to have larger families and less likely to use child carers … Confidence is frequently cited as a barrier to learning … It becomes a major deterrent when combined with other factors, in particular lack of English (2008:2).

This study produced a 'Planning and Outreach Framework' through which it is suggested women can be identified by ' types … who have different learning aspirations and/or face

barriers to learning (2008:65), followed by strategies to support them into learning. These types are learning positive/ optimistic/ pessimistic/ negative; they state:

> Learning negative women are the most challenging group … mothers staying at home would be one priority … the learning negative mothers we interviewed believe staying at home gives their young children the best start' (2008:66-67).

Such labelling practices do not, in my view, support the careful nuance of their enquiries and are surprising in how they appear to place responsibility on individual women. This apparently broad dismissal of women's judgement and choices about meeting their infants' needs is also concerning, and this report has therefore been useful in my reflections on how to approach women's stories, particularly in respect of such personal decisions.

2.5.3 Home languages, children and mothers' motivation

In relation to mothering and developing an adult learning identity, I expected previous research to show that mothers of young children experience practical barriers to attending and space to study, and that this would ease as children entered school. My own experience had been of women voicing concerns as children reached around the age of six or seven. It is clear from a range of studies that parental duties and children's needs can both stimulate and hinder parents to learn English, with this role falling predominantly on mothers (Mills 2004, Hashem and Aspinall 2011). Ward and Spacey found that, whilst all the women wanted to support their children at school and talk in detail to teachers, life stage and age 'are powerful determinants of women's access …The dominant trend is to stop either on marriage or when they have their first baby. Some never return to learning…' (2008:61) whilst in Buckingham et al's study of a broad range of women learners with children under 5 in west London, she noted that:

> This is an important factor for training providers to recognize; pregnant women and new mothers may still have an interest in training in spite of changed circumstances that can temporarily reduce it (2004: 60).

She also found that immigrant mothers in unsettled conditions, who may have had a traumatic migration experience or were waiting for residency decisions, were reluctant to leave their children with others and were not ready to concentrate on learning (2004). This connects to Kouritzin's 'time' constraint, which she conceptualised as not about class availability but about a woman's personal timing and readiness to take a new step. Others are keen to leave the house and become independent as soon as they can but can be

constrained by family duties. Where some regarded a child entering nursery as liberation from domestic duties and an opportunity to study, many women were only able to attend if courses were within walking distance of home, family learning, or women-only classes (Buckingham 2004, 2005). Ward and Spacey found that women's 'investment' (Norton 2000) in learning English is closely connected to their children's needs and fast- developing English:

> They told us that they children are growing up with English as their dominant language so their mothers don't understand them and have difficulty communicating as the children 'speak like water' (2008:33).

The value of learning English was undeniable both for confidence and learning progression but the problem of not sharing a language with their children became apparent in several studies: 'It was not Serafina's ESL class but her son's pre-school that was driving a linguistic wedge between them' (Menard-Warwick 2009:103). This 'subtractive bilingualism' is well-recognised in work with bi/multilingual families (Lambert 1975 in Wong Fillmore 1991). Although Norton was not able to engage with mothers of very young children, for one participant who immigrated with her six year old, the fear of losing contact with her daughter was strong; this was not just about their heritage but was 'an essential link to her future: her ongoing relationship with her daughter and her identity as a mother' (2000:89). She sustained ambivalence towards English because of the threat and opportunities it offered her and her familial and social relationships, but Norton uses her concept of investment and identity to argue that this mother could simultaneously hold the apparent contradiction of being committed to Polish at home and English outside. This ambivalence was shared by the participants in Mills' study, who were all mature university students of Pakistani origin living in the UK, acutely aware of the necessity of English for their children to succeed, whilst mother tongue languages were regarded as equally essential for other reasons including religious and moral guidance, cultural identity and being connected to their community. As one of 'several identity markers that contributed to the plurality and mutability of the women's identities … Language particularly was cited as a crucial component' (Mills 2004:176). This study was particularly valuable for my research as a reminder of the strength of feeling and association belonging to the term 'mother tongue' which was not regarded simply as a culture transmitter or heritage reminder, but 'a primal term, a metaphor that carries with it the overtones of mother earth, motherland' (2004: 166). Mills notes that 'father tongue' is not collocated, and that mothers are regarded as a family's primary language teachers, so that this work is necessarily gendered. Mothers in

her study made frequent, daily, language choices for themselves and their children, being shaped by, and actively reshaping, relationships and practices (Fairclough 1992, Weedon 1987) which became indicators not only of rapid, sensitive linguistic skills, but also of maternal ability and achievement:

> Linguistic good manners were not only regarded as evidence of respect for others but were also seen as powerful indicators of satisfactory upbringing and nurturing. As such, they were subject to judgement by relatives and others in the community and reflected on the parents, particularly the mother (Mills 2004:183).

This constant juggling was not always successful, leading to later regret and loss, highlighting the ongoing personal, internal work undertaken by bilingual mothers, especially in a country where the minority language is not respected or popular in wider society, and can carry connotations of fear or threat. Mills' participants were reflecting back on years of these practices, and I was interested to follow this by enquiring in detail how those with very young children are currently making such choices; her study group were able to reference each other's behaviour from a similar heritage background, despite linguistic and other differences in upbringing, whilst ESOL students in my study area were much more dispersed from their cultural communities and in smaller family groups.

2.5.4 Methodology

Although all these studies recognised that women's investment in learning English was strongly influenced by becoming mothers only Mills and Kouritzin had set out with this specific focus, and no mothers of pre-school children were included. Norton and Menard-Warwick had women and men in their sample, Ward and Spacey included women of all ages, and Buckingham et al researched women who were not only ESOL students. Translation and interpretation were a major concern for all the researchers, who paid careful attention to their options, choices and likely impacts on the work. As discussed in Chapter 5 my own position and decision to work in English were closely influenced by their research and others (Temple and Young 2004, Temple 2005, Albouezi 2006, Pavlenko 2006, Pahl 2006). Menard-Warwick (2009) is a Spanish speaker who had linguistic and cultural support from a neighbour and a colleague; Goldstein's two-year ethnographic study of Portuguese workers in Canada (1995) was co-produced with a bilingual assistant; Ward and Spacey (2008) employed bilingual community researchers to identify and interview respondents as did Roberts (2006) who found that this produced very mixed results. Mills was able to use English with her very fluent participants. Norton and Kouritzin both chose to use English whilst offering the choice for translation of written

data, weighing up potential problems of distancing and misinterpretation in involving a third person and women's preference to express themselves in their new language, an approach which I decided was most appropriate for this study. Clearly this excludes the absolute beginner and may fail to capture cultural or linguistic nuance. As ESOL research develops with more intensive enquiry into learners' lives, this dilemma merits more open debate within the profession with acknowledgement of the effect of such research choices on findings and knowledge development.

Studies were described as ethnographic, longitudinal or case studies, indicating their personal and often intimate nature, particularly through a deliberate choice of unstructured or semi-structured interviewing as key when working from a feminist perspective: the face to face interview has 'become the definitive feminist approach, marginalizing if not excluding (other) work' (Kelly et al 1995:236 in Mills 2004:167). Norton observed that only women volunteered for the diary project within her study, referencing bell hooks' (1990) view that 'writing is paradoxically both a form of resistance and a form of submission for women who have few means to make their voices heard (2000:27). I drew on these insights to introduce a range of speaking and writing methods through which women might more effectively express some aspect of their experience or feelings, designing a calendar for less confident writers to record language use and providing notebooks for others who wished to write and discuss their reflections. I devised and introduced simple drawing tools during interviews to encourage and stimulate responses on family language practices.

2.6 Summary

ESOL and TEFL research show that the social turn in second language learning is now well-established (Block 2003) along with a recognition that rapidly-changing global events impact directly on learners' identities and continuing investment in developing language fluency. In the UK, the introduction of national ESOL provision provided the platform for the first, and to date, only major research project, which identified the need for future work in several directions, including taking a critical stance on policy and political agendas and on bringing students' life experiences into the curriculum (Roberts et al 2006). The heterogeneity of this population makes research particularly challenging, and many areas so far remain significantly under-explored, including the inter-relationship of social and cultural factors such as sexuality, disability, class and religious belief and of changing family

structures and mores. Research with women students has mostly focussed on those who are marginalized, and categorized by ethnic identity, whilst little attention has been paid to the learning needs of women as the majority. The relationship between dominant political discourses on immigrant families' language practices and student mothers' daily lives has not been explored. This research seeks to develop this field of knowledge by asking what a feminist approach to critical analysis of ESOL policies and their wider socio-political context can offer, and extends the practice of giving voice to women who are not regularly heard in policy debate.

Chapter Three Theoretical framework

Pennycook (1990), Weedon (1997), Norton (2000), Pavlenko (2002, 2008) and Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) argue that post-structuralism offers a theoretical model within which to explore 'language acquisition in its social, cultural, and political contexts, taking into account gender, race, and other relations of power as well as the notion of the subject as multiple and formed within different discourses' (Pennycook 1990:26). I follow these researchers with a focus on the identity, agency, subjectivity and investment of research participants who are also, at times, language learners. In SLA, key aspects are that language operates as symbolic capital and as the site of identity construction (Weedon 1987, Bourdieu 1991, Norton 2000); that language learners have agency, with dynamic, changing, multiple identities (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001, Block 2003, Baynham 2006); and that SLA is not simply cognitive but also 'situated learning' (Lave and Wenger 1991, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1998, 2003), that is, becoming socialised into specific communities. I develop from this a theoretical approach which combines feminist post structuralism with critical discourse analysis (CDA). Critical pedagogy, feminism and CDA have all developed from explicit value bases with the intention of encouraging a dialectical relationship between theory and practice, and of meeting goals of social justice through political or other actions (for example: Freire 1972, Lather 1991, Luke and Gore 1992, van Dijk 1993, Wodak 1997, Pennycook 2004, Luke 2004, Lazar 2007). I retain a focus on gender both conceptually and practically which includes theoretical analyses of gender itself, gendered practices and relations alongside other aspects of identity such as race and class. I will in this chapter argue that it is from the particular contributions to knowledge made by feminist theorists within a post-structuralist framework which allows this re-working of gender, language and power to be especially appropriate to the research topic.

3.1 Developing a framework for gender analysis

The refutation of sex as a generally binary distinction in favour of its consideration as a social category opens up, in my view, a more productive and distinctly more complex route to theorising in line with other post-structural thinking. It represents and requires a shift away from lines of enquiry which close down or rely on a single truth or interpretation and offers instead the potential for rich insights into the relationships between gender, context and discourses, particularly across disciplines. This is especially apt for this investigation into the personal lives of women learners of English within British

public and political discourses which significantly affect many aspects of their lives. Although I argue that women cannot be regarded as a homogenous group and may in many circumstances have more in common with some men than with other women, categorisation by sex nevertheless does take place in both public and private spheres of life; how and why this occurs in relation to learning English and to what political end is a key question to which I will return in Chapter 7. Feminist theorisations of gender in Western societies during the last forty years have fallen into distinct phases, and I argue that, although I follow a broadly post-structural approach, there are insights and strengths to be developed from earlier thinking which are appropriate to a contemporary resurgence in feminist action (Mills and Mullany 2011) in which the challenge is to move beyond deconstructive analyses of gender/ feminism. Second Wave feminism of the 1960s and 1970s rejected biological determinism and the normative positioning of female/femininity and vigorous opposition to patriarchal practices was often successful in challenging and changing structures which depended on a gender variable. Women's clear, collective political ambitions to end discrimination and achieve female emancipation, in both public and private arenas, arose through the mantra of 'the personal is political' which served to ground theory in women's material and embodied realities and build new knowledge out of the experience of ordinary lives. However, the focus and power of feminist collectives tended heavily towards white, Western, middle class women, an identity which was soon challenged as constructing a new normative position based on a concept of the 'universal woman', an essentialist position roundly criticised particularly by black, working class, lesbian and disabled women (for example hooks 1981, Lorde 1984). Third Wave feminism, emerging from the late 1980s onwards, was influenced by, and in turn became an integral part of and contributor to, post-structural and deconstructive challenges to concepts of universalism, the fixity of language and scientific truth claims (for example hooks 1990, Lather 1991, Luke and Gore 1992, Mirza 1992, Maynard 1994, Weedon 1997, Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis 2002). Differences between women and between men as well as between the sexes were explored, feminist research expanded beyond the white middle classes in the Western world; in other words, aspects of gender studies are now much more usefully situated as one of a range of identity variables which are key to understanding the lives and learning narratives of women migrants.

In this enquiry, I work from a position which regards gender as socially constructed and continuously performed, and draw on feminist language theorists to support my analysis. Sunderland says that gender entails 'any difference between women and men being socially or culturally learned, mediated or constructed' (2004:14, original italics); Norton and Pavlenko regard it as 'a complex system of social relations and discursive practices differentially constructed in local contexts' (2004:3); gender identities are described by Litosseliti as 'a communicative achievement, an effect of discursive practices … multi-layered, variable, diverse, fluid, shifting, fragmented and often contradictory or dilemmatic' (2006:63) and by Butler as a 'doing, an incessant activity performed' (2004:1). Lazar asserts that 'gender functions as an interpretive category that enables participants in a community to make sense of and structure their particular social practices. Second, gender is a social relation that enters into and partially constitutes all other social relations and practices' (2007:145). My research participants are women who have become immigrants, mothers and English students in addition to other roles and identities including wives, divorcees, separated daughters and unemployed adults. If gender identities are understood to be complex and multi-layered for all, then how much more so are they for this group? Wodak suggests that the problem of not knowing where one belongs is 'often more relevant for women because women are still explicitly treated differently and discriminated against in most host societies. This relates to employment, education and housing; discrimination has also become very visible in the ''headscarf' and 'veil' debates' … Migration could thus be regarded as a gendered, religious and social class issue' (2008:198). She notes the difficulties in theorising and devising adequate methodologies to analyse these questions and argues that multi-level contextual analysis is necessary in order to fully illustrate the effects on migrant women of identity uncertainty and everyday discrimination.

Such complex, inter-relational investigation and analysis has often depended on an 'intersectional' approach (Crenshaw 1989) in which Black feminism is evidently the 'theoretical anchor for a lot of these types of analyses. It insists on the politics of location, insists that we look at how race, class and sexuality and gender work together, to constitute subjects' (Ringrose in Ali et al 2010). However, both despite and because of this acknowledgement and attention to all women's different positions and experiences 'intersectionality' can appear an innocuous term, apparently obvious and simplistic but liable to varied interpretation; what are its scope and limitations and how can it be used

effectively? In approaching this enquiry, I find intersectionality useful for its potential to offer feminism a way to conceptualise and begin to overcome the apparent contradictions inherent in using post-structural methodologies whilst remaining committed to those political projects which make visible social and material consequences of gender inequalities. Here I follow Davis (2008) who suggests it addresses feminism's 'primary audience concern .... the acknowledgement of differences among women ... the long and painful legacy of its exclusions' (2008:70) and can be used as 'a heuristic device... [that] references the ability of social phenomena such as race, class, and gender to mutually construct one another' (Hill Collins 1998:205). Yuval- Davis cautions that attention is required to the specific and fundamentally different logics of social divisions and inequalities, avoiding its application primarily as a tool for theorizing identity to the detriment of social structures; for example in her work on gender and the nation- state, (1997) she argues that this is essential to an understanding of gendered practices within nationalist and citizenship discourses which position women as keepers and cultivators of the nation rather than its developers. Arnot takes up this theme in her analysis of the 'liberal democratic education project [which] allows itself to become the subject of its own critique at the same time as obscuring its connection with political and economic conditions' (2009:36) and suggests that feminist research has failed to fully 'treat as problematic the political category of 'women' or, on the other hand, to address the differentiation of women's experiences and their multiple positionings by the state (2009:42). One way in which I apply Arnot's challenge is in my discourse analysis of the pre-entry visa language test required of some immigrants applying to enter the UK as a spouse, civil partner or fiancé/ee. (Home Office 2010a). I will show how this materially affects the lives of applicants in terms of their gender, racial origin, class or economic circumstances in relation to the capital required to learn English and pass the test in their home country, and also impacts on the family lives of their partners and others in the UK, and that it can be theorised through Black feminism, which Mirza says gives her 'a framework to look at the agency of women... to draw on post-colonial historical contexts ... a past from which we can understand the present, and the way that racialised patterns and sexualised and gendered patterns reoccur, and sustain inequalities...' (Ali et al 2010:653). Here it becomes evident that one cannot abandon a structural analysis and must consider agency in relation to the constraints of such institutionalised, legalised inequalities.

This research foregrounds the accounts that women have shared about inequalities they experience arising from a range of issues including gender, race and poverty which leads to migration, and the effect this has on their internal, emotional lives and material reality. Feminist theory has contributed much to the disruption of basic ideas about what is considered Truth in such situations. Passerini links the unique, everyday and sometimes ordinary experiences of women's stories with the need to pay close attention in order to learn how to interpret their truths: 'When talking about their lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they are revealing truths' (1989:261, author's italics). She adds: 'It is precisely because of their subjectivity - their rootedness in time, place and personal experience, and their perspective-ridden character – that we value them' (1989:263). Narratives can break down our own barriers between our internal and external selves, our conscious and unconscious understandings. Georgakopolou suggests we might regard ourselves in Bakhtinian terms '… more specifically, as a storied self, a dynamic and evolving entity, a dialogical project, emerging through tellings and retellings of personal but socioculturally mediated stories' (2005:1) and considers that there is more to be developed from Bakhtin's work on language and body politics, shifting our focus from the verbalized to the embodied. Following this, women's accounts and reflections on the physical and emotional impact of their emerging identities as English speakers become an integral part of the data and development of knowledge.

3.2 The field of language learning

Bourdieu's (1991) concepts of field, habitus and particularly linguistic capital support an understanding both of controlling the field of language learning and the particular significance of English, for as ' "Linguistic capital" is the power conferred upon a particular linguistic form, style or dialect associated with the legitimacy and prestige of particular social positions – it is crucial in the conversion of other forms of capital into symbolic capital' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough1999:101). I have noted previously that in this model:

> habitus, capital and field interconnect and continually influence each other to produce the practice of the individual social agent. Not only economic (tangible, financial) but also social and cultural, capital can only be recognised if it is given legitimacy by society (symbolic capital): "The kinds of capital, like trumps in a card game, are powers that define profit in a given field" (Bourdieu 1990:230) and society is constantly engaged in the distribution, reproduction and evaluation of capital through its structures and institutions (Macdonald 2009:6).

Within a rapidly- changing international context '… it is English that stands at the very centre of the global language system. It … continues to entrench that dominance in a self-reinforcing process' (Held 1999:346). It is the central language of communication, business, science, politics, travel and tourism and politics (Crystal 2003, Jenkins 2003). It is the native language of 'the two modern hegemonic powers, Britain and the USA' (Held et al 1999: 346), with the additional authority of having become the world's predominant lingua franca, remaining the 'most eligible language for virtually all significant purposes' (Phillipson 1992:42). As such, those who migrate to the UK are acutely aware that this powerful linguistic tool opens many doors, not only within their new society but also in other countries, and may consider themselves as 'trans-migrants' (Block 2007:33), challenging the stereotype of the permanent immigrant, and significant in relation to the ways in which governments attempt to control how the field is defined, managed and mediated.

Bourdieu (1977a) argues that individuals are positioned within their social fields and share a deep, internalized understanding, or 'doxa' of the system of evaluation at work in this structured space and how it can work against them, and that their attitudes, beliefs and experiences, or habitus, mediate and structure practices within it. He posits a circular relationship between structures and practices, so that structured subjective dispositions and actions reproduce the objective structure: 'Thus, there is a correlation between objective probabilities and subjective aspirations, between institutional structures and cultural practices' (MacLeod 1987:15). In this framework, power in everyday life is rarely displayed as overt physical force but is transmuted into symbolic force, a process of 'symbolic violence' and so, 'to understand the nature of symbolic power, it is therefore crucial to see that it presupposes a kind of *active complicity* on the part of those subjected to it.' (Thompson in Bourdieu 1991: 23 original italics). These mechanisms take place within each field: 'a network of positions defined by a particular distribution of capital … which endows that field with its own specific practical logic…' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:101) and which is always, constantly, contested, a site of struggle for capital (power) between the agents in that field. He seeks to explain the motivation of subjects to acquire or protect such privileges in terms of capital accumulation strategies, showing how individuals become complicit in perpetuating inequality, which he terms 'misrecognition', that is the ways in which the social practices of dominant classes are not recognised as anything other than natural or possible. The strength of his model for this research lies in

its considerations of language learning as more than a cognitive or instrumental process of acquiring grammar or vocabulary, and it forms, together with Foucault's (1972) development of 'discourses' a key foundation for critical enquiry into illusions of neutrality in education. It represents a major shift away from the de-contextualised approaches of previous thinkers such as Saussure, which he criticised as "a self-contained system completely severed from its real uses and denuded from its practical and *political* function" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 141, emphasis in original). Connecting the process of language acquisition to a theory of social, unequally-structured power relations allowed Bourdieu to expose the mechanisms by which some people are excluded from gaining this form of capital; it means that "speakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence" (Bourdieu 1991: 55) through which he distinguishes the post-structuralist position from that of the linguist's abstract view of competence. Norton, theorising from a post-structuralist feminist position, develops this further through her understanding that women participants were more concerned to be understood than to understand others; if unable to 'impose reception ' or have the right to speak 'they were *ipso facto* unworthy people' (2000:113 original italics). I draw extensively on these theoretical models to examine the significance of everyday interactions for women's emotional, intellectual and social wellbeing.

3.3 Summary

In Chapter 2.4, I traced how the field of gender and language learning had developed from a 'differences' towards an 'identities' paradigm and that it can be argued there is a social turn under way in investigating second language learning motivation. In this chapter I have drawn on a body of work by feminist theorists to support my position that gender is socially constructed, resulting in gender roles which are multiple, shifting and in the process of constant renegotiation. As this happens within linguistic interactions then the role and power of the participant within that interaction is key and here I have drawn on Bourdieu to highlight the particular significance of linguistic capital for the women in this study. I develop this in the following chapter in my discussion of dominant discourses where I retain a focus on the need to investigate how and where women experience discrimination, thereby retaining the feminist imperative to material and structural inequalities within an overall approach of social constructionism.

Chapter Four Methodological approaches

In this chapter I explore the value of a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to contemporary UK ESOL discourse, alongside a consideration of critical ethnographic approaches. Ethical issues, particularly in relation to language use, power and participation in the research are analysed within a framework of reflexivity, which is itself critically considered for rigour and relevance within this project. I argue that these distinct methodologies, when understood as working dialectically, combine to support a thorough and meaningful enquiry into, and analysis of, textual and spoken data.

4.1 Critical discourse analysis

4.1.1 What is discourse in CDA?

For critical discourse analysts, 'discourse' can be viewed from various perspectives which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but may offer alternative analyses of the same data. Here it means more than 'language above the sentence' (Cameron 2001) and 'language in everyday use' that is, functionally or as a form of social interaction and in context (Fairclough 1992:3) even though these elements play a key role. Discourse is taken to mean social or ideological practices 'for producing meaning, forming subjects and regulating conduct within particular societies and institutions, at particular historical times' (MacLure 2003:175). Best understood in the plural, and famously conceptualised by Foucault as those 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (1972: 49), they are more than simply linguistic, but are forms of knowledge, 'powerful sets of assumptions, expectations and explanations, governing mainstream social and cultural practices' (Baxter 2003:7). Such social and ideological practices are 'ways of representing the world from particular perspectives… [such as] ..the ways of representing the issues, the potential benefits, the risks and dangers, the relevant institutions, the relationships' (Fairclough 2010:418) and are inherently associated with an understanding of how power relations are acted out through them. Litosseliti suggests that their characteristics include being recognizable and meaningful, operating in relation to, and possibly supporting or conflicting with each other, in ways which are 'not necessarily coherent' (2006:49). The many discourses related to migrant women's English learning may concern mono/multilingualist societies, settlement rights, functional skills, parenting roles and women's rights to further and higher education.

The crucial difference between this definition of discourse and a simple communicative event is that discourse as social action occurs 'within a framework of understanding, communication and interaction which is in turn part of broader, sociocultural structures and processes' (van Dijk 1997:2 in McKenna 2004:11), a distinction usefully conceptualised by Gee as 'little d' discourses which mean 'connected stretches of language that make sense, like conversations, stories, reports, arguments, essays. He defines 'discourse' as part of 'Discourse' ' (1990: 142) which are:

> Ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing, that are accepted as instantiations of particular identities…They are "ways of being in the world" … they are socially situated identities. They are, thus, always and everywhere social and products of social histories (2008:3).

They are thus held in place by social relations of power, which Foucault conceptualised as weaving itself discursively through 'social organisations, meanings, relations and the construction of speakers' subjectivities or identities' (Baxter 2003:8). This Foucauldian conception that 'modern power is invisible, self-regulating and subjecting ' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:24) needs, in their theorising of CDA, to be complemented by an understanding of power as domination, which 'establishes causal links between institutional social practices and the positions of subjects in the wider social field' (1999:24) in order to allow space for agency in such practices. I find helpful Foucault's (1972) concept of power acting in a capillary fashion, which has been fundamental to feminists' incorporation of the significance of daily events and apparently unrelated or insignificant oppressions, which could also be used to explore differences between women, refusing the idea of a causal factor but rather asking how the exercise of power takes place. In the context of migrant women learners, one can consider how they are positioned within this network as students and consumers of educational products, mothers and recipients of benefits and social services, workers and immigrants. However, the strength of Foucault's concept is also its undoing in terms of the feminist (and other emancipatory projects) as he does not allow for institutionalised power relations; for example what differentiates the lives of heterosexual and lesbian women. He 'saves for himself "the political" with his insistence on power, but he denies himself a *politics* because he has no idea of the "relations of force" said Hall (1996:136 in Loomba 2005:41). Such a position makes it impossible to think about resisting structures of domination in any systematic way, which is central to postcolonial, feminist and other oppositional theories.

These contradictions are sites of social struggle where the subjects are both 'interpellated' but also have different degrees of agency to resist and transform their positions through this 'constitutive process where individuals acknowledge and respond to ideologies, thereby recognizing themselves as subjects' (Althusser 1972:174) and becoming complicit in their own domination. Both Althusser and Butler recognise the power of constraint and the limited potential for resistance to hegemony implied in interpellation, suggesting that although there are points of vulnerability in ideology, nevertheless '… a wilful and instrumental subject, one who decides *on* its gender fails to realise that its existence is already decided *by* gender '(Butler 1993:x, original italics). For example, a good student or a good wife is so because she is designated as such through discursive practice, and Butler warns that 'persons are regulated by gender… this sort of regulation operates as a condition of cultural intelligibility for any person. To veer from the gender norm is to produce an aberrant example that regulatory powers … may quickly exploit to shore up the rationale for their own continuing regulatory zeal' (2004:52). This appears to leave little room for interruption of the prevailing ideology, but Youdell (2006) develops within the field of education; she considers how Butler offers political potential by using Althusser's understanding to engage in Foucault's acts of insurrection; in other words, one must first be named (in a way that is recognizable in the particular discourse) but then has the potential to name another; in thinking of agency as discursive, one can join in a citational chain of discourse (Butler 1997: 5). These actions involve both decontextualising and recontextualising so that the 'sedimented meanings of enduring and prevailing discourses might be unsettled and reinscribed' (Butler 1997:100).

These theoretical connections support my analysis of the discursive construction of female ESOL students, in which I show that the naming of immigrant mothers in authoritative written and spoken texts operates to significantly constrain their agency as subjects within this discourse, but that the value in analysing this alongside women's narratives demonstrates a potential to unsettle. Within this I view gender as part of a complex construction, not simply an individual one but a symbolic system:

> a set of ways of thinking, images, categories and beliefs which not only shape how we experience, understand and represent ourselves as men and women, but which also provide a familiar set of metaphors, dichotomies and values which structure ways of thinking about other aspects of the world … (Cohn and Ruddick 2004 in Litosseliti 2006:43).

Such domination, not usually sought through violence or coercion in western democracies, instead relies on hegemony appearing as mostly consensual and acceptable. 'The winning of consent and the perpetuation of the otherwise tenuous relation of dominance (Gramsci 1971) are largely accomplished through discursive means, especially in the way ideological assumptions are constantly re-enacted and circulated through discourse as commonsensical and natural' (Lazar 2007:147), a technique which serves to obscure inequalities and attempts to close down debate. Described by Bakhtin as authoritative discourse, it 'is indissolubly fused with its authority – with political power, an institution, a person' (Bakhtin 1981:343), whilst simultaneously resisted by its opposite: internally persuasive discourse characterised by flattened hierarchies, tentative and exploratory meaning-making. Here I follow Bakhtin in his emphasis on the dialogicality of language in order to both support a methodology of CDA and an ethnographic, feminist approach to research practice. His insights into how texts, both written and spoken, are always caught up in a dialogical chain 'always responding, always anticipating and eliciting responses – but also in the sense that discourse is so to speak internally dialogical, it is 'polyphonic', 'double-voiced' 'double languaged' (Bakhtin 1981)' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:49) are echoed in Kristeva's (1986) notion of 'intertextuality'.

CDA therefore 'reveals how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualize and dialogue with other texts as well as those that are left out' (McKenna 2004:11) in order to unravel networks or 'chains of discourse' through which they are transformed and may be repeated 'in a new, perhaps more authoritative context. That is, each recontextualization may move the argument into an increasingly non-negotiable materiality' (Blackledge 2005:13). Examples in this field include references to female learners as 'the hardest to reach' (DIUS 2009a: 8) or 'at risk of social exclusion' (DIUS 2009a:17); as those 'whose lack of English is likely to contribute to a weakening of community cohesion' (DIUS 2008:9); or those who have a 'responsibility and obligation … to make sure that their children speak English' (HC Hansard 2011). I will draw on such policy and political texts to explore how English language education for migrant adults is not only contextualised within, but driven by, related discourses of immigration control, economic demands and national and international security concerns. This illuminates how texts, drawing on 'socially available repertoires' (Fairclough 2003) engage in a process of recontextualization mixing or hybridising genres, which leads to further blurring of boundaries; some aspects of style may cross over, such as conversational or everyday forms of speech used by senior

politicians. Here David Cameron, as Opposition Leader, links himself through parenthood and generation to a group of British Asians: 'I … actually found a number of parents saying to me, you know when we went to school it was taught in English straight away' (Cameron 2007).

'Thus the vector of CDS [critical discourse studies] is formed by the intersection of language, discourse and social structure' (McKenna 2004:10). Discursive practices are both structured and structuring so may construct, perpetuate and deconstruct a category such as 'ethnic minority' or 'second language learner'. In this context, I agree with Fairclough's argument that '… the language element has in certain key respects become more salient, more important than it used to be, and in fact a crucial aspect of the social transformations which are going on – one cannot make sense of them without thinking about language' (2003:203), especially so in this language learning environment.

So from this, it is possible to see how genres may be combined in one discourse, enabling the analyst to focus on 'interdiscursivity'. It is a central tenet of CDA that theory and practice are dialogical in order to bring about social change, 'revealing how discourse does its ideological work' (McKenna 2004:10), and for feminists, in 'theorising and analysing the seemingly innocuous yet oppressive nature of gender as an omni-relevant category in many social practices' (Lazar 2007: 143). Language, reflecting and constructing the social world, cannot therefore be considered neutral, but must be regarded as socially, politically, and historically situated (Fairclough and Wodak 1997), which applies in this research not only to analysis of ESOL policy and related discourses, but also to learners' narrative contributions. The various post-modern 'turns' such as social, linguistic and narrative (MacLure 2003) contribute to our understanding of multiple truths and forms of knowledge, both personal and collective, conscious and unconscious, and how these truths and knowledges cannot always be held firm, but shape-shift, can sometimes only be appreciated through an indirect gaze. This is where the researcher lets go of essentialism and embraces the potential of the multiple perspective, which Bruner describes as seeing the world not 'univocally' but through different prisms: '…to be in the subjunctive mood is, then, to be trafficking in human possibilities rather than in settled certainties' (1986:26). He continues:

> The moment one abandons the idea that "the world" is there once for all and immutably, and substitutes for it the idea that what we take as the world is itself no more nor less than a stipulation couched in a symbol system, then the shape of the

> discipline alters radically. And we are, at last, in a position to deal with the myriad forms that reality can take – including the realities created by story, as well as those created by science (Bruner 1986:105).

4.1.2 Purpose and principles of a feminist CDA

CDA is 'discourse analysis with attitude' (van Dijk 2001:96), an approach which seeks to understand 'the relations between discourse, power, dominance [and} social inequality' (van Dijk, 1993:249 in McKenna 2004). It is problem-orientated (Glynos et al 2009) and its proponents share a common set of presumptions which include having a commitment to redressing injustice and inequalities so that theory and practice are unified and dialogical in an attempt to bring about social improvement (Wodak 1996, Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, McKenna 2004, Fairclough and Wodak 2010). Yanchar et al state that it is not possible to achieve a 'positionless critical analysis' (2008: 267), as such research must begin from a framework based on values and assumptions providing the researcher with a theoretical background or 'enabling condition' (Bohman 1991:125 in Yanchar 2008) from which to begin. According to Lazar there are advantages in a feminist critical discourse analysis approach as it operates 'at the outset, within a politically invested, explanatory program of discourse analysis' (2007: 144) which she had earlier defined as 'how gender ideology and gendered relations of power are (re)produced, negotiated and contested in representations of social practices, in social relationships between people, and in people's social and personal identities in text and talk' (2005:11). I suggest that particular attention is needed to those practices in which gender appears to be invisible, when Lazar suggests that 'Gender ideology is hegemonic in that it often does not appear as domination at all, appearing instead as largely consensual and acceptable to most in a community (2007:147). Apple agrees that it is 'crucial to locate the "silences" – the absent presences – in texts of this sort [and to] focus on the very concepts that structure the texts themselves' (1994: 353, 354).

My position here is that such analysis must take place within an intersectional framework, within a historical-social context and that there is a clear reason in this research for foregrounding gender as a key variable. However, it is necessary to reduce complexity through such a focus which is difficult in a field such as migrant identities and public policies. Wodak illustrates how migration can be regarded as a gendered, religious and social class issue using an empirical example of how the experience of not knowing where one belongs can be more acute for women who 'are still explicitly treated differently and

discriminated against in most host societies. This relates to employment, education and housing' (Wodak in Harrington et al 2008:198). She is careful to caution for the need to include other factors apart from gender, whilst also following her data analysis which records how female migrants reported certain kinds of discrimination, for example, for non-White and most Muslim women, this included being 'looked at ' in derogatory ways. She refers to Flam and Beauzamy (2008) who, in researching symbolic violence against migrant women in the UK, found that the high visibility of discourses such as 'bogus' asylum seekers or people who take jobs off local people, was negatively experienced to a greater degree by women than by men. The effect on developing a sense of belonging was profound and is relevant in showing how, interacting with class, ethnicity and religion, gender interacts in complex ways to perpetuate discrimination.

4.1.3 Summary of key features

Despite the wide variety of methods used within the field there are key features on which I draw (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, McKenna 2004, Wodak and Meyer 2001, Fairclough 2010, Blackledge 2005, Baxter 2010, Hyatt 2005, 2011). This is based on a relationship between linguistic analysis and context (Halliday 1978) and on a deep understanding of context to include not only temporal and spatial elements but also incorporating the concept of epoch or episteme (Foucault 1972). Attention is paid to both macro and micro analysis, and to the appropriate selection of material for grammatical features which are relevant to the research questions. All these understandings and decisions, guided by my theoretical and ontological framework, are necessarily partial, and selections take place within an ongoing reflexive process.

