Teachers' views on recognising and using home languages in predominantly monolingual primary schools.

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The use of home languages has previously been advocated in highly multilingual UK classrooms (e.g. Conteh, 2007; Kenner et al., 2008; McGilp, 2014). However, drawing on the home languages and cultural insight of children who use English as an Additional Language (EAL) may also have important social and academic benefits in contexts where monolingualism is the norm.

Conducted in a small local authority in England with low numbers of children who use EAL, this study investigated a) primary teachers' views on implementing language awareness activities, using pupils who speak languages other than English as a linguistic and cultural resource, via interviews and questionnaires and b) the amount and nature of references made to home languages during classroom observations.

Although the teachers did not refer to or use home languages on a day-to-day basis, they generally showed willingness to consider implementing certain activities which incorporated them. However, largely, the teachers had not previously contemplated such practice. They did not reference any academic benefits to promoting linguistic diversity but were more aware of the potential social benefits. They also lacked confidence in particular areas (e.g. linguistic knowledge) as well as showing a strong awareness of issues such as the importance of English

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Introduction

Currently, almost one in five (around 870,000) primary school children are using English as an Additional Language (EAL) in England (DfE, 2016). These children have a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds, ranging from speaking English in the home on a regular basis with one or more people, to very rarely encountering any English in their home lives. What they have in common is using (or hearing) at least one language that is not English to some extent in the home, which is usually accompanied by an awareness of a culture that is different to that of their monolingual English-speaking peers. The current study investigated the views of 55 primary teachers on how willing and confident they would feel to undertake classroom practices that recognise and use the linguistic and cultural insight of these children. The in-class behaviour of a subset of seven of these teachers was also observed over 15 hours of lesson time.

Within the study we use the term home languages to describe language use or knowledge of languages (other than English) that children who use EAL have gained from their home lives. Broadly speaking, rationales for incorporating home languages into classroom learning can be grouped into three categories. First, as a means of helping children who use EAL access English and the curriculum; second, as a way of celebrating diversity and recognising children's home lives; and third, as a way of welcoming or integrating pupils into the classroom. These are all likely to be motivated by a desire to improve the educational, social and personal experience of those children who use EAL. However, as this quotation from a debate in the UK parliament's upper house illustrates, children who use EAL also arguably represent an important yet untapped linguistic and cultural resource:

> There must be … hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren, who are bilingual. What thought have the Government given to, or what action have they taken on,

> mobilising this resource … to make sure that we use the resources that our multicultural society has given us? (HL Deb, 2015)

Utilising these children's linguistic knowledge and cultural insight in the classroom as a means of enhancing monolingual children's education, as well as the three aforementioned reasons, may be one way of 'mobilising' these resources. Yet, currently, as Safford and Drury (2013) argue, the knowledge brought to school by children who use EAL 'viewed as a disadvantage in policy, is not well understood by the education system' (p.78).

As there is no explicit educational policy regarding the use of home languages in mainstream primary classrooms (DfE, 2016), the degree to which teachers recognise and foster children's home language(s) is largely dependent on individual teachers' and schools' interpretation of policy (Mehmedbegovic, 2008). The only wide scale indication of the extent to which home languages are used in primary schools is provided by the Language Trends survey (Tinsley & Board, 2016), completed by 556 primary schools in England. This reports that for schools 'with significant numbers of pupils with EAL there is generally mild, rather than marked, encouragement for home languages' with almost a quarter of these schools reporting providing no opportunity for children to use their home languages in the classroom (Tinsley & Board, 2016, p. 66).

Languages other than English are currently taught at primary level. This became a statutory requirement for Key Stage Two (ages 7-11) in England from 2014. The national curriculum states, 'teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language' (DfE, 2016), with most schools choosing to teach French (Tinsley & Board, 2016). However, the Language Trends survey highlights great variability in the nature and amount of primary language teaching due to issues such as teacher expertise. As

Cummins (2005) warns, we may now be 'faced with the bizarre scenario of schools successfully transforming fluent speakers of foreign languages into monolingual English speakers, at the same time as they struggle, largely unsuccessfully, to transform English monolingual students into foreign language speakers' (p. 586). Moreover, the dominance of French in primary school curricula arguably does not reflect the increasingly linguistically diverse society primary school children are growing up in.

Home languages in the primary classroom

Home language pedagogies have previously been trialled within individual classrooms, for example, Kenner, Al-Azami, Gregory and Ruby's (2008) bilingual poetry project in an East London classroom. They argued that by comparing a Bengali and a North American lullaby, second and third generation children were able to explore their cultural heritage and bicultural identities, noting that many children may never be given the opportunity to do this in the absence of parental support or community education projects. Allowing this bicultural discussion, Kenner et al. (2008) argued, led to a deeper understanding of the lullabies as the children accessed metaphorical content more easily. While this is only one example from one educational context, it suggests potentially important benefits to using home languages that may be replicable in other educational contexts. Projects with younger children, such as McGilp's (2014) use of picture books and a multilingual collage in a pre-school setting, also provide evidence of benefits to using multilingual activities including increased involvement from more reserved children. She argues that including the children's first languages validates their experiences and culture, reassuring them (and their parents) of their value.

The term 'multilingual home language pedagogies' will be used throughout to refer to the use of activities, such as those discussed in this section, which use or refer to home languages, or a selection of different languages for the purpose of building

language awareness or recognising and valuing home languages and cultures. Although including within its scope more traditional foreign language learning, this study mainly focuses on the potential inclusion of a more multilingual education, where the home languages of children or the languages that exist in local communities (as we recognise that some children listed on school records as using EAL may actually have very little knowledge of their 'home language') are used to contribute towards pupils' linguistic and cultural education.

The extent to which primary language teaching could adopt a language awareness approach that draws on the 'resources' within the classroom (i.e. the children who use EAL) is considered. Using such an approach can build a heightened sensitivity, or consciousness of the 'workings' of languages more generally (Carter, 2003), laying the foundations for future language learning (Hawkins, 1984). Teaching students about multilingualism has been shown to improve students' self-efficacy towards language learning as well as providing them with a more realistic picture of the world's multilingualism which is perhaps contrary to the 'monolingual bubble' (p.13) they may be living in (Lanvers, Hultgren & Gayton, 2016). Additionally, using a wider variety of languages has been found to positively influence children's expressed views towards other languages and cultures (Barton, Bragg, Serratrice, 2009). Multilingual pedagogy can also be useful when teachers' linguistic knowledge and confidence are limited as specialist knowledge of one language is not required (Barton et al., 2009; Jones, Barnes, & Hunt, 2005), a potentially compelling motivation for many UK schools.