4.1.4 Criticism and limitations

(a) Bias and selectivity

The partiality on which CDA is based has been heavily criticised (Schlegoff 1997, Widdowson 1997, 2000) as being a route for interpretative positivism where problems may arise when 'a direct connection is made between the world-view expounded by a text and its linguistic structure' (Simpson 1993: 105). The question of representativeness and prejudice has raised issues of how valid and reliable it can be. Is there a kind of 'theoretical imperialism' (Schlegoff 1997) imposed, regardless of the interests of the research participants, applying sociological categories where none need apply, imposing a political agenda in all situations? Chouliaraki and Fairclough respond robustly, arguing that 'all

analysts are operating in theoretical practices whose concerns are different from the practical concerns of people as participants, and all analysis brings the analysts' theoretical preoccupations- and categories- to bear on the discourse' (1999:7), and others support them, arguing that there is no value-free science nor is it manageable to analyse a complete text; all researchers must select for appropriacy (van Dijk 2001, Blackledge 2005). Litosseliti suggests that, where linguists have already engaged with hermeneutic, interpretive or social constructionist principles, then CDA is appreciated for its readiness to declare its principles 'and to marry ideological commitment to the pursuit of rigorous, replicable and retrievable research methods' (2010:129).

(b) Theoretical eclecticism

Unconvinced as to rigour, Widdowson argues that CDA analysis is, ' … in effect, a kind of *ad hoc* bricolage which takes from theory whatever concept comes usefully to hand (1998:137). He accused critical linguists of proposing that there was a model, when in fact they used 'a collection of expedient practices, which need only a tool-kit, and no theoretical warrant whatever' (1998:138). Pennycook (2001) voiced similar concerns, arguing that while there was a developed political view of society in this approach, there was not in relation to knowledge, and he was concerned at perceived efforts to construct a scientific edifice around CDA. However, I follow Weiss and Wodak (2003) who, amongst others, argue that there is strength in plurality and theoretical synthesis, acknowledging the influence of post structural and cultural studies in developing more sophisticated analyses, dealing with 'discursive diachronicity and heteroglossia, subjectivity and micro-relations of power' (McKenna 2004:16). CDA's link with the extra-discursive domain and its materialist conception of language are here strong foundations from which to resist such criticism.

(c) Inflexibility

Connected to concerns around researcher partiality is criticism that analysts focussing on deconstruction of text with the aim to expose dominant ideologies and social inequality, themselves run the risk of concluding that there is another 'truth' to be discovered, thereby simply replacing one hegemonic practice with another. Again, post-structuralism acts as counterpoint to this, highlighting complexity and plurality of meaning, with attention to how particular versions of truth are constructed and identities change (Henderson 2005).

4.2 A Mixed Methods Approach

4.2.1 Principles and Approaches

This enquiry has been developed over a period of time in order to achieve a detailed, intensive analysis of the selected group, and develop trusting relationships to encourage 'thick' (Geertz 1973) high-quality data. I intend to describe and interpret ways in which women with children interact with learning English in relation to the structural conditions within which this is provided in order to develop understanding of their experiences. I draw on the work of researchers from critical ethnography, including Watson- Gegeo 1988 and Simon and Dippo 1986; from narrative studies including Griffiths and MacLeod 2008, The Personal Narratives Group 1989, and Treleaven 2003; and following Norton (2000) I build on their shared principles, including that 'Critical ethnography is understood as a form of knowledge production which supports transformative as well as interpretive concerns' (Simon and Dippo 1986:195) whilst Treleaven notes '…these cathartic qualities of private storytelling and their transformative function in the formation of public collective participation and political narratives' (2003:264).

My focus is on the everyday world of women (Weiler 1988), which varies not only between this and other groups of women and of men but also between individuals, according to factors such as their ethnic and linguistic origins, class and education backgrounds, families and migration histories. My research setting includes women's homes and communities, their interactions in both personal and public spaces, and the meanings these interactions have for them; the narrative told will include both 'the stories we decide constitute the 'data' … AND the stories we tell as researchers' (Sikes and Gale 2006:15) as my analysis will locate their stories within the context I have chosen for the enquiry. Giving voice to the invisible, marginalised or oppressed is a particular strength of the narrative approach, linked to feminist and Black writers (Lorde 1984, Passerini 1989, Anzaldua 1989) and crossing disciplinary boundaries. My enquiry develops a thread between participants' stories and the political sphere, a further function of a narrative approach; in developing her argument about the relationship between politics and knowledge, Arendt proposed, through a concept of 'natality' that we must constantly revise our judgements and knowledge to be able to adapt to, and for, the new humans always being born. In the context of public action, she suggested we must understand that we are in a shared space which has to acknowledge these unique beings: 'Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that

nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live' (1958:8). So narrative has a vital role to play in linking the life, the truth, the voice of an individual to the collective decision-making processes of society, including those 'little stories' which may appear very ordinary but provide the possibility of 're-framing the understanding of what is at issue' (Griffiths and MacLeod 2008:134), whereby, they argue, such data can identify previously hidden issues and 'can contribute to the setting of the policy agenda' (2008:138). In this project, I draw on such insights and experience to foreground women learners' voices in a field where they rarely contribute to policy analysis and development.

4.2.2 An etic-emic analytical framework

'Etic analyses and interpretations are based on the use of frameworks, concepts, and categories from the analytic language of the social sciences and are potentially useful for comparative research across languages, settings, and cultures' according to Watson-Gegeo (1998: 579) but I suggest must be used with particular caution in the field of language socialization; examples abound of the use of terms which are misrepresented as culturally neutral. For example there can be difficulties in coding concepts such as 'motivated student' or 'teacher-learner interaction' whilst the widespread use of such terminology as SMART [2] targets carries a particular association with discourses of training for economic purposes which bear little resemblance to the messy, multi-directional reality of living and learning in a new community. A key feature of a critical ethnographic approach is to ensure that each situation is understood from the perspective of the participants by referring to 'culturally based perspectives, interpretations, and categories used by members of the group under study to conceptualize and encode knowledge and to guide their own behavior' (Watson-Gegeo 1998: 580) which she argues makes them functionally relevant to the researcher. However, they cannot simply be substituted but must also be considered for cultural meaning; this emic analysis forms the basis for the etic extensions to develop and allow if not direct, then possibly abstract, comparisons to be drawn. Here I use the term 'language socialization' (rather than language acquisition) relating to interaction and initiation into new communities and practices, based on a theory of social constructionism (Burr 2003). Referring again to the wider institutional discourses to which learners are exposed, together with their own social identities, the analysis does not assume that 'knowledge and beliefs can be skimmed off from talk (naïve realism)' (Roberts 2006:17) but considers how participants call upon and construct their own discourses in

[2] Meaning Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, Time- bound

this process of making meaning. In this study, issues of cross- language interpretation are central to such data production and analysis (see Chapter 5).

4.2.3 Criticisms and disadvantages

There are methodological pitfalls to this approach which can arise from a lack of rigour in approaching the study with a clear theoretical frame or hypothesis. For example, the corresponding disadvantage to the ethnographic aim of obtaining rich and in-depth data is that its open structure may lead to vague or anecdotal conversations, a risk which can be reduced by ongoing transcriptions, data analysis and continual reframing of the questions. Data analysis can be complex or even overwhelming if there is a great deal to transcribe, with the potential danger here of omitting key information or simply choosing material which provides a hoped-for answer (Silverman 2001). Although openness to new concepts and meaning-making by participants are central to this approach, nevertheless illustrations which researchers rely on must not be anecdotal but systematically selected to take account of variation and typicality.

4.2.4 Combined Approach

Such obstacles to good research can also be addressed by applying complementary techniques and understanding from both approaches. CDA benefits from multidisciplinary and inter-professional practice (Wodak and Meyer 2001, Rogers et al 2005). In this regard, ethnography can provide the valuable, long term, intensive fieldwork data which provides the CDA with its materiality, context and detail, illuminating 'multiple aspects of a practice, both synchronically (at the time of the fieldwork) and historically' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:62). This longer period of enquiry supports more careful and accurate data interpretation where language use is culturally- specific or the participants are not expert users. Conversely, CDA provides a basis for analysing data which regards it as discursively produced, a reminder that participants' accounts are not a transparent or neutral reflection of their social world. Both approaches require reflexivity, particularly in respect of researcher power and positioning.

4.3 Ethical reflexivity – links between theory, data and action

Reflexive practices have become widespread within qualitative research and in particular are integral to critical social enquiry (Denzin and Lincoln 2005) and feminist research (Oakley 1981, Maynard and Purvis 1994, St Pierre and Pillow 2000, Fonow and Cook 2005)

but the purpose, value and the practices themselves are not always seen in the same way (Anderson 1989, Burr 1995, Denzin 1997) and have been problematised both from perspectives of those committed to reflexivity and those who see difficulties in these strategies (Patai 1994, Visweswaran 1994, Hammersley 2008, Sampson et al 2008, Pillow 2003, 2010). Here I explore how moving to a 'possibility of critique beyond paralysed reflexivity' (Varadharajan 1995:xi) locating the researcher within the research process itself, not just in a descriptive or confessional way, but by being actively and positively self-critical, may enable one to problematize deeply-held beliefs whilst at the same time continuing to act. This is demanding, (Cheng 2001, Elllsworth 1989) but is, I suggest, a necessary product of the connections between feminist scholarship and praxis, and of awareness that tensions between commonalities and differences cannot be resolved through methods which distance theory from experience (Ransom 1993). Lazar agrees, counting critical reflexivity as a key principle of feminist praxis which must be used to examine the inadequacy of a liberal reformist position - premised on an abstract sameness for all women – by 'viewing universality in concrete rather than abstract terms, based on acknowledgment of specific differences in the material conditions, contexts, and situations of women's lives' (2007:153) which she sees this as crucial for theorising the complexity of gender and power relations which are currently subtle and pervasive.

I draw on Chouliaraki and Fairclough in order to locate this methodological, often personal, process within a broader understanding of power relations. They regard reflexivity as one of three characteristics of practices, those 'habitualised ways, tied to particular times and places, in which people apply resources (material or symbolic) to act together in the world' (1999:21) which make up social life. As discussed above, such practices are forms of production, understood in a broad sense, whereby 'symbolic, including discursive, elements of practices, are just as real as physical elements, in that they have effects upon and within practices' (1999:23) and are located within a network of relationships to other practices, which shift together using the concept of 'articulation' (Laclau and Mouffe 1985) into moments which may transform them. In this context, I regard my education research as a practice in which I apply certain technologies (academic writing) to the material of production that is, this thesis, whilst using its discursive elements to affect not only the research itself but also those other practices within its network. As such I am subjected or 'interpellated' (Althusser 1972) by the external practices of the University but also have agency potentially to transform myself, reflexively

generating representations of what I do and what I am, what I have seen and understood in this written form. Chouliaraki and Fairclough also reflexivity being bound up with social struggle and that 'discursive constructions of practice are themselves part of practices' (1999:26) which together support a critical approach unpicking the relations between theoretical and social practices.

From this perspective, reflexivity becomes much more than a confessional tale or simply a tool to justify or attempt to legitimate data. As part of a shift away from neutral, observational ethnography, feminist, Black and queer theorists particularly contributed towards awareness of power relations between the researcher and the researched, and what may develop when the researched becomes the researcher, and the focus shifts (Fine 1994, Denzin and Lincoln 2005, Fonow and Cook 2005). Prell argues that this 'capacity to arouse consciousness of ourselves as we see the actions of ourselves and others …' meant that reflexive events are 'fertile field for analysis of how persons, by dramatizing and ritualizing social interaction, are active constructors of their own place in society' (1989:251) and that:

> Reflexive moments were the richest because they framed the process of meaning making, and made participants aware that they were the makers of meaning. Because reflexivity implies a distance and unity at once, marginalization may still be integrated with a yearning for a great story. (1989:252).

This process, acknowledging that 'how knowledge is acquired, organized, and interpreted is relevant to what the claims are' (Altheide and Johnson 1998) requires attention to the whole process, including forming research questions, contacting and accessing participants, conducting interviews, making relationships, analysing data and writing up (Clough 2002, Hertz 1997). Choices around interpretation (see also Chapter 5.2.2) were closely connected to my understanding that feminist ethnographers do not try to disassociate themselves from the production of knowledge and power that this involves, but attend to the contradictory problems of representing subjectivities and identities of others in a way which is both ethical and critical. In this project, not only the words we use, but also the languages themselves are not value-neutral but exist within a world hierarchy in which English (along with its culture) is dominant. I already had a relationship, as ESOL teacher, with some of the participants, which reinforces our personal power hierarchy and the implicit compact we share that to learn English is desirable (if not essential) and for which they have sought, and I am part of, the provision of a learning environment. I am white and middle class. Several problems presented themselves: those

who were my students may have sought to please me as their teacher; we are used to engaging with each other in formulaic exercises in which there are frequently right and wrong answers; some have had little experience in expressing themselves conceptually in English. So having attended as far as possible to the constraints of working in English, how much further could I break down these barriers?

Feminism has exerted enormous influence on 'contextualising research with and for women' (Lawthom in Goodley et al 2004: 61). The deliberate flattening of hierarchies which feminists espoused was part of asking questions about the role and purpose of the researcher, who and what mediates women's stories and whose voice was considered authentic; here self reflexivity 'will enable us to look closely at our own practice in terms of how we contribute to dominance in spite of our liberatory intentions' (Lather 1991:150) and challenge us to ensure that others' truths are respected and not 'simply expropriated in the service of some good cause' (Passerini 1989:264). Is the 'good cause' emancipatory, liberatory? And if so, whose decision is it to decide that some values are more emancipatory than others and what is in the interests of social justice? Spivak warns 'let us also suspend the mood of self-congratulation as saviors of marginality' (1999:204) and be careful of how intellectuals can claim to both deconstruct the subject and to speak for her, when they place themselves as transparent communicators, whilst Hinterberger argues that as no complete knowledge of others is available, 'ethical strategies of representing 'others' need to be based on working responsibly within this framework of impossibility, not trying to sidestep it' (2007:77). Norton writes eloquently of her dilemmas:

> In some respects, defining my own relationship to the women was even more complex than helping the women develop a format for their diaries. I wanted to create a supportive and intimate environment in which the women would feel sufficiently comfortable to discuss their desires, fears, joys and frustrations' but the relationship of teacher 'could not easily be displaced (2000: 31-32).

But does it produce better research or are we 'wading in the mass of our own positionings' (Patai 1994)? Does the research collapse into a process of value analysis at the expense of attention to its substantive issues? (Gewirtz and Cribb 2006:149) and can we even agree about what kind of ethical reflexivity is appropriate (Hammersley 2008)? How vulnerable are researchers to the lure of discovering the exotic 'other' (Visweswaran 1994) or even to suffering the result of feminist research methods which carry a 'potentially high cost for the health and well-being of researchers' (Sampson et al 2008: 920)? My position here is that all researchers should be prepared to offer a defence of their beliefs and judgements

in this as in other areas such as fieldwork decisions, and that social research cannot be abstracted from the practical realities which they study . I agree with Pillow who argues that the purpose of reflexivity is not only to better represent difference, establish ethnographic authority or be a useful methodological tool, but also to be more rigorous, 'to question and deconstruct what is most hegemonic in our lives' (2010:278) which is not accomplished by ignoring the power relations involved in our own research. It is clear that reflexive practices must constantly be adapted in order to take account of context, knowledge, research focus and the needs and interests of the study group.

Chapter Five Research Setting and Methods

5.1 Critical discourse analysis

5.1.1 Research setting, sample selection

Contemporary policies and provision of ESOL in England are the focal topic of this research, with specific reference to gendered practices and their effects on women students. 'Contemporary' is here taken to mean the first decade of the 21st century, highly significant as the period when centrally-funded and nationally-organised ESOL was introduced (see Chapter 1: Introduction). My research questions in this section set out to examine dominant ideologies underpinning ESOL policy and provision; to discover how they can be viewed through a predominantly gender lens but within a broad understanding of social equalities; to consider ways in which provision is affected as a result; and to offer insights into the process through which strategies either to implement, or to challenge or resist such ideologies may emerge. I focus on a critical analysis of discourse 'but never in isolation, always in relation with its other elements, and always in ways which accord with the formulation of the common object of research' (Fairclough 2010:5).The points of entry to this analysis are the discursive features of political and institutional texts, particularly in relation to the strategies of connecting discourses of immigration and border control, the national economic interest and community or social cohesion to ESOL provision for a certain group of students, here women with child care responsibilities. I reiterate here that this analysis is not based on biological determinism (see Chapter 3); however, this research was initiated following observed and reported difficulties in accessing learning by this group.

Having regard to the time period as a whole (2000-2012), I made an initial and ongoing selection from a broad range of written material and some spoken material connected to ESOL, including Acts of Parliament, governmental reports and guidance, political speeches and debates, conference papers, journals, books, email correspondence and media articles. There is limited ESOL policy in the UK. Following *Breaking the Language Barriers* (DfEE 2000) which directly led to the inclusion of ESOL in Skills for Life provision, and the standardization of teaching qualifications which was introduced across the sector (DfES 2004) the next major policy development was *A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion* (DIUS 2009). Initially, an overall search was applied to ESOL documents for references to gender as a social factor which may

influence planning or to women, the results of which indicated the need for sub-coding such as ethnicity, family, or community cohesion. I considered these questions:

- Where and in what circumstances does ESOL policy acknowledge and address gender as an issue?
- Are there any particular views, attitudes or beliefs expressed about the position or needs of women learners, especially those with young children?

Given the paucity of such referencing, I extended my reading to include historical background in order to place this in a wider temporal context of UK ESOL (Wodak and Meyer 2001, Hyatt 2005). This served as a valuable resource for understanding how discourses referring to migrant women learners could be traced over decades (Rosenberg 2007: 253). I then revised and applied the following questions to the whole sample:

- How is ESOL, as a form of public education, and how are ESOL learners constructed in the political sphere?
- What values, attitudes appear to be dominant both in determining the purpose of teaching English to immigrants and how the learners are perceived in relation to this learning?
- Are there any particular views, attitudes or beliefs expressed about the position or needs of women learners, especially those with young children?

Texts were examined for ESOL and gender references, and further selections made. Some were chosen where certain discursive features of the government's strategies become apparent, such as where it seeks to explain immigration controls, attribute responsibility to migrant women for children's alleged school difficulties, or justify or legitimate certain policies in relation to ESOL budget cuts (Fairclough 2010: 14-15). Local responses and planning documents were selected where relevant, but it is noted that there has been little opportunity for regional policy autonomy despite the government's intention (DIUS 2009a) to devolve prioritisation of services and partnership arrangements. Texts were selected which provided illumination, critique of or contrast to governmental discourses, to develop insights into material already gathered, or to suggest themes related to the concurrent fieldwork (Patton 2002, Flick 2009). As initial processes of data collection and analysis developed, patterns became evident, especially in relation to interdiscursivity and intertextuality and certain texts are selected and grouped together to illustrate these 'chains of discourse' (discussed in Chapter 4.I.i).

Given the scope of this project, it has not been possible to extend the search of immigration, economic or community cohesion documents to consider wider implications for learning and family languages on the respondent group, for example issues which cause severe stress such as family separation due to changing immigration rules, conditionality attached to benefit claims, experiences of racism or the debated climate of Islamophobia in some parts of the media. Citizenship criteria and language testing has significantly affected ESOL provision in some areas of the country and has been discussed elsewhere (Cooke 2009).

Three texts emerged as significant examples of the political discourse throughout this decade:

- Blunkett, D. (2002) Integration with Diversity: Globalisation and the Renewal of Democracy and Civil Society. London: Foreign Policy Centre
- Home Office (2010b) Equality Impact Assessment: English Language Requirement for Spouses UK: Home Office
- HC Hansard (2011) Commons Hansard Debate: Prime Minister's Questions text for 2 February 2011 Column 856 Question 37426 London: Hansard

These texts span the decade, are especially clear in relation to ESOL and family life, and carry exceptional authority by virtue of their authors, here the then Home Secretary, the Home Office, and the current Prime Minister.

5.1.2 Research instrument: CDA framework of analysis

I draw on Hyatt's (2005, 2011) models for my data analysis. Key to this project is a method which provides sufficient scope for contextualising texts, given that ESOL policy and the lives of learners are intimately connected with decisions made on national and global stages; this context must include both spatial and temporal aspects. Such context is only part of the picture without fully understanding how 'language (and other semiotic modes) work as agents in the discursive construction of power relations' (Hyatt 2011: 2-3) and this framework offers a route into detailed analysis of these influential texts. Thirdly, this tool needs to be both practical and flexible so that emerging findings may be considered alongside the ongoing fieldwork such that they co-construct new meanings in relation to the research theme. By this means, it is possible to avoid criticisms noted above of an overly deterministic or structural model, and engage in more open, dynamic

interpretations in dialogue with individual accounts; these multiple voices (Bakhtin 1981) also form part of the discussion of strategies of counter-discourse or resistance to hegemonic practices. I have followed Hyatt's (2011) two main components of contextualising and deconstructing key texts. Context here includes detail of the decade in question with reference to previous 20th century language provision, and I particularly use the notion of epoch (Hyatt 2005) or episteme (Foucault 1972) with which to analyse how not only the women learners under consideration but also the matter of teaching or learning English become appropriated in order to legitimate a discourse as normal or truthful. This is closely linked to the concept of a political warrant (Cochran-Smith and Fries 2001) by which policies are justified as being in the national interest; it may be seen that almost all ESOL is expected to fall into this category.

The second aspect of Hyatt's framework proposes a range of linguistic tools for deconstruction of text, from a position that context is central to this understanding of language as 'social semiotic' (Halliday 1978):

> - social in that it is a system of communication shared and mutually intelligible by its particular speech community and semiotic in that it is a system of signs that convey meaning about the particular culture of its users. Language, in this systemic-functional sense, is an interconnected series of systems which offer finite sets of choices in particular sets of circumstances to particular participants to make particular meanings. Any analysis of meaning in language, therefore, needs to consider both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors (Hyatt 2011:7).

His analytical criteria include modes of legitimation, interdiscursivity and intertextuality, evaluation or appraisal and lexico-grammatical constructions, all of which are used here in exploration of the questions set out above.

5.2 Fieldwork

5.2.1 Fieldwork setting, mixed methods

Local authority adult education centres and further education colleges are the key providers of ESOL in England and Wales. I chose Kent Adult Education Service (KAES) in East Kent, comprising Thanet, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Shepway where I live and work, for both ease of access, local knowledge and as my research questions relate directly to such service provision (see Chapter 1: Introduction). I also approached the local further education college but was refused access to their students. Each centre is fairly small in comparison to large city providers, so I obtained permission to access area data from KAES management information systems and approach colleagues for support in

locating participants; from this I identified all women students within my project area. Throughout 2011 and 2012 I used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods through which I hoped to discover detailed local factual information enriched and extended by individual stories. Following Roberts (2006), my position is that the quantitative/ qualitative dichotomy is not useful in ESOL research when there is a pressing need to both provide updated and accurate context to the national debate, whilst also persuading and illuminating that debate with carefully-chosen, credible personal accounts. She notes Lazaraton's (2005) research which found that this is still relatively rare, with only 7% of language learning studies use mixed methods but without space to fully develop this here, I agree with Robert's conclusion that there are productive possibilities from pursuing combined methodologies. For example, I noted in Chapter 4 that CDA is considered to benefit from an inter-disciplinary approach and that one aim in this research is in using stories or narratives to support a possible reframing of ESOL debates in the professional and public arena.

The substantive quantitative data took two forms: a collection of background data on language use, families, and education and work experiences and a thematically coded analysis of emergent patterns from which to inform the interview process. This 'landscape' provided not only a context but also material for a critical consideration of closed categories or anomalies which may mask interesting cases 'using statistical findings as trigger points to drill down into the data for qualitative analysis and maintaining a general sceptical stance about the 'social facts' that statistics produce' (Roberts 2006: 10-11). Two instruments were used: a survey and questionnaire. The purpose of the survey [3] 'Women and ESOL Research Project 2011' was to:

- of women students attending class in the project area, discover how many have dependent children
- identify home languages currently being used in the local area
- introduce the next stage by inviting those with children to complete a more detailed questionnaire.

Respondents were located as indicated above. ESOL tutors were contacted directly, face to face, by phone or email, to explain the research, the purpose of the survey and to ask for support. Where practical, I visited classes to introduce myself and the research. The survey

[3] See Appendix 3

was designed to be used by learners of all abilities, with English text using simple statements and questions; it was given to, and, at lower levels, read to, students either by me or their own tutor. There were eight simple direct questions with tick box and yes/no answers. Completion usually required no more than 5 minutes. Surveys were collected by the end of June 2011. Of 271 women on roll in May 2011, 185 responses (68%) were received.

The questionnaire[4]: 'Women English language learners with child care responsibilities in East Kent' was designed:

- to provide detailed data regarding the target group's migration patterns, work and education, children and households and language use
- as a purposive sample to select respondents for interview, based on my knowledge of the group and to meet the specific purpose of my research questions
- to identify patterns or themes which may provide relevant context or paths to pursue either through the fieldwork or the CDA process
- to elicit sufficient background information to develop in interviews

The 3 page questionnaire was piloted on more advanced learners and some questions were modified for clarity; again a number of tick boxes were used. I chose layout, colour and font for ease of comprehension and direction. Questions were divided into four parts and numbered accordingly for ease of collation and analysis. Simple direct questions were used although there was space for comment in two sections. This questionnaire was distributed through class tutors and returned by women at all class levels with some teacher support. Forty seven questionnaires were completed and included for analysis; a further four were not included as the respondents only had adult children. The questionnaire included a confidentiality statement and invitation to continue to interview[5].

This research is based on purposive sampling (Patton 2002) which means selecting a range of respondents who are members of a group, or illustrate the issues of interest in the study from which to develop rich, detailed data. Initially, I chose a sample from a

[4] See Appendix 4
[5] See Appendix 5

homogenous group of women ESOL students in a geographical area; the next criteria used were women with child care responsibilities (although this was open non-mothers to respond, in fact there were no such responses). Although I did not actively select participants by social category such as age or ethnicity I did pay attention to including a range of backgrounds which reflected the survey and questionnaire data. Of 8 Asian questionnaire respondents, 5 were not available for interview, and the others were excluded as beginners. Thirteen of the 20 were European and there were no Black women amongst the 47 respondents. From questionnaire respondents I selected a range of potentially typical cases, apart from the decision to include students at a Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) class, which are not common locally; this was intended to offer both contrast to the experiences of those in mainstream provision and triangulation within the interview group. I also used the process of collecting and interpreting questionnaire data to inform themes to be explored: 'This process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory' (Glaser and Strauss 1967:45) from which I hoped to develop new insights. For example, I was interested to discover that a third of the questionnaire respondents were single parents and wanted to discover what difference, if any, this made to their family experience of language use and later this became a significant analytical moment when participants spontaneously debated this issue in group discussion.

Practical constraints were a deciding factor. I had hoped to organise perhaps 3 groups of around 5 women each by geographical location, to be interviewed both individually and in the group. Unsurprisingly, however, due to their family, work, class and other commitments, this failed to materialise; I interviewed the FLLN group in Folkestone, three Canterbury Level one students, 7 Thanet Entry 2-3 students and two women together in Ramsgate. 20 women participated at least once, whilst 8 women became the core respondents, 6 of whom were visited at home. Identifying who would be a good or key informant was part of this process (Flick 2009), finding those with the necessary knowledge or experience of the research issue, capable of reflection and with the time and willingness to participate.

I have discussed underlying critical ethnographic principles (Chapter 4.2.1) and to avoid the dangers of 'blitzkrieg ethnography' (Rist 1980:8-10) I built on relationships with tutors and some students to locate a core group of possible participants, whilst with others I was

able to locate their experiences within my own local teaching practice over eight years in family learning and mainstream ESOL. All except one had completed the questionnaire and had indicated their interest in participating; additionally I included one non-learner with particular local connections and interests in family bilingualism (Linda[6]). Although the project ran formally for over a year, my relationships with some women both precede this and continue informally. I excluded those in Entry 1 and 2 classes (basic levels) from further participation, following Roberts (2006) and others who express concerns that, for example 'Whilst participants may be able to communicate effectively in a second language for much of the time, the extra effort required, especially when emotional or sensitive topics are involved, can result in impoverished accounts' (Murray and Wynne 2001:158-159). I explained that there would be no interpreters for interviews and asked for their views, none of which were negative; of the more advanced speakers, some said that they were already used to using English in group discussions or were so used to English through family members or work that it was not a problem to express themselves in this medium. One of these women said that 'How you feel comes through anyway, whatever the language' (Linda). Of the less confident, the general view was that women welcomed the opportunity to try to express themselves in English in a new way, echoing Norton (2000) and Barton and Hamilton (1998).

5.2.2 Construction of knowledge and meaning without translation

a) Emerging obstacles and practical decisions

In this research, several issues are closely related to the role of language in the construction of knowledge and meaning in methodological choice. One is that of working across cultures and specifically across languages; a second and related question is that of power, boundaries, inside/outside researchers and the development of friendships, and for both of these I draw on the work of Norton (2000) Temple and Young (2004) Albouezi (2006) and Pahl (2006). This research has depended on my ability to find an effective form of communication, that is, meaning-making (Mills 2004) with women who speak a variety of languages which I don't share, and who themselves have a range of ability in English. I had assumed at the outset that I would need and use interpreters for at least some interviews, following Roberts who argued that, in relation to '"Entry level" learners (i.e. anywhere from near beginner to intermediate) the only possibility of gaining an 'emic' insider view and elicit extended narratives which would shed light on their lives and their

[6] Pseudonyms used throughout

identities was to interview them in their first or expert language' (2006:20). In taking the position that language constructs representations of people and that it is integral to power and social relations, in this context the relationship between languages also forms part of constructing meaning and so should also be part of my methodological processing. Here I follow Temple who argues that 'Although there can be no single 'correct' way for researchers to represent people who speak different languages, choices about how to do this have epistemological and ethical implications' (2005: para 1.6), beginning from an acknowledgment that all researcher representation is partial and the knowledge co-constructed with participants cannot be removed from one's own social position and relations. In using ethnographic and feminist perspectives to encourage participants to speak fully and freely, I did not assume that all the research would be conducted in English, and began to consider ways in which interpreters may play a role. In this, my concern was that language ability affects not only how accurately or fully participants understand and respond to questions or prompts, but how more engaged, confident and active they could become during the project, stimulating ideas and themes for me and others to follow, and I wanted to encourage this by positively offering interviews in home or expert languages.

I considered the practicalities of locating and recruiting interpreters and the potential pitfalls of this method of representation. Ethical and methodological concerns arise from attempting to define 'suitable' interpreters who may then be considered to 'match' or characterize the participant group on the basis of some form of social category such as gender, class, ethnicity or language background; this positions the interpreter as absolutely inside a homogenous group or lifestyle, and can lead to uncritical reporting (Temple 2005). Roberts highlights how, in the Effective Practice in ESOL Project, challenges arose from relying on community interpreters, teachers or students (that is, not trained researchers with expert languages) to interview learners, including how interviewers had to make the decisions I refer to above about both translation and meaning-making; their socio-cultural, linguistic backgrounds affected the overall emotional tone and depth of contributions; they had difficulty in 'making the familiar strange'; they found it hard to give control to the interviewees and, she found:

> Power differences were everywhere: gender, age, length of time in the UK, linguistic skills, educational background, status in the community and power asymmetries related to colonial histories were all played out in the interviews (2006:21), concluding: 'The results from these bilingual interviews were very mixed' (2006:20).

However there can be an uncritical acceptance that trained, bilingual researchers are able to produce a 'correct' representation of other people's lives, whereas I argue against this view of unproblematical representation for the reasons outlined above (see for example Hoffman 1998, Pavlenko 2006, Temple and Koterba 2009); in fact this role demands even greater awareness of how the language constructs who we are when the interpreter is themselves a migrant; '…for these bilinguals, and in particular for immigrants and expatriates, the two languages may be linked to different linguistic repertoires, cultural scripts, frames of expectation, autobiographic memories, and levels of proficiency and emotionality' (Pavlenko 2006:27). Albouezi's expression of her dilemmas of being an 'insider' researcher, sharing a common language and cultural understanding with the Yemeni community but needing to think about her role 'in terms of a continuously shifting positionality' (2006:7) is illuminating. She concurs with Temple and Young who state that this question of those who don't share the dominant language having always to rely on others to speak for them must be fully debated and not lost in translation practicalities: 'translators *must* also form part of the process of knowledge production' (2004: 164 authors' italics).

b) Scope and purpose of the enquiry

I faced therefore an early dilemma with choices regarding focus, scope and data validity. I could not engage with mothers not currently engaged in learning which effectively excluded enquiries I had hoped to make about their experiences, wishes, attitudes and possible barriers to learning, based for example on studies such as Ward and Spacey's research with Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women, who concluded that, of those not participating, 'The women all value English language. Those with few English skills are painfully aware of the limitations this places on their lives and almost all want to learn' (2008:43). Anecdotally, it is suggested locally that there is strong resistance to learning English in some families, and this is an area clearly worth investigating. This obstacle also potentially restricted access to those who may have more recently arrived in the UK and would therefore be in the early stages of learning 'which places the greatest demands on the immigrants to learn the second language and cultural practices of the new society' (Norton 2000:24). However as this route closed down, and I focussed on those currently or recently in class, I was able to consider more fully how those who are active students are subject to external and internal influences on, and unexpected developments in, their learning and their representation of their changing identities.

5.2.3 Interviews and transcriptions

It is best to think of ethnographic interviews as:

> a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants. Exclusive use of these new ethnographic elements, or introducing them too quickly, will make interviews become like a formal interrogation. Rapport will evaporate, and informants may discontinue their co-operation (Spradley 1979: 58-59).

My focus during interview was:

- What is their account of their decision and journey to the UK, and do they consider themselves as settled, transnationals or undecided?
- What are their family learning practices?
- Do participants regard themselves as part of the local (almost entirely native, English-speaking) community and how does this affect their language learning?
- What are their imagined (linguistic) futures?

My aim was to 'clarify meanings, to examine concepts or to discover areas of ambiguity' (Wellington 2000:86), linking this to CDA data as part of 'undoing the macro/micro dichotomy' (Heller 2001:212) and understand the significance of local actions through further networked interactions, including their own life paths but also institutional processes and ideologies. Through the linguistic interaction of the interview, I set out to discover how women drew on established knowledge to reproduce it or build anew, the obstacles or opportunities it provided and how creative or strategic they were and some of the consequences, including the right to speak, inclusion and marginalisation. Ethnographic principles of respectful listening, reflexivity, knowledge of the wider context, working over a period of time, and recognition that only partial knowledge can be obtained were central to interview planning and data analysis (Kvale 1996, Heyl 2001), issues which are familiar to feminist researchers (McRobbie 1982, Stanley and Wise 1993, Maynard and Purvis 1994, Skeggs 2001,Treleaven 2003).

Interviews took place from May 2011 to January 2012 in classrooms and in family homes, and lasted for between 45 minutes and 2 hours. Eight women were interviewed once only, the most five times. At the outset, I requested an initial meeting during which oral and written explanations were provided, a rough timescale outlined and the purpose of the project outlined, followed by descriptive, structural and open questioning (Flick 2006:166). Early rapport and confidence was essential and I began by asking each woman

to relate her migration story: the 'How did you come here?' question which allowed each person to position herself as expert, to tell her story as she wished without another voice to contradict or judge, and by so doing to begin the process of building 'story-worlds in which narrators introduce themselves and others as figures and use categories to define their identity (or the identity of others) that are often presented (implicitly or explicitly) as playing crucial roles in the explanation of the actions themselves' (de Fina 2006:356). Fundamental changes arise from migration experiences and I began my study of participants' discursive constructions and identity negotiations from this crucial starting point.

Questions developed thematically, within the broad range planned from my research questions but also allowing co-construction of interviews when participants produced in-depth accounts, discovered or reflected on new meanings. Questioning methods included introductory, follow-up, probing and specifying; I used direct and indirect questions, and there was considerable interpretative enquiry, to clarify and encourage contributions. Silences, pauses and encouragement were used to give sufficient space for participants to develop their thoughts and ideas, and to show respect for sensitive discussion.

It is important to note that this research differs from most others in this field by taking a local sample of learners with no common ethnic or linguistic background (see Chapter 2 Literature Review). Methodologically, this meant that respondents had no home 'community' to which they could collectively refer, but constructed their positions both in relation to each other (as outsiders) and in contrast. Similarly, these home communities could not be renegotiated between participants, nor their own positions and interactions within them observed.

I transcribed all the interview recordings myself, partly for practical reasons, but also to be conscious of the social and emotional aspects of the interviews, begin the analysis process early and highlight themes to be reflected back at later stages. Kvale notes that, although regarded as '*the* solid rock-bottom empirical data of an interview project' (2007:93 original emphasis), from a linguistic perspective they are a translation from oral to written language, requiring judgements and decisions, which can produce 'impoverished decontextualised renderings of interview conversations' (2007:93). To minimise this risk, I reviewed and refined my coding, checked extracted accounts against the immediate and

fuller conversation; I considered how my interpretation is influenced by my knowledge as teacher of the spoken discourse and participants' varied modes of expression, including cultural background and comfort with the topic.

5.2.4 Written data: language maps, calendars and diaries

a) Family language map

This instrument I designed and completed with 18 participants during interviews, attempting to capture as clearly as possible a picture of contemporary language use in participants' families and as basis for discussion and reflection about these practices. There is no proforma as participants drew their maps themselves[7]. As children were not interviewed or observed, this was also intended to be a window, through their mothers' eyes, into their language use both in conversation with parents and with siblings and other relatives. Data was coded for factors such as number of children in the home, single and dual-parents households and ages of children[8] and from this, certain patterns emerged, which are particularly interesting when considered in relation to the political discourse of monolingual families. In practice, this tool proved most effective in stimulating personal reflection and group discussion which led, with 6 women, to further diagrammatic representations of their families' language practices when they were young and their own imagined futures[9].

b) Family languages calendar

It can be extremely difficult for learners to be accurate about the amount of time and type of interaction they have in English on a daily basis, and there is, I have found from classroom experience, a tendency to err on the side of optimism as limited use can sometimes cause embarrassment or shame. I designed the calendar[10] as a means to elicit this interaction as a series of events which were coded according to type and time of day. The length of each event was not recorded consistently, nor expected, as the intention was to use this tool as a quick memo rather than a self-conscious exercise which may have influenced responses. Eight participants completed a calendar for 2 weeks. Such small numbers do not allow generalisations but rather indicate the range of interactions that other women with children may also experience, and the extent to which this varies and

[7] See Appendix 16
[8] See Chapter 6
[9] See Appendix 18
[10] See Appendix 17

can be cross-referenced with other data for a fuller, more defined picture of individual participants.

c) Longer writing activities

I had hoped that some women would be willing and able to write more extensively in a way which would feed in to group discussions, although I was conscious of the demands this would make on those with heavy child care or work responsibilities. Here I followed Norton who used a diary study to gain greater insight into participants' daily language learning experiences and how this changed over time. In her study, she was not able to engage either those in full-time work or with pre-schoolers, and she concluded that 'Access to this diary study then, and the symbolic resources it provided, must be understood with reference to patriarchal relations which structure double days for many women' (2000:28). Six women took up my invitation (none in full time work). Their work varied widely from a one-page recording of an incident at a child's school, with the title: 'Different Life, Difficult Language' to an extensive, reflective journal (Maria [11]) and an almost daily diary over 3 months (Sara). These were all incorporated into subsequent interview discussions, which enabled me to minimise the dangers of failing to accurately or fully grasp meanings or concepts, and to encourage women to build on their own writing by orally expanding and developing their thinking. However, there was no neat correlation between who was writing and who came to group interviews, and so this potential for sharing written work with each other was lost.

All the writers preferred to use English rather than their home language, and they refused my offer to arrange translation. Subsequently, I offered written and oral feedback on the writing for the four who wrote over several weeks, and despite the dangers of slipping into teacher-student roles, I believe that this represented to all of us an element of fair exchange of tasks. These participants were very keen to improve their written English and opportunities for feedback on free writing are scarce. Like Norton, I was mindful of research on literacy practices which finds that they are:

> part of a process of situating themselves within the wider context of family, cultural group, nation and even world history. In the case of minority cultural groups, or those who have been displaced, this can create a sense of identity (Barton and Hamilton 1998:241 in Norton 2000).

[11] Pseudonyms used throughout

This is especially apparent in the case of Maria who, while recuperating from an operation, reflected on her migration experiences, family separations, new religious faith and network of English friends and on the previously-unimagined future now opening up for her and her children.

5.3 Ethics and confidentiality

Ethical issues have been discussed in earlier sections on reflexivity (Chapter 4.3) and knowledge production and so it is evident that this is key at each stage of the research (Kvale 2007), from the initial sense of purpose, that is in the hope of making a useful contribution in the field of education and social justice, through each part of the design, fieldwork, analysis and reporting processes.

Participants were fully informed throughout, orally and in writing, about purpose and scope, and were invited to continue. The questionnaire explained that I was registered under the Data Protection Act 1998 and how their data was to be stored and used. An interview introductory letter and consent form[12] were discussed and signed with copies to participants at the outset. Ethical approval from the University of Sheffield's Ethics Committee was received on 22 December 2010, and permission was granted from my Head of Service for limited access to departmental information. Participants were assured that no information would be shared with their tutors, nor with any other student. Written work was returned to them after being copied. I was aware of possible stress or distress that may be caused during interviews in recounting personal experiences or in reaching moments of understanding, and both of these occurred; I ensured that privacy and time was available to manage this and that I could reflect with the interviewee at a later meeting on matters raised.

[12] See Appendices 1 and 2

Chapter Six Everyday Lives and Language Stories

This chapter sets out to address the overarching research question, which is:

- How do women experience learning and using English as they engage in the process of learning English through adult education provision?

Subsidiary questions cover a range of issues relating to their family and community lives, focussing on aspects of motherhood and everyday social practices, including:

- What are their family language practices?
- What are their stories of migration and plans to settle in the UK?
- How do they perceive themselves as English language users and members of the local community?

As data emerged from surveys, questionnaires, interviews, calendars, diaries and maps[13] it became evident that emotional, internal transitions were at least as significant for the participants in their perception of themselves as successful language learners, mothers and immigrant citizens as were material resources and external conditions. This is reflected in observations and evolving discussions held over several months, during which I also spent time with women at end of term celebrations, attending interviews, collecting children from school and having coffee; these were moments when small personal truths and insights, some of great profundity, were offered.

The chapter provides a general picture of ESOL women students in east Kent with children, followed by a detailed presentation and analysis of a range of data from ten key participants[14], following two main themes of family language relationships and community engagement.

[13] See Appendices Part 1 for proformas
[14] Pseudonyms are used throughout

6.1 Learners' backgrounds: main findings

This section contextualises the detailed analysis and discussion that follow. The local ESOL learner population reflects almost exactly the national and county figures showing that women outnumber men by around 2:1.

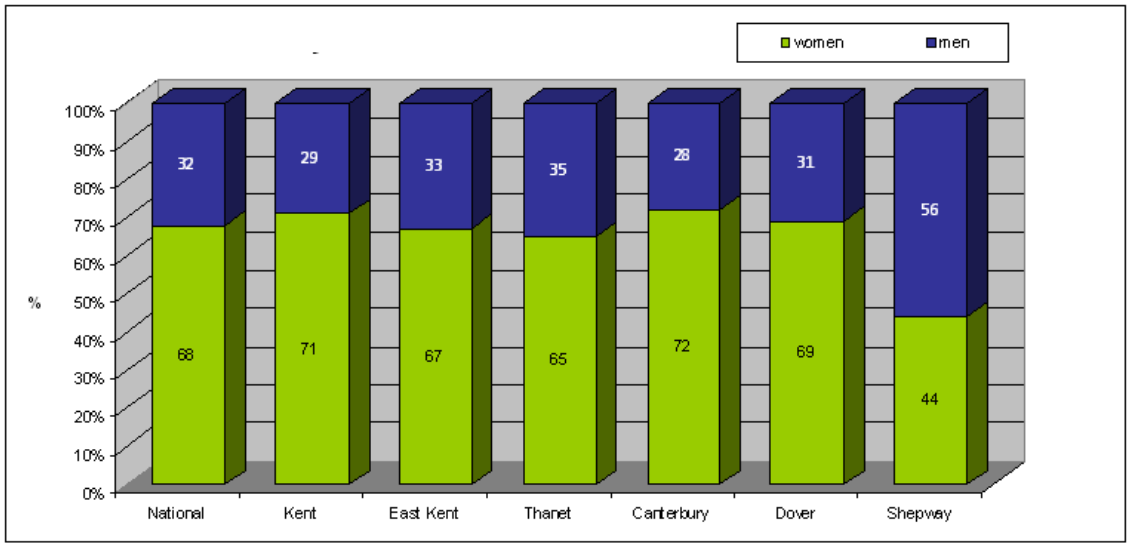

Figure 6.1 ESOL students by enrolment and gender
(sources BIS 2011, KAES 2009-10)

Multilingual practices at home

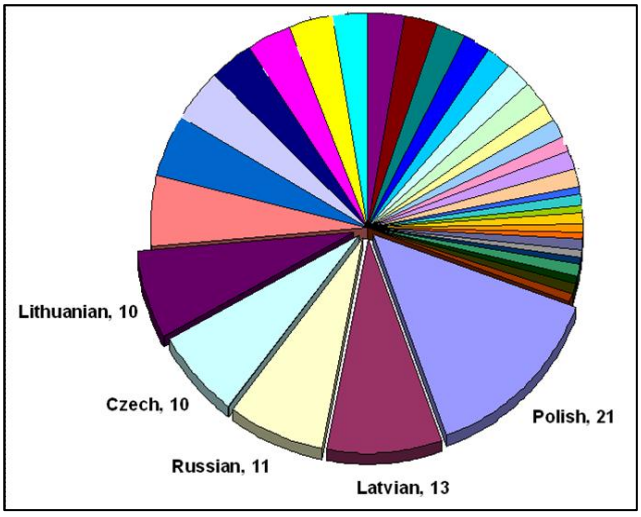

Figure 6.2 Respondents' home languages

182 survey returns were received (68% of enrolled women) of whom 121 had a total of 167 dependent children. In these households, 37 languages were in use[15].

[15] See Appendix 11

Table 6.1 Multilingual practices at home

Language use	Number	Percentage
Monolingual (home language)	66	55
Bilingual with English	42	35
Trilingual with English	10	8
Bilingual other	3	2
Total	121	100

Of the 121 women with dependent children at home, 45% were bi/multilingual households. It should be noted that these figures can only be indicative, as the question posed was not discussed or broken down, for example to allow for additional children who are cared for but not related. Some respondents may also have assumed that the survey required them to state the home language only, or were hesitant to assert that their English was a skill they claimed. Nevertheless, it is evident that there is a wide range of linguistic backgrounds amongst this population of learners.

Forty seven detailed questionnaires[16] were returned by women with dependent children, who recorded 27 home languages; of this group, 20 (43%) used English to some extent at home. This data was further interrogated during the interview stage, when 18 women drew a language map. Of the 31 children logged on the maps, 2 were babies and pre-lingual; of the other 29, 16 were born in the UK. The table shows an unsurprisingly strong correlation between children having been born, and length of time, in the UK and a preference for using English. It should be noted that this is again a very simple snapshot, the view of their mothers at a particular time, and relates mainly to the language practice between mother and child. What is notable is that every one of the children used English at home to some extent.

Table 6.2 Children's language preferences

	Number	Respond in English	Bilingual	Average years in UK
Child born in UK	16*	11	16	8.5
Child born outside UK	15	1	15	3.6
Total	31	12	31	6.05

* excl. 2 pre-lingual babies

[16] Proforma in Appendix 4

All mothers record using predominantly or exclusively their home language, with the exception of two women married to English husbands. It became apparent during interviews that issues of children responding in English to mothers' use of home languages in English was a major cause of concern and distress. Using the maps as a very rough indicator, it appeared that around half the children did so more than half the time. It was not possible to draw any further comparisons according to age, household composition or other factors in such a small sample. The language maps were drawn freehand[17].

Migration patterns

The respondents were approximately 50:50 EU: non EU[18] with a wide range of twenty five home countries recorded[19] from the 47 questionnaires, and reasons given for migration were in respondents' own words. They were used as discussion prompts and should not be read as statistically significant.

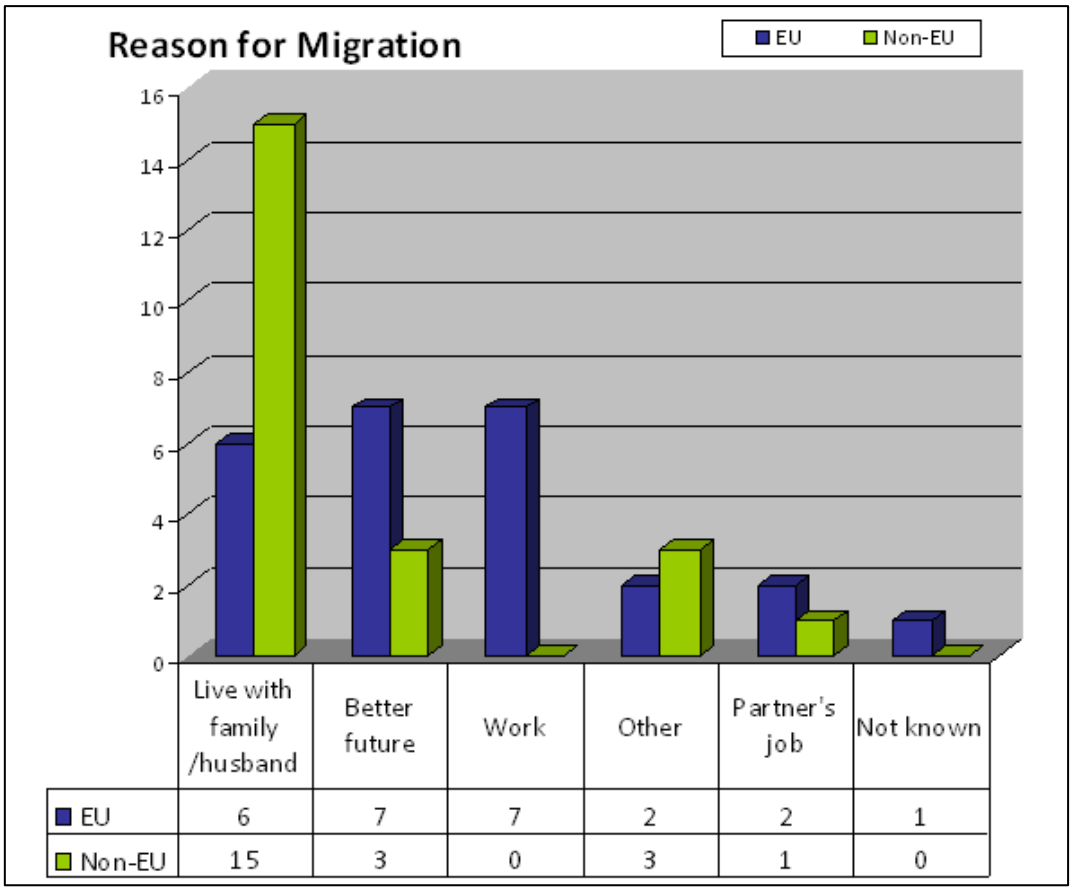

Figure 6.3 Reasons for migration

[17] See Appendix 18
[18] European Union
[19] Full list in Appendix 12

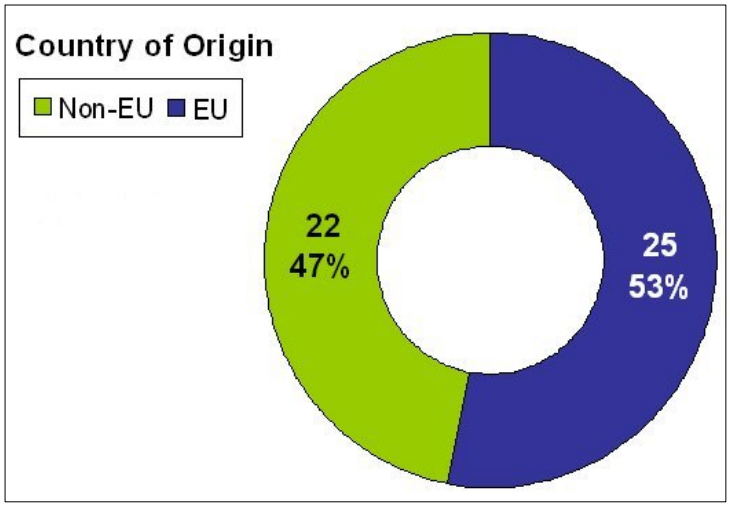

Figure 6.4 Countries of origin

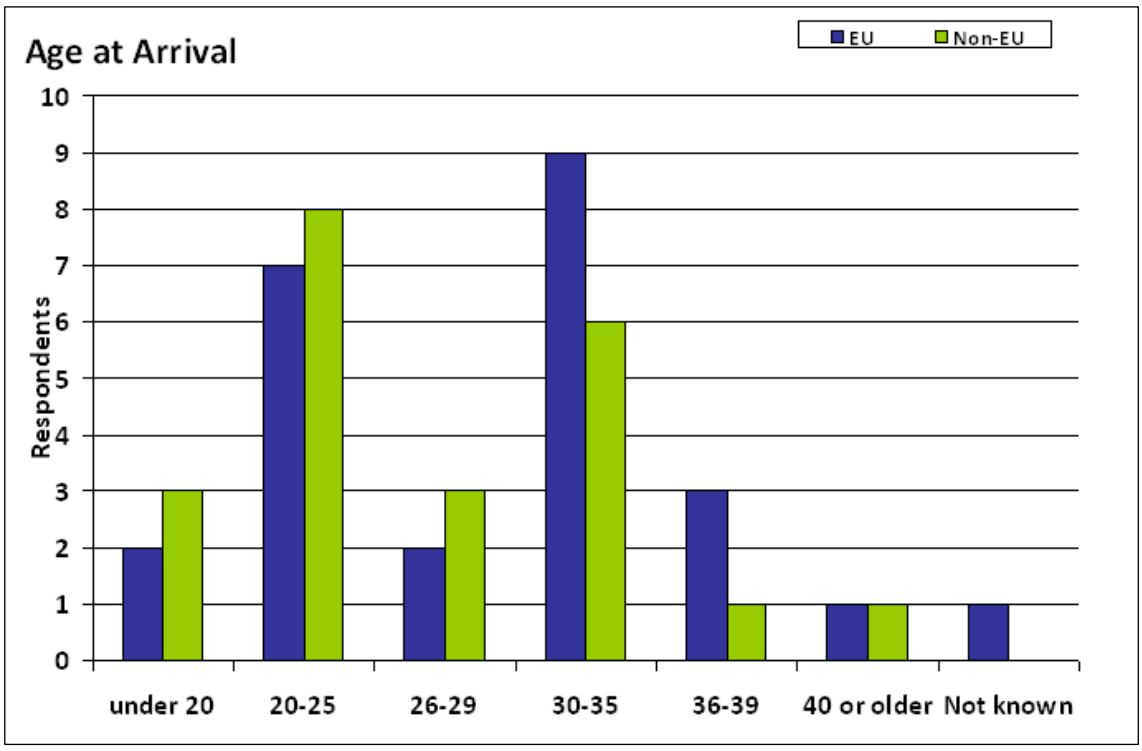

Figure 6.5 Age at Arrival

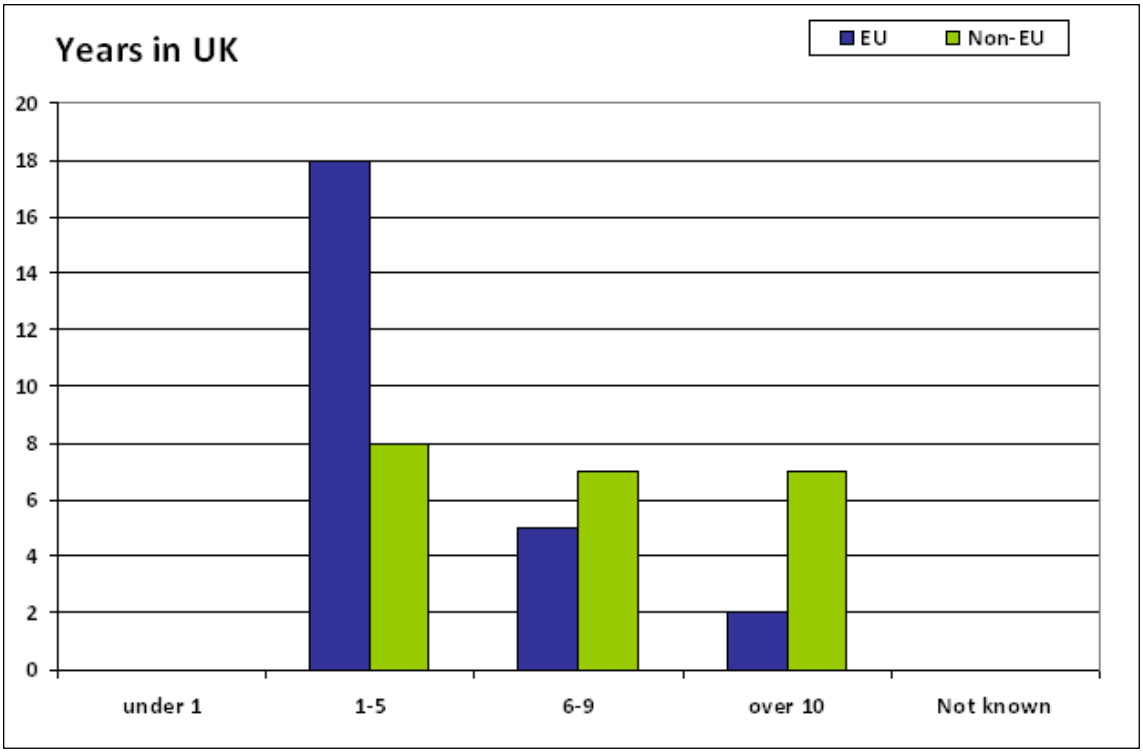

Figure 6.6 Number of years in UK

There is a broad age range represented, with women having arrived in the UK between ages 17 and 42, with an average of 28 years. The only notable group were the five Bangladeshi women, who were all under 22 years old at arrival. In this sample there were no very recent arrivals, but the majority of EU women had been here for 5 years or less.

Children and households

Table 6.3 Household size

	Total	**Average size of household**	**% of lone parent household**
Number of households	47	4	
Number of lone parent households	15		32

I examined the data for separated parents, following the unexpected number of lone parents which emerged from these questionnaires. Household size is relatively small. Only four women live with an extended family group including mothers-in-law; none live with their own parents or siblings and they are relatively isolated, with a particular absence of grandparents or older, adult children with whom home languages may be used on a daily basis. This lack of family resources particularly affects the six single parents, none of whom live with other adults who would be a potential linguistic and cultural resource.

Everyday English outside the home

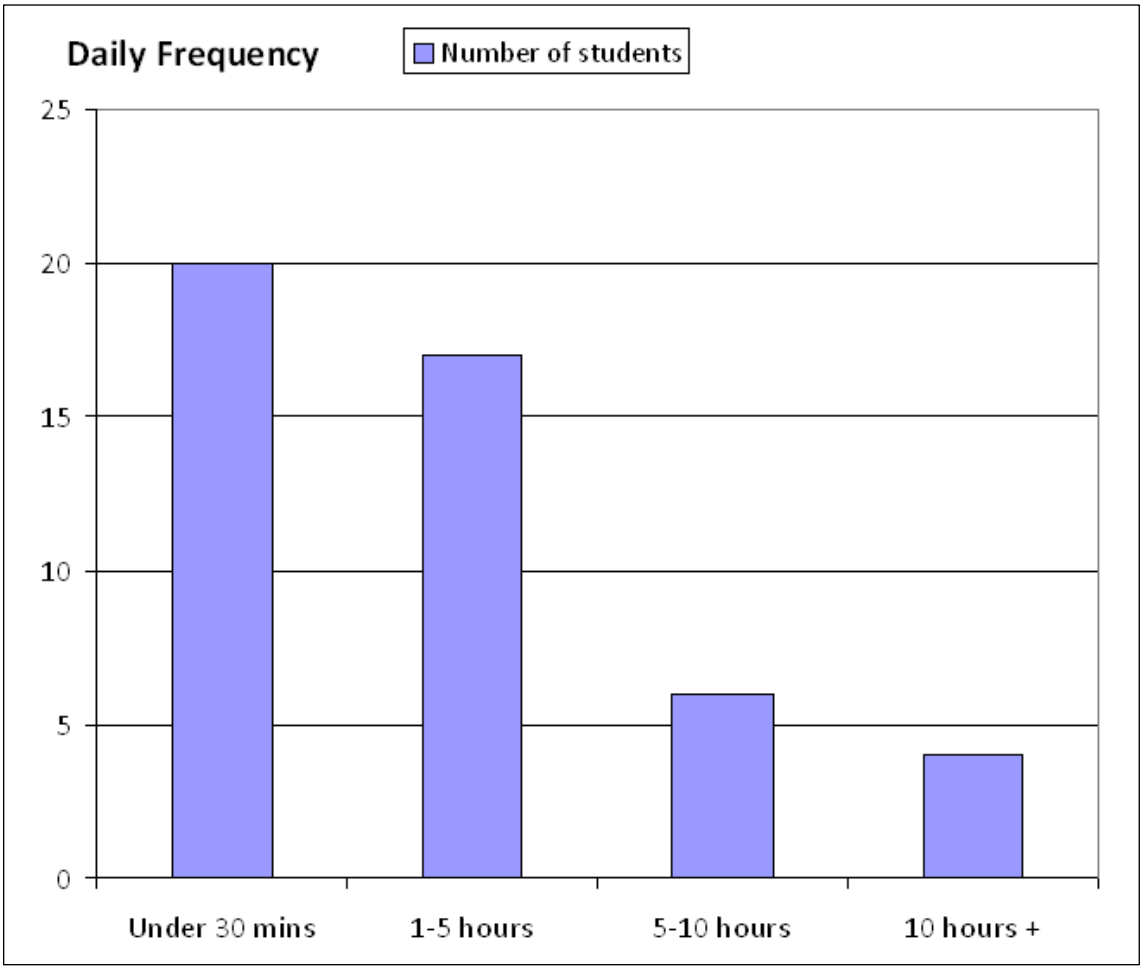

Figure 6.7 Frequency of English use outside home

Twelve of forty seven women recorded that they do not use English every day, and the majority do not have extensive speaking practice on a regular basis, but nevertheless, respondents recorded a relatively high level of confidence in everyday encounters with those around them, such as neighbours, teachers and health care services, particularly high amongst those in work. This result was unsurprising as the ESOL core curriculum focuses on such exchanges.[20] When asked whether they were confident to talk about family and the future, which was expected to be more difficult language use, responses were very similar; approximately 35 appear to be comfortable at least sometimes in their everyday English use. Experience of using English outside prepared interactions is raised during interviews, when almost all women had considerable difficulty in reliable language comprehension and production.

[20] See Appendix 13

Range and frequency of interactions

Eight respondents completed a total of 15 calendars showing weekly English language interactions. These were coded under headings, two of which were listening or reading (online, TV, radio). The majority 13 types involved speaking and listening. Clearly of most significance was interaction with friends (40) followed by shopping (21) and children's schools (16). Of the 164 interactions, most (73) occurred during the morning. The length of each interaction was not always recorded, but some lasted for a few seconds (greetings) and others up to several hours (party). This data graphically demonstrates the disparity between women's social circles with English speakers: Maria, convalescing at home, recorded 21 varied events in one week compared to Lily's 4 – her children's nursery, post office, Tesco and a chance chat. It also highlights the lack of available, detailed and valuable information for tutors and its potential as a tool to 'bring the outside in' for classroom planning.

Work and education

Although the data shows an average of 11 years in school, there are 7 queries to this question, which, with hindsight, I believe is flawed and open to misunderstanding. Similarly there will be different interpretations of the question regarding 'college or university' to which 25, just over 50%, responded positively. Nevertheless, there appears to be a high proportion who completed schooling and attended further education evidenced by the qualifications recorded. Thirty two women were employed before coming to the UK and 13 currently have a paid job. This is a significant decrease from 70 – 28%. It is notable that very few are working in comparable kinds or levels of employment[21].

ESOL course satisfaction

In answer to the question 'Is your course helping you with your English?' it might be expected that a positive response would be given from those in regular attendance, but in itself this is not an especially useful indicator and needs to be much further broken down. Respondents did not have, for example, an opportunity to say what kind of English it was or was not supporting; whether this was consistent over time, whether teaching styles, methods or exams made a difference. Comments were invited regarding improvements but without follow-up questions, my view is that all this data is of limited value. The most

[21] See Appendix 14

ticked category for possible course improvements was class times (23) which supports my experience over years of students requesting classes more than once a week and to fit with school hours. For this sample, it was a more pressing need than crèche provision (2) or changes to topics or activities (9 each). Child care for these students was mostly dealt with by attending while children are in school and relying on husbands; as local labour for migrants is primarily agricultural shift work, long hours which can be changed on a daily basis, this adversely affects class attendance for both female and male ESOL learners. This finding supports other research which shows that mothers are keen to struggle to sustain language learning and progress to further education but can be constrained by family responsibilities as well as work patterns (Kouritzin 2000, Ward and Spacey 2008, Cuban 2010).

Table 6.4 Childcare while attending ESOL class

Childcare type	**No. of respondents**
School	16
Husband/partner	13
Other family member	4
Creche provided (Family learning class)	5
None	2
Other	5

Family learning classes

There was a higher level of satisfaction expressed by those attending the family learning class because of opportunities it offered pregnant women and those with very young babies for socializing, getting useful local information and developing English skills with childcare on site. ESOL family learning programmes are in a uniquely influential position to support and mediate in these situations but my experience of teaching and observing these classes over five years showed a worrying ignorance and anxiety amongst child care staff who had no experience or training in working with non-English speaking families, and struggled to find strategies to overcome their own barriers to communication, particularly with the diverse range of ethnic and linguistic family backgrounds. In one observed class mothers and staff made a list of simple vocabulary, questions and instructions, which they translated so that parents could use both words to support the child's comprehension. In another, a 'Sing and Sign' teacher provided instruction for both staff and mothers which enabled them to use the same sign, such as for milk, sleep, yes, no and toilet. Although

useful, these ad hoc measures were introduced without staff training, and more importantly, discussion about how the service could become functionally multilingual in order to play a key role in preparation for entry to nursery and school. I discuss this further in discussion on policies and programming issues and strategies for overcoming barriers to learning, following the critical discourse analysis in Chapter 7.

6.2 Family Language Practices

6.2.1 Language and social categorization: Lin, Winnie and Diana

Three women are invited to explore their dreams and hopes, family relationships and the role of English and their position as mothers and learners. In their fourth interview, they have been talking about their own plans for further education, improved English and job prospects, and I start by asking whether, at the moment, they think their learning priority is for themselves or for them to support their children. I examine how in this moment of interaction**,** language is central to a range of ways in which social practices are produced and reproduced, how certain social structures and categories are experienced and legitimized and the effect of language learning ideologies. The transcript is reproduced with observations about this unfolding process. The first column indicates turns taken in the interview, and speakers are identified by initial in the second; the researcher is 'S' throughout.

Table 6.5 Thanet-01

TT	Sp		**Observations**
1	S	… So I'm going to ask you a difficult question now, ok, so the difficult question is- learning English - ok, getting better English, is it more important for you, or for you to help your children?	Teases out whether current investment in learning English is for self as adult or as parent
2	W	For my children	Unequivocal
3	D	For me because they studying, they learning English, yeh but I not everyday speak English, they every day speak English in school.	Also very clear and puts responsibility for children with the school which she regards as more able to help them than she
4	S	Ok, so you are clear this is for you, this is what you need for yourself. And Lily?	
5	L	For me because I live in here maybe every day I need a lot of things I need handle so, for me.	Adult needs are foremost in her mind - finding new accommodation, business
6	S	Things you need to handle, did you say, things you need to understand and do, to manage?	
7	L	Yeh for child maybe he can go to the school, teacher, yes	Begins to follow D's view
8	S	So it's for you. But Winnie you have a slightly different opinion? Ok.	
9	W	Because now I understand I talk to my children I got a hole in the middle you know the hole you know that … / I'm here and my children in	Sudden introduction of strong symbolic image which refocuses the discussion

		here but when they grow up in real world and get bigger and stay here I can't talk in my own language talk to my children lots of things so I need more English, for me too but for my children too.	W accepts her position as mother of children who will stay in UK and have access to linguistic capital which she doesn't have Also clear it's her role to acquire it
10	S	Ok, so you're thinking ahead, you're thinking to the future, yeh, and are you thinking that Winnie because you think that your children will not understand you in Chinese so you've got have to move towards them in English? (all saying yes) So you think that's true for all of you? I know that you (D) are very careful aren't you, you don't speak English at home, you really want to keep your home language. But you can see this gap, this hole, yeh, beginning to get bigger?	Introduces the idea of moving towards the children in a language (implies that opposite also possible)
11	W	Now I got a hole in the middle now. Sometimes I talk Chinese a little bit, they can't understand but I talk English, try to talk English, they say 'Mummy I can't understand what you talking about' so that's the hole inside.	Repetition of key phrase and further explanation makes stronger symbol Embodied experience of the separation
12	S	Yeh yeh, it's really, that's important isn't it thinking about how that relationship is going to be in the future and of course as a mother you never think that you won't be able to talk to your children /you know, when your baby is born, to think that I can't talk to my baby, well that's ridiculous! .. but you're in this position now, aren't you, where you see	
13	W	I've got a hole inside so understand so	Further repetition
14	L	But I have question, why, because he, she er, first language is Mandarin, Cantonese,	L begins a series of questions by which she tries to work out whether this will happen to her and her children
15	W	Cantonese	
16	L	Cantonese, why not talk to children this way	
17	W	I talk to children but when they go to school then few year they come back they speaking English / that's got them their first language/ because the children, younger, and 3 year old she not remember new language, how much	W explains that English became her children's first language through school attendance
18	L	When your child got to school does he come back home every day	Tries to establish how this works
19	W	Everyday they slowly slowly they forgot your language they speak in school/ when my child	Daily process of forgetting Home/school authority battles

		go home sometimes I say 'Oh did you do that' they thinking 'Oh no my teacher say not like that' … you not agree, my teacher is right, you wrong / so he speak English.	are reproduced as mother's language deficiency Children copy the teacher to get access to the 'correct' linguistic form Mother is 'othered' by her children
20	L	So if later my child go to school so when he come back home he don't like to talk me in Mandarin?	Imagined future now holds the fear that child will reject home language
21	W	Yeh maybe	
22	L	Is big question	Beginning to understand implications
23	S	Mmm. Is that the first time you've thought about that Lily?	
24	L	Yes. You know, most of my friends they have child they live in here but maybe when children go to school they more like speak English but if go back home parents speak Mandarin but first time hear so	Checks against previous knowledge of friends' experiences
25	W	You know my children, 2 and a half years they not speak at home so I take him go to nursery so first language English not Chinese so that why	Refers to earlier conversation where L states her child not speaking; aligns herself with this difficulty Acted as 'good' parent to take child to nursery with unforeseen consequences
26	L	So my child now is 21 months he don't speak Mandarin if later he go to nursery he just speak English so oh, I just worry about it, maybe later my child	Hypothesises about what may happen if she follows her health visitor's advice to place child in nursery
27	W	Definitely speak English	Strongly confirms L's future
28	L	Yes definitely speak English no Mandarin, but I can't, oh my god	Accepts W's scenario, now extremely worried
29	W	So you must learn more English to move to your children	Strong injunction to take parental responsibility to acquire correct linguistic resource
30	D	But you with husband at home speak Mandarin?	Interjection from D who points out the significant difference between single parent W and L who lives with her husband
31	L	Yes	
32	D	Children hear and they speak	Makes the logical progression,

			and based on her own family, that children then have access to hearing and beginning to engage with home language
33	L	Some children maybe one year old they can speak Mandarin but my child now is nearly two year old can't speak Mandarin, maybe later go to school, speak English, oh worry about it	L unable to hear this argument as she is so worried by W's narrative
34	W	Don't worry about it because you and your husband speak Mandarin, yes	W does hear and accept D's argument She reproduces the social order in which one parent families, having fewer resources, will have different obstacles, in her case with a damaging outcome for family language use

In this section, I explore what happens in those gaps and spaces in women's lives outside the classroom, 'below the radar of tasks and exercises' (Kramsch 2009:3), in interactions on the street, with teachers and nurseries, navigating into working environments and in intimate relations with young daughters and sons. These are frequently the places where language is involved in 'encounters where seemingly nothing specific is at stake … but parties are, nonetheless, in their everyday lives, producing, reproducing, or challenging the social order which has them positioned in ways that result in their particular access to those particular material and symbolic resources' (Heller 2011:39). The conversation above is between women who perceive themselves as 'good' students, committed to engaging with educational opportunities for themselves and their families, and prepared to take advice from local service providers. Initially they respond straightforwardly to the question about whose needs are being met at the moment by learning English, but Winnie's strong narrative, clearly told, with repetition of a symbolic threat, the 'hole inside', focuses attention on what is really at stake in her experience: not only her home language but also the parent-child relationship which appears to rest on her capacity to significantly improve her English. The current and feared future cost to Winnie is evident to the other women, although what is not raised in this conversation are the implications of the potential loss to her children of their home language.