The attitudes of teachers

It is important to recognise that not all teachers may have the same level of conviction in the value of home languages as those involved in the research discussed above (e.g. Kenner et al., 2008). Indeed, Mehmedbegovic (2011, 2008) found some practitioners

demonstrated a reluctance towards home language use in the classroom. The practitioners exhibited fear of immigration, of difference, of children who can speak a language when the teacher cannot and of British identity and the National Curriculum being lost to Europe. The latter finding may now, of course, have different significance given the UK referendum vote to leave the EU.

Research within a UK context focuses on the potential benefits of home language use from (often single) highly multilingual contexts or classrooms. Therefore, the extent to which such approaches are beneficial, or even feasible, in a wider range of contexts remains to be to established. For example, in schools without a 'dominant minority' language (shared by the pupils who use EAL), without bilingual teachers or teaching assistants, in locations where there are no complementary schools nearby, or without researcher involvement in the implementation of new pedagogy. That is, questions remain about whether and how home language pedagogies could operate and how they would be perceived by teachers in schools with a monolingual (English) majority, situated within a largely monolingual, monocultural community.

Issues of geography, or indeed, even more localised educational context, may also influence teachers' *confidence* to use home languages in the classroom. For example, Franson (1999) found the effectiveness of support given to pupils who use EAL to be highly dependent on the professional and personal knowledge of the individual teacher. Conceivably, confidence to use and knowledge of, using home languages may also vary between individual teachers. Pre-service training is also likely to play an important role in developing teachers' confidence, yet training may also vary according to geographical region and numbers of pupils who use EAL, with more rural areas (with low numbers) considering training about using and teaching EAL less of a priority (Murakami, 2008). Subsequently, teachers may be ill-equipped to implement

practical classroom strategies, both in terms of providing academic support to EAL users as well as introducing activities which aim to represent linguistic diversity (Cajkler & Hall, 2009; Foley, Sangster, & Anderson, 2013). In sum, teachers' confidence, knowledge and, subsequently, practice in less linguistically and culturally diverse areas may be influenced by such issues, though to date, research has tended to present a view of home language education in urban, multilingual areas. Although largely monolingual areas are perhaps less linguistically interesting, they nevertheless represent communities in which a substantial portion of the population of England live their lives. For example, excluding London, a city often considered 'super-diverse', within all other regions of the UK, at least 80% of the population identify as being White British (Census, 2011).

In determining the extent to which adopting more multilingual home language pedagogies in primary classrooms is feasible, as well as considering whether teachers *could* implement such pedagogies in the light of factors above, it is also important to consider their willingness to do so.

First, the position of English as the dominant language in British education and society and as a global lingua franca cannot be overlooked. Children who do not have English as a first language arguably need a high level of English proficiency to make progress in the educational system as well as to access aspects of British society beyond this, thus cementing the dominance of English within classrooms and potentially, within teachers' own linguistic ideologies.

Related to the dominance of English in schools is the centrality of the National Curriculum and with this, long-established patterns of learning and knowledge within the education system. It has been argued that currently home languages are either viewed as a hindrance to learning aims (i.e. accessing the curriculum), or as 'informal',

'separate' learning (see Conteh, 2012) . Therefore, if the use of languages within the classroom is to be re-considered, the role of the teacher and the learning process (see Bourne, 2001) as well as the way we perceive 'valuable' knowledge must also be re-considered (Conteh, 2012).

Additionally, teachers may exercise caution when talking about diversity through fear of negatively drawing attention to it. Such concerns may be particularly prevalent in monolingual areas. This tension between successfully representing diversity whilst also achieving inclusive practice is a dichotomy, according to Conteh (2012), also observable within educational policy itself.

To investigate the likelihood of home language pedagogies being implemented in a predominantly monolingual area and to gauge how teachers in such an area may perceive such pedagogies, the current study was driven by the following questions:

RQ1) To what extent do classroom interaction and activities reflect any presence of linguistic and cultural diversity?

RQ2) How willing are teachers to implement multilingual home language pedagogies and what factors contribute to this?

RQ3) How confident are teachers to implement multilingual home language pedagogies and what factors contribute to this?

Methodology

The educational context

The research area was one local authority (LA) in the North of England. The LA has 47 state-funded primary schools (ages 4-11) and approximately 1,400 primary school teachers (DfE, 2016). It is predominantly monocultural (White, British) with only around 8% of pupils being from a minority ethnic background (DfE, 2016). Unlike the

previously discussed studies, it is neither predominantly urban nor rural. The area has a moderately high proportion (around 16%) of children claiming free school meals (FSM), slightly above the national average of 14.5% (DfE, 2016). This is often used as a proxy for socio-economic status and indicates an increased chance of children obtaining poorer academic qualifications, having a special educational need and being in care (Gorard, 2012). Thus, participating teachers and schools may have demands on their time and curriculum space additional to those that are purely academic.

Study design

The study had three sequential stages: classroom observations, a survey administered to a larger number of teachers, and interviews with the observed teachers. This design allowed for data collected during the observations and questionnaires to inform the interview protocol. The full questionnaire and observation schedule are available at www.iris-database.org.

Participants

All participants were teachers or head teachers within this one LA. The observations and interviews were carried out in two primary schools which then participated in the larger scale questionnaire. Both the schools were academies[†], one, a larger school in a more urban area of the LA (with 25.1% of pupils receiving FSM) and another, a

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[†] Academies are independent, state-funded schools who receive their funding directly from central government. They have certain freedoms including curriculum planning and delivery.

smaller, village school (with 2.9% of pupils receiving FSM).

All the teachers who were observed and interviewed (*n*=7) had between one and four children who use EAL in their class at the time. All but one of these children spoke an Eastern European language (the teacher did not know the language spoken by the other child). As this study was primarily focused on teachers, no further data about the children were collected, though we recognise this limits the depth of contextual information we can use to inform our findings from the observations and interviews.