In this space, the women problematise the acquisition of English as something which, although still acknowledged to be a necessary and valuable linguistic resource, now appears to hold an unforeseen danger, and their home languages become more prized as

they are threatened. However other ideologies and social categories are legitimised by them in ways which maintain the social order. Winnie recounts her children's rejection of her in favour of the school teacher in terms of her language deficit rather than their inability to use either language or code switch, thus contributing to an ideological stance which holds that not only schools, but also homes should be monolingual. It is understood within this exchange that the children will seek to copy or acquire the right, or 'legitimate' (Bourdieu 1991) kind of linguistic capital, which is significantly more difficult for adults, even those who are heavily invested in this work. Diana's intervention, which here is presented by her as a kind of escape route for Lily's dilemma, rests on her observation that Lily has a valuable resource which Winnie has lost, that is that she is married and living with a husband with whom she shares her home language. Winnie immediately both understands and accepts her exclusion from this social category, telling Lily that she does not need to worry, and is herself again 'othered' by the reinforcement of her position.

6.2.2 Multilingual work: Tina

Several participants explained how their childhood experiences nurtured early abilities to be multilingual, which inform their current practices and future plans. Tina's family is making strenuous efforts to build strong intercultural and linguistic capital for their two children, aged 2 and 8 months. A medical doctor from Ukraine, she met her husband Krys in England on holiday fruit-picking, at which time she had already began unconsciously to code-switch between languages:

Table 6.6 Tina1a

TT	Sp	Ref Tina1	Observations
1	T	I don't know basically before I used both languages with no problem then when I came to UK I used Russian and Ukrainian, sorry Russian and English and when I met my husband I started use Polish, now I can't produce Ukrainian, it's funny, because all my education, all my, you know like childhood I spent in Ukraine with no problem and I can understand write, read but to produce, just only when I spend a few months in Ukraine I start to produce	T experienced moving with ease across languages Notices beginning of distance from home language
2	S	So you've lost that natural production of your home language?	
3	T	Yes I have no idea how is possible, is probably because Polish is so similar to Ukrainian yeah?	The ease of transition produced an unexpected result and

		I start sentence and Polish so deep in my head that I just move to Polish and I remember when I did some presentation in the institute it was the last year of my education I was already married with Krys and obviously spoke in Polish and I started something tell about my job and … my research … and it was difficult tell people in Ukrainian and then when I finished I realised that I put a few Polish words…	affected her professional identity

Tina's parents lived with them in England during the research period, and her language map shows the extent to which they each endeavour to sustain multilingualism[22]. They are quick to learn and adapt to family developments:

Table 6.7 Tina1b

TT	Sp	Ref Tina1	Observations
1	S	And has Krys learnt Ukrainian or Russian to talk to your family?	Exploring how responsibility is shared
2	T	He started to learn Russian without me. He used to work with Latvian, Lithuanian or Russian guys … he asked others to teach him, he got like 'Russian in 2 months' listened to tracks …then he gave answer quicker than me and I was like huh how can you know it? … when I was angry I started to speak Russian he was confused and didn't know what I was talking about and I had, you know, stronger position, but now he understands me.	T is impressed and slightly annoyed at her husband's learning facility She is no longer able to use Russian as tool against him
3	S	So do you still go back to Russian when you are feeling angry or upset or have strong emotion?	
4	T	Not so often as before now I see that I use Polish with D (son) when Krys is near me; when I was in Ukraine I spoke only Russian with them and not so often Polish … I see with D, I started to use Polish when I want him to do something or when I, you know, say D stop, or D do this … I wonder why I do this and I see that he listen to Krys quicker and better than me so I start without thinking to use Polish to make sure he react somehow.	She notices her language switches when parenting in order to be more effective

[22] Tina's language map is in Appendix 15

They are willing to go further still and send the children to live for extended periods with their grandparents, following their intention to offer them at least four languages and the cultural and religious aspects of life in Ukraine and Poland. Practically, it is becoming harder to obtain visas for Ukrainian grandparents to the UK, Tina is trying to establish herself in medicine in the UK, and they are not yet decided whether they will remain permanently. But the impending loss causes concerns and requires justification:

Table 6.8 Tina1c

TT	Sp	Ref Tina 1	Observations
1	T	…it's difficult for me and you know you always feel different giving kids to your parents or parents in law, uh but most probably for him he will catch this pronunciation, and Polish, the proper one, my husband's family they are teachers so it's good Polish it's not slang	T acknowledges the pain of separation Stresses that her children will acquire correct linguistic capital

In this family the responsibility is not borne by the mother alone, but between both parents and sets of grandparents, an unusual situation in this research. There is evidence here of energetic, positive intentions to develop a solid multilingual and multicultural base before the pressure to adopt 'more dominant, visible and influential' literacy and language practices (Barton and Hamilton 2000:12) is exerted and Tina seeks to sustain such 'hybrid literacy practices' (Soltero-Gonzalez 2008) when they enter the UK pre-school system. This is far from successful for many, as the next section explores.

6.2.3 The language of mothering: Linda

Whilst Tina and other participants enjoy the diversity of languages and cultures with which their children engage, for those with the youngest children there is considerable confusion and discomfort about which language to prioritise, and acute awareness that decisions made at this age carry long term consequences, particularly living in a region of the country where multilingual practices are not common. I discovered that this arises much sooner than I had anticipated, at around 2-3 years, with mothers reporting that their toddlers begin to call out in the night in English, use it with their friends and in games from the influence of TV programmes.

‘Maybe I’m not a good Romanian citizen after all’ (Linda)

Linda is the only non-ESOL student in the project, and was included for her insights into this situation from her own situation and her role running a group for bilingual families at the library where she works. Originally from Moldova, which lost its Romanian connections under Russian rule for many years, she moved to a prestigious Romanian university to study and ‘partake in the real heritage’. She completed her PhD in metaphors and text linguistics whilst teaching there. Introduced to her English husband by mutual friends, she made the decision to move to the UK with him, quickly became pregnant, and decided to stay rather than moving to Romania together, believing that she could provide a better future for her child here. Five years on, Linda has struggled to sustain what for her was ‘the deal’ that M (their son) would be raised as half Romanian. Her husband’s job takes him away from home for several weeks on regular rotation, and M’s first words were in Romanian, but he has not sustained this, which for two years has caused her great misgiving and worry as the following extracts illustrate. Here it is possible to trace her intellectual processing of her son’s developmental stages which led to English becoming their predominant language at home and in the community and also the emotional demands and exchanges between them.

Table 6.9 Linda1a

TT	Sp		Observations
1	L	So his first words were in Romanian so that amused me greatly	Initial pleasure at hearing child’s Romanian
		and we even had to draw up a list of Romanian words for my parents in law who had him for little bits	Inclusion of English grandparents
		… he still knows them very well but the reason for failure is my mistake	Presents change to English as a failure, her responsibility
		when he went to nursery at 3 yrs old I wanted him to be able to communicate his needs and wishes to the teachers so he would not be unable to explain himself and get frustrated or upset so I wanted it for his sake that he be able to communicate clearly in English, so for a while I possibly placed a bit more stress on English language, maybe even exclusively, but definitely remember making a bigger effort in English.	Reasons that son needed support to enter nursery, wish to avoid distress Assumption that nursery would not manage his care without English Again accepts responsibility for not realising what was happening
		And then after he went to the nursery which was obviously in English, I must have somehow	Acknowledging busy life, time

		just let it slip out of my hands, the proportion of time I spoke to him in Romanian, because he was there, I started doing part time work at the library, so there was a lot of English language around him and I didn't think much about it, thinking we will catch up and then we never did.	passing
2	L	… a year and a half ago, he actually asked me, 'Mummy don't speak Romanian to me' which nearly as good as broke my heart as I was trying to make an effort and this response and then I thought don't push it, I wanted it to be fun, I want him to enjoy it, I don't want to turn it into a chore which probably should have done and put my foot down	Son exerts agency to resist mother's language Powerful emotional impact Tries to find alternative strategy Not convinced about the strategy in hindsight
3	L	because he just didn't want to, there was a strong will there opposed to me so I just didn't want to…	Language becomes a central factor in battle of wills with toddler
4	S	And he was what, just over 3 then?	
5	L	Yes between 3 and 4 years old, this is when he just decided he didn't want any of that, he just wanted to - I don't think you can say he just wanted to be like everybody else, I think he probably had so much to get to grips with in his own life, the limitations that adults impose, the emergence of his own personality, and the way he has to be, perhaps he feels restrained in his wishes, and dealing with the whole new setting of nursery, new adults, that was a lot, that's like taking a new job, with a new boss, so with that level of complications for him so he probably didn't want it any more than this.	Rejects possibility that peer pressure or conformity was an influence Provides compelling developmental arguments for son's refusal to use Romanian
6	L	… M is now older and he likes the idea of speaking other languages and it also helps that there are other children in his class, there are several other children who are bilingual. So um, he's quite willing to respond	Now believes that son is more aware of peer group Refers again to his will
7	L	I think it grew when he saw other children speaking other languages and I think it acquired, I know it's early to talk about it, the 'cool' factor - it's special, it's interesting	Romanian is presented as something different rather than everyday, it is 'othered'

Table 6.10 LinTina1a

TT	Sp		Observations
1	S	… because for you Linda, there is always an ambivalence here, you want M to be really fantastic in English and to really love his Romanian, you know	Referring to ongoing discussion in this and previous interview
2	L	But he picked up on that actually Sheila, he does know that if he wants mother to be buttered up and all nice and smooth and he goes 'Oh Mummy, Mummy' in Romanian and I go all melty and I know what he's doing but I still can't say no	Mother and child share awareness that home language has an emotional resonance which son uses as a resource to meet his own needs
3	T	They perfect know from which way to touch you!	Concurs from own experience
4	L	Absolutely! He knows which buttons to push … knows how important it is to me	Further confirmation that son knows this is a tool at his disposal

Linda eloquently demonstrates, as do Lily, Winnie and Diana, how family language practices develop and take root during the everyday business of getting children settled into nursery and going to work. In this case mother and son struggle in an intimate relationship, whilst her husband is often away, to resolve not only meeting his needs to enter his new world, but also her own sense of great loss and dislocation from her country of origin, language, family, study, work and peer status at the university. Linda positions herself no longer as an emerging academic with challenging work and a supportive team, but an immigrant wife with an 'exotic' language in the family, a part-time librarian and mother; transitions which occurred within two years and which she is now, after five years, beginning to accept. In her first migration from Moldova to Romania, Linda already understood her language and culture to be vulnerable from foreign colonialisation, and actively engaged in retrieving that part of her own and her family's heritage. No sooner had she become an expert in this field and achieved academic success than she migrated again, by which process this vulnerability was again exposed and painfully exploited by her young son for whom it was extremely clear that this could be effectively used in parent-child battles for authority and control.

Linda's account provides a personal backdrop to the larger context of what can happen to home languages when bilingual children enter pre-school: Wong Fillmore's study of 1,100 families across the USA compared the language development of those in English only/

bilingual pre-schools with those in home language only establishments. She noted that, in the first group, 'All too often, English becomes their language of choice long before they know it well enough to express themselves fully in that language, and they use it both in school and at home' (1991:335). She continued:

> They leave their primary language preschool programs at age 5 or 6 and enter elementary school while they are still vulnerable to the assimilative forces operating on children. Their primary languages can and apparently do begin to erode once they encounter English in school (1991: 340).

Although Linda rejected the notion of peer conformity at age 3, this is not Wong Fillmore's conclusion; she asserts that young children are vulnerable to the social pressures exerted by those around them:

> They can tell by the way people interact with them that the only language that counts for much is English: the language they do not as yet speak. If they want to be accepted, they have to learn English, because the others are not going to learn their language (1991: 342).

This process by which children are exposed to, understand and adapt to a monolingual environment is revealed to cause deep distress to this mother, and in the next section I consider further the gendered question of emotional capital.

6.2.4 The expenditure of emotional capital: Ana

Linda is relatively unusual in the extent to which she is able to articulate this process, but eight other participants had also experienced cumulative migrations and the complex vulnerabilities which can ensue. Here children become a cultural and linguistic boundary within the home, not only symbolically representing parental hopes but also 'reconstituted as a field for competing adult identities' (Anderson 2002:114). Such embodied power and its concomitant vulnerability bring huge implications to parental decisions regarding the languages in which their children should be raised, how they should be identified, the cultural values attached to what they can say, and how they may express themselves. Women parenting alone face particular challenges, when energy and self esteem are running low:

Table 6.11 Can1a

TT	Sp	Ref Can 1	Observations
1	A	… when I try to speak English to them they don't answer... they don't like it… not that I want to speak English but sometimes it comes .. I feel like they don't understand me, I'm a bit	A's efforts to meet her children in English is rejected

		frustrated this way	
2	I	Because they know they can speak with you Italian and my children Polish, when I speak to them English they start laughing, they said 'You speaking like Pakistani woman' because your accent because they had at school Pakistani woman working in the kitchen and they always laughing like she speaking and same me	I's children are acutely aware of the 'correct' linguistic form and punish their mother when she appears to deviate The children reflect and reinforce racism at school
3	A	But children are cruel because they don't know another way	Tries to excuse them

'Desire in language is the basic drive toward self-fulfilment' (Kramsch 2009:14) and where women have separated from partners and husbands under difficult circumstances, this exciting but frustrating learning process is deeply complicated by issues of identification with the Other, when language carries resonances of the departed partner as well as of their life before migration. Ana, a former teacher, married her Italian-English husband and lived with their two sons in France before separating. They moved to England four years ago to enter the boys in private education, planning for university entry, agreeing that the more cosmopolitan, multilingual opportunities in the UK would be advantageous for them. Her routine revolves around driving her 11 year old to day school in another town and her 13 year old to and from weekly boarding, which can be understood from a gender perspective as a woman doing the family's emotional work in a middle class family where it is expected that this investment will reap rewards in the long term; an understanding also particularly pertinent to all immigrant families. This emotional capital, 'emotionally valued assets and skills, love and affection, expenditure of time, attention, care and concern' (Allatt 1993: 143) is 'the one capital which is all about investment in others rather than self … the processes through which [it] is generated highlight the cost for mothers of always being 'close-up', while men maintain their prerogative to remain 'at a distance'' (Reay 2004:71). In the following extracts, Ana reflects on how her own personality, family traits and cultural and linguistic heritage impact on continuing negotiations with her ex-husband, her doubts about the perceived benefits for their sons, and how this carries a high cost to her own sense of self, family relationships and future options:

Table 6.12 Can2a

TT	**Sp**	**Ref Can 2**	**Observations**
1	A	Yeh but er I have a different opinion … I give priority to families and he gives priority to future, work and I understand that but I don't	A's views differ but she has deferred to her husband

		agree, you know, I'm less ambitious, give them good education anyway but keep the family together, that's the point where we have lots of discussions	
2	S	And you really differ in that, which I guess is partly cultural but I guess partly just who you are	
3	A	Yes partly I think most is culture, you know, we don't really, we think boarding is like 'Why? You don't have a family?' for us sometimes children go boarding because they have really bad, you know, difficult families and they are too young. In my family they think 'What? Boarding? Why?' they think your child can go away when he's 18	Culturally, for A boarding school is constructed as shameful
4	S	So Ana is this causing you some difficulty with your family?	
5	A	With my family back in Italy? No I don't speak too much because they wouldn't understand	This estranges her from her family
6	S	Exactly so it's hard to share isn't it	
7	A	… I like it here but I feel like I would be sad not to be here anymore but to make my life easier I would go back and I sometimes when things become a bit tough I think um I have to say I regret you know I choose to come here to, to this, to take this road where the children they have to be educated here because as I said it doesn't happen in my country so I would be with my family	A links education decisions to migration and family Boarding school has a negative consequence as a result

Ana faces difficult choices as her older son finds it increasingly difficult to settle in boarding school whilst the younger one is clamouring to go:

Table 6.13 Ana1a

TT	**Sp**	**Ref Ana 1**	**Observations**
1	A	Um, so the big decision, because you know I'm always, (…)[23] I always doubt, I think what if, I will regret it maybe later and like important decision in my children's life it's my husband that takes them and I don't agree sometimes but you know I leave him to decide because I don't want the responsibility later you know of making a big mistake for my children but that's because I'm not in my country, in my country I'm more secure, here I feel like I need a guide, somebody that knows better than me, yeh that cause lots of problems.	Several hesitant phrases precede her acknowledgement that husband decides Her immigrant status contributes directly to her parental authority

[23] Denotes hesitation

She describes herself as not brave, and feels very anxious about entering the workplace, talking in a hesitant manner (Table 6.13 turn 1, Table 6.14 turn 2) whilst negotiations with her ex-husband can be fraught, compounded by linguistic differences, and she experiences an increasing sense of separation from her children, accompanied by some foreboding regarding her own long term future:

Table 6.14 Ana1b

TT	Sp	Ref Ana 1	Observations
1	S	… So do you see yourself maybe moving from here one day?	Opening up future options
2	A	I don't know that's another big question, I don't know (…) Sometimes I feel like I don't belong here and er things are too difficult for me… my children, they are boys, I see them growing up and sooner or later they will be doing their own things and it's not fair for them to think oh my poor mum, she's lonely, you know if you feel you put too much pressure on the children so I kind of joking with my children and then I think poor them they don't want to grow up thinking my mum is alone at home and I have to be with here (…) I don't want to do that to them so sometimes I think I will go home to Sicily, I don't know ... but if I had money I would choose London and travel from there, have a nice place on the river …	A regards herself as isolated and potentially lonely in the future She does not expect her sons to care for her and plans to reduce this burden She is ambivalent about 'home'

Despite her relative financial security, Ana's daily physical and emotional work for her family is unrecognised as contributing to the external economy, and also acts as part of invisible barriers to her own educational progress, hindering both her self-esteem and available time for courses. Changes to ESOL funding have led to the closure of her next class, Level 2, and replaced it with a generic functional skills course for native and non-native speakers, a prospect which reduces her sense of safety as a foreign language learner. This combination of internal and external processes and resources is unique but is experienced and recognised by each woman in the study as having an effect on their own learning and on their visions of the future.

6.2.5 Remembered pasts, imagined futures

Some participants were invited to remember their childhood family meals and the languages used, and to imagine how this might be in the future for themselves and their grown children. Here Diana and Lily reflect on the implications:

Table 6. 15 Than5a

TT	Sp	Ref Than 5	Observations
1	S	… ok you've got	
2	D	The older daughter	
3	S	So E you think will have children	
4	D	Yes here grandchildren	D clear about this imagined future
5	S	And K and M not yet	
6	D	Not yet	
7	S	Has she got a husband or a boyfriend or a partner maybe?	
8	D	Husband yes	Expects daughter to marry
9	S	Ok all right, so what languages are you speaking at your table?	
10	D	I think English	First response – chooses English
11	S	Ok so what do you (others) think, what languages are you speaking	
12	D	I don't know	Changing her mind
13	L	Mix, Mandarin and Chinese mix	L chooses home languages
14	S	Ok	
15	L	Mandarin and English mix, maybe two speaking Mandarin, two K and N and maybe this family speaking English and this family speaking English?	Changes her mind to consider English-speaking family
16	S	Because it depends who N and K marry? Yeh, do you think their wives might be Chinese, or English Chinese, or …	
17	L	Maybe depends on their wives, if their wives like (tst, tst) like coming here depends from China, maybe they can speaking Mandarin, if their wives is born here from here maybe they speak …	Starts to find this complicated
18	S	Born here?	
19	L	Then maybe English people and speaking only English / oh I don't know	Allows possibility that her sons will marry English-speakers
20	S	So some mix of Mandarin and English yeh? And what about the babies, what do you think they are going to speak?	Researcher prompts L to think about grandchildren
21	L	I think they 100% speak English / you know my friend if K and N maybe later on they grow up liking speak English, if their wives is grow up here they don't like speaking English / my friend come from Hong Kong, they older now, maybe 15, 16 and	L makes a firm statement
22	S	That's not very old Lily!	
23	L	Not very old! They have two or three child and each child speaking English at home. Maybe say	L changes this to consider grandchildren being bilingual

		Mandarin to parents … and speak English to me.	
24	S	Ok, Diana let's see, what do you think?	
25	D	I think E, me and husband and K, M, we will speak Russian but with E husband we will speak English and with grandchild we will speak English, I think.	D now clearer – sees new generation as English-speakers
26	S	Ok, so you're thinking of the possibility of an English husband?	
27	D	Yeh yeh	
28	S	And you don't expect him to learn Russian?	
29	D	Yeh	Expects monolingual husband
30	S	All right, so this is a big change, isn't it …	
31	L	Maybe 20 or 30 years my family they don't speak Mandarin maybe. When I gone, I dead, they don't speak in Mandarin	L suddenly fears language loss when she dies
32	D	When you're dead? You think your Mandarin will go?	
33	L	Yes	
34	S	Do you think that's, what do you think about that?	
35	L	Hmm, maybe is not good. But maybe I gone, they speak Mandarin they stay here nobody to have conversation later later they forget	Thinks it will become unnecessary
36	S	Maybe, I don't know I think every family is different and every child is different … So I don't know, but what's your dream about this, what would you like, what would be the best?	Offers opportunity to propose ideal situation
37	L	About language?	
38	S	Yeh	
39	L	Mm fantastic is we can speak English and they can speak Mandarin.	L unequivocal, prefers all to be bilingual
40	S	All right ok	
41	L	So any language.	
42	S	Ok so you can choose whichever one you want? Everybody is comfortable?	
43	L	Maybe I'm speaking Mandarin to him, he reply to me we can understand these two language that would be perfect.	
44	S	That would be perfect?	
45	L	Yes but is hard, my husband said now he say that he can't speaking English I have to try a year later go to school study in future I have any problem and questions my son can help me.	But quickly reminds us that this is difficult to achieve Son is positioned as language support

The discomfort and difficulty for both women in imagining this family future is evident, raising realistic concerns about the loss of home languages and their own position in

future family structures; Elena's map[24] graphically exposes both her recollection of a large extended family mealtime in her childhood, and her expectation of a severely diminished future family group, with the addition of an English partner for her younger child. These projections were painful, reminding women of the risks they have taken through migration in the hope of gains which are not as yet realised. Norton defines identity as:

> … how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future (2000:5).

This data shows how complex and acute such a process of identity development is, with immediate impact on both daily family language practices and investment in ESOL classes: Lily juggles decisions about entering her youngest son in English nursery, supporting her reluctant husband to learn, what language to use with her older son coming to live with them and her own dreams about running a business. In the next section, I explore what happens outside the family circle.

[24] See Appendix 18

6.3 Community Participation

In this section I sustain my focus on women's detailed accounts of past and present interactions and events which shape their perception of themselves as users of English within local environments. Through calendars, diaries and interviews, women narrated a range of everyday situations in which they attempted to traverse boundaries or liminal spaces (Gaetano 2008) where their ability to participate in an aspect of community life was tested. These included making friends, negotiating with nursery and school services, applying for jobs and entering the workplace, joining a church; in other words a normal range for this demographic sample. Here I use concepts of transition and identification to mark shifts and changes but resist tying these into a deterministic framework which suggests fixed directions in either time or space. Rather I suggest that, at certain times and in particular circumstances, participants orient themselves in ways which allow them to participate in a new interchange or process which may or may not develop further, depending on their needs and resources and the responses of others. Whilst all immigrant women vary in the extent to which they engage, those with less available cultural and linguistic capital find that these are key factors affecting their ability to identify with, and participate in, the desired activity or group and I note again here that the area of study was almost exclusively white British. I will discuss in the next chapter how discourses of community cohesion and improved English fluency work on binaries of immigrants being included/ excluded, participating in/ isolated from a local 'community' defined by geographical space but such delineations are, I argue, less helpful in conceptualising and observing the fluidity and multidirectionality of actual lived experiences than, for example, notions of attachment or 'modes of belonging' (Wodak & Krzyzanowski 2007) on which I draw. A concept of a 'community of practice' can also be useful; introduced as a basis of a social theory of learning (Lave and Wenger 1991) and further developed by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992a, 1992b) in sociolinguistics to theorise language and gender, it is defined by virtue of 'shared practice' rather than abstract characteristics such as ethnicity. Its condition of 'shared experience over time and a commitment to shared understanding' (Eckert 2006:683) was evident for Maria who encountered the Baha'i faith in the UK and accesses it through English and Polish but others had far less experience of defined groups they wished to join.

First I explore how one participant experiences living in, and moving around within this liminal space which I do not regard as ever entirely disappearing from the life of a migrant. It is physical, external and hard-edged while simultaneously embodied, internal, intellectual, emotional and symbolic.

6.3.1 New spaces of belonging

Aged 22, and living with her family in Kosovo, Sara was a college student studying singing and engaged to Andrejus. He worked secretly in opposition to the government; when he fled to England Sara came to visit him, war broke out, and she was unable to return home. She is now 36, and they have three children, aged 10, 7 and 2. Andrejus works in London, commuting over 100 miles daily, they have bought a house and she is in Entry 3[25] class, planning her own further education. I have known her for five years since she attended family learning class with her second child. Four interviews took place at her home over six months.

Table 6.16 Sara1a

TT	**SP**		**Observations**
1	Sa	I was came to stay 3 months, 4 months, not lots	Clarifies original temporary plan
2	S	Aah, that was it, your plan was just 3 months	
3	Sa	Maybe just married and back later again, 10 days next when I come, the start war	
4	S	Really	
5	Sa	So quick, yeh, they doing massacre, we see on TV but there was close everything to people moving so I don't know	
6	S	Yes really	
7	Sa	The war was four years	
8	S	Yes, and did you go home at all in that time?	
9	Sa	No not for seven years	War forced her into exile
10	S	Not for seven years after that?	
11	Sa	'Cos I needed to go as exilio?	
12	S	Exile	
13	Sa	I never stop for four years, just crying, crying	Recalls her long period of sorrow at the enforced separation

Her father made her leave despite her fears. He continues to suffer mental ill health from his war experience and the family are scattered. She no longer sings.

[25] Pre-intermediate

Table 6.17 Sara1b

TT	Sp		Observations
1	Sa	I was singer	Positions herself before migration in professional capacity
2	S	A professional singer?	
3	Sa	Yes from my tradition ... we made first cassette … but the war they killed one my best friends, they killed	
4	S	they killed in the war	
5	Sa	and one she was dead from cancer, too young 22 and we	
6	S	the group split up	
7	Sa	Yes everyone I never think anymore	Closes off possibility that might sing again
8	S	about doing this	

Although Sara never intended to remain in the UK, and her losses are profound, the combination of having children and changed lives in Kosovo make any dreams of returning home ambivalent.

Table 6.18 Sara1c

TT	SP		Observations
1	Sa	Always I have my dream that was for 3 months and never; and yet[26] I do just for my kids maybe?	Reframes her priorities as meeting children's needs
2	S	So do you think it's different now – obviously it's different because of the children, so	
3	Sa	Yeh … because they have lots of dreams, I don't want they to be like me	Focus is their imagined futures
4	S	You don't want them to be like you?	
5	Sa	Yes maybe they finish and they can decide, because er for me was start borning again here	
6	S	You were born again? <u>You</u> were born again?	Clarifies that Sa means she started a new life in UK
7	Sa	Yes I didn't know any more words in English when I come, was start from speaking and get children and very difficult life, all that so, I don't know, maybe later when they bigger I have to go but is everything moving, friends and, when I'm going last year nobody know me much, just family	Acknowledges that return home is no longer straightforward Positions herself as stranger now
8	S	So going back to Kosovo, that's now shifted for you, that's changed?	
9	Sa	Yeh that's changed all my friends I haven't	Strong symbolic attachment to

[26] Sara uses 'yet' to mean 'now'

		seen for long time. Where I was born my father they sell the house and moved in the city. They got house and for me nothing remember and always my dream is where I was born.	physical birthplace which endures

Sara has some physical health problems, at least partly stress-related, and during the project had to suddenly visit her mother who is diabetic and developed kidney problems. Her children are healthy, enjoy school and are academically successful. At home they usually speak Albanian although this is changing as they socialise almost exclusively in English. She is frustrated at her continuing difficulties and slow progress in English, and the lack of daytime class. She waits for Andrejus to return from work, drive her to evening class and return, with all the children, at 9pm to collect her as there is a poor bus service and long dark walk. She has experienced three changes of tutor in a year.

At the beginning of the project, Sara had just decided to volunteer both at the children's school and a local charity shop in order to gain much-needed speaking practice, that is, legitimate linguistic capital, with a view to applying to college for a childcare course. This process of language socialization, learning how to perform in the world in different situations is one which she cannot access in class and from her present position of parent or customer. She has understood that 'you have to work your way into the spaces where that socialization can happen, and second you have you to let yourself be resocialized in ways that allow for demonstrations of profound mastery' (Heller 2011:37). She risks never being accepted as a legitimate speaker, or that she may be successful and appear to betray others left behind (Goldstein 1997).

In the following extracts Sara narrates a range of interactions in these new environments: At school, the children are adapting to her, she is the only non-English member of staff and she learns to adopt a teacher's role. Sara acknowledges a special bond with the children, and the head teacher supports her. On the way home from school, Sara is stared at and shouted at when speaking Albanian.

Table 6.19 Sara3a

TT	Sp		Observations
1	S	Is it getting easier for the children to understand you now?	
2	Sa	I don't know they never say 'I can't understand' they ask a lot, out today in playground they are 3 boys and they coming to me and say 'Bonjour!'	Better since she started work Children consciously aware of her difference

3	S	Bonjour?	
4	Sa	Because they see I'm not English	
5	S	Uh huh so they think you're French?	
6	Sa	They use the words and smiling	Not experienced as hostile
7	S	So they wanted to try their other languages	
8	Sa	I say, 'You want talk with me?' but they just talking and moving, yeh	She tries to engage them
9	Sa	They ran away	
10	Sa	And the teacher she say someone told them maybe I am not English they just watch me so interesting, maybe English school never work some people because all the class they are interesting to me	Sara as an object of interest throughout the school
11	S	Interested in you?	
12	Sa	Yeh, and they say 'Which language can you speak?' and ask questions	
13	S	… So, at the school, as far as you know, you are the only foreigner? The only non-English person teaching?	Checking that she is only non-English staff member
14	Sa	Yeh, because	
15	S	But what about the children? There's more children who don't speak English at that school, isn't there?	
16	Sa	Yeh, lots Turkish maybe I think maybe one African, the black race, but teachers or helping I think there is not any	Agrees there is multi-ethnic population of children
17	S	Really, so you are the unique person, the first one	Researcher positions her as unique
18	Sa	Yeh the first one I think because I talk always now different helpers,	
19	S	All the different helpers …	
20	S	… so there are other mothers who don't speak English but they can't come and help because of the children? Because they don't have time?	Tries to clarify
21	Sa	It is from Bangladesh one woman and I was trying bring to college but she didn't come, she say no I can't, she say hello sometimes but never see, I don't know.. her son is the same in the school	Positions herself as experienced student
22	S	And she doesn't want to come to English class for herself? Is she too busy?	
23	Sa	Three children, perhaps	
24	S	… so how do you feel being the only non-English person at school? What does it feel like?	Asks how it feels to be in this position at school
25	Sa	I was scary, a little bit worried	
26	S	Scared	
27	Sa	Yeh but not any more because I can do this. I	Can track how this is changing

		can help, yesterday I was help a little girl to write 'w' to, because she going off the line, under the line	already
28	S	Ok, on top of the line	
29	Sa	And she say me 'Take the pen and do it!' show me, but they say always she not quiet , no she say 'You do it, not me'	Teacher involving her in how to manage a child's learning
30	S	Oh so she's a little lazy, she wants you to do it for her	
31	Sa	And her teacher said, didn't smile to her because she so naughty	Teacher explaining how to behave with the child
32	S	Oh really so you have to be very serious	Acknowledges her authority as teaching assistant

Table 6.20 Sara3b

TT	**SP**		**Observations**
1	Sa	… because she said 'The children very love you'	
2	S	Who said? The teacher?	
3	Sa	Yeh	
4	S	So the children really love you?	
5	Sa	Yeh	
6	S	Why do the children love you, what do you think?	
7	Sa	I don't know, because if I'm going in the playground, always they coming and maybe smiling, or my face or	Acknowledges own qualities
8	S	Yeh so there's something nice about you	
9	Sa	If they start crying they coming not to head teacher but to me, they asking to help or … some they know, but very little	They are not all personally known to Sara
10	S	Some know you from the street, but they don't all know who you are	
11	Sa	Yeh	
12	S	So you're really establishing a position for yourself at the school, yeh?	Researcher confirms her new status
13	Sa	Maybe yeh	Status accepted
14	S	And the children are making a relationship with you and they trust you and	Reconfirming changes
15	Sa	Yeh I'm very happy, yeh and very happy with my children because I know yet [now] how they are so because I see many different children and I am happy	Sara has new insight into her children's world and how they compare
16	S	Are you proud of them?	
17	Sa	Yes because I always I was thinking, I was thinking they can do difficult, they can do easy	
18	S	They work hard and they are very bright. So in terms of you and your learning English and how it is changing, this is the first time,	Researcher refers to long term relationship between them and this significant change

		since I've known you, that you've been able to go outside into a new place and do a job. And make a relationship with new people?	
19	Sa	Yeh is very first job where I'm not scary to do this	
20	S	You're not completely scared, yeh ok	
21	Sa	And when the head teacher interviewed me and she say 'Do you know we not paying?' and I say I know and she was so nice maybe she give me confidence yeh because she still when she see me sometimes she say 'How is it going?' …	Permission to participate from authority figure Ongoing encouragement
22	S	She has really encouraged you and made it possible for you to go into the school	
23	Sa	Into the school, yeh	
24	S	And she's opened up a place for you there and now you're making that work … Is your confidence growing?	Noting that it takes both parties for this process to work successfully
25	Sa	Yeh I think, maybe yeh but it's not difficult to understand nothing. I forgot still some little words but I hear it everyday so I can speak more	Daily participation in this community brings the desired result
26	S	You can speak more, how wonderful. And you can speak more also I think as well because other people want to hear you, they want to know what you are going to say. And is it good because maybe you are working with small children and they don't care, do they, they're not interested in a way	Confirms that others value her speech Checks whether this speaking community is helpful
27	Sa	No, they not interested, if you not start speak something they never let you, so (laughing) they just continue, talking and talking	Laughing here; aware that she has to enter their conversations quickly
28	S	Which is good in a way because you don't have time then to get self-conscious	Notes this advantage

In these extracts, Sara acknowledges, accepts and confirms that she has qualities developing skills and experience which allow her to be increasingly constructed in a positive light to herself and others as classroom assistant and ESOL student (Table 6.20 turns 1,9,15). Within discourses of 'good' immigrant and student, she uses her social capital (contact with her children's school) to volunteer, thereby occupying an acceptable, gendered subject position within which she gains the opportunity to demonstrate valuable qualities. In the process, Sara gradually acquires the status of 'legitimate speaker' who wishes to be not only understood, but also 'believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished' (Bourdieu 1977:648), a position which can be particularly difficult for immigrant women who can find it difficult to achieve the 'right to impose reception' (Norton 2000:113) on their listeners. However, Sara chose a setting in which, with young children and a sympathetic employer, she was able to negotiate the high level of visibility involved in

being the only minority ethnic staff member, and although clearly positioned as ethnic and linguistic 'other' this is not necessarily hostile; she is achieving her goals of increased confidence, daily exposure to and improvement in English comprehension and use. Unexpected rewards have included that children seek her out and that her own children are seen to be doing well. Therefore at the early stage of this transition into active community participation, this appears to be a successful and effective move, which carries symbolic importance as she begins to acquire feelings of belonging, an important moment in the development of her migrant identity (Fortier 2000, Wodak 2008).