None of the teachers observed and interviewed had received specialist training regarding teaching EAL or spoke a language other than English at home. One observed teacher was teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage (ages 3-5); five in Key Stage One (ages 5-7) and two in Key Stage Two (ages 7-11) where teaching a language other than English is compulsory (DfE 2014). One interview was carried out with the head teacher from the school with the highest proportion of teachers participating in all three phases of the research (the more urban school). This head teacher was a monolingual English speaker.

All the seven teachers interviewed were teaching in either Early Years Foundation Stage (ages 3-5) or Key Stage One (ages 5-7) where languages are not compulsory. French was taught in Key Stage Two in both schools. The head teacher interviewed summarised the rationale behind the choice of French as follows: the local secondary school feed; French as an 'established' or 'default' primary language choice; preparation for the school trip to France; and staff members' linguistic competence (see Cable et al. (2010) for wide-scale corroboration of these rationales).

Respondents to the questionnaire (*n*=55) included teachers from 10 different schools (20% of schools in the LA). The year in which the teachers qualified ranged from 1975 to 2014. Almost half (23/48) of the teachers (who supplied information about

the location of the training) trained in the same county (region) as the LA where they were currently teaching. In terms of the linguistic make-up of their classrooms, 24 (/55) of the participating teachers were not currently teaching a child who uses EAL, 11/55 were currently teaching one child who uses EAL, and the highest number of children who use EAL in the class of a participating teacher was six.

Data collection and analysis

Stage one: Observations

A total of 15 hours of observations (between seven different teachers) in two schools were analysed. The teachers observed were the normal (daily) class teachers and only literacy lessons were observed. We recognise that observing a wider range of subjects might have changed the classroom practice we witnessed. In particular, for example, we did not observe any foreign language lessons where it is possible (though we think unlikely) that the teachers could have drawn on home languages in, for example, meta-linguistic discussions. The interviews conducted with the observed teachers (see next section) were designed to help mitigate this issue to some extent.

An observation schedule was developed, informed by previous research that has documented ways in which home languages have been or could be used (e.g. Conteh, 2007; Kenner et al., 2008; McGilp, 2014), see Appendix A. An open category was also included to avoid missing valuable observations that did not fit into a pre-defined category.

As with all observation, perceptual differences may exist between the teacher and observer (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). In an effort to reduce or identify such differences, teachers were asked to comment on notable (as decided by the first author)

events in their interviews. However, time constraints meant the entire observation schedule could not be discussed.

The observation schedule categories were as follows:

(a) Languages other than English mentioned.
(b) Metalinguistic information given for linguistic awareness building.
(c) British cultural awareness.
(d) Awareness building of cultures where English is not an official/dominant language.
(e) Use of languages other than English (for instructions or activities).
(f) Activities or instructions adapted for pupil using EAL or any additional support given.
(g) Pupil who uses EAL being the focus of the activity/teachers' talk to the rest of the class.
(h) Pupil who uses EAL used to inform the rest of the class (e.g. cultural/geographical information).

See Appendix A for examples.

Stage two: Questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to schools via a combination of random, purposive and snowball sampling. First, all schools (N=47) in the local authority were invited to participate by email as they were located in the region of interest. For some (4) schools, the distribution of the questionnaire was facilitated by a member of staff approached through a personal contact.

The questionnaire (see Appendix B) had three sections to elicit data about:

(1) Contextual and biographical information about the teachers and teaching experience (6 items, e.g. 'How many pupils who use EAL do you currently have in your class?')

(2) Attitudes towards classroom practice, using 1-5 Likert scales (Likert, 1932) to respond to statements (6 items e.g. 'All lessons should be conducted in English')

(3) Willingness and confidence to implement classroom practices, using 1-5 Likert scale to rate pedagogical 'scenarios' (the term scenarios is used to mean classroom ideas/activities/practices or techniques). These were 16 items, eight referring to general classroom practice e.g. 'Using literature in your lessons from the home country of a pupil who uses EAL' and eight describing specific classroom scenarios e.g. 'Using a pupil who uses EAL to teach a conversation sequence, in their language, to the other pupils'). Respondents could also make open text comments on their ratings.

The 16 scenarios teachers rated in the questionnaire described classroom practice in three different categories:

(1) Academic support and assessment (2 scenarios).

(2) Language learning and cultural awareness (i.e. MFL, non-EAL focused) (5 scenarios).

(3) Classroom practice involving pupils who use EAL and their home languages (9 scenarios).

The scenarios relating to academic support (category 1) and MFL teaching (category 2) were designed to gauge teachers' perceptions (specifically, their willingness and confidence) about language related aspects of their job that they are already expected to do. They served as points of comparison for the main focus of the research questions:

home languages (category 3). Scenarios relating to home languages included scenarios which were both:

- Vocabulary-based/aural (5 scenarios).
- Written (e.g. books, grammar) (2 scenarios).

There were more scenarios about vocabulary-based / aural classroom practice to reflect the well-documented observation that pedagogy in general in primary schools tends to be more oral-based than written, and, for language learning, focused on vocabulary (Cable et al., 2010).

Stage Three: Interviews

Six teachers and one head teacher were interviewed from two of the participating schools. Semi-structured interviews (Appendix C) were used to follow up, in a more open format, responses to the questionnaires and the observation data. For example, if a teacher included languages other than English in their lesson, they were asked what had informed this decision.

Results

Findings from the observations, interviews and questionnaires were first analysed according to each research question and second by themes emerging from the data. Descriptive statistics and correlational relationships from the questionnaire data are presented by research question, alongside observation and interview data, as well as within the thematic discussion of the results from all three datasets. For statistical significance testing, alpha was set at $p < 0.05$. The coefficient r_s can be interpreted as an effect size of the magnitude of effects.

To what extent do classroom interaction and activities reflect any presence of linguistic and cultural diversity? (RQ1)

No instances of cultural awareness building (see observation schedule, categories c and d), or of a pupil who uses EAL being used to inform the rest of the class were observed. The most commonly observed category was 'metalinguistic information given' (6 instances). In five of six instances this was used as a tool to aid writing skills and meet assigned writing targets (e.g. 'I can use a simile'). One instance was observed of an activity where building language awareness in English (parts of speech) was the focus. During this activity the teacher praised a child with EAL for her accurate responses in previous lessons.