In the following extract, Sara recounts a very different experience of visibility: on the way home from school, she is stared and shouted at by different groups of women when speaking Albanian. It is notable that her speech is halting and confusing, indicating her continued distress at the recollection (Table 6.21 turns 2,4,6,14).

Table 6.21 Sara 2a

TT			**Observations**
1	S	What happens when you use English, so for example, tell me what happened this morning when you arrived at the school	Invited to talk about today's experience
2	Sa	So sometimes it's not make difference if you don't understand so	Hints at a difficulty
3	S	If you don't understand - everything, the children?	
4	Sa	Yeh the children, so – I'm thinking now, all right, some things make very trouble	Reflects on a situation
5	S	Make it very hard?	
6	Sa	Hard yeh exactly, you think you know nothing sometimes, so make uh very not confidence so	Something has affected her confidence
7	S	So sometimes things happen that send you right back to the beginning	
8	Sa	The beginning yeh	
9	S	And you think I don't know anything, that right?	
10	Sa	Ha ha, yeh like that	
11	S	So what happens to make you feel like that, what sort of thing?	
12	Sa	Sometimes when exactly the people how they are so	
13	S	How the people are with you? How they treat you? Are you thinking about the adults or the children?	Trying to clarify who has caused this
14	Sa	Yeh maybe childrens. I don't think they thinking so, but they but I'm not yet [now] in the same like before, but was many, and I try to told	Appears to say the children don't intend to cause her problems This used to happen a lot in the

		something and the people say I can't understand or leaving alone and so was horrible	past Reaches for words to begin to explain
15	S	Yes it's horrible when people say I can't understand anything you say	Affirms through repetition
16	Sa	Yeh or they don't try to help or to, but people are, but yeh, I was always with nice people but happens sometimes	
17	S	It still happens sometimes	
18	Sa	Yeh … one time last week in er, I was go to pick up B and three ladies was just watching me I don't know why and I was talking to him my	Now begins to narrate last week's incident Daily event- collecting son from school, speaking in home language
19	S	In your language	
20	Sa	Yeh and I was thinking they looking for us	Being watched
21	S	They were looking at you? (yeh) And listening to you speaking Albanian?	
	Sa	Yeh and little one, one lady, she's a head teacher in, she still do something in Margate, Thanet because I see her one time and she say 'Sorry we don't look at you for anything but you are so beautiful' she say ' I was looking for that' and I say 'Ok that's all right ' I was moving [walking] but	The speaker is recognised as an important person She appears to pay a compliment
22	S	Ok, and did you believe her?	
23	Sa	It not	Believes it was a lie
24	S	You didn't	
25	Sa	I don't know because I don't know what she thinking but	Unable to understand what the speaker meant
26	S	Ah ha, so you see them looking at you	
27	Sa	Yeh because maybe	
28	S	And you think why are they doing it, is it because we are speaking a different language?	
29	Sa	Yeh maybe [indistinct]	
30	S	And they were listening to that	
31	Sa	Yeh and	
32	S	And she says 'We are looking because you are very beautiful'	Repeats what appears to be a lie
33	Sa	Yeh, she say … but 3 years ago was one woman she come from London and she was live maybe in our street and she's, always we meet and she come to pick up her grandson (name) and always we talk and she ask me 'Where you from?' and 'Where you come from?' and all the time and one day when the children they finish I pick up B and I was talk to him in my language to say ' Do you have bag?' and you know,	Now moves into a memory 3 years old in similar situation This woman is known socially and is interested in her Again she is returning from school, using Albanian The woman shouts at her for doing this

		things, and she say 'Hey lady, stop speaking your language' they say in very big voice	
34	S	Mm she really shouted at you	
35	Sa	Yeh she was talking with some womans but they just watching them and didn't help	She was not helped by others
36	S	Mm hm	
37	Sa	So they leave alone and they moving [walking]. I know what she feeling and why she saying that but I don't say nothing to her just I was moving and when I come home I say Andrejus she said like that to me and he say don't worry because people are so different and but she was feel very bad day I think. She was trying always, she rang me to say me hello and she …	Tries to understand the other person's perspective Tells husband who does not want to discuss Aware that woman tries to make amends
38	S	Oh she felt bad afterwards, she felt guilty	
39	Sa	Yeh but I never say nothing, just say hello and bye	
40	S	You haven't seen her lately?	
41	Sa	… at this moment I was feel very badly why because, sometimes people they know English but they use [home language?] but to me wasn't reason I can't speak at that time and she said that, so I was, I felt very badly	Appears to accept responsibility for not speaking English at that moment
42	Sa	… because many people they are so nice so doesn't mean for one, so I was think what she say that, why, why	Still struggling to make sense of the encounter
43	S	Why yeh, why do you think she said that?	
	Sa	Um , because, I don't know, because always she know [who] I am, because I told you she talk to me and she ask me and everything	Re-establishes that the woman already knew her and where she was from, so this exchange made no sense
44	S	So she knew where you were from	
45	Sa	Yes, and she was a couple of days like that when I was come to say hello … I don't know why she say this	

Sara relates two painful episodes which occurred a week and three years earlier, and reconstructs these stories during interview, rightly understanding that this is an appropriate moment and that the listener will provide a sympathetic audience. As I noted earlier in discussion of Lily's dilemma over nursery provision, this is another unremarkable, even mundane moment in her daily routine: collecting her child from school, during which, in maternal role, she uses her home language. During this walk from school to home, however, she is not positioned as emerging professional with particular qualities, but occupies a potentially deeply uncomfortable place in public scrutiny as immigrant outsider. Although she has experienced this before, these episodes are remarkable for her in the

nature and quality of the betrayal; she knows that the woman who dissimulates and pretends to be commenting on her beauty is a head teacher, but the nature of the comment and the woman's authority makes it impossible to deal with the unheard, or unspoken underlying message, leaving an unresolved tension. The symbolic power contained in the 'look' or the 'gaze' was thus keenly felt, as '… the gaze of the 'Other' simultaneously constitutes, judges, and, in the very act of judgement, subordinates 'I' to the 'Other' '(Flam and Beauzamy in Wodak 2008:203). The home-school walk can be regarded as a physical manifestation of a symbolic and linguistic border, a transition for all children from the private culture of home to public school space within which Sara's reflections suggest her anxiety is caused at least in part by wondering if she had transgressed an unwritten rule whilst knowing that she was unfairly attacked:

> A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition … The only "legitimate" inhabitants are those in power, the whites and those who align themselves with whites (Anzaldua 1999:25).

The enforcing of the rule of monolingualism in this small but unforgotten encounter serves as a powerful reminder of other such acts of hostility which combine to unsettle the attachments and sense of belonging referred to above, and to set back an individual's investment in themselves as confident, appropriate English speakers.

6.3.2 Nursery and school relationships

Understanding the England and Wales education system, finding appropriate and available places and negotiating a child's entry and progress are key concerns for these learners, as normal parental tasks become unfamiliar terrain in which they possess reduced capital with which to perform their role. Every interviewed participant recounted a situation, an interaction, or set of relationships which in which this was exposed. Here Iveta from Poland remembers her family's initial contact with school three years ago. A single parent, she had planned their move carefully, sending her daughter to additional English lessons whilst she attended a specialist course for nurses.

Table 6.22 Can1b

TT	Sp		Observations
1	I	Now N. has 8 and M. has 12; they didn't speak English when they comes here so was like big problem and I was looking school where would be friendly and I find in W and I think was good school it was for	Mother aware of language needs and takes responsibility She uses previous social

		disabilities people so thought they had them more attention like they have them for disabilities children so I was think would help with the language problem	capital to make an informed choice Sees language need as a problem aligned with a disability
2	S	Good idea	Positive recognition of attempt to meet children's needs
3	I	But wasn't good	Others here check 'wasn't'
4	I	Yes wasn't good, there was lot of abuse from the children, they was beating, they was and also the teachers they was not very helpful for them, there was the worst category of children there so the first day I remember the faces of my children, I was with my sister and I remember their faces they didn't know what they said, they didn't know what they had to do, they just followed with the group… my English was very low and they just starting to learn … They was there like half year, end of half year was horrible, they was going to school, they was crying and I was going home and I was crying… I had a friend from Slovakia … she told me about St S. school, this was more international …and there was totally different, M. had English lesson half hour, teacher just helped him how to make sense that sentence, how start speaking with children; and also the children was totally different, English children, but in W … some groups just abused him, especially him	Children not safe from other children or teachers Realisation that her understanding of disability and purpose of the school were inaccurate Emotional shock and damage began on the first day Unable to support them as she wished The family continue to experience this for 6 months Uses resource of another migrant mother to transfer school Teachers have strategies to support children learning English
5	A	Bullied him	Another participant names the abuse
6	I	Bullying yeh, um, and here was the good start. Now they speaking fluently, they understand everything, English people don't know they are not English - perfect now.	Draws a line under that time. Expresses pride and satisfaction in children's fluency and achievement of English accent.

Iveta discussed these concerns with fellow students Ana from Sicily and Argentinean Lucia, both divorced from their English husbands. Despite considerable economic and intellectual resources, neither woman feels confident in effectively managing their children's education, because of, in their view, both linguistic and cultural obstacles.

6.3.3 Transitions into employment

Along with Sara, other participants were keen to improve their job prospects or enter employment at a suitable level; in particular the three educated to doctoral level spoke at length of the material and emotional impact this had on their lives. For Linda, migration brought:

> a huge sense of loss, of loss of an interesting job, of interesting everyday communication with my friends, of a level of understanding which was quite deep … it moved me, challenged me intellectually and I missed that part of my life terribly *(Ref Linda1*).

Tina's mother is a GP in Ukraine, earning approximately £200 a month, whilst her sister, also medically qualified, chose administration. She is acutely aware of losing her own skills and of the status which this profession bestows:

Table 6.23 LinTina1b

TT	Sp		Observations
1	T	I'm happy with my kids, with husband, but it's really difficult to … it's so difficult to realise all your, you know, skills just going to the rubbish bin and all your development just going down (in tears) … how will she (sister) tell her children what is her profession, what her children will tell to other friends who is your mum you know, even here when I meet people and I tell them that I am a doctor, it's totally different attitude to you, it doesn't matter that you don't work as a doctor, I feel that there is something different and I realise that I am losing this	Interview triggers sense of loss of career Acutely aware of high social capital and significance for her in UK.

While ESOL classes were insufficiently advanced to meet Tina's needs, Lucia discovered a range of fluency and pronunciation difficulties which impede her search for suitable work. However, this is not a straightforward issue of diagnosis and repair. Spanish is the symbolic representation of most of her positive memories, emotions and dreams for the future, for herself and her children. She finished her PhD and met her ex-husband in England, where they settled and the children were born. She returned to Buenos Aires after her son's birth and was there supported and validated both as a mother and speaker of her home language. She frequently invokes home and family, her 'cocoon' as a place of safety and comfort following years of conflict and divorce court battles, whilst she continues to try

and protect her children from their father. Lucia's decision to actively sustain Spanish at home has resulted in losses and gains. Her family have advantages from their bilingualism: she sees L's (her son's) progress in expressing emotion and managing relationships as being founded and strengthened through Spanish and both children can talk fluently with relatives on visits home. Her strongest sense of self, of her soul and imagination are expressed in this language. Given that her daily life has not taken place in Argentina for ten years, and that she cannot return until the children are grown, it has taken on an almost mythical quality, untested by problematical reality, a place for which she yearns. In English, Lucia is a skilled academic writer, and was, in those circles, able to present her work verbally, but has found this oral skill slipping after losing an academic post in 2010 and not regaining a foothold at this level:

Table 6.24 Lucia1a

TT	Sp		Observations
1	L	Yes probably I think that my English is today worse because when your self esteem is down you know	
2	S	When did you start to think that, Lucia? Have you always thought that since you've been here or is this something which has	
3	L	Now it's worse, becoming worse, this year was really really	Locates deterioration to current events
4	S	What happened this year to make you think this has got worse?	
5	L	I didn't work …	Lost her job
6	S	So you stopped working in January 2010, for the first time, so you were not going out and about, and you were also going into an English class for the first time ...	Connects her to first experience as ESOL student
7	L	I did from January to July	
8	S	But I remember that you said to me earlier on that that was a big reality shock because you thought your English was better than it was	
9	L	Yes yes …	
10	S	… Ok and the ESOL class, yes you got a piece of paper at the end but actually your sense of self confidence in your speaking English is still going downhill?	Checks that qualification didn't result in increased confidence
11	L	Yes because I feel that even I did the writing and I passed the writing but just there and I thought very simple … but writing for everyday life pretty bad.. I couldn't believe, I found it very very difficult	Unwelcome reality check with skills expected in class
12	S	So that was a big surprise as well, a big shock	

13	L	Yes yes	

Lucia has not been emotionally prepared to invest in language learning, and now adds fear of failure to her worries, feeling too old at 46 to make changes and retain new language. Caught in this circle of regret, loss, anxiety and resentment, she struggles to return to employment, furiously refusing to consider basic level work, preferring to place herself as a volunteer Spanish language assistant but in contrast to Sara for whom volunteering is an appropriate form of progress, she finds it demeaning. Interview experiences have been daunting; people ask questions:

Table 6.25 Can2b

TT	**Sp**		**Observations**
1	L	.. which if they come the same from other voice, perhaps a man, that I feel more intimidated because here I find more intimidating the man, not always but in the interview on the phone I feel like they are almost crucifying me without knowing me	Distinguishes between friendly and other interlocutors Gender makes a difference Strong symbolic image

Tensions erupt for these high-level learners as employment expectations and self- image collide with the reality of unsuitable work and the lack of progression pathways. These findings echo Norton who found that:

> All the women were intimidated by strangers – by people who did not know them, their personal histories, and the fact that they were not uneducated, illiterate, immigrants (2000:111, 113).

For Ana, Lucia and Linda, now all in their forties, this is compounded by decreasing learning skills. Cuban's study of 16 UK women migrant care workers found that being in the marginalised field of adult education could reinforce their devaluation and that 'little notice was taken of … their aspirations' (2010:182). Migrant women are further behind than men on this road to finding work and many suffer depression and low self esteem (Cuban 2010, Hall and Hewitt 2010). Cooke queried ESOL's effectiveness in this respect, suggesting 'Perhaps women… need to acquire the English associated with the public sphere of the world of work, in which people have to attend interviews and negotiate terms and conditions' (2006:67). Maria however relates a story of employment success, having initially lived on benefits when her baby was born, then working in an industrial greenhouse before progressing to hospital cleaning and care assistant. She attributes much of this to multilingual flexibility and the support of English-speaking Polish friends

along the way, who both opened up new opportunities and scaffolded her learning until she could manage.

These cases clearly indicate how, at a particular moment in the political economic context, certain resources are circulating, but not all are available, and they are distributed differently; this could mean geographically, by gender, through family and friendship networks. Even if available, they are not always able to access them, sometimes for powerful reasons which are not always apparent. Following a critical discourse analysis of ESOL policies and related political discourse in the next chapter, I discuss how such resource distribution and their intersection with individual women's lives can illuminate what appears to be uneven or unsuccessful language learning experiences.

6.3.4 Informal relationships and friends

Breaking down barriers to friendships with English speakers is an obstacle faced by all participants and is regarded as significant in improving their language skills. Fully conscious of feeling unwelcome, regarded as visitors, women know that they themselves could appear unfriendly or uninteresting due to lack of fluency, spontaneity or confidence:

Table 6.26 Than3a

TT	**Sp**		**Observations**
1	D	Umm, last week I meet my friend, it was my neighbour, she started with me speak English and um I start speak English with her and for me very difficult because I think at that moment I forgot English! She ask me a lot about my family, about my children, and um ask me and um I wanted a lot of questions ask her but I can't I don't know why, I was very disappointed (sighs)	Social interaction is initiated by English speaker Socially embarrassing Other speaker is friendly and encouraging Frustrated with own response
2	S	Were you out on the street when you saw her?	
3	D	Yes near school	
4	S	Ok … you didn't know that you were going to see her? … you hadn't got everything prepared?	Aware that learners find spontaneity difficult
5	D	… Yes very disappointed because, um I saw my friend one year ago and this friend thinks that I go, she know that I am going learning English, and she's think that I know better this English and I was very disappointed (sigh and small laugh)	Conscious of not meeting own learning expectations Repeats disappointment
6	S	Oh I imagine and maybe a little embarrassed? What do you want to do now about your	

		friend, do you want to see her?	
7	D	Yes I want to see her again … because she was uh, she made baby and I want ask her questions	Knows how the conversation could develop
8	S	… Ok I ask this because I know that for you, to have a friend, someone to talk to is really important - is it important only for your English or because you also want a friend here?	Teasing out purpose of the interaction
9	D	No, I have friends, I have a lot of friends, but I always think that I am stupid because long time I am learning English and I can't learn and uh I think that my friends with me maybe not interested with me, uh, speak, not English with me speak, and I very want to learn English	Refutes idea of social isolation Takes responsibility again for slow progress
10	S	So you can talk to	
	D	very want to talk but it's very difficult for me	
11	S	… so do you feel that at the moment you have a different picture of yourself?	
12	D	Yeh, I think that when I speak my language I another person and when I speaking English all people think I am stupid I don't know (laughing)	Draws clear distinction between self image in different languages
13	S	So when you speak in your language, tell me, what kind of person are you?	
14	D	I don't know, I'm friendly, I have a lot of friends, but in English I think people don't have this person speak	People can't 'see' her in English
15	S	So people don't see that part of you	
16	D	Yes because not interesting	
17	S	People are not interested in you because you can't say anything back, so you feel boring, is that right?	
18	D	Yeh	

Here Diana eloquently expresses her self-knowledge as a capable, friendly, interesting person and her frustration at the linguistic obstacle to accessing this with English acquaintances. This target speaker is friendly and interested, but the interaction should still be 'theorized in terms of unequal relations of power which compromise efforts by language learners' (Norton 2000:119) and here led to Diana's self-blame. Others found fellow ESOL students became their stepping stone into using English in a sympathetic environment.

Maria, like many local migrants, worked in greenhouses and packing where Russian is used. Her transition to hospital work in English was supported by a Polish friend. An additional influence was involvement in a religious community:

Table 6.27 Maria3a

TT	SP		Observations
1	M	… I feel like wow it's happened so quick! … a lot is that studying the Baha'i writing and meeting the Baha'i people all speaks English so by becoming Baha'i and studying the books it helps me with the English, but also for example by work in hospital helps me a lot because everyday I am using English and I was listening the people all around me so this helped a lot, my work when I changed from greenhouse to hospital so these two things	Traces the combined impact of joining Baha'i and work environment

Apart from Linda Maria used English more than any other participant, even though her mother and brother live locally and use only Polish. During the project she was housebound following an operation, relying on friends and family for childcare, transport and chores. She completed two calendars and a diary over several weeks, during which she recorded using a range of media: phone calls and texts, speaking with visitors, reading school correspondence and homework, studying, listening to a religious speaker and attending a faith gathering, watching film and TV with the children. Her interactions in one day included exchanging a few words with her best friend who popped in, a conversation with me about the project, a visit from a friend when they 'spoke about everything and nothing', and talking to her son's friends and trying to give them activities to keep them busy. Maria is therefore using English in her home and is now code-switching and dreaming in both languages. An interesting characteristic is that she has developed friendships with a range of people, from workmates, teachers and doctors to her sons' parents, which is reflected in her interest in a religious faith which emphasizes unity and interracial harmony:

> '…I understood that this religion is the esence of everything what I beliefe in. When I was depening myself in teaching of Baha'u'llah I felt that I found my place on the earth. I found my "Golden Grail"' (diary extract).

She has also discovered strength both in being able to rely on others and separate from a difficult partner, such that she now reciprocates support and wants to be part of the community through a better job.

6.4 Summary

6.4.1 Life journeys

The women in this study come from a wide range of ethnic and linguistic, family, class, economic and political backgrounds. Most had completed secondary education; a high proportion achieved further qualifications and entered employment. Their primary motive for entering the UK was to search for better economic and other opportunities for themselves but particularly for their children. To date, most have been disappointed in locating either appropriate employment or a level of English which they believe to be necessary to further their personal goals of entering further education or participate more fully in their local community. Material and structural barriers in accessing appropriate or sufficient language courses exist, but significant obstacles are often invisible to potential employers, policymakers and also ESOL tutors.

6.4.2 Child care, bilingualism and gender

Whatever their background, women hold in common the primary child care responsibility in the family. Women are expected to, and they expect to, be much more involved in socializing their children than their male relatives, which as immigrant and minority ethnic families also includes the transmission and maintenance of language, culture, religion and other family customs. In home countries, child care would have been shared with other female relatives, which is now largely unavailable to these participants, so all these responsibilities fall to them. Most of the EU participants had recently arrived, and had not established intergenerational networks, which were vital to Maria, whose mother cared for her older son when she emigrated and then later joined her whilst she separated from her partner and established an independent household; to Tina, whose parents provide child care to enable her to enter medicine; and was absent for Sara, Lucia and others who grieve for the loss of close family members. Only four women out of 46 could call on family, apart from husbands, for child care to attend ESOL class. Such gendered domestic practices cause considerable ambivalence for these mothers at home and in public and one cannot assume that the role of guardian of the home language is necessarily one which is always positively embraced; how can it be, when the success of their family's migration rests on the hopes and dreams which English fluency is expected to deliver? So as assimilation into mainstream culture brings social and economic benefits, women struggle with the paradox that this simultaneously undermines aspects of their family's way of life (Cameron 1992). Although in this study population, women were rarely

housebound or deliberately kept apart from others in society, nevertheless their testimonies strongly indicate that there is a big difference between, for example, being comfortable in speaking to the doctor or neighbours (questionnaire responses) and feeling able to make friends, chat to someone on the street or envisage a multilingual future for their children. Sara, making great efforts to learn English and enter employment through her local contacts, is nevertheless punished when she transgresses the rules, and talks in Albanian in public:

> Thus, in a classical double-bind situation, bilingual mothers carry the double burden of guarding the minority language and culture and facilitating their children's entry into the majority language and culture (Piller and Pavlenko 2004:501).

Participants are all aware of the embodiment of this strain, commenting on how their physical and emotional states immediately impact on their English language production which is hard to predict or control and can have frustrating and disappointing outcomes. They are tired, having full domestic responsibilities, some without partners, in addition to attending class and working where possible.

6.4.3 Identification with English and the local community

'We are just visitors here' (Elena Nov.2011). Although committed to increasing their community networks through friendships, further education or work, all experienced regular difficulties in reliable fluency and accessing the 'right to impose reception' (Bourdieu 1991, Norton 2000). Overt racism and religious prejudice is less pronounced for the interviewed participants who are mainly white Europeans, but this sense of unwelcome tolerance contributes to long periods of indecision over settlement, compounded by ongoing economic problems and unresolved dreams of a return 'home'. Maria pronounces herself as the most contented and actively settled, having overcome considerable adversity. She has consistently made use of available material, family, educational and personal resources to arrive at a position, after five years, of independence with secure housing, work and an expanding circle of friends. She reflects that 'Poland is my home but in my heart … and England is just my home… where I work, where my children are happy' but crucially she has also discovered a connection between English being the most common language in the world and her developing religious focus on unity between faiths and nations. In Maria, therefore, there is a deep desire (Kristeva 1980) to identify with this community, a beloved 'Other' through which she symbolically constructs her new self which dissolves barriers including those of language. For others,

this desire, which feeds language learning motivation or investment, is tempered by conflict, anxiety, tiredness; it cannot be sustained consistently over a long period and all the women noted how much harder it was to learn, and how much longer it took, than they had anticipated.

6.4.4 Complementary approaches

These findings and stories of everyday lives may speak directly to practitioners and planners wishing to understand more fully certain aspects of learners' lives. In this study, they play a key role in complementing the critical discourse analysis of ESOL policy which follows in Chapter 7 by providing the detailed context against which it may be interpreted both synchronically and historically. This is a dialogic relationship in which participants' accounts are heard and discussed before those of the policy makers, allowing the reading of public texts to be undertaken with their experiences in mind. Through this chapter, learners have expressed their commitment to using English from the base of multilingual home environments, and to fully supporting their children and themselves to engage educationally and in employment. They have shown that they are fully conscious of their varying and unreliable production of spoken English and how this affects not only their relationship with neighbours, friends and others in the community but also crucially their self- image as positive and competent women and mothers. Such awareness builds over time to impact on their sense of belonging and right to participate. These themes are at the forefront of governmental debates and pronouncements and have been interpreted through women's personal experiences of some unexpected dilemmas and hardship in addition to positive outcomes from planned migration.

In the next chapter, I explore the policy and political discourses within which these learning experiences take place and such identities are constructed. I consider the potential for critical engagement with these dominant discourses, and the strategies available to ESOL providers, teachers and learners who wish to position themselves differently in relation to them. This may be to take account of material or structural conditions, such as a loss of employment options and status, or perhaps a multidirectional internal journey during which language learning is not simply functional and instrumental.

Chapter Seven ESOL in context: a feminist critical discourse approach

In this chapter I address the following research questions which relate to the early 21st century UK social, political, economic and historical context within which participants' English language learning is provided:

- How is ESOL, as a form of public education, and how are ESOL learners constructed in the political sphere?
- What values and attitudes appear to be dominant both in determining the purpose of teaching English to immigrants and how are learners perceived in relation to this learning?
- Where and in what circumstances does ESOL policy acknowledge and address gender as an issue?
- Are there any particular views, attitudes or beliefs expressed about the position or needs of women learners, especially those with young children?

I discussed in Chapter 4 how the purpose of a CDA is to explore the social and ideological practices which produce meaning and their associated power relations, and to use this analysis in attempting to redress social inequalities. In this study, the policy discourse analysis relates closely to the lived experiences of the women whose voices were heard in the previous chapter. The wider socio-economic and political influences on ESOL provision are explored but also the role that this context plays in daily interactions as they related. Despite being apparently unremarkable and often private or unobserved, such small events are constructed within and contribute to constructing the discursive frameworks considered below.

Although this set of research questions have not broadly changed since the initial stages of the project, in Chapter 5 I noted that the investigation led me to realise that is not useful to separate distinct ESOL policy from other, related texts as its aims, funding streams, providers and ultimately pedagogy are constructed significantly by its three main drivers: immigration control, promoting community cohesion and meeting the needs of the economy (see Introduction and Chapter 2 Literature Review). From this, I argue that a central construct of ideologies which drive ESOL is that there are fixed, bounded groups and systems, places and understandings which permit governments to delineate boundaries, set tests, and position people individually and together as either acceptable or

unacceptable as members of British society. This is evident in the concept of the nation state, 'our' country, the English language, allegiance, jobs and settlement. Powerful notions such as these are further strengthened by tropes of fear and threat of the foreign, unknown invader, and are carried forward through periods of time by interlocking discursive chains, allowing space for new alliances of politicians and others to hybridise old ideological positions through processes of compromise and blurring: 'There is *ad hocery*, negotiation and serendipity within the state, within the policy formulation process' (Ball 1993:1832), but the values and ethics which underpin them develop into those 'regimes of truth' (Foucault 1972) by which people are governed and limit the range of responses available to them within that discursive framework. I intend to show that an intersectional approach, as explored in Chapter 3, is essential in order to understand the significance and implications of these policies; racial origin and gender are closely interlinked in this field, with a particular distinction made between European and non-Europeans, and in the latter group between migrants from English-speaking countries and those from elsewhere.

The key texts which I have selected for detailed CDA are extracts from:

- The Cantle Report (Home Office, 2001)
- Integration with Diversity: Globalisation and the Renewal of Democracy and Civil Society (Blunkett, 2002)
- A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion (DIUS, 2008, 2009)
- Commons Hansard Debate: Prime Minister's Questions text for 2 February 2011 Column 856 Question 37426 (HC Hansard, 2011)

These texts cover the first decade of the century which is the focus of this research, tracking developments since the introduction of nationalised ESOL provision. The first two relate to a situation of civil unrest in north England which formed part of a significant discursive chain linking social cohesion, citizenship and nationalisation with the use of English. The third is a suite of documents which are the only other main ESOL policy since the Skills for Life framework came into effect in 2001. It followed the previous texts by, for the first time, specifically linking ESOL provision to community cohesion goals. The final selection is a short statement by the Prime Minister which I argue is a representation of the conflation of several themes including the learning of English by certain immigrants.

Migration journeys, rights to settle and personal dreams were shown through the fieldwork data to be an integral part of women's learning processes. In Section 7.1 I address three aspects of an evolving legal framework which have a particular impact on women from certain countries. These are: changing rules on the Family Migration Route, the introduction of language testing for settlement inside the UK and from outside the EU for certain applicants and ESOL course eligibility restrictions on recent arrivals. United Kingdom border controls are not intended or considered by the Home Office or Border Agency to be gendered but to apply equally to women and men but have been introduced in ways which I argue has a negative effect on their family lives, migration plans and eligibility to learn English through ESOL provision.

In Section 7.2, I use critical discourse analysis methods to examine texts by Cantle (Home Office 2001) and Blunkett (2002) in which English language use was not simply linked to, but considered integral to concerns about community cohesion. The argument that, through complex chains of discourse, these and other politicians argued that the violence in northern England in 2001 was at least partly caused because some Asian residents 'either were unable, or refused, to speak English' has been fully made by Blackledge (2005a:1). I intend to develop this by using a gender lens to focus on the hidden or subtle ways in which the texts place responsibility on the young men's mothers, and connect them to the first major piece of ESOL policy to emerge in the decade following its introduction in 2001: 'A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion' (DIUS 2009a). As the title indicates, speaking English is placed centre stage in governmental discourses on building integrated communities and preventing social breakdown, and I analyse these policy documents to show that women students, and those from certain ethnic or religious backgrounds, are identified as a priority group in this task.

Not all women have equal access to ESOL provision, and Section 7.3 addresses how legal and financial barriers impact differently on potential learners.

Political injunctions to use English for social purposes reach deep into the domestic sphere; in Section 7.4 I analyse a spoken text from the current Prime Minister, David Cameron in 2011 to show how discourses of immigration and parental responsibility are connected to allegations of unwillingness to learn English, leading him to make serious

threats to immigration rights; as he explicitly locates his comments in the family migration route and Indian sub-continent, I use this analysis to further demonstrate the effects on female learners.

Many women have found that their only option, often a preferred one, is to access ESOL through family learning programmes once they have children. Overwhelmingly female, this is not a mainstream programme and provision is patchy throughout the country and, as with Skills for Life, ESOL was not part of its original remit. In Section 7.5 I examine its potential and limits in developing different forms of capital, and its role in constructing gendered learning identities.

The chapter concludes by drawing together findings from this range of contextualisation and policy analysis which both answer the research questions set out above and raise further issues.

7.1 Migration journeys and language tests

7.1.1 Introducing the pre-entry visa language test

'English language is the cornerstone of integration' according to the Home Office (2012), a statement which encapsulates the contemporary hegemonic discourse of the benefits to all British society of immigrants learning English. The ideology underpinning the laws and proposals which are discussed below is, at first sight, one with which few residents or immigrants disagree: that learning the dominant language of a society assists immigrants to find employment, access services, support children at school and generally enter into social aspects of the community; in other words, linguistic capital is an essential prerequisite in accessing other forms of capital and therefore advancement within society (Bourdieu 1991, Arendt 1958). For this reason, many immigrants and ESOL teachers campaign for free classes to be made available during the first year of arrival when need and motivation is at its peak. In this examination of key recent legislation, I provide evidence that mandatory testing of, rather than learning, English has become an integral instrument in gatekeeping Britain's borders, but only in relation to non-Europeans, and in ways which particularly affect South Asian women whose rate of immigration continues to remain high into the second and third generation (Hart Dyke and James 2009). They are the:

- Explanatory Memorandum to the Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules laid on 1 October 2010 (CM 7944) (Home Office 2010a) and
- Equality Impact Assessment: English Language Requirement for Spouses (Home Office 2010b).

They state:

> 7.11 The Rules are being amended to introduce an English language requirement for migrants applying to come to or stay in the UK as the spouse or partner of a British citizen or person settled here.
> 7.12 The new requirements will apply to non-EEA[26] nationals applying for leave to enter or remain in the UK as a spouse, civil partner, fiancé(e), proposed civil partner, unmarried partner or same sex partner unless they are a national of a majority English-speaking country[27] or have a degree taught in English (2010a).

This border control policy had been a New Labour government (1997-2010) proposal, now enacted by the Conservative- Liberal Coalition (2010 onwards), deriving its authority firstly from being part of a continuing legislative framework through which the government of

[26] European Economic Area
[27] Listed in the Rules para.8 (iii)

the day is regarded as entitled to protect the national interest, and secondly that there had already been introduced a language test for citizenship which provided a precedent: *The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act* introduced for the first time a requirement on 'those seeking naturalisation as British citizens to demonstrate that they have a sufficient understanding of English (or Welsh, or Scottish Gaelic) and a sufficient knowledge of life in the UK' (Home Office 2002). This would be examined in a multiple-choice online test for those with Entry Level 3 English (pre-intermediate standard). Coinciding with the new nationalised framework of ESOL curricula and professional status, the duty to teach both the language and social-political themes of citizenship fell to ESOL teachers, who welcomed in broad terms the recognition that practical topics such as legal and education systems should be incorporated into adult learning. The recognition that less able or confident applicants could be accepted if they progressed one level and had participated in citizenship classes in the curriculum was regarded as a positive understanding of achievement, willingness to learn and the time it can take many learners to reach an intermediate level.

By the late 2000s, critics argued that the test was extremely flawed, not only because it is less an examination of cultural knowledge and more a functional language test, which, in common with those of other countries, is designed to gatekeep against those with fewest English language skills and least access to them (Blackledge 2009, McNamara 2009, Cooke and Simpson 2009). In the 24 question, multiple choice test, 'Citizens of English-speaking countries tended to do best'; Zimbabweans achieved a pass rate of 90.2% compared with Bangladeshis' 44% (BBC News 2010). Many also agreed that it was disturbing to find, in political and media discourses, a conflation of testing, learning and competence, variable factors then regarded as correlated with the achievement of a shared language. Simpson (2009) uses Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) to argue that there is no causal link between a shared language and shared values or understanding, highlighting their findings that this common assumption is flawed, and there is not necessarily 'maximum transparency' in communication. This misconception has become central to the positioning of immigrants and English language learning in relation to community cohesion, discussed below in Section 7.2.