The other categories (a, b, e-h) were each observed once and were not included in the lesson aims stated by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson, suggesting that they were not an intentional or significant part of the lesson. These included a child with EAL suggesting her home country as an idea for a setting of a story (the child volunteered this information in response to the teacher eliciting ideas from the class and the exchange did not continue beyond the child's response); the teacher from the same classroom (T1) allowed the pupils to answer the register in any language they chose; and a different teacher (T6) used an additional comprehension check directed at the child with EAL ('Can you see that…Where it says…?').

In the interviews, the teachers gave a few more examples of activities: one teacher (T4) described her use of traditional stories from the country of a child with EAL; another (T5), the use of bilingual story books with a foundation stage class; and one reported their child with EAL telling anecdotes from her home country (T1). T1 summarised her current practice regarding language learning, including home languages:

> We'll do the register in a different language and the afternoon is literally just the basics with things like “hello” and I try and encourage them to teach me things like “how are you” … in in their [home] languages.

T1, the teacher who reported the most use of non-English language learning and use, described language learning before aged seven as just ‘bits and pieces’, ‘when we have five minutes’ and predominantly vocabulary-focused. However, we emphasise that we did not carry out sufficient observations to be able to reliably corroborate, or otherwise, this (or other) teachers’ self-report in terms of their actual in-class behaviour.

‘Show and tell’ sessions were also reported to be a time when pupils, including pupils with EAL, would tell stories, teach some vocabulary or show cultural items including books, gifts and photographs. One teacher (T4) described a child teaching the other children about Christmas traditions in his home country: ‘he did tell us all about it and everyday he came in and showed us this little gift and the children got really excited about it’.

Additionally, both schools, observed as a whole, had made attempts to visually demonstrate an inclusive ethos and both had visual displays relating to the concept of celebrating people’s differences. The more urban school also had several displays that used ‘hello’ in different languages.

How willing are teachers to implement multilingual home language pedagogies and what factors contribute to this? (RQ2)

The ratings (1=not willing at all, to 5=very willing) for 16 different pedagogical scenarios provided a high mean (M) reported willingness rating of 4.12 (ranging from 3.62 to 4.62).

Table 1 The scenarios teachers reported being most and least willing to implement

Most willing to implement:

Doing a topic week on Spain, including some basic vocabulary and cultural activities	*M*=4.62	*SD*=0.83
Introducing activities that involved languages other than English	*M*=4.62	*SD*=0.83
Providing academic support to pupils who do not have English as a first language	*M*=4.60	*SD*=0.96
Least willing to implement:		
Using literature in your lessons from the home country of a pupil with EAL	*M*=3.62	*SD*=1.51
Teaching basic Mandarin Chinese vocabulary (e.g. 'hello', 'my name is')	*M*=3.62	*SD*=1.51
Working with the family of an EAL pupil in order to learn about their culture and language	*M*=3.84	*SD*=1.27

Teachers therefore reported being less willing to use literature from the home country of a pupil with EAL as well teaching basic Mandarin vocabulary. These items were also the most divisive (least agreed upon) amongst teachers. However, teachers reported high levels of willingness for the general concept of using other languages, as well as providing academic support to pupils who use EAL, two areas of classroom practice teachers may be expected to undertake more regularly as well as the more specific highly scoring scenario 'Doing a topic week on Spain…'. The standard deviation scores indicated that the teachers were also the most in agreement about their willingness scores for these items.

How confident are teachers to implement multilingual home language pedagogies and what factors contribute to this? (RQ3)

The ratings for the 16 pedagogical scenarios provided a mean confidence level of 3.25 with scores ranging from 1.87 to 4.31.

Table 2 The scenarios teachers reported being most and least confident to implement

Most willing to implement:		
Providing academic support to pupils who do not have English as a first language.	*M*=4.31	*SD*=1.12

Teaching basic French vocabulary (e.g. 'hello', 'my name is').	*M*=4.31	*SD*=1.12
Doing a topic week on Spain, including some basic vocabulary and cultural activities	*M*=4.16	*SD*=1.01
Least willing to implement:		
Teaching basic Mandarin Chinese vocabulary (e.g. 'hello', 'my name is')	*M*=1.87	*SD*=1.32
Providing foreign language vocabulary lessons (e.g. French/German)	*M*=2.78	*SD*=1.32
Using an original and a translated version of a poem by an author who shares a first language with a pupil who uses EAL in your classroom	*M*=2.78	*SD*=1.32

Similar to the willingness scores and perhaps unsurprisingly, those items which described more traditional classroom practice, such as providing academic support to pupils who use EAL; teaching French and learning about Spain, were scored higher by teachers. Again, much the same as the willingness scores, teachers scored items relating to using literature (poetry) and teaching Mandarin, the lowest. However, in contrast to this emerging pattern regarding more traditional classroom practice, 'Providing foreign language vocabulary lessons…' was also one of the lowest scoring scenarios.

"Teaching vocabulary known to a pupil who uses EAL but new to you" (*SD*=0.97, *M*=2.91) and "Story telling activities using both English and the language of a pupil who uses EAL" (*SD*=0.97, *M*=2.91) were the scenarios with the lowest standard deviation scores, indicating that the teachers were most in agreement with their score assignment. Conversely, the scenarios with the lowest standard deviation scores were "Working with the family of a pupil who uses EAL in order to learn about their culture and language" (*SD*=1.4, *M*=3.4) and "Allowing pupils with EAL to communicate in their first language during classroom activities" (*SD*=1.4, *M*=3.4).

Teachers were also asked to score the following statements (1=completely disagree, 5=completely agree) in terms of their confidence:

- ‘I am happy with the support I have been given regarding pupils with EAL’ (*M*=3.17, *SD*=1.20)
- ‘I am confident in providing extra help to pupils with EAL’ (*M*=3.04, *SD*= 0.96)

A Spearman’s correlation was run to determine the relationship between the teachers’ mean confidence scores and their mean willingness scores. The two variables were strongly correlated (r_s=0.508, p<0.001). Therefore, the more confident a teacher reported feeling, the higher their reported willingness to undertake the scenarios was.

In the following sections, the items are analysed thematically according to the categories of activity types, in order to explore patterns in the reported confidence and willingness.