In 2001, Home Secretary Blunkett had discussed whether such a language test should be introduced before this process of naturalisation and told journalist Brown of The Guardian newspaper:

> This has been misunderstood. It isn't a question of having a test before you come into the country. That wouldn't be practical and it would be unacceptable. We want to make becoming a British citizen more attractive and we want to ensure that there are light-touch programmes to obtain naturalisation. One of those would be a modest grasp of the English tongue so they can feel and become more English (Brown 2001).

Despite that assertion, the 2010 test became part of a raft of measures to reduce net immigration from outside the European Union (EU) including a points-based system, in which the Home Office asserts its aim is 'helping those who come to the UK to integrate into British society' which implies that this group of immigrants don't or can't integrate without demonstrating, before arrival, 'a command of English speaking and listening at A1 level or above of the Common European Framework of Reference' (Home Office 2010a:3). There is no equivalent measure designed to address the situation of European immigrants who don't speak English. It continues:

> The English language requirement for spouses and partners will help promote the economic well-being of the UK, for example by encouraging integration and protecting public services. The new rules will help ensure that migrant spouses and partners are equipped to play a full part in British life from the outset (2010a:3).

I draw on Blackledge to show how this is a further example of 'representing illiberal discourse in liberal terms … a familiar strategy as we move through the chain of discourse relating of English language testing for citizenship' (2005a:80), and an instance of Bakhtin's 'double-voiced' discourse, which:

> has a twofold direction – it is directed both toward the referential object of speech, as in ordinary speech, and toward another's discourse, toward someone else's speech'. (Bakhtin 1994:105 in Blackledge 2005a:17).

The policy is justified by being presented as apparently leading to only positive outcomes for both immigrants and British citizens. It is confident, using a range of positive verbs to assert that the new rules will help, promote, encourage and equip, together with a topos of threat, an argumentation strategy which Reisigl and Wodak (2001:77) propose is where a political action or decision appears to carry specific threats or dangers which should result in changing that political act. Here an assumption is made that the reader agrees that, unless these particular immigrants take an English test, the national economic well-being and public services are at some risk; the latter all the more potent for not being

clearly identified. This is the 'common sense' part of the argument, which is powerfully implied. It relies on the link between speaking English (an unproblematised concept) before arriving in the UK and integration being both understood and accepted, following an ongoing theme of promoting monolingualism.

7.1.2 A gender and race perspective

The strength of such assertiveness relies on a long process of recontextualization (Bernstein 1990, Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999) which refers back to, for example a Member of Parliament's speech following the Burnley disturbances in 2001, when she referred to 'the established tradition of bringing wives and husbands from the sub-continent who often have no education and have no English' (HC Hansard 2001). By referencing either both or neither sex, such texts appear to be gender-neutral, whereas in this family migration route, women outnumber men by 2:1 (Home Office 2012). In its Equality Impact Assessment, the Home Office acknowledged that:

> The policy has an impact on more women than men because of the greater number of women who seek to enter or remain in the UK as a spouse or partner. However the gender of those applying in the marriage route are [sic] outside our control (2010b).

Approximately 64% of spousal applications granted are to women, of whom:

> the top three nationalities for wives/partners granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK in 2009 were Pakistan (18% of grants), India (10% of grants) and Bangladesh (7% of grants) (Home Office 2010b).

Whilst it is true that the gender of those applying is not within the Home Office's control, it is within its area of knowledge, and there have been strong criticisms (see ILPA& JCWI 2010) of its failure to recognize the particular obstacles faced by women in many countries in accessing learning, but instead to conclude that:

> The language requirement will help encourage the integration of women and remove cultural barriers and broaden opportunities for them. It will help women play a full part in British life. Any indirect sex discrimination is justified by these policy objectives including the economic well being of the country (Home Office 2010b).

In this further example of recontextualization, whilst the overall aims of integration and economic wellbeing are repeated, gender-specific aims are added, assuming the existence of cultural barriers and limited opportunities (presumably for education and employment although this is not overt). The document evokes images of oppressed women so that here, whilst the apparent social justice case is made, it relies on racist stereotyping of

gender relations in Asian households. The concluding sentence illogically tries to justify discriminating against female applicants by suggesting that they are liberated by the process (of being helped to remove barriers, open opportunities and participate), and then further compounds its confusion by appearing to suggest that, in any case, the national economy relies on them following the rules.

There has been a long history of British Asian women having been identified as having the fewest English language skills since surveys in the 1960s and the commonly-reported statistic that 'three quarters of Bangladeshi women over the age of 25 do not speak fluent English' (Cabinet Office Strategy Unit 2003:55) was actually based on data already 10 years old and subject to some mis-reporting (Rosenberg 2007:250). Despite this, the findings can continue to be drawn on in a generalised fashion, so that the rules applying to this family migration route can be collated with the positioning of Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani women as victims, passive, excluded and in need of support to escape negative cultural conditions. The beginning of the 21st century marked a significant turning point in this narrative, influenced by international terrorist attacks, and the domestic unrest referred to above, such that a stronger focus on community cohesion and border controls provided strong political warrants (Cochran-Smith & Fries 2001) for a range of texts which impacted on language learning and practices. A selection of these is presented in the following section.

7.2 Speaking English and community cohesion: a critical discourse analysis

I begin this section by analysing aspects of the influential *Community Cohesion [Cantle Report]* (Home Office 2001) along with a text written by the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett *Integration with Diversity: Globalisation and the Renewal of Democracy and Civil Society* (2002) to demonstrate the strength of the government's conviction that it had both the duty and right to intervene in the family language practices of certain citizens. I then consider the suite of documents through which ESOL provision is drawn firmly into the discourse of community cohesion:

- Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion (DIUS 2008).
- A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion (DIUS 2009a)
- Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion Consultation Report (DIUS 2009b)
- Implementing the New Approach to ESOL (BIS 2009)

Through this choice of texts, I intend to illustrate how women, especially mothers in this instance, are particularly subject to the 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu 1991) inculcated by these legal frameworks. In the earlier documents, women are not specifically referenced by gender, whilst in the second, they are highly visible in text and photos, and I will consider how they are constructed as a result and may, or may not, have access to symbolic, linguistic and material resources as a result. I also consider the gendered implications for this for the wider ESOL population.

7.2.1 The early 2000s - Cantle and Blunkett

The Cantle Committee (2001) focussed on the fracturing of different ethnic communities and issues of integration and cohesion. Its conclusion ran to 67 proposals, the first of which was:

> The rights- and in particular - the responsibilities of citizenship need to be more clearly established and we would expect to see some or all, of the above considerations strongly featured. This should then be formalised into a form of statement of allegiance (Home Office 2001:48).

Their view of the concept of citizenship was that it needed to recognise:

> … the contribution of all cultures to this Nation's development throughout its history, but now establish[es] a clear primary loyalty to this Nation (2001:20)

and a debate on these issues was recommended to:

> … determine both the rights and responsibilities of each community. Whilst respect for different cultures is vital, it will also be essential to agree some common elements of 'nationhood'. This might revolve around key issues such as language and law. For example … a universal acceptance of the English language … (2001:19).

Kundnani commented that 'According to the Cantle report, it is not so much institutions as attitudes that are the focus of change. Like its conceptual cousin, 'social exclusion', 'community cohesion' is about networks, identity and discourse, rather than poverty, inequality and power' (2002:5) and he argued that this, taken together with Blunkett's announcements, marked the end of multiculturalism in the UK. The chain of discourse linking this report with the legislation to follow on nationality, immigration and asylum was closely examined using a critical discourse analysis model (Blackledge 2005a); here the discursive construction and intertextuality can be viewed through a race and gender lens. In the extracts above, Cantle establishes at the outset that those applying to settle through citizenship have not as yet either understood, or had it made clear to them, what their responsibilities are to this country. The disingenuous use of 'contribution', negating the impact of colonialism, is itself dismissed as historical and apparently insufficient. It is followed by a topos of threat that if people do not make an oath of allegiance, then their 'primary loyalty' may still lie elsewhere, and perhaps this has been at least partly the cause of community violence. So citizenship appears to mean, according to this text, a loyalty to something known as 'nationhood' in which key issues are law and language, specifically the primacy of English which, it is implied, is not yet accepted by all.

Clearly this is not addressed to any community whose first language is English, so the focus is on the young British Asians involved in the unrest, not their white or black British counterparts. However, those young men were second or third generation immigrants and therefore fluent English speakers, but although the connection being made between lack of English and rioting was invalid, it nevertheless provided Cantle with the opportunity to justify remedying an implied problem. He asserted 'We have resisted the temptation to set out our proposals for these new values as this should be the result of a debate' which he then failed to do, continuing:

> Nevertheless, we would expect the new values to contain statements about the expectation that the use of the English language, which is already a pre-condition of citizenship, (or a commitment to become fluent within a period of time) will become more rigorously pursued, with appropriate support. This will ensure that subsequent generations do not bear the burden of remedial programmes and, more

> importantly, that the full participation of all individuals in society can be achieved much more easily. This is not to diminish the value and role of second and minority languages, which reinforce sub cultural identities (2001: 19).

By referring back to the existing rules of citizenship applications, Cantle uses this to further strengthen his construction of a reluctant Asian population whose use of English needs to be 'rigorously pursued', an energetic and somewhat punitive phrase albeit softened and given a liberal tone by the addition 'with appropriate support'. He allows his imagined readers to believe that this has been, to date, a significant strain on contemporary society, presenting as fact that there has been a burden. Again, by attaching this moral evaluation, he implies, erroneously, that there is an opposite desire amongst those whose English needs to be improved. In a strangely threatening final sentence, Cantle uses 'double-voiced discourse' (Bakhtin 1981:324) to deny what he actually means; he addresses an opposing readership which seek to positively value multilingualism, but places other languages within a negatively- constructed image of 'sub cultural identities', using a topos of threat that anything other than English works against the mainstream culture.

So who is Cantle really talking about? If it is not the young men who rioted, then perhaps he was concerned with the migration route for Asian spouses; in Ouseley's enquiry into the same situation, community concerns included:

> Inter-continental marriages [which] mean that around 50% of the marriages that take place in the Asian community result in an intake of new residents who are unable to communicate in the English language, which limits their participation in mainstream social and educational activities (2001:11).

Shortly afterwards, in the context of writing about national and international security and globalisation, the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, drew stronger and more disturbing parallels between home language practices of British Asians and social violence. He wrote:

> I have never said, or implied, that lack of fluency in English was in any way directly responsible for the disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001. However, speaking English enables parents to converse with their children in English, as well as their historic mother tongue at home and to participate in wider modern culture. It helps overcome the schizophrenia which bedevils generational relationships. In as many as 30% of British Asian households, according to the recent citizenship survey, English is not spoken at home. But let us be clear that lack of English fluency did not cause the riots (2002: 76-77).

Blunkett begins this text with a strong denial, repeated at the end, that he is making a link between English 'fluency' and civil disturbance, but this denial works to plant the

possibility that in fact it could. As with Cantle above, he employs 'double-voiced discourse' (Bakhtin 1981) to show he is aware of the discourse of his opponents and responds to its, as yet unspoken, opposition by dismissing its claims. This is further clarified by the use of 'However' with which he begins the next sentence, preceding three claims for what speaking English achieves for 'parents'. Further into the text, Blunkett claims how many British Asian households don't use English at home; this may be the only factual statement in the text, used here in the passive voice to denote the anonymity of the report writers and allowing him to make an evidentiary claim that his article is based on a scientific survey and to name British Asians directly, thereby making it clear that these are the families to which his writing is directed. As the report is not cited, nor its original source or methodology noted, it is constructed as simple fact, undisputable, but nevertheless familiar territory as it builds intertextually on previous surveys which had drawn similar conclusions about Asian women as I have noted above. British Asians are constructed as a homogenous group without distinctions of any degree, and nor are social factors apart from ethnicity proposed as alternative evidence or reason for social unrest.

In a completely different manner, the third sentence is short but powerfully symbolic. Blunkett using mythopoeia (Fairclough 2003) to invoke the threat and fear of mental illness, here with a definite article 'the' and label 'schizophrenia', a commonly- known, if misunderstood, medical diagnosis which has connotations of violence and lack of control. By following this clause by 'which' and a verb in the present simple, this grammatical construction creates a factual statement: it 'bedevils'. The choice of such a dramatic verb evokes powerful religious and fictional forces at work affecting relationships between family members of different generations. Such a theatrical style, making fantastical claims, is seemingly designed to frighten or alarm the reader, using this topos of threat to underpin a series of unproven claims.

Blunkett legitimates his statements in a number of ways, firstly by the authority afforded by his political position; this is the first time that a serving Home Secretary had formally and publicly suggested not only what languages families should use at home, but drawn a clear implication that failure to speak English was directly connected to social unrest. Throughout the text, English is presented as having greater worth than minority languages, which are constructed as harmful, a process which 'can only succeed when, in the "institutionalised circle of collective misrecognition" (Bourdieu 1991:153) dominant and

dominated groups alike accept the greater value of certain languages and varieties' (Blackledge 2005a:33). Despite a context in which thousands of immigrants were enrolling in the new ESOL SfL programmes, he suggests that they were failing to understand the importance of English to such an extent that it was leading to their mental ill health. English is presented a morally and practically superior, modern, usable in the wider society whilst mother tongues are 'historic', evoking concepts of redundancy, old-fashioned or out of touch.

By these means, Blunkett participates in constructing and reinforcing 'what counts as knowledge/truth in a particular era' (Hyatt 2011:5). From a feminist perspective, it is notable that he and others avoid direct reference to women or mothers which can be understood as examples less about convenience and more about deliberate avoidance or misleading strategies. In the texts above, it is clear that 'spouses' from the sub-continent are actually 'wives' and that 'parents' who bear responsibility for children's home language use are 'mothers'. This failure to clarify such meaning works to reinforce a patriarchal hegemonic discourse, allowing the writer to deny gender discrimination by obfuscating the true target of his or her text. In this way the role of immigrant mothers is reinforced by dominant discourses as being to inculcate English as the primary language of their families and to relegate their home, mother, or expert languages to a subsidiary, largely unnecessary position, whilst simultaneously this message is delivered in a manner hard to unpick and challenge. However, this discourse is built on, and continues to depend on, a racist and outdated picture of the female immigrant population and especially disregards the hugely diverse and less settled European families and learners. In the next section I examine how this discourse found its way directly into ESOL provision, and constructed a particular image of the female ESOL learner.

7.2.2 A New Approach to ESOL - the late 2000s

The New Labour government's rhetoric linking English language learning and community cohesion was sustained throughout this decade and in 2008 when this research project began, it had initiated the series of consultation and later policy documents known as 'A New Approach' which firmly established this connection (DIUS 2009a, DIUS 2009b, BIS 2009, DIUS 2008). In his foreword to the Consultation Response Form, John Denham, Secretary of State at the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) asserted:

> Darra Singh's recent report "Our Shared Future" on integration and cohesion published in June 2007 showed that the ability to communicate effectively is *the* most important issue facing integration and cohesion for both settled and new communities in Britain (DIUS 2008:3 my italics).

Not so: the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's first of 57 recommendations was that the government adopt a new definition of cohesion and integration with policies to follow and it was at pains to address the complexity and local context of all relevant issues. It went to some lengths to define the difference between 'integration' and 'cohesion' but the subtleties of their definition are often lost in policy implementation:

> Cohesion is principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people get on well together; while integration is principally the process that ensures new residents and existing residents adapt to one another (DIUS 2008: 9)

However this substantial investigation into English communities quoted the results of a MORI poll which found '60% of respondents in our MORI polling identifying language as the main ingredient of "being English"' (COIC 2007:159) and it recommended strengthening provision for English language 'training' whilst reducing what the Commission regarded as automatic translation of materials into community languages by some local authorities, which 'although well intentioned, goes against much of what we have set out in our report on the need for communities and organisations to be integrated and "outward facing" ' (CIC 2007: 159). The processes of 'getting on well' and 'adapting' are vague, liberal concepts, commonly-understood to be generally 'a good thing'; such 'evoked evaluations' (Martin 2000) work as 'mechanisms through which evaluation is covertly constructed' (Hyatt 2011: 9) and so provide a justification for the hegemonic discourse of its central component, monolingualism. Although there is clear evidence that immigrants are willing to learn English, are fully cognisant of its benefits and share a common belief in the significant value of this linguistic capital, the commissioners went further and stated: 'It binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of community languages cannot' (COIC 2007:73).

By 2008, two million people had already benefitted from ESOL provision, and this was now to be re-focussed in order to meet broad government objectives 'for those individuals and communities where lack of English is likely to contribute to a lack of community cohesion' (DIUS 2008: 9). Without space to examine further this conflation of English speaking by some people with shared values and positive behaviour by all, I turn to its policy

interpretation and implementation. The plan was to devolve ESOL to local authorities who, without new funding, were to assess local needs, identify priority learners, set up partnerships and ensure that English language provision met community cohesion targets. Despite much liberal framing, there was no room for dispute about this shift:

> We expect providers to adapt to the new approach – where they are reluctant to re-align with integration and community cohesion priorities, other providers may have to be brought into the mix (DIUS 2009a:15).

Although swiftly overtaken by a new political agenda of recession, employability and austerity this period was ideologically significant for several reasons, and women, particularly mothers, were in the spotlight. A major theme was the identification of priority groups; in an 'indicative list … of those most likely to suffer significant disadvantage because of their lack of English… a high priority group should be excluded women without English as a first language, particularly those from unwaged families who have school age children' (DIUS 2008: 9). Four local test areas were selected to identify such groups. When the full report was published, women were clearly identified, as shown in the following tables:

Table 7.1 Women as priority groups

	Area	Text	Page
1	Manchester	MCC has also commissioned 'pre-ESOL' engagement activities for another priority group – Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Taiwanese and Vietnamese women	11
2	Salford	to develop engagement activities that can meet the needs of Yemeni women … more effectively. Childcare and the need for lower levels of ESOL provision that can be delivered in community settings are key requirements	12
3	Peterborough	women with young children who are isolated from communities outside of their own	12
4	Peterborough	to deliver 'first steps' ESOL that leads to further progression for women in settled communities	12
5	Ealing	identified two different groups of Somali women as their priority groups – in one group individuals have little or no English language and are not engaging in learning and in the other, women have taken part in some ESOL but are not progressing.	13
6	NIACE study[28]	looked at Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali women's learning journeys	16
7	NIACE study	the aim of bringing women in these communities together, identifying their learning needs and helping them access all types of adult learning.	17
8	NIACE study	'A Woman's Place' will target specific groups of women from	17

[28] Ward and Spacey (2008)

		settled ethnic minority communities in the UK, with language needs who are at risk of social exclusion	
9		Voluntary and community groups … helping to overcome any cultural issues around women accessing learning or preparing to enter the workforce	22

Source: A New Approach to ESOL (DIUS 2009a)

Women in these extracts are almost all identified by ethnicity and are non-European. They are referred to throughout as 'the most excluded'. There were 15 references to women and one to men.

Table 7.2 Visual representations of female and male learners

Document	**Women wearing veils or scarves**	**Women not wearing veils or scarves**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women shown at work**	**Men shown at work**	**Women in public space**	**Men in public space**
Consultation 2008	5	22	27	8	4	19	0	9
Consultation Report 2009	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	nil
Full report 2009	10	15	25	8	0	0	0	0
Implementation report 2009	5	13	18	10	0	0	0	0
Total	20	50	70	26	4	19	0	9

This table shows an extensive use of photos with women greatly outnumbering men; almost half wear head coverings which suggest they are Muslim. The proportions change dramatically when students are shown in public spaces, where almost five times as many men as women are in working environments, and there are no women at all in street scenes.

Photo 7.1 - Learners in a classroom

This photo which appeared in the consultation document was also used twice in the final report.

'A New Approach': Discussion

The gender, religious, racial and class implications in the naming of priority groups and graphic images in these documents are significant, and here I draw on Arnot (2009), Flam and Beauzamy (2008) and Wodak (2008) to consider the implications within a discourse of learning English for community cohesion. First is the identification of Muslims and non-Europeans as the most vulnerable and in need of language support in order to achieve integrated and cohesive communities. Wodak (2008) cites Flam and Beauzamy's (2008) research into symbolic violence towards female migrants in their European Union project, in which they considered the 'gaze and the look':

> …this gaze can turn into an instrument of superordination, superiority and contempt, of surveillance, control and discipline … The gaze of the 'Other' simultaneously constitutes, judges and, in the very act of judgement, subordinates 'I' to the 'Other'' (Wodak 2008:203-204).

The reader of 'A New Approach' is made complicit in this judgement unless they too consider themselves the object of the gaze, in which case: 'To reclaim the lost freedom 'I' must look back and thus acknowledge and seek to subordinate the 'Other' (ibid).

In Chapter 6 I presented findings which showed how acutely aware participants were of the gaze, its symbolic power and the difficulty of turning this back on the local or native person. Sara, for example, is one of the non-European women in the project who is Muslim although she does not wear a head covering; she described two experiences in which she felt unable to respond to verbal and non-verbal hostility and how this reverberates in an internal dialogue which she cannot resolve. I noted in Chapter 3 that Wodak found migrant women experience certain forms of discrimination not experienced by men, and that forms of dress, particularly headscarves and veils, are part of international debates 'where states seek to control women's bodies and where their bodies and religious beliefs are at the centre of the so-called 'equality' of culture' (2008:198). Flam and Beauzamy define symbolic violence thus: 'denying the presence, skills or contribution of the 'other'. It called attention to real and symbolic status downgrading' (in Wodak 2008:199) which can be traced in 'A New Approach' to a portrayal of women as being without local political agency, thereby reinforcing a gender stereotype in relation to civic behaviour, roles and responsibilities. Where community cohesion or citizenship rhetoric bases itself on a discourse of universal rights, responsibilities and benefits, it fails to address this gendered positioning: here, people in priority groups who are not-quite-yet, or not-quite-good- enough, citizens are predominantly immigrant women who are rarely conceived as being likely to become community leaders and developers.

'A New Approach' firmly places men, and not women, in the public sphere and Arnot et al found that this 'association of masculinity with public life' (2009:98) was common in their investigation into how European student teachers conceptualised gender relations in society and in relation to citizenship. Whilst male teachers showed little interest in challenging gender roles, females offered models of 'caring citizen' or 'family builder' (Arnot 2009:91), relying on a traditional moral discourse which denies or ignores the state's role in exclusion. Here Arnot draws connections between feminist critiques of political philosophy and of education in their common interest in uncovering such gendered assumptions in a liberal democracy which serve to marginalise and subordinate women as citizens, which will inevitably be reflected in ESOL pedagogies and knowledge outcomes. If, in order to serve isolated or poor women, such provision is located in geographically and professionally decentred community venues, then this can also reinforce their marginalisation and low expectations of active entitlement in high-quality

learning environments. I return to this issue in my discussion of family learning programmes and concluding chapter.

Women's improved access to education is positive and empowering for many but there is a fine line between arguing that they have the right to be educated, informed and act as strong role models within their families (Hart Dyke and James 2009) and falling into a trap of pathologising them when their (usually) male relatives take part in violent and criminal activities, leading one commentator to ask '… why is investment in Muslim communities and Muslim women about terror rather than social improvement?' (Janmohamed, 2009). Rosenberg, continuing her critique of Blunkett's 2002 injunctions to families, asked:

> Could it be that women were somehow being blamed for the disaffection of their English-speaking sons and grandsons? Was there a subtext combining gender, class and culture? In 2008, with the knowledge that the 7 July 2005 London bombings were carried out by British nationals fluent in English, there is still a focus on all family members being able to speak English (Rosenberg 2009:48).

Any view that immigrant women have not, over many generations, enabled their multilingual children to positively participate and that this must be, in some way, their fault, leads to gender stereotyping and blaming (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989), but there is a danger that this appears to underpin *A New Approach* and the ESOL services which flow from it.

In 'A New Approach' women are further defined by motherhood, again placing their role and remit within the domestic sphere, although in this discourse the reward and approbation comes, not when they act as cultural guardians, but as cultural travellers, ensuring their children's safe passage into the wider world through the medium of English. Nevertheless, women demonstrate that they continue to be willing to accommodate themselves to learn in situations which are conflictual in order to achieve this capital, where for example their own cultural integrity is denied or damaged, or the range of their knowledge undervalued (Cooke 2006, Blackledge 2005b, Roberts et al 2004). Adults with previous, positive experience of formal learning use their habitus and this cultural capital to support their ability to assimilate to the style and demands of the ESOL classroom, gaining teacher approval and external success, whilst others take longer and risk teacher disapproval and even loss of access to courses in a system in which continued provide funding depends on exam achievement. Critical examination of this behaviour in the UK and elsewhere shows that although learners use a range of strategies to resist the use of

methods or materials which they find irrelevant or problematic, they will nevertheless continue (wittingly or not) to participate in their own domination.

What is absent from the Local Authority Action Plans designed to set up partnerships from which local services were to emerge is any sense that women learners themselves have agency, skills, resources, either to set up their own courses, or mentor others. Asian women in particular are portrayed, even by active supporters (HL Hansard 2011), as passive and housebound, whereas many migrants, especially many Europeans, might not be cosmopolitans with high capital, but neither are they victims, traumatised and isolated; they are transnationals, ambitious to acquire English, open to long term living in the UK, fully conscious of both possibilities and obstacles, proud of their own cultures and languages and, crucially, prepared if necessary to return or move on. This can be regarded as ungrateful, threatening or lazy by the host community, or invigorating and exciting, such as when young people code switch between their various languages and merge musical styles (Rampton 2005). Within this discourse of the deserving and undeserving immigrant, women's unwillingness to remain in low-skilled, badly-paid work can be regarded with little understanding or sympathy, as evidenced by my fieldwork findings, and by Cuban's study of care workers in north- west England (2009). In the next section, I develop this issue of progress in education and work in the context of ESOL eligibility before returning to the domestic sphere.

7.3 Eligibility and obstacles: gaining access to ESOL

Access to ESOL classes and financial support has changed. Two restrictions especially impacted on women during this first decade of the 21st century: the first was the changing rule in relation to spouses (usually wives) of those with settled status which prevents non-EU recent arrivals, even those already married, from being eligible to enter ESOL courses as 'home learners' for three years; wives, partners and husbands of British citizens must meet the fees as overseas learners, effectively closing the door to learning as young families are established and women prioritise child care over English classes. In 2008/9 those eligible as 'home learners' applicants included:

> Para 17 d - the spouse or civil partner of a person with settled status, who has been both married (or has undertaken a recognised civil partnership ceremony) and resident in the UK for one year (LSC 2008:13).

In 2011/12 this became:

> c) The spouse of a person with settled status, where they are not a citizen of an EEA[29] country, who has been resident in the UK for three years.
> d) The spouse of an EEA national living within the UK, where they are not a citizen of an EEA country and resident in the UK for one year (Skills Funding Agency 2011:5).

These changing rules for non-European spouses necessarily impacts most on those who I have shown are also most affected by Family Route immigration rule changes and the requirements of the pre-entry visa language test: women from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Although identified as the most vulnerable, excluded and in need of English language support, these women are actively denied the access granted to others, perpetuating a stereotype that they are reluctant to learn.

The second restriction relates to course fees: spending on ESOL provision for two million students tripled from 2001 to 2008, when it reached around £300 million (Hubble and Kennedy 2011) and plans were already in place to remove automatic fee remission. Learners in receipt of certain means-tested benefits and their unwaged dependants gained free entry to classes whilst all others were required to pay a contribution. It was recognised that some would struggle to pay and a Discretionary Support Fund 'for vulnerable learners including spouses and low paid workers' made 36,168 awards totalling £4.6 million in 2007/8 (Hubble and Kennedy 2011). As I have previously noted, 'spouse'

[29] EEA refers to the European Economic Area

may often be a euphemism for 'wife' and here I suggest that another apparently gender-neutral policy clearly has a gendered aspect, the result of which materially discriminates against poorer married women. Denied automatic access to the mainstream, this group of learners are dependent on those conducting initial assessments to be both aware of, and willing to apply to the Fund which is derisory in comparison to overall spending.

By 2011/12 the financial situation had considerably worsened and severe budget cuts were proposed, so that only those on so-called 'active' benefits became eligible for free classes; these were JobSeekers Allowance (JSA) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA). Although the government's Equality Impact Assessment denied that there would be any significant effect on women, this was hotly disputed by a range of agencies including Niace, the Institute for Race Relations, the University and College Union (UCU) and was, at least partly, effectively resisted by the Action for ESOL Campaign which included students, tutors and supporters. Parliamentary questions highlighted the gendered nature of the cuts and the government acknowledged that data is not gathered about those who claim partial fee remission based on, for example, housing benefit, council tax and income support (HL Hansard 2011b) which effectively prevents comprehensive analysis of potential need. For the first time the significance of women being the majority student population as well as those most affected by budget cuts was raised and debated following a House of Lords Early Day Motion:

> That this House believes the ability to read, write and speak English is essential for all people living in the UK; … is particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact on women, who comprise two-thirds of ESOL learners; and calls on the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills to modify the proposals to ensure that women currently outside the labour market and on a variety of benefits are not excluded (HL Hansard 2011a).

At the same time, support for ESOL in family learning was being protected as set out in a House of Commons Written Statement by the DIUS Minister John Hayes:

> … there are women and families who rely on community-based English language to help them communicate with their children's schools, as well as opening the door to other public services … we will work in partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government on developing new forms of support for those who need informal, community-based learning of English (cited in NIACE 2011).

Through this statement, the Minister is able to rely on a hegemonic discourse which associates supporting children, accessing services and non-mainstream learning with learners who are mothers; it would be difficult to imagine him making the case for

provision for men in the same way. Women are symbolically and materially positioned in a learning environment which, being 'informal' and 'community-based' may not offer qualification or progression. In my literature review, I discussed how feminist studies on migrant women's learning foreground issues such as failing to recognise women's invisible work in supporting their families whilst classifying them into unhelpful singular categories such as 'migrant' or 'women' which fail to grasp the complexity of their roles, responsibilities and needs. This situation of access and eligibility is, I suggest, an example of such failure. ESOL itself is positioned through these measures as an agent of the state with a primary and almost exclusive focus on providing training for low-level employment, directed at a male cohort of students with no regard for their parenting responsibilities whilst women learners not actively seeking employment due to childcare are sidelined into informal provision with no guaranteed progression potential. This appears to me to have become one of the major dilemmas facing ESOL at this moment in its development: how to reconcile, in an already marginalised profession teaching a marginalised population of students, the need for and the difficulties arising from a further division between mainstream courses and community provision. The positive, creative opportunities that the latter offers many students can work as strategies of resistance to a dominant discourse of ESOL delivery, but they are vulnerable to closure and variable teaching quality; and, from a feminist perspective, may serve to perpetuate gendered stereotypes of family life and roles. In the following sections, I explore some aspects of the government's views and family learning provision before returning to this discussion in the concluding chapter.

7.4 Parental responsibilities: a critical discourse analysis of a political speech

It was evident from my fieldwork data that participants expected to use their home language indoors and English outside; this practice was being challenged by children who all used English to some extent at home, often in preference to families' first languages. At times during the last century there was positive recognition of the importance of maintaining minority ethnic cultures and home languages, such as Local Government Act 1966 Section 11 funding for those from the New Commonwealth. Much of this provision was directed at new arrivals, intended to overcome any disadvantages children may experience on starting school and it established a firm connection between women learning English and their mothering roles. Critical discourse analysis of a recent statement by the current Prime Minister, David Cameron, might suggest the government becoming increasingly involved in taking a position about such family language practices, and how this is tightly bound into an ideology of monolingualism and threatening immigration. This exchange took place during Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons:

> Q8. [37426] **Kris Hopkins (Keighley) (Con):** This week, I met a gathering of ESOL-English for speakers of other languages-students at the Keighley campus of Leeds City college. Sadly, too many children in Keighley start school unable to speak English. Does the Prime Minister agree that there is a responsibility and obligation on parents to make sure that their children speak English?
>
> **The Prime Minister:** I completely agree, and the fact is that in too many cases that is not happening. The previous Government did make some progress on making sure people learned English when they came to our country; I think we need to go further. If we look at the number of people who are brought over as husbands and wives, particularly from the Indian sub-continent, we see that we should be putting in place, and we will be putting in place, tougher rules to make sure that they do learn English, so that when they come, if they come, they can be more integrated into our country (HC Hansard 2011).

The question posed allows Cameron to assertively agree about the moral responsibility on parents to ensure their children speak English, and to follow this with an apparently negative fact, a 'truth claim' which is unsubstantiated by both him and his questioner. Nor does he celebrate the advantages of Britain's bilingual children; multilingualism is here invisible, but is sustained throughout as an underlying fear or threat to 'our' country. He then draws an invalid causal link between the question and his response, suggesting that the now factual problem of non-English speaking children can and will be dealt with by introducing tougher immigration rules preventing Indian spouses from entering the UK without passing a language test. Cameron legitimises his statement through various means, including invoking the authority of his position; he suggests that the previous

administration's work was unfinished, using a repeated 'we' and present simple verbs for an emphasis on the collective power of the present administration to enforce this immigration law. The use of intertextuality in the middle section, referencing Cryer's 2001 speech: 'bringing wives and husbands from the sub-continent who often have no education and no English' can appeal to an audience who regards this migration as problematic, allowing him to avoid statistics but refer to 'the number of people' and make a further invalid link to a need for 'tougher rules', again suggesting that he is both required to, and intends to act forcefully in defence of something unspecified but implied in 'our country'. Lexical and grammatical constructions: the use of 'we need… we look… we see that… we should … we will be putting in place' combine rhetorically to demonstrate that what has been presented here is reality, it is a serious situation, the government has recognised it and is taking responsibility to prevent such danger from re-occurring. The use of pronouns to clearly include and exclude groups of people is used to chilling effect in the final sentence when a topos of threat is introduced with the use of a conditional clause to throw further doubt on the future of this immigration route. Thus he has moved, in three sentences, from a question about parental responsibility to suggesting that some spouses may not be allowed to enter the country at all. Who is Cameron targeting here? Despite the phrase 'husbands and wives' it is unlikely that he has husbands in mind when he talks about them being 'brought over'. This is far from being a gender-neutral text and supports an understanding of the interwoven nature of discourses of immigration, racism, gender and language learning which impact materially and symbolically on the lives of all learners and their tutors.

The Prime Minister's uncompromisingly tough stance is located also within a chain of discourse which does not distinguish between different levels of English language ability, nor acknowledge the complexity and length of time it takes to achieve confidence and competence in daily interactions nor, crucially, the strength and value of being multilingual both for individuals and society as a whole. This last issue, which goes to the heart of family language practices and mothers' attitudes to not only learning English but also their parenting abilities, is played out especially in family language classes.

7.5 ESOL through Family Learning

Throughout this decade, 2001-2011, whilst many women were attending mainstream ESOL courses, there was increasing provision of family-based ESOL through Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN). Literacy and numeracy programmes receive positive reports of sensitive, creative practice in caring environments (Brooks et al 2008) and participants provide glowing feedback:

> The vast majority of parents were very positive about their experience of family literacy: 97% reported gaining some kind of benefit during the course, and 96% thought that they continued to benefit from the course three months after it had finished (NRDC 2009: 10).

Family learning can be a powerful gateway to learning. It offers safe and accessible environments in which mothers and other carers can develop their own skills, understanding and knowledge at the same time as enriching their approaches to supporting their children's education (Rees et al 2003, Ward and Spacey 2008:22). Its potential for promoting bilingualism is recognised: 'Family learning should play a vital role in encouraging the use of the mother tongue at home, in the community and in places of learning' (Savitsky 2008:11). In this section I examine FLLN's potential to offer English language students with dependent children various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1991) and its role in the construction of gendered learning identities. I briefly overview policy aims, structural barriers and opportunities, and highlight some issues of critical concern. There is insufficient space to discuss pedagogical models or the influence of a rapidly-developing field of home-school literacy practices (see Brooks et al 2008 for a comprehensive international review).