Confidence and willingness scores according to activity type (RQ2 and RQ3)

Average mean and standard deviation scores were calculated for the following scenario categories:

Table 3 Willingness and confidence scores for scenario categories

Academic support and assessment: 2 scenarios (items 1 and 2)		
Willingness:	*M*=4.39	*SD*=1.22
Confidence:	*M*=3.82	*SD*= 1.08
Language learning and cultural awareness, MFL, non-EAL focused: 5 scenarios (items 3, 7, 9,11,14)		
Willingness:	*M*=4.18	*SD*=1.24
Confidence:	*M*=3.24	*SD*= 1.17
Classroom practice involving pupils with EAL and their home languages: 9 scenarios (items 4, 5, 6, 8, 10,12, 13, 15, 16)		
Willingness:	*M*=4.00	*SD*=1.24
Confidence:	*M*=3.01	*SD*=1.22

Therefore, as throughout, for these categories, teachers reported feeling more willing to

implement these scenarios than they did confident, and they reported being the most willing to implement scenarios relating to academic support and assessment. The scenarios involving home languages (i.e. those most strongly related to the focus of the research) were scored the lowest by teachers for both willingness and confidence.

The scenarios which referred to more specific types of classroom activities (see Appendix B) were analysed according to the following groups:

Table 4 Willingness and confidence scores by classroom activity type

Vocabulary-based / aural: 5 scenarios		
Willingness:	*M*=4.23	*SD*=1.14
Confidence:	*M*=3.38	*SD*=1.17
Written (e.g. books, grammar): 2 scenarios		
Willingness:	*M*=3.98	*SD*= 1.22
Confidence:	*M*=2.85	*SD*=1.15

As the mean scores above indicate, teachers reported feeling more willing and more confident to implement those activities which were vocabulary-based and aural, rather than those which involved written work.

Factors contributing to teachers' willingness and confidence (RQ2 and RQ3)

General attitudes towards teaching pupils who use EAL

Teachers were asked to score the statement: 'Pupils with EAL are difficult to accommodate within the classroom' (1 = completely disagree, 5 = completely agree). The scores suggested that while teachers largely disagreed with this statement, this was not unanimous (*M*= 2.18, *SD*= 1.11). In terms of their willingness to use pupils with EAL as a resource, the teachers showed strong support for the statement 'I think pupils who use EAL can contribute to the teaching of other pupils' (*M*=4.22, *SD*=0.99). Additionally, the cultural work ethic of the families of pupils with EAL emerged as a

theme within the interview data (e.g. T4: 'their [children who use EAL in this area] families are very interested in their wellbeing and their academic progress' and T5: 'they actually do apply themselves to their learning, they've got this mission in their mind'). All teachers were also asked about the advantages to being a child with EAL in the interviews and only one teacher (T4) gave being able to speak two languages as an advantage.

Teachers' language learning experience

11 (20%) of the teachers had never studied a foreign language; 27 (49%) had studied one language (with the majority (36) studying French). The highest proportion of teachers 30/55 (55%) had studied a language to GCSE level and 3 had studied a language to degree level. A Spearman's correlation was run to determine the strength of any relationship between teachers' foreign language qualifications and their confidence and willingness scores. This showed qualification level to be statistically significantly positively correlated with both mean confidence (r_s=0.369, p=0.006) and mean willingness (r_s=0.278, p=0.040) thereby indicating that teachers who had higher language qualifications also reported feeling more willing and more confident to implement the suggest scenarios.

Linguistic insecurity

Most comments given by the teachers in the open section of the questionnaire were to justify the assignment of a low score as being due to a perceived lack of their own linguistic confidence. Some teachers specifically referenced their low confidence levels, though most referenced a lack of knowledge or experience in languages more generally, as well as the specific languages mentioned in the questions. Within comments relating to linguistic insecurity, the teachers were particularly concerned about their

pronunciation. The teachers' comments suggested they were not only afraid of being incorrect themselves but also of teaching incorrectly.

Whilst the teachers reported feeling insecure about their own linguistic knowledge, they did not demonstrate strong support for the inclusion of a trained bilingual teaching assistant in their classrooms when scoring the statement 'my classroom would benefit from a trained bilingual teaching assistant' (M=2.26, SD=1.33). As noted above, they also exhibited the most variation in their willingness scores for 'allowing pupils with EAL to communicate in their first language during classroom activities' (SD=1.4, M=3.4). Comments which provided reasoning for the scores included 'If I don't understand them I'm lost' indicating that the teachers may feel uncomfortable about allowing their classrooms to be more linguistically diverse.

Teaching experience

Spearman's correlations were also run to analyse whether the time since a teacher had trained was associated with their mean willingness and confidence scores. While the year a teacher qualified significantly positively correlated with mean willingness scores (years were coded: the higher the number, the more recently a teacher qualified) (r_s=0.407, p=0.002), there was not a statistically significant correlation for mean confidence scores (r_s=0.161, p=0.239). Therefore, teachers who had qualified more recently were more willing to implement the proposed scenarios, yet were not more confident to do so than teachers who had been teaching for longer. Rather than time teaching, instead, comments left in the open section of the questionnaire suggest that opportunity and circumstance may be what leads to increased confidence. Within the questionnaire, teachers showed awareness of whether they had done something before or not, which was often dependent on the children in their current and previous classes (e.g. 'I used to have 13 EAL children in my class who all spoke Bengali, so we had

weekly sessions where we learnt the language as a class, taught by the children').

Initial teacher training

Teachers were asked: 'Please briefly outline the training you received for teaching EAL learners during your teacher training:'

Table 5 Number and percentage of teachers who received each training type

Training type	***N***	***n***	**%**
None	55	26	47%
Lecture/seminar based training	55	16	29%
Placement (specifically designed, about teaching children who use EAL)	55	7	13%
Training which was circumstance driven (as opposed to specifically designed)	55	4	7%
Practical training (visits, observations)	55	2	4%

The training teachers received appears to be variable, yet the highest proportion of teachers reported having received no training whatsoever and almost a third reported having lecture-based training rather than classroom-based. The seven teachers who had undertaken a specifically designed placement had all attended the same teacher training institution, further demonstrating the variation that can exist between training providers.

Classroom demands

Prioritising children's comprehension and progression in English. The theme of comprehension of lesson content was apparent in much of the interview dialogue. Teachers discussed having concerns over whether the child using EAL had full understanding during classroom interaction, both academically and socially. When referring to whether they adapted their lessons in any way due to the presence of a child with EAL, the teachers exclusively focused on the child's comprehension.

English proficiency level, despite this never being raised in any interview questions, also emerged as a prominent theme. All the teachers interviewed discussed whether the child(ren) with EAL they were currently teaching had any academic problems relating to their English skills. Teachers suggested the need for alterations to lessons was dependent on the child's level of English. A high level of English proficiency was also given as a reason for not using home languages (in any capacity) within lessons (T5). Children having a *low* level of English was also given as a reason for not using home languages within the questionnaire data. For example, 'this would depend upon the children's level of English and because I would be promoting the learning of English. I would want the children to interact with children other than those who speak their first language'.

Within the interviews, when asked whether they considered there to be any disadvantages to being a child who uses EAL, the teachers most commonly referred to issues affecting academic progress (e.g. T4: 'It takes him longer to kind of process it than it does the other children'). When asked whether they would adapt their lessons in any way if they were teaching a child with EAL, the teachers stated they would use additional comprehension checks and bilingual aids (word cards, stories) to help the child access English, particularly for younger children. In terms of accessing external support for the provision of effective EAL education, all teachers interviewed referred to the child's English proficiency and 'a need' for it. This is illustrated by one teacher (T2):

> If they need some support they should get support. Because it must be very difficult to come into a- you know if you think of it as us in another country. They don't know the language at all. Again I think it probably depends on how much English they already know but they should have help if it's necessary.

Inclusion. Aside from academic progression, teachers' responses to whether they considered there to be any disadvantages to being a child with EAL could also be categorised into socio-psychological disadvantages (e.g. 'confidence, sense of belonging and fitting in' (T5)) and social disadvantages (e.g. 'they take things very literally so they're not used to the social, the local social ways of how the children talk to each other' (T3). However, when asked, 'Do you think there are any advantages to being an EAL child?', the teachers' answers centred around the children's social presence within the classroom and within this, the ability to share interesting information.

The monolingual peers. The monolingual children's experience of having a child using EAL in their class was also prominent in the interview data. Indeed, when asked whether there were any advantages to *being* a child with EAL, three of the teachers instead described the benefits for their monolingual peers. In response to 'Do you think that having a child who uses EAL in your class benefits the other children?', the teachers discussed the development of more tolerant attitudes as well as cultural and geographical knowledge. For example:

> It's nice that children… welcome children no matter from what race or cultures, we're all equals and we're all friends and I think that's important for children to have that because if you don't it's perhaps very difficult if you meet somebody for the first time that doesn't speak English.

The concept that *every* child's needs must be addressed, not only those who do not have English as a first language, was also evident within the data. Comments in the interviews relating to this included: 'he's had his thirtieth' [referring to the proportion of the teacher's attention in a class of 30]' (T4) and 'every child has a need so I wouldn't view it any differently' (T2). One teacher from the questionnaire data also raised this

issue by asking ‘how would this benefit the majority?’. Such comments suggest that the teachers were conscious of the monolingual majority in their classrooms.

Discussion

We now consider some broader themes emerging from our data that offer further insight into our findings from all three datasets (observations, interviews and questionnaires) and also put forward our interpretation.

General views on the position and role of home languages in the class and curriculum

The extent to which home languages were recognised within the classrooms is, of course, difficult to gauge from only fifteen hours of observation. However, we can be sure that in these fifteen hours, children’s home languages were not evidenced either visually or interactionally, and no instances of any languages other than English being used were observed. Our findings suggest home languages were more likely to be used as a bridge to English and any reported changes to teachers’ classroom behaviour seemed motivated by a desire to provide more effective English academic provision. The data also revealed conflicting views as to when home language use was appropriate, as there were reports of both a high and a low English proficiency being a reason for *not* using home languages.

The concept of using home languages to recognise and value those languages was not ‘disallowed’ or outright dismissed by any teachers interviewed. For example, home language and cultural knowledge could be demonstrated during the register and ‘show and tell’ time, according to some of the interviewed teachers. As Conteh discussed (2003), this suggests that using home languages to ‘succeed in diversity’ may be more likely to be ‘squeezed into the corners’ (p. 122), rather than contributing to

more ‘formal’ learning time. While they listed some advantages to being a pupil who uses EAL, the teachers, on the whole, did not consider actively drawing on the children’s knowledge in lessons. Similarly, while they listed some advantages to having a child using EAL in the class, there seemed to be an implicit assumption that this would benefit the monolingual pupils without any teacher intervention via particular activities or approaches.

These perspectives on incorporating home languages into the classroom suggest that it was seen as largely separate from the aims of the curriculum. Yet, as noted above, language learning is now compulsory at Key Stage Two and schools have the freedom to choose which language(s) they teach, including those spoken in the school or wider community (DfE, 2016). Indeed, the framework followed by the school inspectorate (Ofsted) states that students’ cultural development should include developing interest in and respect towards cultural diversity in order to develop tolerant attitudes towards different ethnic groups within the local, national and global communities (Ofsted, 2016). It is noteworthy that the teachers did not show awareness of policies, frameworks or teaching materials (e.g. ASCL, 2016) that could justify or support the inclusion of *home* languages in their classrooms, including any that may have existed in their individual schools.

Home languages in a predominately monolingual area: effects on attitudes, training and expertise

Research to date (Kenner, Gregory, et al., 2008; Kenner, 2009; McGilp, 2014) has focused on the potential advantages to home language pedagogies within multilingual contexts. However, as noted earlier, there are also strong rationales for providing wider linguistic and cultural education in traditionally monolingual areas. In schools where there is perhaps only one child using EAL, there may be less of an

immediate need to develop a school policy about home languages yet there is arguably a need to consider how we may represent diversity effectively (i.e. via more than just 'food and festivals' (Knight, 1994, p. 103)).

In the recent UK referendum about leaving the EU, the research site for the current study was in one of the regions with the highest proportion of Leave voters in the country (over 69% (BBC, 2016)) Whilst claims about the rationale behind these votes cannot be made with any great confidence, these numbers may demonstrate more nationalistic ideologies, perhaps including protectionist attitudes towards the English language. Such attitudes may, in turn, result in schools, teachers or even parents devaluing languages other than English and their place within schools' curricula. This situation could arguably provide a strong justification for the inclusion of education about linguistic and cultural diversity, but, at the same time, is also a potential barrier to its implementation.