7.5.1 Locating ESOL within FLLN

The Basic Skills Agency family learning programmes were founded in the mid-1990s with three aims: to raise parents' literacy and numeracy skills, improve their abilities to help children at school and improve children's acquisition of literacy, language, and numeracy. Their aim is to break the 'generational cycle of underachievement' (DfES 2001) through an intervention in which both children and adults learn together. This may be due to financial or other disadvantage, and include 'those adults whose first language is not English [who] tend to have literacy skills that are well below the average' (DfES 2004:1). It is underpinned by 'the need to eliminate social exclusion, for the good of the people who are currently excluded and for the wider benefit of society' to be achieved by establishing

links between adults and their children's schools and communities, having acquired skills 'that give them confidence and a sense of potential' (DfES 2004: 12).

This policy, couched in liberal and empowering terms, is based on a deficit model not only of parenting abilities, but also of the literacy practices of a wide range of families, English and non-English speaking alike. For the latter, I have shown that there is already a political discourse which strongly suggests reluctance on the part of these families to learn English accompanied by injunctions to use it at home, and the literacy referred to in this policy is predominantly English in a written form. Minority ethnic students in FLLN can be implied as not having literacy-rich homes; such assumptions are classed, raced and gendered and have a powerful effect on teaching practices (Blackledge 2005b, Auerbach 1989, Reay 1998). The repetition of words and phrases associated with dysfunctionality creates in the reader's mind images of families not only in significant difficulty but also those who cause difficulties in the community. The juxtaposition of such phrases with 'adults whose first language is not English' creates a connection which becomes difficult to refute and becomes part of a common sense point of view 'or *doxa* (Bourdieu 1977) … which presupposes that the use of some minority languages, represented as oppositional to English, is associated with social problems, as is a failure or refusal to learn English' (Blackledge 2009:83-84).

Given the government's position as set out in Sections 7.2 and 7.4 that there were such intergenerational problems causing negative consequences in British Asian families, and that mainstream ESOL was already included in Basic Skills, it is unsurprising that FLLN ESOL classes were introduced although these were not specifically developed and piloted for bilingual families until 2008, models of which are now available for all ability levels and length of course (Skills for Families Excellence Gateway) following the high and increasingly urgent demands being placed in schools in many areas of the country coping with new patterns of immigration. In some areas, Polish is the second most common language of school-entry pupils (Kofman et al 2009). However there continues to be reluctance to name families as multi-or bilingual:

> Family language is used to describe the programmes for families where English is not the primary language at home. They include a broad coverage of skills including Family English, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) courses and are not therefore just family ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses (Skills Funding Agency 2010:4).

This Guidance implies that programmes are intended to place English as the primary home language. At the same time, ESOL is negatively positioned 'not …just' as if it is, by itself, insufficient reason for course provision.

7.5.2 Barriers to FLLN

Although FLLN policy has consistently prioritised fathers for provision, and 'ethnic family groupings' (LSC 2005-2006) are no longer listed despite awareness of the value of involving wider family networks, learners are overwhelmingly mothers. Research in 42 local authorities into the effectiveness of programmes found that 94% of participants were women and 22% did not have English as their first language (NRDC 2009:8). Mothers are held, and hold themselves, primarily responsible for cultural and language development of young children (Piller and Pavlenko 2006, Reay 2004); my research participants are acutely and constantly aware of the expectations and pressures placed on them as mothers of bilingual children. However, Section 7.3 above detailed the structural gendered inequalities presenting obstacles for non –EU learners, inevitably compounding the difficulties faced by those in greatest need: '85% of mothers of Bangladeshi pupils and almost 70% of Pakistani mothers had no qualifications compared to only 16% of White British mothers (DfES 2006, Ward and Spacey 2008:22). There has long been recognition that early access to language classes aids settlement in economic and social terms and delay adversely affects later achievement (Baynham et al 2007). A second barrier is Guidance advice which proposes that 'If the adults have pre-entry Level language needs it might be more appropriate for them to join a beginner's adult only ESOL course first and then to progress to a family language course' (Skills Funding Agency 2010: 11). This echoes the difference drawn between 'Family English' and 'ESOL', suggesting a further range of problems in these programmes: a lack of awareness and ownership of the needs of beginner learners, a change of direction in relation to progression, which is usually from community into mainstream courses, a dismissal of child care needs which is why learners need Family Programmes in the first place, and a lack of training or availability of specialist tutors and child care staff. The examples which follow illustrate the effects of these policies in the research locality.

Table 7.3 Research Participants in FLLN class 2010

Name	Country	Languages	No. of chil.	Previous work or education	Current	Comments
Eva	Bulgaria	Bulgarian	1	Soldier University	u/e[30]	Husband dentist; wants to work when English improves. Taken E3.
Elena	Hungary	Hungarian	2	Publisher, author, radio DJ University	Author	Husband Internet service provider. She writes self-help books, started twitter in English. Taken E3.
Sonya	Belgium	Turkish, Dutch, Flemish	1	u/e	u/e	Unable to work as diabetic and pregnant.
Julia	Bulgaria	Bulgarian, Russian	1	Nurse	Nurse	Husband engineer. She studies at home, wants to work.
Aina	Japan	Japanese	1	Nurse University	u/e	Planning to move to Australia for husband's work. Had previously lived there.
Akcan	Turkey	Turkish	2	u/e	u/e	Previously at college, husband taxi driver. Was cleaner, stopped when pregnant. Wants to learn English to support children at nursery and school and become independent in family matters: 'In Turkey I was lively but now just looking at husband'.
Ana	Polish	Polish, German	1	University Economic science	u/e	Single parent. Came with boyfriend to UK.

This class of about twelve women are predominantly European and highly educated, although only one is currently employed outside the home. They have small families, expect to return to work, and are studying with plans to progress into further education or seek equivalence for existing qualifications. Their class takes place in a SureStart centre, where they feel relaxed, with their children in the next room. Several are pregnant or breast feeding. They are confident in their parenting skills and have no need for numeracy or IT, although a thorough grounding in the education system is welcome. Children are

[30] unemployed

exposed to a range of languages at home. The women are very positive about the benefits of this learning forum, including being able to discuss matters of particular interest in relation to their children, make friends and use this as a springboard to meet each other outside class. A few miles away in a charity-run family centre, an ESOL class is being run informally for a group of predominantly Moroccan, Afghan and Iraqi women with young children who are not eligible to enrol, having entered the UK as non- European spouses. Although their tutor is qualified, they are not entitled to enter for SfL exams, and their studies ended when the family centre lost its funding. Again those with the most significant needs and arguably high anxiety and willingness to learn, are denied entry if they are not able or willing to join a mainstream class. These policies were not jointly formulated in order to deliberately deprive recently-arrived Asian mothers with young children and low levels of English from benefitting from FLLN courses, but taken together this is the unintended consequence. The warrants (Cochran-Smith and Fries 2001) for each vary; the political driver underlying eligibility for all SfL based on EU membership or UK residence is clearly linked to governments' intentions to limit access to public services, including education, as part of a drive to reduce net immigration. The Guidance is silent on how the loss of child care, socialisation with other mothers, local flexibility, free spaces and other advantages of FLLN provision adversely affect learners to the extent that they are denied education.

7.5.3 Critical approaches

It can be difficult to interrupt or challenge the public discourse surrounding family literacy, which is held internationally in high esteem and is presented as an effective support to vulnerable families, working in partnership to meet socio-economic targets, such that 'the expectations generated by this discourse are onerous and, perhaps, quite unrealistic' (Anderson et al 2008:74). The fact that it is almost exclusively a provision for mothers is rarely debated, and UK policy and related texts are gender-neutral or draw attention to the lack of male participants:

> To be consistent with Department for Education terminology, adults on family programmes will be referred to as 'mothers' and 'fathers' rather than parents… The priority groups for this provision are: …
> Fathers in order to increase the number of males involved in this type of provision (Skills Funding Agency 2011).

Although much is being done to try and engage wider family networks and the work of, for example, Gregory et al (2004) shows the valued relationships between siblings and

between children and their grandparents for intergenerational exchanges of learning, the connection remains in dominant literacy discourses between mothers, poor home literacy practices and a drive to promote school literacy, or white middle class models (Blackledge 2005b, Valdes 1996, Auerbach 1995). From 48 Canadian websites on family literacy:

> the dominant image … was that of a woman (mother) reading to a young child; when other people were included, a traditional nuclear family configuration dominated (Anderson et al 2008:64).

> 'The teachers seemed to consider that the women did not possess the appropriate resources to organise their homes as adequate literacy learning environments' (Blackledge 2005b:2).

Here there are several areas of concern: interventions based on a foundation of breaking cycles of illiteracy and deprivation necessarily devalue families' capital; immigrant families face the additional risk of having mainstream cultural values imposed on their child-rearing practices; mothers are the focal point for both the responsibility and the blame for their children's educational outcomes; and immigrant mothers are, additionally, held accountable for wider societal and economic conditions, as a result of their migration journeys, where 'mothering exists at the disjunctures between nationalisms, the states, and the … movement of capital and labour' (Villenas and Moreno 2001:672 in Menard-Warwick 2009:103). In these discourses, women's language learning is not related to their personal previous goals or interrupted education but to the primary needs of their families, and whilst such aims are usually shared by learners, tension exists between what formal, political statements are made, how providers interpret guidance and tutors use their own experience and capital to plan and carry out teaching, and how mothers use their own capital and exert agency to achieve their goals.

None of the policies above are explicitly racist or sexist, but the ideological and social power acted out through them, especially in combination with others, become part of a larger order of discourse through which it is possible to recognise both the gendered and gendering aspects of them (Sunderland 2004, Mills 1997 in Litoselliti 2006). These policies create gendered and raced boundaries and it is important to recognise the limits to which women can exert agency to access learning and the variation between individuals and groups. For example, Ward and Spacey's study of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women in and out of ESOL found that 'Caring for children is the major practical barrier to taking up organised learning' (2008:3) whilst Buckingham et al's study of women in west

London concurred but added: ‘However, childcare acts as an umbrella term for issues of affordability, availability and location’ (2005:52).

7.6 Summary

I have argued in this chapter that through the processes of policymaking, various constructs become evident along with the intended, and unintended, consequences of political objectives. One is that unchallenged bilingualism can be dangerous to community cohesion, and English is used as a means of social control: 'shifting notions of bilingualism are at base the outcome of competitions among institutions, groups and individuals around questions of citizenship, language and the state' (Stroud 2007:25). Whilst those who investigated the needs of different regions to develop their own strategies for community cohesion recognised how multiple factors contribute to difficulties and solutions, the government continues to place speaking English as central in this discourse. An image of the ESOL learner can develop of perhaps the genuine/bogus asylum seeker, often assumed to be male or, more recently, the non-European Muslim woman as priority learner due to her isolation and lack of participation, both of which constructs attract considerable public opprobrium. Another construct is that Asian women are culturally oppressed and need to be rescued, possessing little agency in relation to their family networks, and little cultural or literacy capital, or the conflation of women learners with Asian immigrants, such that the needs, learning journeys, motivation and other characteristics of all learners are viewed through this same lens of incapacity. All learners are subject to being positioned as meeting the requirements of the economy, and as in need of language training in order to become suitable for entry to low level occupations. This reduces opportunities for students to develop alternative identities, such as househusbands or for women to progress rapidly and return to previous professional standards; domestic labour is rendered invisible and unacknowledged for its effect on entering or sustaining women's learning. Family learning further constructs mothers as struggling, low-skilled parents rather than highly-resourced, capable adults who require specific, appropriate information in a suitable learning environment.

In contrast to the nuance, complexity and depth of understanding expressed by the research participants in Chapter 6, the blunt instrument of political rhetoric and its effect on everyday lives is striking. I have traced how, through processes of drawing up legal frameworks, writing rules and procedures and carrying out consultation, ESOL has been drawn so closely into these discourses that it must necessarily reinforce them. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, there are dangers of ideological critique which aims to uncover a hidden 'truth'; deconstructing such hegemonic discourses only to replace them with an

alternative version of 'truth' which can lead the analyst on a path of messianic, reformative social justice (Patterson 1997) whilst others recognise that excessive reflexivity can result in stagnation (Pillow 2003, 2010). Through this critical analysis, I have demonstrated that there are ideological and structural inequalities, both overt and invisible, in the provision of English language classes to immigrant women. I follow those who argue that there is little point, from a critical feminist perspective, in pursuing such an intellectual exercise without considering what an alternative may look like and how it may be pursued. This is where the 'political project' of feminism meets the theoretical framework of post-structuralism and where, perhaps, the rigidity of control mechanisms can appear fragile in an environment of decreasing certainties. Heller (2012), discussing mobility and multilingualism, suggests it is time to shift our gaze from fixed boundaries and focus on processes, circulation and ambiguity, and, having now discussed both the experiences of participants and the discourses of contemporary ESOL, I follow her suggestion to consider how the 'trajectories of resources and actors intersect in spaces where the consequential work of combining meaning-making with resource distribution takes place' (Heller 2011:10). In the concluding chapter, I consider how this thesis contributes to such an understanding and suggest further areas of research in the field.

Chapter Eight Conclusion

8.1 Contribution

In the field of UK ESOL, there is much yet to be discovered about the lives and language experiences of its diverse population of adult learners and this thesis develops such knowledge by focussing on those who are mothers of young children. I have drawn on the concept of 'bringing the outside in' (Baynham 2006, Baynham and Simpson 2010, Lytra and Moller 2011) addressing how participants' family and community relationships and interactions affect them as emerging English speakers. It highlights how deeply such experiences influence learners, particularly with young children, in ways which may continue for years, but suggests that this is largely unknown to tutors and planners, and it demonstrates that it is vital to attend to how unique and complex lives intersect with desires and decisions to learn. I used interviews and diaries to gather these stories and devised research tools of family language mapping, calendars and imagined family meals. These have pedagogic potential which I discuss in Section 8.5 Recommendations.

The enquiry develops a critical feminist approach to contemporary ESOL, foregrounding participants' voices alongside an analysis of selected texts. Its contribution is to demonstrate that gender does have 'independent analytical status' (Bensimon and Marshall 2003:340) and that such critique needs to be renewed as although 'feminism' still has 'political currency … there is an undeniable resistance and range of negative connotations attached to the term'(Mills and Mullany 2011:11) which I argue can work to constrain our understanding of power relations in ESOL. Lazar argues that a 'distinctly feminist politics of articulation' gives rise to a set of distinctly feminist concerns (2005:3), so that, rather than simply 'talking back' to power I have attempted to make policy analysis accountable to critical feminism, showing how immigrant women's lives and learning potential are influenced both discursively and materially. The work draws on a body of critical analysis in English language learning (for example Auerbach 1997, Pennycook 2004, Rosenberg 2007, Cooke and Simpson 2008) demonstrating, through an intersectional lens of gender and race, evidence of structural and symbolic discrimination, overt and invisible, within discourses which connect speaking English with state control of immigration and settlement, the breakdown and promotion of community cohesion, the value of monolingualism and meeting the needs of an economy currently in severe recession.

In this study, recognising the choices made by researcher and participants with regard to using English throughout, I have valued the everyday language women used to tell their stories which 'shapes their particular understanding of their worlds and the subject positions they took up within different discourses' (Treleaven 2003:265) and located this within a site of education in which, whilst learning 'implicit and explicit lessons … about themselves as women of a particular race, class and culture…these lessons in turn affect how they see themselves as learners and shape their future learning experience' (Hayes 2002:51).

8.2 Key Findings

I addressed these questions:

- How do women with mothering responsibilities experience learning and using English as they engage in the process of language learning through adult education provision?
- What are their family language practices?
- What are their stories of migration and plans to settle in the UK?
- How do they perceive themselves as English language users and members of the local community?

A key finding is that emotional, embodied and symbolic transitions were at least as significant for participants in their perception of themselves as successful language learners, mothers and immigrant citizens as are material resources and conditions. Winnie referred to 'the hole inside' when talking to her children, Lucia to feeling 'crucified' by people who don't know her, and this theme continues throughout the findings.

Of the wider group surveyed, 45% reported being multilingual; however families are experiencing rapid change as all children use English from a very early age, causing dilemmas, anxiety and pain to several mothers. Some made considerable effort and sacrifice as fears of losing home languages was a central concern; the divide between mother and children widened and some lost parental authority, echoing Wong Fillmore (1981); I develop this by addressing the unexpected finding that one third are single parents (Chapter 6:1), a compounding social factor by which mothers were constructed as possessing reduced social capital with which to assert authority and sustain family language and culture.

I found that women were equivocal about their plans to settle in the UK; most had arrived for work or economic reasons and now children's educational needs had become a priority, including gaining English as linguistic capital (Bourdieu 1977), seen as essential worldwide. Approximately half the questionnaire group were European, as are many ESOL learners, and assumptions that immigrants plan to settle permanently cannot be considered reliable. I concur with Kouritzin (2000) that women's investment in their own language learning varies between women and over time, and that this depends on both external circumstances such as material conditions, life stage and family opinions, but also on internal processes. I develop this into a contemporary British context: the question of investment in learning (Norton 2000) which prompts the question 'Should I stay or should I go?' (Skilton-Sylvester 2002) is not just about continuing in the classroom but remaining in the country itself. In this respect, many European learners demonstrate a more fluid, mobile relationship and a sense of the potential to return 'home' than others who may be, for example, asylum seekers. However, this concept of home is also in flux, potent symbolically but not reliable. Retaining a sense of attachment and belonging to a physical space and family of origin supported women with a sense of self which had not yet developed here, especially as, in this study, most were living apart from extended family networks and also struggled to find a 'mode of belonging' or role model (Wodak 2008). This became further apparent when participants were asked to project into the long term future, when a hazy picture emerged whilst language practices were deemed to become English, again compounding a fear of language loss and of their own increasing isolation.

Personal ambivalence was compounded by external factors, including economic recession and everyday encounters of transition into the local community. Following Bourdieu (1991) Norton (2000) Flam and Beauzamy (2008) and Wodak (2008) this study found that social interactions outside home were constructed by and further constructed power relations; here, viewed through a gender and race lens, they demonstrate how women feel stupid or unseen, threatened, confused and deskilled. Conversely, positive encounters occurred when transitions into employment or learning are supported by a known, trusted person acting as conduit into the new world. This study builds on an understanding that the need to understand and be understood, and to be afforded permission to engage in encounters, daily reconstructs women's identities as confident English speakers. It develops knowledge about the variable investment in learning English being brought into class, even by the most committed and persistent learners.

I initiated this study through awareness of immigrant women's material and structural obstacles to entering and sustaining learning whilst caring for young children. Themes developed with participants show that, regardless of background and circumstances, they all carry primary child care responsibility and are subject to the double-bind of sustaining family languages and cultures whilst supporting children into mainstream society (Piller and Pavlenko 2006). I did not anticipate that the study would come to depend on such an overtly feminist analysis, which developed through early stages of reading, question setting and data analysis until it became evident that this was my ontological base from which using a gender lens could become a more fully-developed, intersectional, political enquiry. From this I followed Lazar (2007) to approach the critical discourse analysis in ways which exposed a range of apparently unrelated connections between texts which could be understood as gendered and having an impact on women in ESOL. My questions were:

- How is ESOL, as a form of public education, and how are ESOL learners constructed in the political sphere?
- What values and attitudes appear to be dominant both in determining the purpose of teaching English to immigrants and how are learners perceived in relation to this learning?
- Where and in what circumstances does ESOL policy acknowledge and address gender as an issue?
- Are there any particular views, attitudes or beliefs expressed about the position or needs of women learners, especially those with young children?

Following initial readings and analysis, I found it unhelpful to treat ESOL texts as distinct from wider discourses previously discussed (Chapter 7) of immigration controls, community cohesion and employment skills. I follow Rosenberg (2007), Blackledge (2007) and Simpson (Simpson and Whiteside 2012) who argue that English language learning is integrally bound up in, and frequently defined by, these discourses. I extend their work by addressing gendered aspects of the ESOL learning which are under-researched. My enquiry shows that two thirds of learners are women, that the majority have children, and that they experience material and structural disadvantages when gender is co-related with poverty, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and lack of appropriate childcare. I agree that English learning by immigrants is widely regarded and accepted as necessary for successful integration but that immigrants themselves can be constructed as unwilling or reluctant to

learn so that certain groups must be coerced into doing so and I find that this impacts on Asian women in particular (Chapter 7.1.2). In the discourses of strengthening community cohesion (Chapter 7.2) I found responsibility for community breakdown or lack of cohesion strongly associated with Asian families not speaking English at home. I draw on feminist theorists (Chapter 3) to show that this leads to race and gender stereotyping through which policies ostensibly designed to prioritise funds towards those most in need of language support, can instead reinforce images of Asian women lacking in agency and capital, further strengthened by visual images in relevant reports (Chapter 7).

I concur with Brooks et al (2008) that family learning is highly regarded and is a valuable resource, but argue that it can be problematised as further constructing immigrant mothers with minority languages as underachieving, excluded and in homes which are not literacy-rich (Chapter 7.3.2). FLLN learners are overwhelmingly female, reflecting again the gendered discourse of mothers' childrearing duties, through which they become positioned as doubly ineffective: having inadequate parenting skills and English. My teaching and observations of FLLN classes, although limited in geographical area, were of monolingual environments which failed to value mothers' home language practices and contributed strongly to an exclusively monolingual discourse of child care and literacy development (Chapter 6.2I).

Whilst none of the policies above are explicitly racist or sexist the ideological and social power acted out through them, especially in combination with others, become part of a larger order of discourse through which it is possible to recognise both the gendered and gendering aspects of them (Sunderland 2004, Mills 1997 in Litoselliti 2006), which affect women learners in ways which may not be immediately apparent. This study group did not follow a stereotypical picture of the British Asian woman learner; they were very diverse ethnically, many were well-educated and resourced. They did not live in large family groups but were fairly isolated from relatives. Similarly, most were not following immigration routes to British nationality but reflected a more fluid migratory pattern emanating from Europe and its economic context. This affected their sense of permanence and belonging but not their commitment to learning English, which weakens the discursive connection between settlement and English language use. Structural and material conditions affected the group, such as the stresses of single parenthood and seeking appropriate employment, finding suitable child care and accessing ESOL courses; however,

these were amongst those fortunate to meet legal and financial criteria for entry, whilst other women living locally were not, and were excluded. The policy texts I analysed did not acknowledge or reflect the complexity and subtlety of multilingual family lives such as these, and the responsibilities of the host or native speaker community to encourage and support emerging speakers is almost entirely lost in these discourses. This imbalance is significant as the women's stories demonstrate how it is the accumulation of difficult daily linguistic interactions which most undermine confidence, which leads to problems in sustaining or initiating relationships. These are the events which they continued to work through in interviews, reflecting and retelling them in the process of negotiating gendered selves. Similarly, ongoing governmental injunctions to speak English within the home deny the reality and responsibility on mothers to sustain home languages and cultures. Their accounts and questionnaire responses show that children not only acquire English rapidly and prefer to use it which is unsurprising, but uncover the damage done to parent-child relations in a context where multilingualism is not positively valued and supported in institutions such as pre-school providers or through the adult ESOL and family learning curricula.

8.3 Methodology: critical reflection

Throughout this research I have considered how two stories, women's narratives and a trail of discourse and policies, have travelled alongside each other, commenting openly and silently on each other and creating a new, ongoing story of English language learning in contemporary Britain. Feminist research is less about method and more about purpose, how this locates the researcher, her questions and every aspect of her enquiry; by using a range of methods, I found that this resulted in substantial and meaningful data which can be interpreted in relation to each other. From an empirical perspective, the opportunities afforded by a long period of engagement were continued conversations and the re-interpretation of early ideas, allowing new themes and insights to emerge; the use of critical discourse analysis was appropriate to explore, uncover, challenge and discuss how ideologies of gender are prevalent and, at times, act against women's interests in this field of learning. My 'warrant' (Swann 2002) for orientating gender in this study was not only that 'non-naturally occurring data constitutes good data but also an acceptance that solicited interpretations constitute reported understandings (not 'mined facts')… [which] entails taking on board co-construction' (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2008:15), in which I consider this research partly successful, as using only English no doubt influenced the

depth and complexity of responses and constrained, with less fluent speakers, a full contribution to developing ideas. Developing the project by the use of specific classroom observations designed to connect participants' narratives and interview data to their learning environment would have provided a useful further contextual and pedagogic dimension. My original intention, to include women not currently in learning, had to be altered for practical reasons (Chapter 5) so my analysis cannot compare their experiences and reflections.

8.4 Researcher involvement and reflexivity

Pillow (2003, 2010) reminds us that there is always the additional story, that of the researcher herself, who, in this case through the process of doctoral writing, engages with and influences this new narrative. I have argued throughout of the importance of researcher reflexivity and openness, including one's partiality and mindfulness that others' personal storytelling is part of a process of political change. Continuing awareness of the unequal power relations between myself and participants, and between them and state institutions, carried dangers of helplessness; I feared misrepresentation due to language constraints, cultural misunderstandings, a failure to listen carefully enough or ask the 'right' questions; I wondered continually how to do justice to their stories. I questioned the rigour of my discourse analysis, whilst re-shaping its direction alongside the ethnographic process, and attempted to avoid yet another binary which positioned the state as villain of this story alongside heroic, oppressed victims. It is not irrelevant that questions of meaning-making, interpretation and constructions of power relations rely so extensively on language, which I consider an active instrument in the enquiry and that my purpose, to enquire, critically analyse and construct new meanings, is dependent on the language itself as a tool. However I have also attempted not to hold too tightly to a particular form of interpretation, in order to allow openness to multiple truths and knowledges which themselves have shifted rapidly during the research. One such aspect is my relationship with the ESOL profession which I view with the emerging lens of researcher, problematising its role and pedagogy as agent of the state. Although teaching English to immigrants is always a pragmatic endeavour, ESOL tutors have nevertheless often regarded personal and political empowerment of learners as a legitimate practice, working individually and collectively to support a marginalised student body to find a safe, positive and constructive position in wider society. Whilst challenging wider hegemonic discourses which, I have argued, can and do exert negative influences on many students, there are

also challenges to be made within the profession which proved to be an uncomfortable deconstruction of some aspects of ESOL discourses and pedagogical practices.

I suggest that there is wider applicability of this research partly because south-east England is one of several regions which have recently experienced intensive and unexpected immigration, particularly from Eastern Europe. Secondly, women's narratives of family experiences often have wider resonance and can form part of a collective understanding of immigrant mothers' relationships with the English language. Thirdly, this critical discourse analysis provides a framework within which other women's lives may be explored.

8.5 Recommendations

I suggest that national and local policy-makers, planners and providers acknowledge and address the fact of a majority female student population, and plan to overcome material and structural barriers, particularly regarding lack of learning choices available to women with young children, with inflexible mainstream courses often the only option. Family learning is an extremely important resource which can nevertheless be critiqued for its dependence on a parent-deficient and highly gendered model of provision and lack of specialist ESOL teachers. At policy level, through consultation and local research, constructions of the female ESOL student need to be continually interrogated for gender and racial stereotyping, building on previous research knowledge that many populations of learners are similarly diverse. There should be great care in attributing characteristics such as inter-generational households, oppressive cultural influences or educational and career ambitions as broad generalisations.

I agree with many others (for example Action for ESOL campaign) that there should be continuing pressure to resist political and other discourses which position immigrants as resistant to learning and using English at home or in public. I have demonstrated that these determined, active learners are engaged in a daily struggle to sustain multilingualism, and view English use as a positive, significant skill for all their family. Research on multilingual literacy practices with young children (Pahl 2004, Kenner 2004, Martin-Jones and Jones 2000) demonstrates the richness of families' resources which may not be valued at school (Gonzalez et al 2005: 90 in Brooks 2008), a problem which, I suggest, is compounded within ESOL by similar presumptions of monolingualism, which

could be challenged by teacher trainers. Local service providers may proactively consider how best to meet priority service targets by developing partnerships between ESOL and pre-school, such as providing classes in SureStart and other family centres with a multilingual agenda.

There is potential for the research tools to be used by tutors as a means to enable and encourage learners to make comparisons across space and time, to graphically represent contemporary language practices and imaginatively engage in their future life in the UK or elsewhere. Tutors are likely to discover a range of multilingual practices which were previously hidden, which may point to both additional resources and priorities for learning which could be negotiated with individuals or as a class group. Dissemination of these ideas and their application could be easily achieved through conferences, journals and workshops, and they are adaptable for learners of all abilities.

8.6 Further research: mainstream or margins?

This re-emerging debate about ESOL comes at a time when provision is moving rapidly towards a unidirectional 'ESOL for work' programme in many areas. From a feminist perspective, there is a need to further analyse how ESOL can be considered either 'masculinised' or 'feminised'. Anxiety is expressed about the disadvantages of perceived mainstream 'masculine' systems which may be constrained, reductionist, training rather than educative, and designed to follow a culture of performativity which can work against women's interests and needs but qualifications are hugely important to both sexes. If one suggests that mothers' needs can be better served outside of the mainstream into a range of community provision, then further serious dilemmas are raised such as: vulnerability of funding streams; less well-trained tutors; inaccessibility of progression routes and qualifications; lack of national standards; and gendered practices of some parenting and early years services. What can be drawn from feminist pedagogies? There is much to learn from those who advocate participatory, empowering pedagogies (Auerbach 1997, Freire 1972) crucially the development of supportive environments which acknowledge and address the impact of learning English on mothers' self esteem in their external and private worlds. Women-only spaces can be affirming and allow opportunities to share personal stories, fears and challenges and develop strategies, and Auerbach reminds us of the benefits of working in homogenous groups: '…if they are all women or all mothers, if their children are similar in age … it will be easier to find common issues and to develop an

organizational basis for acting on them' (1997:32). Co-teaching models, mentoring, the encouragement of minority ethnic teachers, more direct work with and by women learners themselves are all vital and may be more readily developed outside the mainstream. Careful consideration is needed regarding essentializing gender and recognising differences between women from different backgrounds, but this thesis shows that women at different life stages, with particular priorities, concerns or constraints around learning English at that time, need supportive programmes which attend to these issues. Secondly a feature of such participatory classes is their aim to empower learners to set their own agendas, name and find solutions to current real-life problems. This links, through practice, the academic argument to political action, a connection which lies at the centre of feminist research.

This research has provided me with a unique and welcome opportunity to consider in depth many issues lying behind a problem which appeared over several years to be an apparently unfair restriction on access to learning English for local women with young children. With a deeper understanding of the social, economic and political context surrounding structural constraints I am more aware of the need to consider them not as a priority group but as mainstream learners with appropriate provision, including attention to those symbolic, imaginative aspects of becoming users of another language. I hope to develop this research further with those not engaged in learning and to consider the pedagogical possibilities of different settings.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

University of Sheffield

Information Sheet

Research Project Title: "Migrant women as mothers and learners of English: an exploration of transitions and gender"

This is a project about women who have moved to England, and have young children. It is about learning English, and about moving home and being a woman.

I invite you to be in the project. It is important that you understand what the project is, and what happens. Please read this paper. You can talk about it with your family and friends. Ask me if you don't understand or have questions. Take your time! Thanks.

Some questions about the project:

What is it about?

I have been an ESOL teacher for a long time. I teach lots of different people and I am interested in what happens to women who want to learn and have young children. I am interested in questions such as:

- What is your story about moving to England?
- How easy or difficult is it for you to learn English and why?
- What do you feel about which language your children use?
- What difference does it make to you what decisions the government makes about things like immigration and community services, and how does this affect your plans for the future?

The project will last for several months. At the end, I plan to write about your stories and how you feel about learning English, and I will make suggestions about what is important, especially for women, in arranging English courses. I will talk to other teachers and course managers about what I have found. I will write a thesis which is part of my application for the degree of Doctor of Education (EdD).

Why did I choose you?

I am asking women who live in the local area to be in the project, so that we can talk about local courses and things that are important in our area. There will be about 10 -15 women altogether. Some of you are in classes now, some of you were in classes before, and some are waiting for a place.

Do you have to take part?

No! You can decide what to do. It makes no difference to your English classes, to your work or benefits – all of these things are separate to the project. You can decide to stop at any time that you want. You can ask me questions about it at any time if you have worries or you are not sure about something.

How will the project take place?
There are a few different parts:

1. Three group discussions. We will decide together the best place to have these meetings –perhaps at the college/ Children's Centre. I will pay your bus fare and refreshments, but we don't have a crèche, so you will need to look after the children yourself. Each meeting will take about 2 hours; the times can be flexible. I will ask you all some questions, about your classes, how you feel about learning and teaching your children. Then I will ask you to talk together, so that I can listen and write some notes. I will tape record the discussion to help me remember what everyone said.

2. Three individual interviews, when I will see each of you personally. We can have these interviews at your home or somewhere else if it is easier. This is more like a long conversation between us. I will again ask you some questions, such as about your education before you came to England, or what languages you think your children should speak. Again, I will tape record and make notes of our interview.

These conversations can be very personal and sometimes we will talk about feelings or experiences which might be difficult but it is important that the project includes everything –positive and negative –that you feel about being a mother and learner of English. You can tell me if you don't want all the information to be used in the project. As the project continues, you and the others will decide more about what you want to include in the discussions.

If you take part, it is important that you try to be as open as you can so that I can understand your story. It will all be in English, so perhaps you will not be able to say everything that you want to, but it doesn't matter if you make mistakes.

3. Making notes on a calendar about which language you use at home and when. I'll ask you to do this for about a week at a time, before we meet for discussions.

4. Keeping a diary. This takes more time and not everyone will be able to do this. With this, you write down important things like how do you choose when you use your different languages, what do other people in the family do, how you feel about learning English. I can help you with ideas, but this is very personal and everyone will write something different. This is private between you and me unless you want to tell others about what you are writing. You can decide to write in your home language and I will arrange for translation.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
There are no direct benefits for you at the time of the project, although you may enjoy talking with me and the other women about your situation. I hope that this research will help to improve services for women with young children who are learning English in our area.

What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?
If the project has to stop for any reason, I will tell you why.

What if something goes wrong?
If you are not happy at any time with what happens in the project, please tell me straight away and I will try to help. If you think I have done something wrong, and you are not happy with my work, then please contact my supervisor who will be happy to talk to you. His name is Dr David Hyatt at the University of Sheffield (see below for contact details). I will give you full information about the complaints procedure later.

What happens to the tape recordings?
These will be used only for analysis during the project; that is, to help me remember exactly what happens in the interviews. They will be stored securely in my house. No-one else will have access to them. I will not use them for anything else without your written permission.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential (private)?
Yes. I will keep all my notes, tapes and papers locked in a cupboard in my house. I will ask you to give me written permission so that I can use our interviews when I am teaching, perhaps talking at a conference or with my supervisor or writing an article for a journal. But I will use a code for each person so that no-one will know which person I am writing about, all the names will be changed and I will not identify you in reports or publications.

What happens to the results of the research project?
The results (stories/data) will be analysed by me and will be written as part of my doctoral thesis. There may be an article in a journal or a book later. I will tell you about this later in the project. Your personal information will either be destroyed or stored securely.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?
The project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Educational Studies Department's Ethics Review Procedure.

Contact for further information
My contact details:
Sheila Macdonald
Tel: 01843 607088
Email: edp08sm@sheffield.ac.uk

My supervisor:
Dr David Hyatt, School of Education, Department of Educational Studies, 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA
Tel: 0114 222 8126
Email: d.hyatt@sheffield.ac.uk

This information sheet is for you to keep. I will also give you a copy of your signed consent form if you decide to take part.

Thank you very much for reading this, and for agreeing to come to the first meeting.