The teachers interviewed, perhaps due to having monolingual majority classrooms, were very aware of the monolingual children's experience of having a child with EAL as their peer (section 'The monolingual peers' above). Whilst the teachers described advantages this afforded the class in terms of developing intercultural understanding, some reported wariness about dedicating too much time to the needs of (one) child. This is indicative of a tension that may exist between diversity and inclusion (as described in Conteh (2012)), a tension that is arguably more difficult to resolve in largely monolingual areas. In such areas, issues of number (the minority, the majority, 'standing out' and 'fitting in') are more apparent, and as a result, may serve to consolidate teachers' locally context-bound practice. Thus, what *top-down* educational policy has to recommend about home languages becomes critical for shaping teachers' decision-making, beyond the (majority) characteristics of the local environs.

As well as the demographics of an area affecting teachers' practice, their experience and knowledge may also be affected by having taught or trained in a given area. Comments left by the teachers in the questionnaire suggested that they felt their confidence levels were attributable to whether they had had the opportunity to trial a certain activity, or even teach a child who uses EAL. We also draw inference from the facts that a) we observed little to no evidence of systematic or planned awareness-raising about home languages in any of our three datasets (observations, interviews, questionnaires), and b) that almost half of our respondents had been trained and currently taught within the same region. We acknowledge, however, that we were not able to carry out statistical analysis of potential associations between location of training, experience, and attitudes. We did, nevertheless, find that confidence levels were not correlated with the *time* spent teaching. This suggests that opportunities to trial certain classroom activities and subsequently teachers' perceived confidence, may be determined by local context, rather than just the length of a teacher's experience.

Only seven of the 55 teachers (all 7 had trained at the same university) who participated in the questionnaire had undertaken a placement during their teacher training which was designed to prepare them for teaching children with EAL. If pre-service training does not incorporate such preparation, teachers' experience and expertise regarding teaching children who use EAL are arguably left to chance. If training has a localised focus, in either university-based programmes (see Murakami, 2008) or the School Direct pathway (school-based training (Hodgson, 2014)), teachers may be more likely to develop expertise for one geographical context. This may reduce the chances of pedagogies considered successful in one context (i.e. multilingual) being trialled in others (i.e. predominantly monolingual). And crucially, as Cajkler and Hall (2012) argue, 'unless more time is freed to focus on understanding language acquisition

and diversity, levels of confidence immediately following training programmes will remain low' (p.225).

Linguistic competence and language awareness

As stated above, without explicit reference to home language use in statutory educational policy (see Brumfit (1995) for a historical perspective on related policies), individual teachers are central in determining whether children's or community languages are recognised within the classroom. On the whole, the participating teachers showed relatively high levels of willingness to implement the scenarios presented within the questionnaire, though demonstrated higher levels for those which involved providing English academic help (as reviewed in Adesope, Lavin, Thompson and Ungerleider (2011)), rather than those aimed at *using* home languages. Similarly, much of the interview data had an academic and English proficiency focus, despite these not being explicitly mentioned by the interviewer (the first author). This suggests that the teachers tended to associate bilingualism with the need for additional support rather than with advantage (cognitive, social, cultural, linguistic), a concern also raised by Butcher, Sinkra and Troman (2007). This association, Butcher et al. argue, can reinforce a broadly deficit view of bilingualism, a view which is at odds with many of the motivations behind the activities suggested in the questionnaire used in our study. Such activities utilise and promote the use of more than one language (see Adesope et al. (2010) for a systematic review and meta-analysis in this area).

In terms of language learning activities, teachers' scores indicated they would be more willing to implement activities that were aural or vocabulary based, than written or grammar related. This is perhaps unsurprising as these are classroom scenarios that primary teachers are likely to be more familiar with (Cable et al., 2010). Indeed, the statutory inclusion of foreign languages in the primary curriculum is fairly

recent (2014) and many teachers are still gaining familiarity with more formal teaching of languages such as French (see Tinsley & Board, 2016). This lack of confidence with more traditional language may conceivably affect teachers' views on their ability to incorporate languages which are even less familiar to them. In response to many of the 16 pedagogical scenario questions, the teachers directly referred to a lack of, specifically, linguistic confidence as a reason for their overall low reported confidence scores. Indeed, 20% of the respondents to the questionnaire had never studied a foreign language. This corroborates the most recent Language Trends survey that found schools were 'struggling with classroom teachers who do not feel confident, and schools where language teaching is not prioritised at all' (Tinsley & Board, 2016, p. 44).

In sum, a lack of linguistic expertise may be problematic both for the potential implementation of home language pedagogies as well as more traditional foreign language learning at primary level. This being said, language awareness approaches (e.g. the 'Discovering Language' programme (ASCL, 2016)) (including using children or community members as linguistic resources) can help to mitigate poor teacher expertise, as put forward by the 'Discovering Language' programme as well as Hawkins (1984). Approaches like these advocate activities such as teachers learning languages with their pupils (to enhance positive attitudes and tolerance to error), teaching general language learning strategies (for example, metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness to help the learning of other languages in the future), and communicative strategies (to compensate for lack of knowledge or skills). In the current study, we found little evidence of knowledge of such approaches, but, rather, evidence of a more traditional didactic approach with the teacher as the knowledge source (or the 'monitor of learning' as discussed in Bourne (2001)). For example, in our questionnaire, when asked about incorporating a pupil's home language into class activities, many teachers reported

being afraid of mispronouncing words, being wrong, or not understanding their pupils. Other comments indicated that they perceived it to be *their* role to provide a correct model.

The dominance of English

Another factor which emerged from the data as representing a significant obstacle to the potential implementation of home language activities was that of long-established teaching patterns within primary education and, related to this, the vital role of English in providing access to the curriculum. As mentioned above, developing the academic progress (in English) of children who use EAL emerged as a prominent theme within our data. As one teacher stated, priority would always be given to the learning of English, and as stated by all teachers interviewed, external support would only be arranged to help with the learning of English. Such attitudes towards the prioritisation of English, in areas without community or parental support (e.g. community language schools) to help maintain home languages, may ultimately lead to heritage language loss (see Fillmore, 2000). As noted earlier, the current system may too often result in bilingual children becoming monolingual children whilst simultaneously perhaps often failing to develop languages other than English amongst monolingual children (Cummins, 2005).

Conclusion

Reflected in our data are significant, but not necessarily permanent, obstacles to the potential implementation of multilingual home language pedagogies. The teachers, rather than dismissing home language use outright, seemed on the whole to be unaware of why and how they may use home languages. Lower willingness to implement activities tended to be associated with lower confidence levels. Concern was

particularly noted around more formal uses of home languages in the classroom (relating to literature, written language or grammar). We found that context-specific training and experience may be one factor associated with lower willingness to undertake the suggested classroom practices ('scenarios'). Arguably, the first, or at least a critical step to increasing teachers' confidence to utilise home languages is to make policy-level changes that recognise the potential advantages children who use EAL may bring to the classroom and society, thereby fostering more multilingual classrooms that are more in line with the linguistic landscape of the UK as a whole. Future research should explore the potential benefits of informing teachers about home language pedagogies in pre-service teacher training and also evaluate the feasibility of introducing such pedagogies within a range (geographical, social, cultural, economic) of educational contexts.

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Appendix A: Observation schedule

Information collected prior to observation:

- Session code
- Teacher code
- No. of EAL pupils
- No. of students
- Lesson focus
- Activities undertaken in session

Categories:

Examples of observations noted are given underneath categories as 'e.g. real' and examples which would have been coded within categories were they observed are listed underneath the categories as 'e.g.'.

(a) Languages other than English mentioned

e.g. Names of languages, or vocabulary and information about languages (other than English) in any capacity, for example, a discussion about the origin of a word.

(b) Metalinguistic information given for linguistic awareness building

e.g. real: A game in which parts of speech were assigned a number on a die. Pupils rolled the die and added the corresponding part of speech e.g. ‘adverb’.

(c) British cultural awareness

e.g. A discussion of any aspect of British culture, for example, customs and traditions.

(d) Awareness building of cultures where English is not an official/dominant language.

e.g. A discussion of any aspect of Polish culture, for example, customs and traditions.

(e) Use of languages other than English (for instructions or activities)

e.g. A language (other than English) forming part of an activity or regular classroom practice. For example, saying ‘¡Párense!’ [stand up] in Spanish instead of English as part of everyday classroom routine.

(f) Activities or instructions adapted for a child using EAL or any additional support given

e.g. real: An additional comprehension check directed at the child who uses EAL ‘Can you see that…Where it says…?’.

(g) Pupil who uses EAL being the focus of the activity/teachers’ talk to the rest of the class.

e.g. real: The teacher directly asked the child who uses EAL to answer questions.

(h) Pupil who uses EAL used to inform the rest of the class (e.g. cultural/geographical information)

e.g. real: A child volunteered the name of her home country as a suitable setting for a

story.

(i) Miscellaneous observations relevant to the study

e.g. Any information relevant to the study. For example, the teacher informs the researcher that the child who uses EAL is reluctant to use their home language at school.

Appendix B: Questionnaire items

Your background:

(1) Which year did you qualify as a teacher?

(2) Where did you complete your teaching training?

(3) Please briefly outline the training you received for teaching EAL learners during your teacher training:

(4) Have you ever studied a language, if so, to what level?

Your classroom:

(1) How many EAL learners do you currently have in your class?

(2) Approximately how many times have you sought extra help to cater to the needs of pupils with EAL? Please give brief details.

(3) How many times have you assessed/organised the assessment of an EAL pupil's ability in their first language?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

1 = completely disagree

5 = completely agree

(1) I am happy with the support I have been given regarding pupils with EAL.

(2) I am confident in providing extra help to pupils with EAL.

(3) All lessons should be conducted in English.

(4) I think pupils with EAL can contribute to the teaching of other pupils.

(5) My classroom would benefit from a trained bilingual teaching assistant.

(6) Pupils with EAL are difficult to accommodate within the classroom.

Please add any comments you would like to make regarding any of the statements:

For the next question please indicate, using a number between 1-5, both how confident you would feel about doing the following and also, how willing you would be to do so.

1 is not confident/willing at all

5 is very confident/willing or already done/doing so

(1) Providing academic support to pupils who do not have English as a first language.

(2) Assessing the capabilities of a pupil who has a low level of English.

(3) Introducing activities which involve languages other than English.

(4) Demonstrating how English grammar using the languages of pupils with EAL in your class.

(5) Teaching vocabulary known to a pupil with EAL, but new to you.

(6) Using literature in your lessons from the home country of a pupil with EAL.

(7) Providing foreign vocabulary language lessons (e.g. French/German).

(8) Working with the family of a child who uses EAL in order to learn about their culture and language.

For the next question, please follow the same procedure to indicate how confident and how willing you would be to do these activities in your classroom:

(9) Teaching basic French vocabulary (e.g. 'hello', 'my name is').

(10) Using a pupil with EAL to teach a conversation sequence, in their language, to the other pupils.

(11) Doing a topic week on Spain, including some basic vocabulary and cultural activities.

(12) Using a language of an EAL pupil to give classroom instructions to all the class.

(13) Story telling activities using both English and the language of a pupil who uses EAL.

(14) Teaching basic Mandarin Chinese vocabulary (e.g. 'hello', 'my name is').

(15) Using an original and translated version of a poem by author who shares a first language with a pupil who uses EAL in your classroom.

(16) Allowing pupils with EAL to communicate in their first language during classroom activities.

Appendix C: Example interview protocol

- Do you think that being a pupil with EAL has any disadvantages? Linguistically, socially, personally, academically?
- Do you think that being a pupil with EAL has any advantages? Linguistically, socially, personally, academically?
- Do you think the education a child with EAL receives should be any different from the other children in the class?
- Do you consciously adapt your lessons due to the presence of a child who uses EAL?

- Do you think having a child with EAL in your class can benefit the education of the other pupils?
- Do you ever teach your pupils about culture? If so, how and what cultures?
- Which languages do you teach in your class? Do you know why those languages were chosen? Which languages do you think should be taught?
- Are there any ways in which you would like to improve the way in which pupils with EAL are incorporated within your classroom activities?
- Do you think the training you have received so far has successfully equipped you to support pupils with EAL both socially and academically within the classroom?