Appendix 2

University of Sheffield: Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: "Migrant women as mothers and learners of English: an exploration of transitions and gender"

Name of Researcher: Sheila Macdonald

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I read the information sheet, dated ……. about this project. I understood the information in the sheet. I had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I can stop at any time without giving any reason. *(Contact number: 01843 607088)* ☐

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the above research project. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Sheila Macdonald	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Copies:

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy for the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

Appendix 3

Women and ESOL Research Project 2011

My name is Sheila Macdonald. I teach ESOL in Margate and I am doing a project at the University of Sheffield. I am interested in women ESOL students who have children living with them in the UK. I want to find out what languages you speak with your families and how easy or difficult it is to come to class.

Can you help me? Please fill in the form. If you have more children than this, please add them on another piece of paper.

What is your name?	
Where do you go to class? Please tick.	Margate / Dover / Canterbury / Shepway
What is your home language?	
Have you got any children or grandchildren?	Yes/No

Age	Girl/boy	Lives at home with you? Yes/No	Language(s) you speak together at home

Would you like to continue with this project? I would like to interview women students who have young children. If you are interested and want to know more, then please tick here ☐ and I will get in touch with you.

Thanks for your help!

Sheila Macdonald

All information is: Confidential √ Anonymous √ Used for academic purposes only √

Appendix 4

Women English language learners with child care responsibilities in East Kent: Questionnaire

PART A: YOU AND YOUR FAMILY		
A1	What is your name?	
A2	What is your home country?	
A3	How old are you?	
A4	How long have you lived in the UK?	
A5	Why did you come to live in the UK?	
A6	What languages do you speak?	
A7	What languages do you write?	
A8	How many children have you got?	
A9	What are their ages?	
A10	Which language(s) do you use most with your children?	
A11	Who lives in your home in the UK?	
A12	Are you the main child carer in your family?	Yes ☐ No ☐

PART B: YOUR EDUCATION AND WORK		
B1	How many years were you in school?	
B2	Did you go to college or university?	Yes ☐ No ☐
B3	Do you have any qualifications?	Yes ☐ *Go to B4* No ☐ *Go to B5*
B4	What are your qualifications?	
B5	Did you go to work in your home country?	Yes ☐ *Go to B6* No ☐ *Go to B7*
B6	What work did you do?	
B7	Are you working now?	Yes ☐ *Go to B8* No ☐ *Go to B10*
B8	What is your job?	
B9	What language do you usually use at work?	
B10	Have you done any other jobs in the UK?	Yes ☐ No ☐
B11	Are you on an English language course now?	Yes ☐ *Go to C1* No ☐ *Go to C9*

PART C: YOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE		
C1	Where is your course?	Adult Education ☐ FE College ☐ Community Centre ☐
C2	What level is your class?	Entry 1 ☐ Entry 2 ☐ Entry 3 ☐ Level 1 ☐ Level 2 ☐
C3	Is your course helping you with your English?	No ☐ A little ☐ Some ☐ A lot ☐
C4	What would make your course better?	Times of the class ☐ Creche ☐ Topics ☐ Activities ☐ Other (please comment):
C5	Is there a crèche (a nursery)?	Yes ☐ *Go to C6* No ☐ *Go to C8*

PART C: YOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE		
C6	Do you use the crèche?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C7	Is it free?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C8	Who looks after your children when you are in class? *(Now go to D1)*	
C9	Do you want to go on an English language course at the moment?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C10	Is there any reason why you can't go at the moment?	Money ☐ Illness ☐ Child care ☐ Times of classes ☐ Too busy at home ☐ Too busy at work ☐ Other (please comment):

PART D: USING ENGLISH EVERY DAY		
D1	Do you speak English outside your home every day?	Yes ☐ No ☐
D2	For how long do you speak English every day (usually)?	..... minutes ..... hours
D3	The following sentences are about using English outside your home. Are they true for you? Tick a box.	

	"I feel confident and comfortable using English when I …			
D3.1	*…chat to my neighbours".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐
D3.2	*… speak to the children's teacher".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐
D3.3	*… tell the doctor how I feel".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐
D3.4	*… do my job in English".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐
D3.5	*… talk about my plans for the future".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐
D3.6	*… talk about my family background".*	Yes ☐	Sometimes ☐	No ☐

Finally!

I consent for the information provided in this questionnaire to be used in the research project of Sheila Macdonald. Yes ☐ No ☐

Would you like to continue to take part in this research project? Yes ☐ No ☐

I am looking for women who are interested in meeting me for a short series of individual and/or group interviews. I may ask you to keep a simple language diary. I will provide more details of the project before you agree to continue. If you are willing for me to contact you about this, then please enter your contact details here:

Home phone	
Mobile phone	
Email	

If you have any questions, please email me on edp08sm@sheffield.ac.uk
or phone on 07971 682085.

Privacy statement

The information collected is used to provide data for S.Macdonald's doctoral research project: "*Women English language learners with child care responsibilities in East Kent*"

Only the minimum data required for statistical analysis is collected, and it will be destroyed appropriately once no longer necessary. I am registered under the Data Protection Act 1998 for this project. The data will be used solely by the researcher but if third party involvement is needed I will not do so unless they have confirmed to me that they are also registered.

I take reasonable precautions to protect personal information from unauthorised access or disclosure, but I cannot act as insurers of the security of your personal information transmitted over the internet or via insecure postal means.

*Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.*Please return it to me in the envelope provided, or send online to: edp08sm@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix 5

Women English Language Learners with child care responsibilities in East Kent Research project: University of Sheffield **Invitation to interview** **Name:** **District:** *Thank you for agreeing to come to a group discussion. I would like to explain more to you about the research project and to talk with you about your family, about the languages you speak, and about learning English in Adult Education.* *Please tick* ***√*** *which date you can come:* *Monday 27 June from 10.00 – 11.30 am* ☐ ***Or*** *Thursday 30 June from 1.30- 3.00pm* ☐ ***Or*** *These times are not good for me* ☐ **Researcher:** Sheila Macdonald Contact: edp08sm@sheffield.ac.uk 07971 682 085		***Women English Language Learners with child care responsibilities in East Kent Research project: University of Sheffield*** **Invitation to interview** **Name:** **District:** *Thank you for agreeing to come to a group discussion. I would like to explain more to you about the research project and to talk with you about your family, about the languages you speak, and about learning English in Adult Education.* *Please tick* ***√*** *which date you can come:* *Monday 27 June from 10.00 – 11.30 am* ☐ ***Or*** *Thursday 30 June from 1.30- 3.00pm* ☐ ***Or*** *These times are not good for me* ☐ **Researcher:** Sheila Macdonald Contact: edp08sm@sheffield.ac.uk 07971 682 085

Appendix 6

Profile: key participants

Pseudonym	Origin	In UK (yrs)	Languages	ESOL	Previous work/qual	Current work	Age	Children	Parent
Winnie	China	14	Cantonese Mandarin	E3	Hairdresser	Unemployed	45	Daughter 10 Son 8	single
Sara	Kosovo	14	Albanian	E3	Singer	Housewife/ volunteer classroom assistant/charity shop	36	Son 10 Daughter 7 Son 3	two
Lily	China	8	Mandarin	E3	None	Takeaway food	30	Son 5 Son 2	two
Lucia	Argentina	10	Spanish	L1	PhD Virology	Spanish language classroom assistant	46	Son 11 Daughter 7	single
Linda	Moldova	5	Romanian Russian	N/A	PhD Linguistics	Library assistant	38	Son 5	two
Maria	Poland	4	Polish	L2	Food technician	Hospital care assistant	34	Son 14 Son 4	single
Ana	Sicily	4	Sicilian Italian	L1	Teacher	Housewife	44	Son 13 Son 11	single
Iweta	Poland	3	Polish	L1	Nurse	Care Assistant	35	Son 12 Daughter 9	single
Tina	Ukraine	2	Ukrainian Russian Polish		Medical doctor	Hospital health care advisor	28	Son 2 Daughter 8m	two
Diana	Lithuania	2	Russian Lithuanian Polish	E3	Hairdresser	Housewife	32	Daughter 10 Son 6 Daughter 4	two

Appendix 7

Record of interviews, transcripts and field notes

Date	Participant	Length	Recorded	Transcribed? /notes
6 /06/ 2011	Ana	45	X	notes
10/06/2011	Folkestone gp	1.30	X	notes
27/06/2011	Thanet E2 gp	1 h	ThanE2 001	yes
4/07/11	Maria	1.05	Maria 001	Yes
4/07/11	Canterbury gp: Lucia, Iveta, Ana	1.10	Can 001	yes
80/7/11	Sara	55	Sara 001 001A	yes
11/07/11	Thanet E2 Lily, Diana	1.	Lildiana001	yes
22/07/11	F'stone gp Eva Elena no recording	2h	Eva 001 (25m)	yes
5/10/11	Lucia	1.15	X	Notes
27/10/11	Tina	1.45	Tina 001	yes
7/11/11	Maria	1.	Maria 002	yes
10/11/11	Sara	1	Sara 002	yes
11/11/11	Cant gp Lucia, Ana	1.30	Cant 002	yes
14/11/11	Linda	50	Linda 001/001A	yes
14/11/11	Maria	40	Maria 003	yes
16/11/11	Thanet gp: Lily, Diana, Sandra, Winnie	50m	Thanet E2-3 001	yes
17/11/11	Sara	1	Sara 003	yes
18/11/11	Ana	1	Don 001	yes
28/11/11	Maria	1	Maria 004	yes
28/11/11	Linda and Tina	1.20	Linda Tina 001	yes
30/11/11	Thanet Gp	1	Thanet E2-3 003	yes
01/12/11	Sara	45	Sara 004	yes
02/12/11	Lucia	1h	Lucia 001	yes
05/12/11	Maria (last)	50	Maria 005	yes
07/12/11	Thanet Gp	1.10	Thanet E2-3 004	yes
08/12/11	Sara (last) canc			
09/12/11	F'kstone	2h	x	No private space
12/12/11	Lucia (last)	40	Lucia 002, 002A	yes
14/12/11	Thanet Gp (last)	45	Thanet E2-3 005	yes
16/12/11	F'kstone Gp	2h	Last class, not red	
13/01/12	F'kstone Gp	1.05 15	FLN 001 FLN 002	

Appendix 8

Contact details:

01843 607088/ 07971 682085

edp08@sheffield.ac.uk

Research project: Migrant women: mothers and learners of English

Dear research group,

About the diary / notebook

We have talked about when and how you came to live in England and a little about the languages you use at home with the family. Now I would like to know more about when, where and how you use English, and how you feel about it.

To do this, I'd like you to write down your experiences of learning and using English. This may be in class, or at work, with your children or with friends for example. Some of you may want to write about the past or future. Some of you may be able to write something every day, but I know that writing can take a long time, so there are no rules about what to write, how much or how often. Everyone is different, and every contribution is important.

I will give you a calendar to help you record when and where you use English.

We will meet to talk about your writing, about every 2 weeks. We can discuss your comments, and think about what else you would like to write. If you want it, I am happy to offer you advice about improving your writing.

I hope that we will be able to continue for about 8 weeks and we can agree on a time and place for this that suits you.

Thank you again for agreeing to be part of this project. It is really important to hear what women who are mothers and sometimes also students, say about their experiences of learning and using English.

Please feel free to ring me or email at any time if you have questions or worries.

Best wishes

Sheila Macdonald

Appendix 9

Family languages calendar. **Please write your name here:**

Monday's date:

Mark on the calendar when you use English (E). It will be helpful if you can write a note to say who you were talking to and where you were. If you use more than one home language, mark those if you have time.

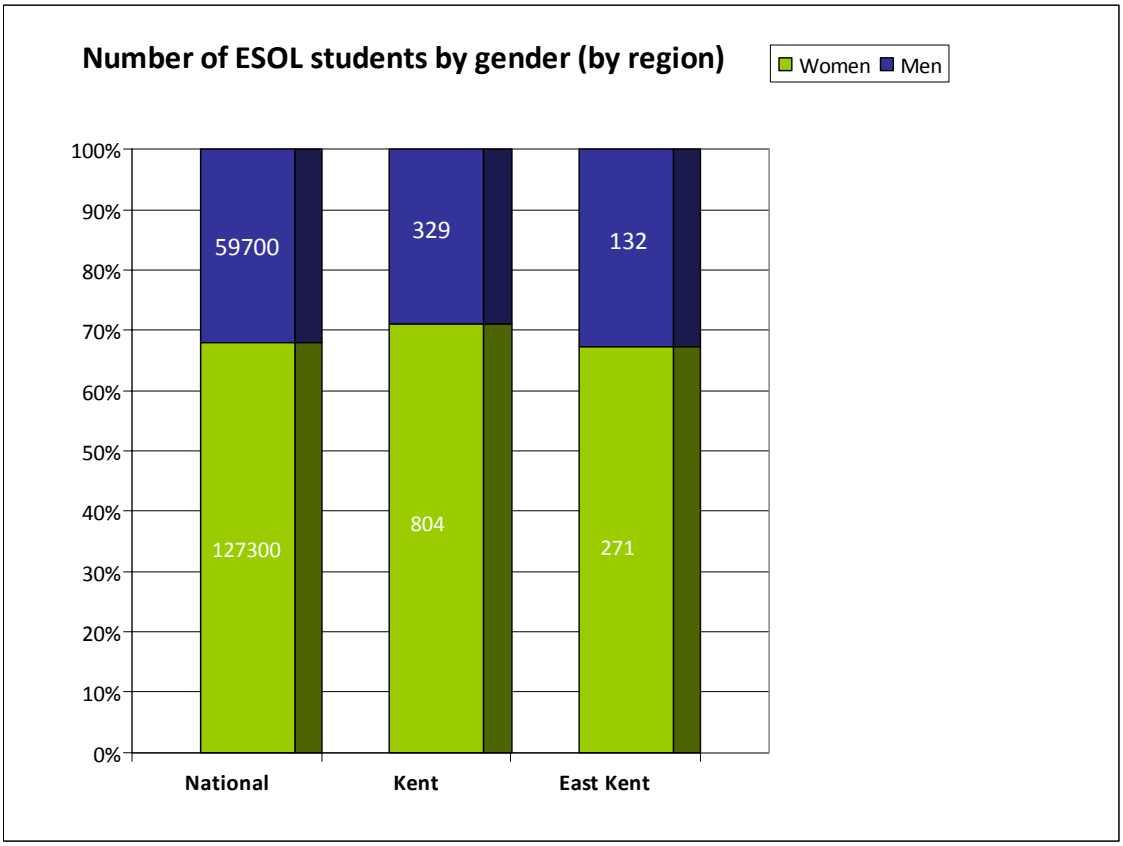
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Appendix 10

Women and ESOL Research Project 2011: Survey Findings

All data refer to learners registered with Kent Adult Education Service in May- June 2011.

The area is east Kent, including Folkestone, Dover, Canterbury and Thanet.



Sources: BIS (2011) KAES (2010)

Survey return: 182 women (67% response)

Respondents with children	**Numbers**	**Percentage**
With dependent children	121	66
With adult children	20	11
With no children	41	23
Total	182	100

Languages spoke with children	**Numbers**	**Percentage**
Monolingual home language	66	54
Bilingual with English	42	35
Trilingual with English	10	8
Bilingual other	3	2
Total	121	100

Appendix 11

List of languages spoken at home: east Kent

Home language	Number of speakers
Polish	21
Latvian	13
Russian	11
Czech	10
Lithuanian	10
Slovakian	8
Dari	7
Turkish	6
Arabic	5
Bengali	5
Nepali	5
French	4
Kurdish	4
Spanish	4
Albanian	3
Cantonese	3
Hungarian	3
Japanese	3
Mandarin	3
Chinese	2
Kosovan	2
Romanian	2
Slovak	2
Tamil	2
Armenian	1
Bangla	1
Bulgarian	1
Greek	1
Indonesian	1
Italian	1
Persian	1
Punjabi	1
Serbian	1
Thai	1
Unknown	1
Urdu	1
Uzbek	1
TOTAL	**151**

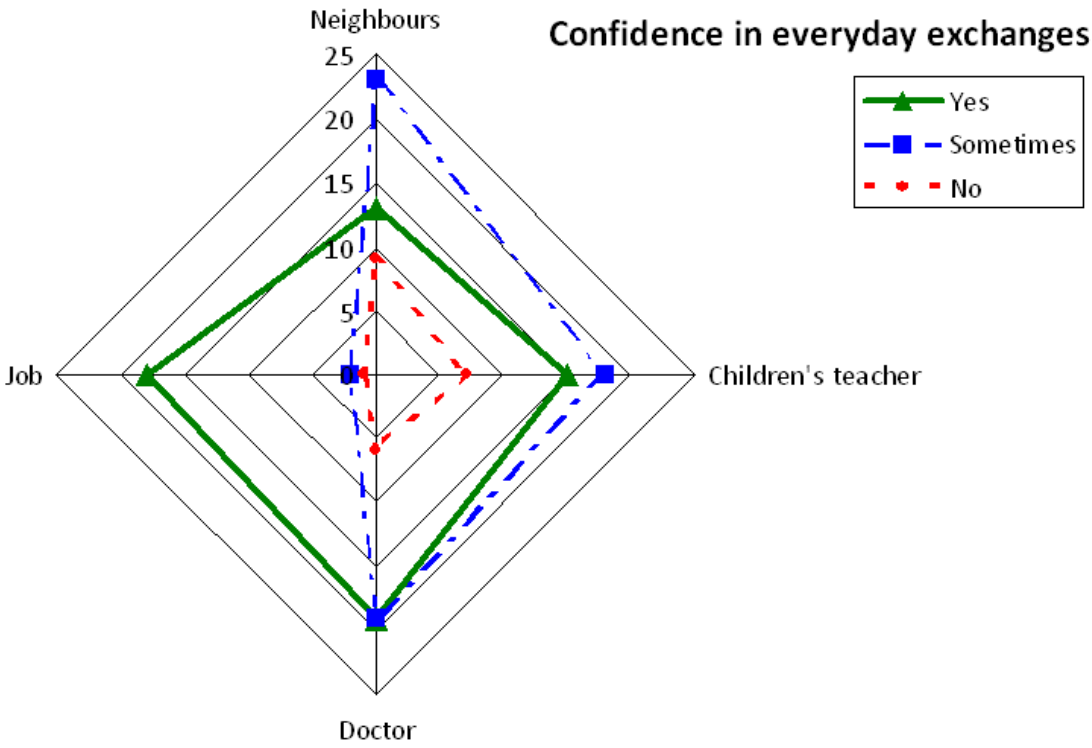
Appendix 12

Migration patterns: Countries of Origin

Country of Origin	Number of Respondents	Country of Origin	Number of Respondents
Czech Republic	7	Egypt	1
Bangladesh	5	Hungary	1
Poland	5	Iraq	1
China	4	Italy	1
Lithuania	3	Japan	1
Bulgaria	2	Latvia	1
Kosovo	2	Pakistan	1
Slovakia	2	Romania	1
Afghanistan	1	Russia	1
Argentina	1	Thailand	1
Bali	1	Turkey	1
Belgium	1	Ukraine	1
Cyprus	1	**Total Respondents**	**47**

Appendix 13

Everyday English Use: Confidence in speaking with people outside the home



Appendix 14

Work and education

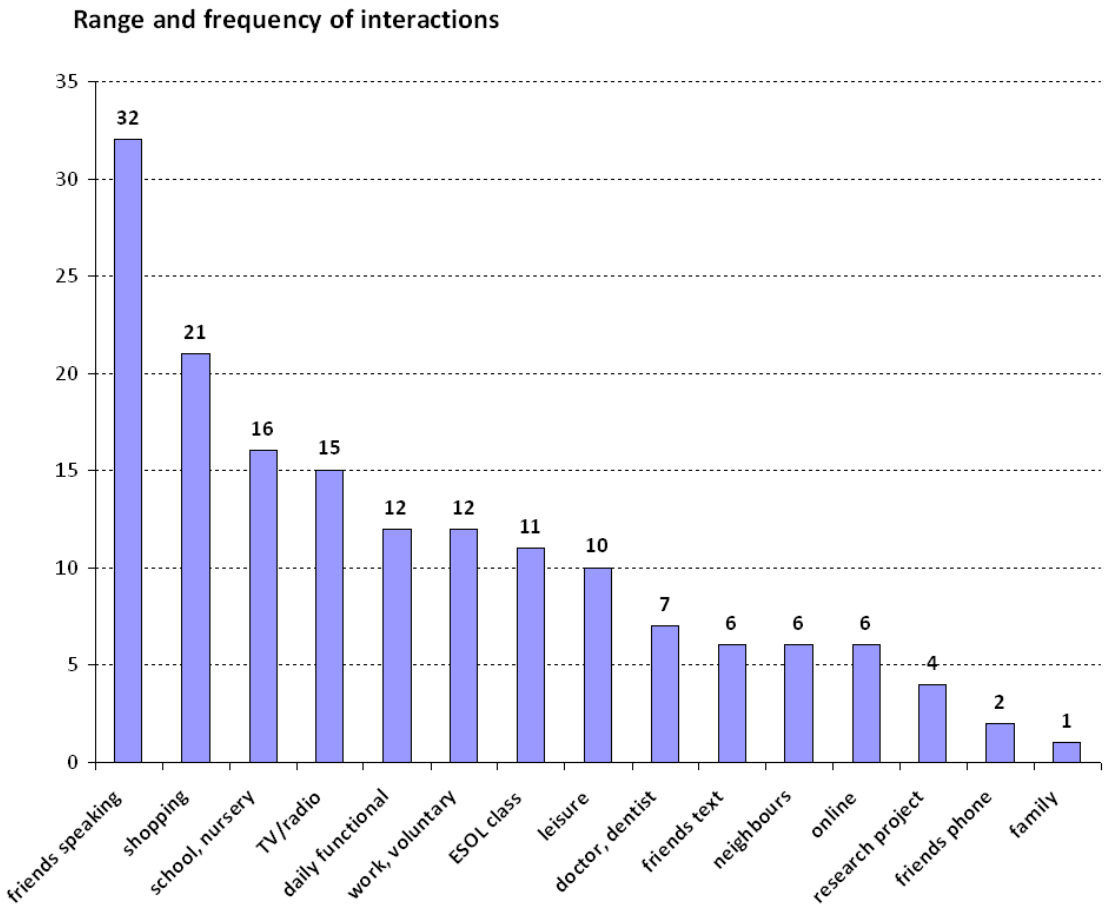
Home country	Qualification	Previous job	Current job	ESOL level	Family Notes
Hungary	diploma	publisher, radio DJ, author	author	E3	
Bali	hotels	housekeeping, waitress		E3	Daughter 2
Afghanistan					Child 2
Bulgaria	BA Defence of national security	soldier, Bulgarian Navy		E3	Daughter 2
Bulgaria	registered nurse	nurse		E3	Daughter 5, wants work
Lithuania		packing, waitress	night support worker	L2	Daughter 4
Belgium	school diploma			E3	2 young children, diabetic
Latvia	accountant	cashier, sales, accountant	packing fruit, veg	E3	Daughter 12
Czech Republic		barmaid	cleaner	E1	Son 13
Thailand	food hygiene	restaurant	waitress	E2	Child 15
Czech Republic		kitchen assistant		E1	Children 14, 2, 2
China				E2	Sons 5, 2
Turkey		gardener	waitress	E2	Son 12
Bangladesh				E1	Children 14,13
Sicily	teacher	teacher		L1	Children at school different towns; wants part time work
Poland	confectioner			E1	Children 20,19,18, 13
Slovakia		sales/ care assistants	cleaner	E1	Children 18, 14
Cyprus (Greek)		factory		E2	Daughters 18, 15; diabetic
Czech Republic		pharmacy and cook		E1	Grandchildren 6,4,3,2,
Bangladesh				E1	Children 8,5,2
Kosovo				E3	Children 10,7,2; 2 voluntary jobs
Pakistan	teacher training	teacher		E2	Children 12, 7, 3
Slovakia				E2	Children 4, 3
Czech Republic	social care		cleaner	E2	Daughters 12, 4
Poland	food technician	shop assistant	support service assistant, hosp	E3	2 sons, 14, 4
Lithuania	hairdresser	hairdresser		E2	Children 10, 6, 4. Wants work
China		hairdresser		E2	Children 16,11, 5

Home country	Qualification	Previous job	Current job	ESOL level	Family Notes
Kosovo		shop		E2	Children 7, 5
Czech Republic				E1	Children 10, 6, 5
Czech Republic		sweet shop		E2	Children 15, 8, 5
Bangladesh				E1	Children 9, 7, 6 pregnant
Lithuania		bartender/waitress		E3	Children 6, 3
Bangladesh	GCSE equivalent			E3	Child 6m
Argentina	PhD virology	medical research		L1	Children 11, 7; volunteer language assistant
Bangladesh	GCSE			E2	Children 9, 7
Poland	nursing	nurse	care assistant	E1	
Poland	chemist analyst	economist/manager	housemaid	E2	Son 12, daughter 7
Poland	gardener			E2	Children 17, 14
Russia	lawyer	human resources manager		L2	Child 3
China	nursing	nurse		L2	Child 2, volunteer, charity shop
Japan	nursery	nursery		E3	Son 3
Czech Republic				E1	Son 2, pregnant, job seeker
Ukraine	doctor	doctor	office administrator	L2	Children 2, 5m
Iraq	teacher	teacher		L1	Children 6, 3
Egypt	chemist	medical rep	receptionist	E3	Son 3
Romania	PhD linguistics	university lecturer	librarian	N/A	Son 5
China	hairdresser	hairdresser		E3	Children 10, 8

Total 47

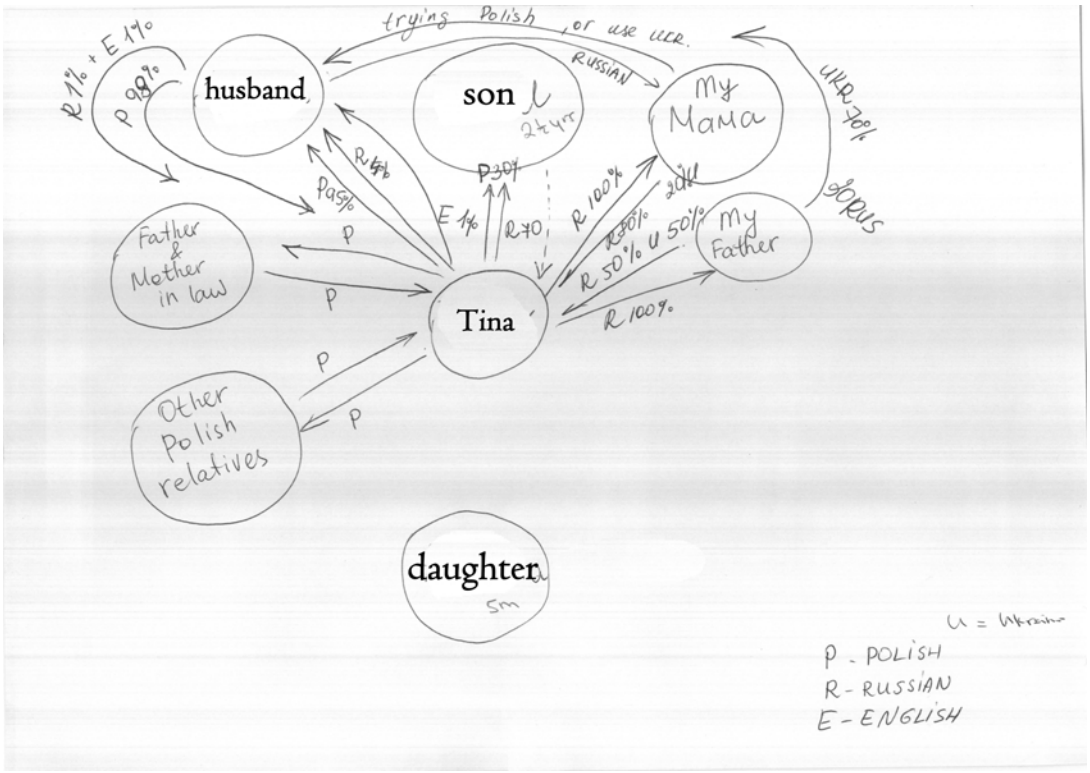
Pre- entry: absolute beginner	E1: beginner	E2: basic	E3: pre-intermediate	L1: intermediate	L2: post-intermediate

Appendix 15


Range and frequency of interactions
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
32
21
16
15
12
12
11
10
7
6
6
6
4
2
1
friends speaking
shopping
school, nursery
TV/radio
daily functional
work, voluntary
ESOL class
leisure
doctor, dentist
friends text
neighbours
online
research project
friends phone
family

Appendix 16

Family language map: Tina



Appendix 17

Language Calendar: Sandra

Family languages calendar. **Please write your name here:** SANDRA

Monday's date: 14-11-2011

Mark on the calendar when you use English (E). It will be helpful if you can write a note to say who you were talking to and where you were. If you use more than one home language, mark those if you have time.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning			3 Hours English class lessons	5 minut Doctor Conversation			
Afternoon			15 minut HMR conversation		With Talk Talk conversation 20 min		
Evening						Shoping and 5 min conversation with saleswoman	

Phone call estate agent. | P/c to GP | support re benefits | family phone

Language Calendar: Maria

Family languages calendar. **Please write your name here:** MARIA

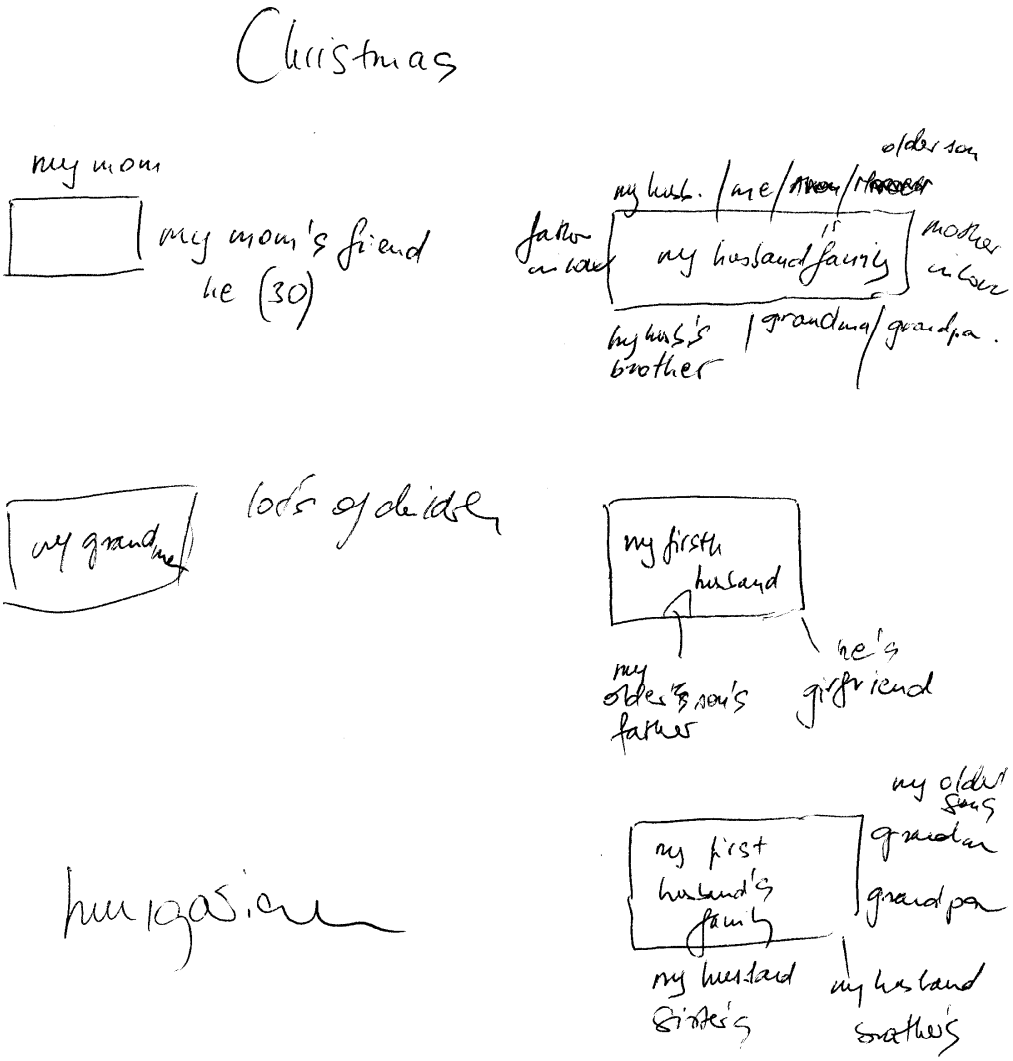
Monday's date: 7th of November 2011

Mark on the calendar when you use English (E). It will be helpful if you can write a note to say who you were talking to and where you were. If you use more than one home language, mark those if you have time.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	I spoke to Sheila for about 1 hour. I spoke to my friend for 1 hour	I spoke on the phone to my friend 10 min. I phoned to Matt's school.	I spoke to my friend for 10 min	M. picked up M. and I spoke to her 10 min.	I was listening a record of William Sears for 1 hour	My friend pop around and we had a chatt for 30 min	At home with my children spicking both English and Polish
Afternoon	I sent two messages in English to my friend I spoke to M and his friend for 3 hours.	I read letter from school. I spoke to friends for a two hour use	I called to Matthe school and spoke for 10 min. I spok to my friend for 1 hour.	My friend called me and we talked for 15 min. I read letter from school.	I spoke to my friend 15 min.	I sent a fiew messages to my friends	My friend fith family came and we cooked together and spoke
Evening	I spoke to M friend's mum for 15 min. I spoke to M on the phone 15min	I sent five messages to my friend.	I sent a five messages do friends.	I spoke to my friend for 15 min	I went for a celebration to Mrs. A and spoken to all my friends for 3 hours.	I watched film with my son "The twilight"	We watched "The twilight 2"

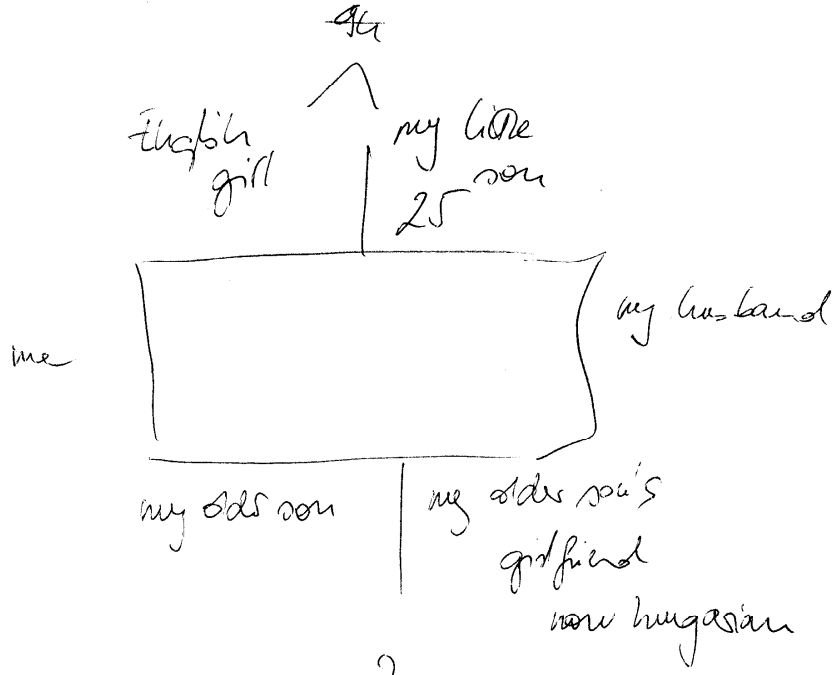
Appendix 18

Family Meals and Languages: Elena



Elena's recent Christmas family meal.

Elena's imagined future Christmas family meal.



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